

“Haeresis Armenorum Transsylvaniae”

Bishop György Mártonffy and the Armenian Catholic Church in Transylvania (1718–1721)

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Abstract. Bishop György Mártonffy (1663–1721) is regarded not only as one of the key figures of Re-Catholicisation, but also as the most important innovator of Catholicism in Transylvania. He was the first Roman Catholic prelate to gain a foothold in the Principality of Transylvania, and after more than a hundred years, he was also able to perform the episcopal office in Transylvania, which had been vacant before. According to the small amount of old-fashioned literature at scholarship's disposal, Bishop Mártonffy built cordial and harmonious relations with the Uniate (Catholic) Armenian Church in Transylvania. However, this idyllic view has been very much nuanced by recent archival research. Moreover, the hand-written documents about this relationship preserved in the archives of the Apostolic Holy See in Rome and the Vatican City use a completely different tone. Therefore, the main objective of the article is to revise Bishop Mártonffy's relations with the Armenian Catholic Church in Transylvania, on the basis of the archival sources, which have been partially discovered or not yet fully discovered. Furthermore, in this brief study, I also address the church-historical processes that led to the deterioration of relations between the Uniate Armenians, who were already loyal to Rome, and the Roman Catholic Episcopacy in Transylvania, led by Bishop Mártonffy from the early eighteenth century.

Keywords: Armenians, Catholicism, Transylvania, Apostolic Holy See (Rome)

Bishop György Mártonffy (1663–1721) is regarded not only as one of the key figures of the Counter-Reformation, but also the most important innovator of Catholicism in Hungary and Transylvania.¹ He was the first Roman Catholic prelate to establish

1 My scholarly investigations on the subject of this study were conducted in Rome and at the Vatican City thanks to the Kuno Klebelsberg Scholarships offered by the Ministries of Culture and Foreign Affairs of Hungary in the years of 2004, 2006, 2008, 2010, 2018, and 2024. As the author of this article, personally, I wish to express my deepest gratitude for their financial and moral support. Further on, special thanks are due to Dr. Karen Jallatyan, Visiting Associate Professor of Department of Armenian Studies at the Péter Pázmány Catholic University, for her selfless help in reading through the draft of this study.

himself in Transylvania, and after more than a hundred years, he was able to truly perform the vacant episcopal office in Transylvania. During his relatively short ecclesiastical tenure (1713–1721), the bishop did his utmost to restore the battered Catholicism in Transylvania. Bishop Mártonffy supported ecclesiastical education and the religious orders, made regular church-visits in the territory of his diocese, and worked hard for invigorating Transylvania's everyday religious life.

According to the small amount of secondary literature, Bishop Mártonffy established cordial and harmonious relations with Armenian Catholics in Transylvania. This relationship was particularly balanced after 1715, when their (Uniate) bishop, Oxendio Virziresco (1654–1715), who had created their church-union with Rome, passed away in Vienna. This idyllic view has been greatly nuanced by recent archival research: the written documents preserved in the archives of the Apostolic Holy See in Rome and the Vatican City described this relationship in a completely different tone.² Therefore, this article intends to revise Bishop Mártonffy's relations with the Armenians in Transylvania on the basis of archival sources that have been partially or not yet discovered in Rome. Furthermore, it also seeks an answer to the question of what processes of church-history from the last third of the seventeenth century led to the deterioration of relations between the Armenians in Transylvania, who had already been loyal to Rome since their church-union, and the Roman Catholic bishops of Transylvania.

In order to understand the subject of this article, it is necessary to briefly summarise the historical antecedents. The Armenians' first group fled from Moldavia to Transylvania in 1668 under the leadership of their Apostolic (Eastern Rite) Bishop Minas Alēk'sanean T'oxat'ec'i (ca. 1610–1686).³ The reason for their flight was their active participation in an uprising against the tax-policy of the Moldavian voivod (prince), Gheorghe Duca (1665–1666, 1668–1672, 1678–1683), which the authorities later brutally suppressed.⁴ Subsequently, in 1672, another wave of Armenian refugees arrived in the territory of the Principality of Transylvania. In that year, Ottoman-Turkish troops occupied Podolia and the city of Kamjaneć-Podil'skyj (Kamieniec-Podolski; present-day Ukraine), which was then part of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth (*Rzeczpospolita Obojga Narodów*, *Res Publica Utriusque Nationis*), forcing many Armenian families to flee their former homes.⁵

2 Lukácsy, *Historia Armenorum*, 73–78; Vanyó, *Püspöki jelentések*, 113–16; Petrowicz, *La chiesa armena*, 168–69, 173–75, 181; Kovács and Kovács, eds., *Erdélyi római katolikus egyházlátogatási jegyzőkönyvek*, 98–106.

3 APF SC FA, Vol. 1. Fol. 525r–526v; APF SC FA, Vol. 2. Fol. 630r; APF Indice, Vol. 5. Fol. 95r, No. 161: 39; EFGYL MFK HD, No. 14. Pag. 10; ELTE EKK CH, Tom. 21. Pag. 81.

4 APF SC FM, Vol. 1. Fol. 265r–267v; APF FV, Vol. 8. Fol. 74r–77v.

5 Lukácsy, *Historia Armenorum*, 14–15; Veszely, *Erdélyi egyháztörténelmi adatok*, 124; Nagy, *Emlékirat*, 253.

For nearly two decades after their escape in 1668–1672, the Armenians of Transylvania were free to practise their ancient Eastern Christian faith and did not come under the radar of any church-union policy on the part of the Roman Catholic Church. Although the Principality of Transylvania was under strong Protestant political leadership, the Hungarian territories under Ottoman-Turkish occupation, and the Kingdom of Hungary had been one of the Apostolic Holy See's main missionary targets in Central and Eastern Europe from the first third of the seventeenth century.⁶

However, both among Armenians in the colonies and those living in the motherland, the Roman Catholic Church paid special attention to missions and, therefore, had already achieved considerable success. In other words, as a consequence of these missions, certain groups of Eastern Apostolic Armenians converted to Roman Catholicism. Moreover, due to the efforts of Nikol Torosowicz (1603–1681), Armenian Archbishop of Lviv (Lwów, Lemberg; present-day Ukraine), after prolonged and violent conflicts, Armenians in the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth united with Rome (1630–1681), which had a significant influence on the Armenians in Transylvania.⁷

In 1683, Archbishop Opizio Pallavicini (1632–1700), Apostolic Nuncio to Warsaw, Francesco Bonesana CR (1649–1709), a Theatine father, rector of the Armenian College (*Collegium Armenum*) in Lviv,⁸ and the Armenian Catholic Archdiocese of Lviv jointly initiated the organisation of Catholic missions among the Armenians in Transylvania at the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith (*Sacra Congregatio de Propaganda Fide*),⁹ the Missionary Institution of the Apostolic Holy See.¹⁰ Their initiative was supported by the fact that the Armenians

