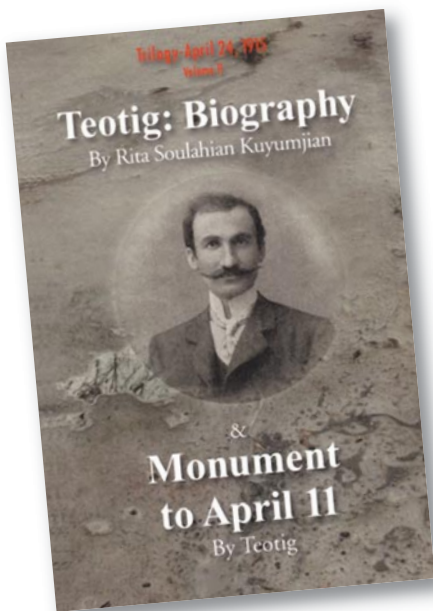


The name Teotig meant little to the English reader until the recent publication of the volume II of Rita Soulahian Kuyumdjian's *Trilogy—April 24, 1915*, which includes Teotig's biography and Soulahian Kuyumdjian's translation of *Monument to April 11*, Teotig's compilation of biographies of intellectuals who were victims of the Genocide.

Himself a survivor, Teotig (Teotoros Lapjinjian, 1873–1928) was a prolific editor, author, and publisher. A native of Scutari (Constantinople), he started his literary career in the late 1890's. His name has become synonymous with his almanac, *Amenun Daretsuytse* ("Everyone's Almanac"; 1907–29), an encyclopedic undertaking of well over 10,000 pages, which today stands as an inexhaustible reference for anyone interested in Armenian life in the first quarter of the 20th century.



Teotig was assisted in his enterprise by his British-educated wife, Arshaguhi Teotig (1875–1921)—herself a writer and educator—until her untimely death. He fled from Constantinople in 1922 on the eve of its occupation by the army of Mustafa Kemal. He lived a wandering life for the next six years, in Corfu, Nicosia, and Paris, with the last yearbooks being printed in Venice, Vienna, and Paris. He passed away in May

1928 in Paris, when the 18th volume of his yearbooks (his “paper children,” as he called them) was in press. His son Vahakn Teotig died in the United States sometime in the 1960's.

The yearbook contains a huge array of diverse material, ranging from poetry and

The rich contents of the book has stood the test of the time as the product of a single-handed effort by an indefatigable amateur and connoisseur of Armenian books (he called himself *madenamol*, “bibliomaniac”) that paved the ground for the next generation of trained scholars and bibliographers.

The First Historian of Armenian Printing

BY DR. VARTAN MATIOSSIAN

fiction to scholarship and yearly chronicles and obituaries. It has become a classic, both because of its well-crafted editions, profusely illustrated, and its extensive contents, which included, in addition to Teotig's enormous output, contributions by many writers and scholars of the time—from poets Taniel Varoujan and Vahan Tekeyan to women writers Zabel Essayan and Shushanik Kurghinian, to historians Arshag Alboyadjian and Garabed Basmadjian.

Among Teotig's many published and unpublished works—one of them, *Koghkoto hay hokevoraganutian* (“The Golgotha of the Armenian Clergy”), was painstakingly edited by Ara Kalaydjian, recently deceased, and first published in 1985 by St. Vartan Press in New York—his lavish *Dib u darr* (“Type and Letter”), published in 1912 by V. and H. Nersessian Press in Constantinople on the 400th anniversary of Armenian printing, stands out. It is an outline of the history of Armenian printing since the beginnings, and until his time. After an introduction of the history of printing since Gutenberg's time, Teotig also surveyed, for the first time, Armenian books published all around the world, from Turkey (and Western Armenia) and Russia (and Eastern Armenia) to Asia, Europe, and the New World. He gleaned information from various reference sources, as well as his own library, which contained well over 4,000 volumes.