6 Tóth, *A szaggatott kapcsolatok*, 843–92.

7 Schütz, *An Armenian-Kipchak Document*, 247–330; Nagy, *Lembergben kezdődött*, 53–95.

8 The Armenian College in Lviv was founded by the Apostolic Holy See in 1664 to ensure the supply of Armenian Catholic seminarians in the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth. The rectors of this Seminary were representatives of the Theatine (Cajetan) Order with missionary experience in Armenia. Its first and founding Rector was Father Clemente Galano CR (1611–1664). From 1709, the name of this Seminary was changed to Armenian–Ruthenian College (*Collegium Armenum et Ruthenum*). It was closed by the Emperor and King Joseph II (1765–1790) in 1784. See on this: APF ASC, Vol. 32. Fol. 68r–69v; APF CP, Vol. 133. Fol. 270r–310v; APF CV, Vol. 2. Fol. 2r–23v; AGT CL, Portfolio 1. (Unnumbered folio.)

9 The Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of Faith as a Missionary Institution of the Apostolic Holy See directed by Cardinals of Papal Court will hereafter be referred to as *Propaganda Fide* in this article. This institution was established by a bull entitled in Latin as *Inscrutabili divinae providentiae* declared by Pope Gregory XV (1621–1623) on 6th of January (on the Feast of Epiphany) in 1622. APF CU, Vol. 1. Fol. 1r–27v.

10 APF ASC, Vol. 53. Fol. 248r; APF SOCG, Vol. 496. Fol. 503r; APF LDSC, Vol. 72. Fol. 69r; APF SC FA, Vol. 3. Fol. 462r–v, Fol. 465r; APF SC FM, Vol. 2. Fol. 126r–127r; APF FMPR, Vol. 2. Fol. 195r–v; APF FV, Vol. 42. Fol. 49v; APF CV, Vol. 2. Fol. 166r; EFGYL SZFK HD, Pag. 4–7.

fled to Transylvania from such territories as the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth and Moldavia, which had always been under the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of the Armenian Apostolic (Eastern) Archdiocese of Lviv. Thus, after the conclusion of the church-union, the aforementioned archdiocese wished to maintain this claim or right even.¹¹ The Apostolic Holy See did not block the request, and in fact soon approved it. As a result, in 1685, Rome sent to Transylvania Oxendio Virziresco, a Moldavian-born Armenian priest, who had studied at the Urban College (*Collegium Urbanum*)¹² in Rome, the Seminary of the *Propaganda Fide*. His mission was to convert Armenians to Catholicism.¹³

Despite initial difficulties, the Armenian missionary succeeded in converting several families to Catholicism.¹⁴ However, a key question in connection with his mission proved to be whether the apostolic bishop of the Armenians, Minas Alêk'sanean T'oxat'ec'i, who had an Eastern faith, could also be won over for the possible church-union. For a long time, scholars believed that thanks to the activities of Oxendio Virziresco, at the end of 1686, Bishop Minas himself accepted the church-union in Lviv and made a Faith of Catholic Confession in the presence of Opizio Pallavicini and Armenian Catholic Archbishop of Lviv Vardan Hunanean (1644–1715).¹⁵ This version of the event is strongly refuted by contemporary sources kept in the Apostolic Holy See's archives.¹⁶ Although Bishop Minas did indeed visit Lviv, he did not meet Nuncio Pallavicini in person, but only Archbishop Vardan Hunanean, and had a harsh dispute with him in defence of the Armenian Apostolic faith.¹⁷ Moreover, in the light of recent research, it is safe to say that Bishop Minas did not make a Faith of Catholic Confession in his own name or on behalf of the whole Armenian community in Transylvania, nor did he do this in the presence of Nuncio Pallavicini or Archbishop Hunanean.¹⁸

11 APF SC FM, Vol. 2. Fol. 134r–135v.

12 The Seminary called Urban College in Rome was founded by Pope Urban VIII (1623–1644) on basis of his bull entitled in Latin as *Immortalis Dei Filius* and declared on 1st of August in 1627. APF CU, Vol. 1. Fol. 103r–120v.

13 APF ASC, Vol. 57. Fol. 114r–v; APF SOCG, Vol. 497. Fol. 335r–v; APF LDSC, Vol. 76. Fol. 33v–34r; APF SC FA, Vol. 3. Fol. 419r; APF CU, Vol. 1. Fol. 268r; APF Giuramento, Vol. 8/1. Pag. 92; APF Indice, Vol. 5. Fol. 111r, No. 81: 1; ELTE EKK CH, Tom. 21. Pag. 81–82; EGYFL MFK HD, No. 14. Pag. 10.

14 APF SC FA, Vol. 3. Fol. 468r–469v; Rôšk'ay, *Žamankagrut'iwn*, 185.

15 ARSI FAH, Vol. 155. Fol. 81r–v; ELTE EKK CH, Tom. 21. Pag. 82; EFGYL SZFK HD, Pag. 11.

16 APF SC FA, Vol. 4. Fol. 374r–375v; APF CU, Vol. 3. Fol. 472r–v.

17 APF ASC, Vol. 70. Fol. 103r–105v; APF SOCG, Vol. 532. Fol. 456r–457r; APF LDSC, Vol. 76. Fol. 90r–v; AAV ANVI, Vol. 196. Fol. 219r–220r.

18 Nagy, *Did Vardapet*, 427–42.

In the final analysis, Bishop Minas did not convert to Catholicism, but died in 1686, soon after leaving Lviv under circumstances that are still unclear.¹⁹ However, Bishop Minas's death facilitated Oxendio Virziresco's pastoral activity in Transylvania. Three years later, on 28 February 1689, the entire Armenian community officially made a Faith of Catholic Confession in the city of Lviv in Archbishop Vardan Hunanean's presence and proclaimed church-union with Rome.²⁰ The Apostolic Holy See appreciated Oxendio Virziresco's missionary efforts and in 1690 appointed him as Uniate (Titular) Bishop (*in partibus infidelium*) of *Aladia Hiberniae* and Apostolic Vicar of the Armenians in Transylvania; however, the ecclesiastical jurisdiction was not exercised by the Armenian Catholic Archdiocese in Lviv, but directly by the Apostolic Holy See through the *Propaganda Fide*.²¹ At the same time, Oxendio Virziresco was deliberately appointed titular bishop, rather than diocesan bishop, because the Apostolic Holy See considered the views of both the Viennese Court and the Hungarian Catholic Church. They had a fundamental interest in re-organising the Roman Catholic Diocese in Transylvania, which had been vacant since the early seventeenth century.²² Moreover, when Oxendio Virziresco was appointed bishop, he was told that he had to deal not only with the religious life of his own Armenians in Transylvania, but also with the Roman Catholic faithful of the region who were living without their prelate. However, this did not pose an obstacle for him, as despite his Armenian origins, he always considered himself a believer in the Roman Catholic Church, and because he was ordained as a priest in Rome and also celebrated the Holy Mass according to the Latin rite.²³ It is therefore not surprising that Bishop Oxendio Virziresco also supported the Latin rite and increasingly wanted to marginalise the ancient (Eastern) Armenian ecclesiastical customs as heretical and schismatic elements, which led him to repeated hard conflicts with his own parishioners.²⁴ Moreover, because of his forced Latinist ideas, between 1691 and 1700, many of his followers renounced the church-union, left Transylvania and

19 Rošk'ay, *Žamanakagrut'iwn*, 186.

20 APF CP, Vol. 29. Fol. 647r–v., Fol. 648r–v; APF LDSC, Vol. 76. Fol. 90v–91r; APF SC FA, Vol. 3. Fol. 498r–v; EFGYL SZFK HD, Pag. 12.

21 APF ASC, Vol. 60. Fol. 14r–19v; APF SOCG, Vol. 510. Fol. 95r., Fol. 96r; APF LDSC, Vol. 79. Fol. 123r–v; APF SC FA. Vol. 4. Fol. 146r–v; APF Indice, Vol. 5. Fol. 114v., No. 14: 19; ELTE EKK CH, Tom. 29. Pag. 346; ELTE EKK G, Vol. 522. Fol. 173r–v; PL AEV SPSZ, No. 273/2; EFGYL SZFK HD, Pag. 12.

22 Varga J., *Berendezkedési tervzetek*, 463–64.

23 APF ASC, Vol. 51. Fol. 154r–v; APF SOCG, Vol. 490. Fol. 110r; APF SOCG, Vol. 492. Fol. 313r–v; APF LDSC, Vol. 70. Fol. 54r–v.

24 APF ASC, Vol. 63. Fol. 68r–70v; APF SOCG, Vol. 572. Fol. 283r–285v; AAV ANVI, Vol. 196. Fol. 265r–268v.

returned to Moldavia.²⁵ This was mainly due to the fact that during the church-union concluded in Lviv in 1689, only the Roman Pope's primacy was officially declared. Problems of urgent importance to the ecclesiastical union, such as differences between the Roman and Armenian Catholic rites, the method of Eucharist, the use of the Calendar, the teaching of the Fourth Ecumenical Council at Chalcedon in 451 AD, the question of Purgatory, the prayer of Filioque, and the marital status of priests were completely omitted. This led to several unresolved problems and more conflicts among the Armenians in Transylvania.²⁶ Despite numerous conflicts, by the end of the seventeenth century, Bishop Oxendio Virziresco had definitively Catholicized Armenians in Transylvania with the help of the Hungarian Catholic Church, Andrea Santacroce (1655–1712), Apostolic Nuncio to Vienna (previously to Warsaw), the Jesuit fathers, and the Conventual Franciscan (Minorite) friars in Transylvania.²⁷

Following the resolution of these conflicts, the Armenians in Transylvania were irreversibly (Uniate) Catholic. Due to emigration, their true population decreased significantly, but Bishop Oxendio Virziresco was able to manage a smaller, but more denominationally homogeneous community. This situation was changed by the outbreak of the War of Independence (1703–1711) led by Prince Ferenc Rákóczi II (1676–1735): many Armenians left Transylvania, moved back to Moldavia, and renounced the church-union.²⁸

Bishop Oxendio Virziresco's loyal relationship to the Roman Catholic Church was also manifested in the fact that after the death of Roman Catholic Episcopal Vicar (between 1708–1709) Bertalan Szebelébi (1631–1707) and following the death of Roman Catholic Bishop of Transylvania András Illyés (1637–1712), he temporarily held the offices of Roman Catholic vicar and bishop of Transylvania (between 1712–1713).²⁹

Further on, simultaneously with Bishop Oxendio Virziresco's pastoral activity in Transylvania, at the end of the seventeenth century, after nearly a century, significant changes took place among Roman Catholics in Transylvania. In 1696, Emperor

25 Nagy, *Az erdélyi örmény egyházi unió*, 91–125.

26 APF ASC, Vol. 61. Fol. 84r–87v; APF ASC, Vol. 63. Fol. 68r–70v., Fol. 79r–v; APF SOCG, Vol. 514. Fol. 495r–496v; APF SOCG, Vol. 522. Fol. 453r–454v; APF CP, Vol. 31. Fol. 469r–v; APF LDSC, Vol. 79. Fol. 134v–135r; APF SC FA, Vol. 4. Fol. 267r–268v., Fol. 519r–v., Fol. 523r–v.

27 Nagy, *The History of Ecclesiastical Conflict*, 179–221.

28 APF ASC, Vol. 77. Fol. 279r–280v; APF SOCG, Vol. 559. Fol. 575r; ELTE EKK CH, Tom. 29. Pag. 346; ELTE EKK CK A, Tom. 11. Pag. 112.

29 APF ASC. Vol. 57. Fol. 81v; APF SOCG, Vol. 537. Fol. 225v; GYFL I.1a, (1697.), No. 2., Pag. 6–7; GYFL I/4, Vol. 3. Fol. 247r., Fol. 248v; EFGYL DFK HD, Pag. 6.; Mihalik, *A Szentcsék és az erdélyi katolikus restauráció ügye*, 283–304.

and King Leopold I (1657–1715) appointed Transylvania-born Roman Catholic Bishop of Transylvania András Illyés. The monarch also made him the owner of the Abbey of Pilis, and later granted him the provostship of Esztergom-Szentistván Hungary.³⁰

Despite these hopeful events, Andrew Illyés's activity as bishop in Transylvania proved short-lived. In the 1690s, the *Gubernium*, strongly influenced by Transylvanian Protestants, expelled Bishop Illyés outright, citing the *Diploma Leopoldinum*, which stated that Catholics in Transylvania were allowed only apostolic vicars and not diocesan bishops. Naturally, the prelate did not resign himself to this situation.³¹ In 1703, with the support of the Viennese court, he entered Transylvania again, but his second attempt also proved to be unsuccessful, as in the autumn of 1704 he had to leave his diocese again due to the Ferenc Rákóczi II's War of Independence. Even though András Illyés never returned to Transylvania, he held the title of Roman Catholic Bishop of Transylvania until his death in 1712. In his absence, Bertalan Szebelébi and, after his death in 1707, János Antalfy³² (1644–1728), the Episcopal vicar, and Bishop Oxendio Virziresco, at the request of the Apostolic Holy See, governed all Catholics in Transylvania.³³

However, with the death of Bishop Oxendio Virziresco in Vienna in 1715, there was a new situation emerging.³⁴ On the one hand, the episcopal office became vacant, and the Armenians in Transylvania were left without a church leader; moreover, the community's leaders could not agree on the succession of Oxendio Virziresco. On the other hand, the Apostolic Holy See could not find a suitable person to appoint as Uniate bishop of the Armenians in Transylvania, although Bishop Oxendio Virziresco named in his will written just before his death as his successor Stefano Stefanowicz Roszka (1670–1739), who had worked in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth but had strong ties to Transylvania.³⁵ The *Propaganda Fide* repeat-

30 Cserei, *Erdélyi históriája*, 301.

31 APF SOCG, Vol. 535. Fol. 3v; APF SC FUT, Vol. 3. Fol. 110r; ARSI FAH, Vol. 155. Fol. 81r-v; Veszely, *Erdélyi egyháztörténelmi adatok*, 55–57.