On the 500th anniversary of Armenian printing, we offer for the first time in English a translation of the brief chapter of the book devoted to Armenian printing in the United States (pp. 186–8), enriched with some footnotes (the title is ours). Despite its shortcomings, it is a pioneering and neglected source for the study of Armenian American culture, written at a time when the East Coast, particularly New York, was the hub of Armenian American life (a position that has been mostly ceded to the West Coast in the past four decades). It is a memory of a bygone time when printing in Armenian flourished in the area, before the period of major expansion between both World Wars. Today, a few generations later, some relics of that time (books, newspapers, and journals) have been painstakingly gathered, albeit not completely, in the main Armenian and non-Armenian research libraries of the area. Some may also turn up in church or club libraries, private collections, or even basements and attics.

This translation may also serve as a timely reminder. In the last decade, the name of Teotig experienced a rebirth among Armenian-language readers in the diaspora (despite their dwindling numbers) because of the enterprising spirit of publisher Matig Eblighatian from Aleppo (Syria), the owner of the Armenian bookstore-press “Cilicia.” The first 15 volumes

Armenian Printing in America (1857–1912)

BY TEOTIG

TRANSLATED AND EDITED BY DR. VARTAN MATIOSSIAN

New York

The first Armenian to set foot in this populous metropolis of the United States was a teenager called Khachadour Vosganian, who arrived in 1834 to pursue higher education. Back in Constantinople, he had published the newspaper *Ազգարար Բուզանդեան* (Aztarar Puzantian,¹ “Byzantine Monitor,” 1840). Following his steps, many Armenians immigrated to the New World to study in the universities.

The Protestant missions—just like they did in Calcutta, London, Malta, Smyrna, and Constantinople—established Armenian typography in the land discovered by Columbus to promote the Bible among Armenians too, particularly with publications in modern Armenian. In this way, half a century ago, Armenian-smelted letters entered New York, and the following two printing houses were established:

1. Bible Society (*Աստուածաբանչի Ընկերութիւն*): It printed *Ապաշխարացոյց* (Atlas of the Repentant) in 1857 (first printing, Smyrna, 1839); the Ancient and the New Testament altogether in 1859 (second printing in New York, 1867); the New Testament in 1862 (reprinted in 1864, 1866, and 1867); the Book of Psalms in 1864; and the Gospel of St. Mark in 1868 (in modern Armenian).
2. Book Society of America (*Ամերիգայի Տեսարակի Ընկերութիւն*): It published *Հաւաքուած վկայութեանց Ս. Գրոց* (Collection of Testimonies of the Holy Scriptures, first printed twice in Smyrna in 1849 and 1852) twice, in 1860 and 1879; *Քրիստոնէական վարդապետութիւն* (Christian Doctrine, 1862); *Քրիստոնէական եւ Քրիստինէին համբարարութիւնը* (The Journey of Christian and Christine, first printed in Smyrna, 1843);² *Առաջին դասագիրք մանկանց* (First Textbook for Children, 1869); *Աւետարանական Բարոզներ* (Evangelical Sermons); advices related to natural health; *Սիրայ յրատներ Տանկատանի Բրիտանեայ կնիկներուն համար* (Love Advice for Christian Women in Turkey), authored by teacher M. E. West, in fluent modern Armenian, a respectable book of morals, large fonts, 230 pages (1874); *Քրիստոնէական Բաղնախօսք* (Christian Teaching, 1877);³ and *Բանալի Ս Գիրքը բանալու կամ դիւրին դասեր* (Key to Open the Holy Bible or Easy Lessons, 1879; second printing, 1886).

The number of Armenian-Americans continued to grow year after year. Following, especially, the Armenian massacres of 1895–1896 in the Ottoman Empire, a big wave rushed to the New World to ensure their life, property, and honor. Naturally, that wandering mass included representatives of the various revolutionary parties that had already started elsewhere the task of Armenian liberation, and would have their organs in various cities in America.

Before the emigration of the 1890’s, Haigag Eginian opened a print shop in Jersey City and published the paper *Արեգակ* (Arekag, “Sun,” 1888), the first in Armenian-American journalism. In 1889, he published *Սուրբանդակ*



Teotig in 1905

of Teotig’s *Amenun taretsuytse* (up to the 1925 issue) have already been reprinted since 2007 in careful photographic editions that also include much-needed indexes, patiently prepared by another intellectual from Aleppo, Levon Sharoyan. The reprint is sponsored by the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation.