32 Later on, John Antalfy was appointed as a Catholic Bishop of Transylvania in 1724. APF SOCG, Vol. 646. Fol. 311r.+ Fol. 312v; EFGYL DFK HD, Pag. 18; MNL OL A 57 LR, Vol. 35., No. 76., Pag. 229–230.

33 APF ASC, Vol. 74. Fol. 296r-v; APF SC FUT, Vol. 3. Fol. 42r–43v; EFGYL DFK HD, Pag. 6; Veszely, *Erdélyi egyháztörténelmi adatok*, 365–66; Galla, *Ferences misszionáriusok*, 270–73.

34 APF ASC, Vol. 82. Fol. 443r-v; APF SOCG, Vol. 583. Fol. 212r-v; APF SC FA, Vol. 6. Fol. 552r–553v; APF Indice. Vol. 6., No. 169: 16. (Unnumbered folio.)

35 Stefan Stefanowicz Roszka himself was also an Alumnus of the Urban College in Rome. APF ASC, Vol. 70. Fol. 166r; APF SC FA, Vol. 4. Fol. 83r–84r; APF Giuramento, Vol. 8/1. Pag. 157; APF Indice, Vol. 6. No. 382: 40. (Unnumbered folio.); UKSW FKDOP MS, Nr. 0777-m-008a. (Unnumbered folio); GYFL SZÖKGYL, 339/b. 1. box (Unnumbered folio.)

edly discussed Roszka's candidacy, but in the end the cardinals were unable to reach a conclusion; it contributed to the problem that the Hungarian Catholic Church was reluctant to support the filling of the Armenian Uniate Episcopal See in Transylvania. Thus, the said bishopric office remained vacant.³⁶ This situation practically coincided with the appearance of Bishop Mártonffy in Transylvania.³⁷

György Mártonffy was appointed by the request of the Catholic Status, the Official Self-Government of Roman Catholics in Transylvania (*Status Romano-Catholicus Transylvaniensis, Status Catholicorum*), and at the intercession of Cardinal (Prince) Keresztély Ágost (1666–1725), Archbishop of Esztergom. Emperor and King Charles of Habsburg III (1711–1740) appointed Mártonffy Roman Catholic bishop of Transylvania. Furthermore, in order to increase the battered authority of the diocesan bishop in Transylvania, the emperor raised him to the rank of baron.³⁸ Mártonffy's candidacy was strengthened by his high and excellent theological training, his Transylvanian origins, as well as the fact that he completed his theological studies at the seminaries of Trnava (Nagyszombat; present-day Slovakia) and the Pazmaneum in Vienna.³⁹

Finally, on examining the candidate for bishop, during the Papal Consistory held on 20 August 1714, the Apostolic Holy See officially approved the appointment of Mártonffy as Roman Catholic bishop of Transylvania. By this time, Transylvania's internal political relations had already been consolidated in favour of the Viennese court to the extent that the bishop could take his seat and start reorganising his diocese without hindrance. However, Mártonffy's appointment as bishop was preceded by important provisions. In 1715, the Emperor and King Charles III settled the revenues of the Roman Catholic Bishopric of Transylvania. He reorganised the cathedral chapter and appointed Bishop Mártonffy as a hereditary high-sheriff (*comes, főispán*) of Fehér County. Despite all this, only in 1716 did Bishop György Mártonffy actually take his seat.⁴⁰ The new prelate made great efforts to invite to Transylvania monastic orders that had already been highly successful in the field of Hungarian re-catholicisation, such as the Paulines and the 'slave-redeeming' Trinitarians, and also strongly supported the Jesuit, Conventual (Minorite) and Observant Franciscan

36 APF ASC, Vol. 85. Fol. 437r–438v, Fol. 587r–589v; APF LDSC, Vol. 104. Fol. 231v; APF SC FA, Vol. 6. Fol. 642r–643v.

37 APF ASC, Vol. 86. Fol. 75r–76v, Fol. 102r–103v; APF SOCG, Vol. 600. Fol. 535r; APF SOCG, Vol. 601. Fol. 550r–552v.+ Fol. 553v.

38 APF LDSC, Vol. 103. Fol. 231r–v; GYFL I.1a, (1713.), No. 2., Pag. 15; GYFL I/4, Vol. 3. Fol. 6r; MNL OL A 57 LR, Vol. 28., No. 307., Pag. 591; ELTE EKK CH, Tom. 26. Pag. 265–274; PL AEV ARER, No. 1840/1., PL AEV SPK, No. 477.; EFGYL DFK HD, Pag. 9–10.

39 APF ASC, Vol. 85. Fol. 263r–v; APF SOCG, Vol. 599. Fol. 196r.+ Fol. 197v.

40 APF ASC, Vol. 86. Fol. 58r–59r.

fathers in the territory of his diocese.⁴¹ In addition, the bishop even worked to establish a seminary in the Roman Catholic Diocese of Transylvania.⁴²

As noted at the beginning of this study, for Bishop Mártonffy the Armenians in Transylvania proved to be a challenge. For many decades, scholars thought that in the spring of 1718 Bishop Mártonffy made a church-visit (*canonica visitatio*) to the Armenians of Transylvania, and concluded that they were true and good Catholics. Moreover, it was also assumed that he ordained a young Armenian seminarian as a priest in Armenopolis.⁴³ However, documents preserved in the historical archives of the *Propaganda Fide* present this in a completely different way. The first major difference is that, according to our knowledge, in 1718 Mártonffy did not appear in Armenopolis in person, as contemporary sources are very silent about the visit. In August of the same year, however, three reports were prepared on the ecclesiastical customs of the Armenians in Transylvania, drafted by Lőrinc Pál Demjén (1673–1738) OFM, an Observant Franciscan, from the cloister of Călugăreni (Mikháza; present-day Romania), Zsigmond Kund OFM Conv., and Dániel Veres OFM Conv., Conventual (Minorite) Franciscan Fathers from Cluj-Napoca (Kolozsvár; present-day Romania). All three reports describe Transylvanian Armenians as errant and heretical Christians who might pose a threat to Catholicism in Transylvania.⁴⁴ At the same time, it is not at all clear from the documents on whose behalf the Conventual and Observant Franciscan Fathers wrote and sent their reports condemning the Armenians before the cardinals of the *Propaganda Fide*. However, it can be assumed that the bishop himself was behind this intention. In a few months, Bishop Mártonffy sent a document to the *Propaganda Fide*, dated 1 June 1719, according to which, despite their church-union, the Armenians in Transylvania continued to worship heretical customs. His descriptions are very much in line with the 1718 reports of the Conventual and Observant Franciscan Fathers.⁴⁵

Bishop Mártonffy called Lazar Budachowicz (1668–1721), parish priest of Armenopolis, and his deputy, Michál Minas Theodorowicz (1686–1764) trouble-makers, under whose leadership the Armenians in Transylvania once again returned to their ancestors' errant faith and cancelled the 1689 church-union. Moreover,

41 APF ASC, Vol. 86. Fol. 75r–76r., Fol. 102v–103r., Fol. 254r–v.

42 APF ASC, Vol. 85. Fol. 437r–438r., Fol. 587v–589r; APF SOCG, Vol. 600. Fol. 535r–536v; APF SOCG, Vol. 603. Fol. 418r–419v., Fol. 453r–v; Veszely, *Erdélyi egyháztörténelmi adatok* op. cit. 57–74; Galla, *Pálos missziók Magyarországon*, 395–96, 416–17.

43 Galla, *Ferences misszionáriusok*, 274; Bernád and Kovács, eds., *A Szamosújvári Örmény Katolikus Gyűjtőlevéltár*, 61, 63, 153, 156, 249, 252.

44 APF SOCG, Vol. 617. Fol. 325r.+ Fol. 328v.+ Fol. 329v.

45 APF ASC, Vol. 89/I. Fol. 79r–81v., Fol. 156r–158v; APF SC FA, Vol. 7. Fol. 39r; APF Indice, Vol. 6., No. 156: 36. (Unnumbered folio.)

according to the bishop, both priests practised in secret the old heretical faith of Armenians and incited the Armenian community in Transylvania to definitively renounce the church-union concluded in 1689.⁴⁶

Bishop Mártonffy also attached to the abovementioned letter a document consisting of twelve points, entitled *Errores et abusus inter Armenos Transylvaniae vigentes*, in which he gave a detailed description in Latin of how and where the Armenians in Transylvania had distanced themselves from the Roman Catholic faith. In addition, he listed the secular and ecclesiastical Armenians who expressed their support for Budachowicz and Theodorowicz, calling them the ‘instigators.’⁴⁷

In this document, Bishop Mártonffy accused the Armenians in Transylvania of Monophysite heresy.⁴⁸ He believed that in matters of faith they held the views of the leading theologians of Monophysitism (such as Eutyches of Alexandria or Severus of Antioch), whom the Church of Rome had declared heretics already in the fifth and sixth centuries. Another objection on the part of the bishop was that, based on their old and fallacious church traditions, Armenians celebrated Christmas on 6 January, that is on Epiphany Day, rather than on 25 December, kept the false chanting of the Trisagion Hymn (*Trisagium*) during liturgies at Easter, and incorrectly performed the Eucharist at Holy Masses, which the bishop considered a return to heretical customs.⁴⁹

The twelve-point document drafted by Bishop Mártonffy is very similar to the Latin document *Errores Ecclesiae Armenae* that the Jesuit fathers of Transylvania compiled in 1697, which was drafted with the help of Bishop Oxendio in connection with the Armenian church-strife in Bistrița (Beszterce, Bistritz; present-day Romania).⁵⁰ Moreover, the first six points of Bishop Mártonffy’s document correspond almost verbatim to the six-point document of 1697.⁵¹ Thus, it is likely that in the case of the Armenians in Transylvania, Bishop Mártonffy turned to an older document, trying to use it against the Armenian community in Transylvania.⁵²

In any case, Lazar Budachowicz, whom the Roman Catholic bishop of Transylvania proclaimed chief trouble-maker, as well as his assistants were under suspicion, partly because Budachowicz had previously confronted Bishop Oxendio Virziresco in connection with the ecclesiastical strife that broke out in Bistrița

46 APF SOCG, Vol. 617. Fol. 385r.

47 Vanyó, *Püspöki jelentések*, 115–16; Kovács and Kovács, eds., *Erdélyi római katolikus egyházlátogatási jegyzőkönyvek*, 104–6.

48 APF SC FA, Vol. 7. Fol. 40r–41r.

49 APF SC FA, Vol. 7. Fol. 42r; GYFL I/4, Vol. 3. Fol. 115v–116v.

50 ELTE EKK CH, Tom. 24. Pag. 289–92; ELTE EKK CK A, Tom. 11. Pag. 362–65.

51 Nilles, ed., *Symbolae*, 916–18.

52 APF SC FA, Vol. 5. Fol. 665r–v.

in 1697. Bishop Mártonffy was well-informed of this, since his right hand, John Antalffy, as episcopal vicar and later Grand Provost of the Chapter Office in Alba Iulia (Gyulafehérvár; today Romania), personally participated in the investigation of the Armenian Church strife in Bistrița.⁵³

As noted above, based on his theological studies at the Urban College in Rome, Bishop Oxendio Virziresco represented an extreme Latinist position. In his view, converted Armenians were to practise their faith according to the Latin rite in every aspect. In contrast, his immediate aides, including Lazar Budachowicz, took a completely different view. They studied at the Lviv Armenian–Ruthenian College, which the Theatine father Clemente Galano CR founded in 1664, where they were taught and practised the Armenian Uniate rite adapted to Latin. The Theatine fathers who had considerable missionary experience in Armenia realised that the only way to permanently retain Armenians in their Uniate faith was to observe and adapt several old Armenian church-customs to Roman Catholic liturgical practice. Budachowicz came to Transylvania in 1690 from this type of ecclesiastical and cultural environment and maintained this position during the church-strife of 1697, which put him into conflict with Bishop Oxendio Virziresco, who accused him of heresy and apostasy. For this reason, the bishop repeatedly summoned the Armenian Uniate priest to a commission of inquiry to prove the charge of heresy. However, his attempt failed because a committee of the *Propaganda Fide*, set up specifically for this purpose and consisting mainly of Jesuits in Transylvania, acquitted the priest of the accusations.⁵⁴

Budachowicz and Theodorowicz immediately rejected Bishop Mártonffy's accusation. In their reply, they refuted the bishop's words point by point, stating that in their opinion the Uniate Armenians in Transylvania had always been loyal to the Church of Rome and had never worshipped any heretical customs since they had officially entered into church-union with Rome in 1689. They declared that the entire Armenian community in Transylvania was outraged by these accusations. They added that Bishop Mártonffy had based his claims on false information. For legal redress, they therefore appealed to the *Propaganda Fide*.⁵⁵

As a result, the *Propaganda Fide* sent to Transylvania the Uniate Xač'atur A'rak'elian of Erzurum (*Don Accador, Cacciatur Araciel*) (1666–1740), an Armenian Catholic apostolic visitor born in the motherland, a learned priest and former alumnus of Urban College. Sent to investigate the matter, the visitor was well-acquainted with the problem of the Armenian Uniates; he was also aware of the

53 APF SOCG, Vol. 532. Fol. 472r–v; APF FUT, Vol. 3. Fol. 48v; Molnár, *Lehetetlen küldetés?*, 227, 230–31, 233, 236, 242, 244.