In 2006, Eblighatian had reprinted Teotig’s landmark *Dib u darr*, again with the sponsorship of the Gulbenkian Foundation. I have used this second photographic reprint for the translation, as a testament to the cultural renaissance that the Syrian-Armenian community experienced over the past two decades, in these critical days when both our brothers and sisters in Syria, former Syrian-Armenians scattered around the world, and any concerned Armenian anxiously follow the developments of a country practically engulfed in a civil war. □

(*Surhantag*, “Messenger”), which a year later changed its name and became *Ազատություն* (*Azadutiun*, “Liberty”), resuming publication, after a brief pause, until 1892. Eginian’s print shop also printed the newspapers *Հայֆ* (Haik, 1891–98, edited by M. S. Gabrielian), *Եփրատ* (Yeprad, 1897; edited by B. S. Shaghayan), and *Տիգրիս* (Tigris, 1897; edited by Eginian and Tovmas Charsafjian). There were several mimeographed bulletins in New York, including *Լուսնակ* (*Lusnak*, “Little Moon”); *Կայծակ* (*Gaidzag*, “Lightning”); *Շանթ* (*Shant*, “Bolt”); and *Հարված* (*Harvadz*, “Strike”). Among the books printed by Eginian were *Կսկծակ* (Sorrow), vol. 1; *Դալայիկ* (Tweeting, 1890); and *Լոյս եւ խուսար* (Light and Darkness, 1891). H. Kaftanian recorded *Մարգարակ* (Gymnasium), published the same year, in his handwritten catalogue.

“Araratian” Press: From 1891–92, Parnag Ayvadian published the newspaper *Արարատ* (Ararat), continuing the homonymous paper published by his father Mateos in Constantinople (1876), which had been shut down by Turkish authorities. The same press published *Բանալի անգլիերէն լեզուի* (Key to English Language) in 1892 and *Գրպանի բառարան* (Pocket Dictionary) in 1905.

M. S. Gabrielian: Ayvazian, Gabrielian, Arshaguni, and others were among the capable doctors well known in New York and famed as public figures.

Together with his professional career, Gabrielian fervently pursued Armenian literature. He published the following books from his own press: *Արուեստ աստեղծութեան* (Art of Public Speech, 1891); *Խրիմեան Հայրիկ* (Khrimian Hayrig, 1892); *Աստեղծութիւնք* (Speeches, 1893); *Ազգային քաղաքականութիւն հայոց* (Armenian National Policy, 1893); *Հայկական հոգեբանութիւն* (Armenian Psychology, 1894); *Քրիստոնեայ Հայաստան եւ քրիստոնեայ տէրութիւնք* (Christian Armenia and Christian States, 1897, in Armenian and English);⁴ and *Հայ ցեղը* (The Armenian Race, 1911). Beginning on Jan. 1, 1891, he was the editor of “Haik,” which ceased publication on April 1, 1898.

Elias Khalav and Son: They published *Պիտանի գիտելիքներ* (Useful Knowledge, 1897); *Ինքնուսուցիչ անգլիերէն լեզուի* (Self-Teacher of English Language; they also published the same in English); and *Մեր վարդագոյն տետրակը* (Our Pink Notebook, 1899), all of which were by Bedros R. Torosian, who published *Ո՞վ է Մկրտիչ Փորրուզալեանը* (Who is Mgrdich Portugalian?) in 1912. They also published *Առձեռն Ամերիկեան բառարան անգլիերէնէ հայերէն* (English-Armenian American Pocket Dictionary) in 1898.

“Gochnag” Press: The late Herbert M. Allen started the publication of the newspaper *Կոչնակ* (*Gochnag*, “Church Bell”) on Dec. 15, 1900. When he was called to the editorship of the newspaper *Աւետարներ* (Avedaper, “Good Messenger”) in Constantinople, Protestant Armenians continued publishing “Gochnag,” which in 1912 began linotype printing, the first novelty in the world of Armenian typography.⁵

“Yeritasard Hayastan” Press: The newspaper *Երիտասարդ Հայաստան* (Yeridasart Hayastan, “Young Armenia”) was started by Stepan Sabah-Gulian in 1903 as the organ of the Social Democratic Hnchakian Party.⁶ Its press also published *Գործաւոր դասակարգը* (The Working Class, 1905); *Հաստ* (Have, 1907), *Կարմիր օրեր* (Red Days, 1909); and *Սահմանադրութիւն Հայ Թաւաջիմական*

Ընկերութեան (Bylaws of the Armenian Progressive Society). The presses are currently in Providence, R.I.