54 APF LDSC, Vol. 80. Fol. 155r–v; APF SC FA, Vol. 4. Fol. 527r–v; APF SC FMPR, Vol. 2. Fol. 386r–v.+ Fol. 388v; AAV ANVI, Vol. 196. Fol. 192r–v.

55 GYFL I/4, Vol. 3. Fol. 115r.

re-Catholicization situation in Hungary and Transylvania, since from the beginning of the eighteenth century he had been a missionary in Belgrade, Constantinople, and Timișoara (Temesvár; today Romania).⁵⁶ After lengthy investigations, Xaç'atur A'rak'elean concluded that Bishop Mártonffy's accusations against the Armenians in Transylvania were unfounded.⁵⁷

Therefore, Titular Archbishop of Larissa and Secretary General of the *Propaganda Fide* Pier Luigi Caraffa (1677–1755), Apostolic Nuncio to Vienna Girolamo Grimaldi (1674–1733), and Prefect of the *Propaganda Fide* Cardinal Giuseppe Sacripante (1645–1727) appealed to the Office of the Holy Inquisition, or in other words, to the Supreme Congregation of the Holy Office (*Suprema Sacra Congregazione del Sant'Uffizio*, or the Holy Office in short), to review Bishop Mártonffy's formulations for the sake of a satisfactory investigation. They also asked this office whether Bishop Mártonffy had the right to interfere in the ecclesiastical affairs of the Armenians in Transylvania.⁵⁸

In 1720, the Holy Office prepared a lengthy report in Latin about the matter. It stated that, based upon the canons of the Council of Lateran in 1219, the Roman Catholic bishop of Transylvania had the authority and duty to intervene in the affairs of Eastern-rite Christians living in his diocese also because of his ecclesiastical jurisdiction, especially when there were anomalies in their liturgy and rite diametrically opposed to the practice of the Roman Catholic Church. It seems that this document was also sent to Transylvania via the Apostolic Nunciature in Vienna.⁵⁹ At the same time, the document made no mention at all of the fact that, after 1690, ecclesiastical jurisdiction for the Armenians in Transylvania had not been exercised by the Roman Catholic bishop of Transylvania, but directly by the Apostolic Holy See. This system was essentially ignored by Bishop Mártonffy and his immediate associates. However, the cardinals of the *Propaganda Fide* were certainly aware of this, as well as of the content of the report of the Holy Office. They did not substantially address the matter at their official meeting. Nor did they condemn Bishop Mártonffy, despite his attempts to harass Catholic Christians outside his ecclesiastical jurisdiction.⁶⁰

In any case, in 1720 Xaç'atur A'rak'elean continued his visitation to Transylvania and in the reports he kept sending to the *Propaganda Fide* he described the accusations against the Armenians as baseless and absurd. In his letters, he also stated

56 APF SOCG, Vol. 623. Fol. 293r; APF SC FA, Vol. 5. Fol. 664r., Fol. 674r; APF SC FRC, Vol. 4. Fol. 193r–199r; APF CU, Vol. 1. Fol. 269r; APF Giuramento, Vol. 8/1. Pag. 125; APF Indice, Vol. 6. No. 100:3. (Unnumbered folio.)

57 APF ASC, Vol. 89/I. Fol. 79r–81r; APF SOCG, Vol. 617. Fol. 319r–v.

58 APF LDSC, Vol. 108. Fol. 45v–46v., Fol. 94r–95v.

59 ACDF St. St., UV 59., No. 18.

60 APF SOCG, Vol. 512. Fol. 180r–v; APF SC FA, Vol. 4. Fol. 140r–v.

that Armenians had never championed Monophysitism, which professed the divine nature of Jesus Christ. Furthermore, he added that the key figures of the Monophysite theology were anathemised by the Armenians at their national councils held in the Middle Ages.⁶¹ The latter point was specifically mentioned in previous attempts of church-union with Rome.⁶² It is not surprising that this approach caused Xač'atur A'rak'elean to run into conflict with the Roman Catholic bishop of Transylvania. He attacked Bishop Mártonffy at the Apostolic Holy See for making false accusations against Armenians. He claimed that they had been good Catholics for at least two decades, and, like Bishop Oxendio Virziresco, Bishop Mártonffy wanted to impose the Latin rite on the Armenian community in Transylvania. The bishop retorted that the Armenian visitor supported Armenians of heretical faith and Xač'atur A'rak'elean rebelled the whole Armenian community in Transylvania against him.⁶³ Xač'atur A'rak'elean, however, continued to stand up for the Armenians in Transylvania in reports sent to the *Propaganda Fide* between 1720 and 1721. He wrote that Bishop Mártonffy continued to interfere in the affairs of the Uniate Church, although he had no authority. At the same time, Xač'atur A'rak'elean repeatedly pointed out that his office had not been filled since the death of Bishop Oxendio Virziresco, and he repeatedly suggested to the *Propaganda Fide* that it should urgently appoint and consecrate a Titular Bishop of Armenian origin and the Uniate faith to head the Armenians, otherwise their church would disappear in Transylvania.⁶⁴

However, Xač'atur A'rak'elean considered Bishop Mártonffy unsuitable for this task. In his opinion, the possible appointment of an Armenian titular bishop would not interfere with the jurisdiction of the Roman Catholic bishop of Transylvania because he would continue to be under the supervision of the Apostolic Holy See rather than the Roman Catholic Episcopacy of Transylvania.⁶⁵ He also drew the attention of the cardinals of the *Propaganda Fide* to the fact that the institution regularly sent apostolic visitors to the Armenians in Transylvania to monitor and assist the Armenian Catholics in the correct exercise of their faith.⁶⁶

At the same time, Bishop Mártonffy was shocked by the reaction of the Jesuits from Cluj-Napoca. The Jesuit fathers supported the Armenian (apostolic) visitor and the Armenian Uniate community in this debate. Their stance was surprising because they had previously supported the Latinisation church-policy of the late Bishop Oxendio Virziresco in Transylvania. However, by the year 1719, their position had significantly

61 Krikorian, *Calcedonia*, 114–137.

62 APF ASC, Vol. 89/II. Fol. 345r–346v; APF SOCG, Vol. 623. Fol. 273r–277v.

63 APF SOCG, Vol. 623. Fol. 278r; GYFL I/4, Vol. 3. Fol. 116v–117r.

64 APF SC FA, Vol. 7. Fol. 80r–81v; GYFL I/4, Vol. 3. Fol. 119v–121r.

65 APF SOCG, Vol. 623. Fol. 278r–279r; APF SC FA, Vol. 7. Fol. 97r–v.

66 APF SOCG, Vol. 623. Fol. 283r–284v.

changed. Like (and presumably under the influence of) the Theatine fathers who worked and taught in the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth, they advocated for the preservation of the Armenian Uniate faith. Furthermore, the Jesuits believed that exaggerated Latinisation, baseless accusations, and alarms of heresy would do much more harm to the Roman Catholic Church. In other words, they thought that this kind of church-policy would only lead to the Armenian faithful renouncing the church-union and abandoning the Uniate faith, while, in contrast, it was in the interest of the Roman Catholic Church to keep them firmly in the bosom of its own church. Thus, the Armenian Uniate rite in Transylvania should be preserved and adapted to the Roman Catholic rite, as was done in the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth.⁶⁷

In any case, Bishop Mártonffy's case with the Armenians was not resolved at all because he died in the autumn of 1721.⁶⁸ Soon after, Lazar Budachowicz, the man he had levied accusations against, also passed away. Subsequently, the *Propaganda Fide* considered this case closed. Although no substantive decision was made concerning Bishop Mártonffy's question, the cardinals of the *Propaganda Fide* meeting in Rome agreed that they would regularly send apostolic visitors to the Armenians in Transylvania.⁶⁹

Finally, we should clarify György Mártonffy's intentions in relation to the Armenians in Transylvania during his episcopal tenure. Bishop Mártonffy's attitude towards the issue of the Uniate churches in Transylvania is understandable. During his relatively short tenure as high priest, he worked to restore the authority of Catholicism in Transylvania, as it had been damaged during the previous century. Like many other prelates in Hungary in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, he did not always see the Uniate churches as partners, but rather as rivals. In Transylvania, Bishop Mártonffy constantly strove for a centralised diocese. Neither Uniate Romanians nor Uniate Armenians fitted into this picture. Soon after coming to Transylvania, he turned against the Armenians because, unlike the Romanians, the Armenians in Transylvania did not have a church-leader at the time. After Bishop Oxendio Virziresco's death, neither the Apostolic Holy See nor representatives of the Armenian community were able to come to an agreement on succession. Bishop Mártonffy was also aware that during Prince Ferenc Rákóczi II's War of Independence the Armenian community had significantly weakened in numbers. Therefore, he tried to extend his influence to this community as soon as possible, which inevitably entailed tensions and conflicts.⁷⁰

67 APF LDSC, Vol. 109. Fol. 82v–83v., Fol. 191r; APF SC FA, Vol. 8. Fol. 80r., Fol. 97r.

68 GYFL I.1a., (1721), No. 9., Pag. 22.

69 APF ASC, Vol. 92. Fol. 58r–65v; APF SOCG, Vol. 633. Fol. 314r–315r; APF LDSC, Vol. 113. Fol. 707r; APF SC FA, Vol. 7. Fol. 467r.

70 APF ASC, Vol. 85. Fol. 582r–v; APF SOCG, Vol. 601. Fol. 550r–v; APF LDSC, Vol. 104. Fol. 231v; APF SC FA, Vol. 7. Fol. 588r.

In addition, Bishop Mártonffy inherited the problem of the late Bishop Oxendio Virziresco that the Armenian community continued to stubbornly adhere to its own ecclesiastical customs. It added to the tense relations that, during Mártonffy's episcopacy, most Armenian priests in Transylvania working in the 'Lord's vineyard' had completed their theological studies at the Armenian College in Lviv, where, besides the Latin rite, great emphasis was placed on learning the Armenian Uniate (Catholic) rite adapted to Latin. Thus, the Armenian priests who studied there were educated and socialised in a completely different ecclesiastical culture, which in turn triggered many new conflicts with representatives of the Roman Catholic Church in Transylvania. It is therefore not surprising that, due to differences in rites, Catholic ecclesiastical representatives regarded Armenian Uniates as second-class Catholics and saw their customs as hotbeds of heresy.

Bishop Mártonffy's church-policy toward the Armenians has yet another reading. He clearly wanted to extend ecclesiastical jurisdiction over the Armenians and Romanians in Transylvania. His idea was that Transylvania should have only one diocese, a Roman Catholic bishopric. In essence, the 1720 report of the Holy Office confirmed the bishop's intention. The vacant Armenian Uniate bishopric office was unblest, and its *ex-lex* condition turned out to be useful for him. Moreover, the example of the late Bishop Oxendio Virziresco was of great help in this. For the latter, the Apostolic Holy See's authorities had left the spiritual care of the Latin-rite Catholics in Transylvania after his appointment as bishop in 1690, partly because of the plight of Transylvanian Catholics at the time.⁷¹ This is why he ordained Roman Catholic priests and consecrated churches, altars, and church-bells throughout Transylvania.⁷² This was a special pretext for Bishop Mártonffy to intervene in the affairs of the Armenian Uniate Church in Transylvania and thus gain full ecclesiastical influence over the Armenians.⁷³ Although the *Propaganda Fide* expressed its disapproval that Bishop Mártonffy was exceeding his own ecclesiastical jurisdiction—presumably under pressure from the Hungarian Catholic Church—it did not take any substantive steps to condemn Bishop Mártonffy at the request of the Armenians in Transylvania. In this way, he also considered the Armenian Uniate Church in Transylvania to be under his ecclesiastical jurisdiction. That is why he unjustly accused the Armenians of heresy and schismatism and wanted to use this as a tool against them. Important historical causes and circumstances arising from differences in rites were deliberately ignored.⁷⁴

71 APF ASC, Vol. 83. Fol. 7r–8v.

72 APF ASC, Vol. 152. Fol. 368r; APF SOCG, Vol. 861. Fol. 92r; EFGYL MFK HD, No. 26., Pag. 15.

73 Nilles, ed., *Symbolae*, 919–22.

74 APF SC FA, Vol. 4. Fol. 219r.

At the same time, it is unfortunate to accuse Bishop Mártonffy of being consciously anti-Armenian. From his point of view, he intended to act as correctly as possible for his own age. Weakened after Ferenc Rákóczi II's War of Independence, the Armenian community in Transylvania played into his hands. He could not complete his policy towards the Armenians because he died in 1721, and this task fell to his successors.

Admittedly, Bishop Mártonffy had trouble not only with Armenians, but also with Uniate (Byzantine/Greek Catholic) Romanians in Transylvania, who had united with Rome between 1697–1701 in the city of Alba Iulia. Their bishop, Atanasie (Athanasius, Atanáz) Anghel (ca. 1650–1713), who was active in creating the church-union of Alba Iulia, passed away in 1713 with a battered authority, impoverished and abandoned after Ferenc Rákóczi II's War of Independence.⁷⁵ After Bishop Atanasie Anghel's death, Bishop Mártonffy (like in the case of the Armenians in Transylvania) intended to intervene in the ecclesiastical affairs of the Uniate Romanians as well.⁷⁶ Nevertheless, the Uniate Romanians in Transylvania managed to get the Apostolic Holy See authorities to appoint their former vicar, Ioan Giurgiu Patachi (János Pataki Nemes) OSBM (1680–1727) as their Titular Bishop in place of the late Bishop Atanasie Anghel.⁷⁷ What is more, Ioan Giurgiu Patachi was already elected bishop by the Uniate Romanian clergy at the Council of Sibiu (Nagyszeben, Hermannstadt; today Romania) in 1715. Although Bishop Mártonffy expressed his vehement protest in his letters sent to the *Propaganda Fide*, the Apostolic Holy See completely ignored it. Bishop Mártonffy's situation was further worsened by the fact that Bishop Patachi's election and appointment was supported by the Viennese Court.⁷⁸

Nevertheless, the new Romanian Uniate bishop was immediately faced with major problems in three areas: first, the Orthodox-believers gaining new strength in Transylvania; second, the problem of the ecclesiastical affiliation of the Uniate Ruthenians in Bihor and Maramureş Counties (Bihar and Máramaros; both in today Romania).⁷⁹ In connection with the latter, the late Bishop Athanasie had taken on a sharp conflict with Joseph John De Camillis (Giovanni Giuseppe De Camillis) (1641–1706), the Byzantine/Greek Catholic bishop of Mukačiv (Munkács,

75 APF ASC, Vol. 83. Fol. 679r–680v; APF SOCG, Vol. 590. Fol. 358r–360v.+ Fol. 361v; APF LDSC, Vol. 100. Fol. 375r–v; APF SC FUT, Vol. 3. Fol. 97r–98v; ELTE EKK CH, Tom. 24. Pag. 219.

76 APF SOCG, Vol. 577. Fol. 45r–v.+ Fol. 47v; APF LDSC, Vol. 100. Fol. 374r–v.

77 APF SOCG, Vol. 609. Fol. 59v.

78 APF ASC, Vol. 87. Fol. 141r–143v; APF LDSC, Vol. 99. Fol. 107v; ELTE EKK CK B, Tom. 20. Pag. 203–05.

79 APF SOCG, Vol. 583. Fol. 258r–259v.+ Fol. 260v; APF SC FUT, Vol. 4. Fol. 95r–v; EFL AV, Nr. 367. Fol. 15r; EFL AV, Nr. 124/a. (Unnumbered folio.); GYEL PL CAK, Tom. 4. Pag. 380–81.

Mukačevo; today Ukraine) of the Ruthenians, and his successor György Byzánczy (1657–1733), striving to extend his ecclesiastical jurisdiction over the Ruthenians of Bihar and Maramureş.⁸⁰

The third problem, not surprisingly for Bishop Patachi, was Bishop Mártonffy himself. The situation of Bishop Patachi was aggravated by the action of the Roman Catholic bishop of Transylvania in 1716.⁸¹ Like with the Armenians in Transylvania, Bishop Mártonffy wanted to extend his ecclesiastical jurisdiction over the Romanians of Transylvania who were of the Uniate faith by referring to the canons of the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215. Therefore, he refused to recognise Patachi as bishop, regarding him as a mere vicar subordinate to him in all ecclesiastical matters.⁸²

The Uniate Romanians in Transylvania, on the other hand, put up more effective resistance than the Armenians. After five years of fierce and personal disputes, they persuaded the Apostolic Holy See and the Viennese Court to establish an independent diocese.⁸³ Surprisingly, this time Rome acted quickly. Ignoring Bishop Mártonffy's objections, Pope Innocent XIII (1721–1724) founded a new diocese for the Transylvanian Uniate Romanians with the seat of Făgăraş (Fogaras, today Romania) on 3 February 1721 with the bull entitled as *Ratione congruit*. The first diocesan bishop was the aforementioned Ioan Ghurghiu Patachi. Thus, Mártonffy's concept that in Transylvania there could only be one bishop, one bishopric, and one diocese loyal to Rome essentially failed.⁸⁴

It is also worth noting that this confessional situation bore some resemblance to the jurisdictional dispute between the Uniate Bishopric of Mukačiv and the Roman Catholic Diocese of Eger. The difference was that the conflict lasted for several decades, while in the case of the Romanians it lasted for only a few years. Up to the actual establishment of the Uniate Diocese of Mukačiv in 1771 and the appointment of Diocesan Bishop János Bradács (1732–1772), the Bishopric of Eger did everything in its remit to extend its jurisdiction to the Uniate Ruthenian faithful, and always questioned the legitimacy of the Uniate bishopric of Mukačiv.⁸⁵

The merit and role of Bishop György Mártonffy in the renewal of Catholicism in Transylvania is unquestionable. However, in the light of recent sources, the view

80 Mihalik, *A kaméleonos udvar*, 181–82; Végshő, "...mint igaz egyházi ember," 121; Baán, ed., *Giovanni Giuseppe De Camillis*, 297–301, 305–06.

81 APF ASC, Vol. 86. Fol. 231r–234r; APF SOCG, Vol. 569. Fol. 582r–v; GYFL I.1a, (1718), Nr. 9. Pag. 21.

82 APF ASC, Vol. 90. Fol. 677r–679v; APF SOCG, Vol. 618. Fol. 398r–399v; APF LDSC, Vol. 108. Fol. 353v; Miron, *Biserica greco-catolică*, 65–72.

83 APF SOCG, Vol. 618. Fol. 396r; APF SOCG, Vol. 627. Fol. 287r–v.

84 APF CP, Vol. 100. Fol. 94r–980v; ELTE EKK CK B, Tom. 20. Pag. 206–12.

85 Végshő, "...mint igazi egyházi ember", 140–143.

that Bishop Mártonffy had a harmonious and, at the same time, conflict-free relationship with the Armenians in Transylvania does not seem to correspond to the reality. Recent research has revealed that the relationship between the Armenians in Transylvania and Bishop Mártonffy was very tense due to the assessment of the Uniate church customs. Furthermore, the bishop's ecclesiastical policy laid the foundations for the tense relations between the bishopric and the Armenian Catholic Church throughout eighteenth-century Transylvania. The long-held traditional view has turned out to be a myth that scholarship should definitively discard.

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