The presses of the newspaper *Արաքս* (Arax, edited by Hovhannes Hagopian from October 1905 to March 1907) published *Ատրպատ Մարասպանտա Անդարձ* (Adarbad Mahraspandan: Andarz) in 1909.⁷

Arshag Der Mahdesian published the newspaper *Արծիւ* (*Ardziv*, “Eagle”) in July 1905, which continued until 1908, with an interruption in 1906. During the last year, the young editor, using his own resources, published the English monthly “Armenia”—illustrated and with very fine printing—in New York. The monthly, which previously (1904) was the organ of the U.S. Hnchakian Committee, featured translations from well-known Armenian writers.⁸

The Reorganized Hnchakian Party published the illustrated weekly *Արաքաձ* (Arakadz) in 1911, with lavish printing and rich contents. It only printed 20 issues, however, since the press was burned by a fire.

Boston

The presses of *Հայրենիք* (*Hairenik*, “Fatherland”), the organ of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation (ARF), were founded in Boston. The *Hairenik* was first published on May 1, 1899 in New York by Mr. Charshafjian, who afterwards transferred it to the Hnchakians and finally to the ARF. The presses of the *Hairenik* have published the following books, among many: *Անդրոնիկէ* (Andronike); *Արեւոլոյս* (Dawn); *Մօսունի եւ Զօրի արշաւանները* (The Campaigns of Mosun and Zor); *Յեղափոխական վիպակներ* (Revolutionary Novellas); *Սահմանադրական կառավարութիւններ* (Constitutional Governments); *Yergaran* (Song Book); *Ռուսական Սօցիալ-Յեղափոխականների ծրագիրը* (Program of the Russian Socialist Revolutionaries); *Միութեան խնդիրը* (The Problem of Unity); *Սօցիալիզմ* (Socialism); *Իմ եղբայր գիւղացիին* (To My Peasant Brother); *Երկրագործութիւնը որպէս ուղիղ հասնապարհ* (Agriculture as the Right Way, second printing); *Քրիստոսի սօցիալական ուսմունքը* (The Social Teachings of Christ); *Կրեմլըբիլ* (Craingeville);⁹ *Զայրոյթի օրը* (Day of Fury); *Իզմիրլեան ախարալայրին սէջ* (Izmirlian in Exile); *Երազս* (My Dream); *Դէպի երկիր* (Towards the Country, by E. Agnuni); *Այդպէս էր* (It Was Like That); *Կանոնադրութիւն Վանի ուսումնասիրաց ընկերութեան* (Bylaws of the Philomathic Society of Van); *Շանթեր* (Lightnings); and *Օրէնքի եւ ընկերութեան զոհերէն* (Among the Victims of Law and Society).

Twenty issues of *Զայն Հայրենեաց* (*Tsayn Hayreneats*, “Voice of the Fatherland”) were published by [Kurken] Chiftjian in New York.¹⁰ *Tsayn Hayreneats* first moved to Worcester, Mass., and then to Boston. This newspaper, the organ of the Hnchakian U.S. Committee, was published until 1906. After the proclamation of the Ottoman Constitution of 1908, Levon Larents edited it for about two years in Constantinople. In America, its presses published *Զնտանները* (The Dungeons, 1904); *Գործնական կեանքը* (The Practical Life, 1905); and *Լուծին տակ* (Beneath the Yoke, 1906).

Ազգ (*Azk*, “Nation,” 1907) is the follow-up to *Tsayn Hayreneats*. Its editor was Suren Bartevian. After the fracture of the Reorganized Hnchakians, *Azk* became the organ of the new Democratic

Constitutional party.¹¹ The presses of Azk published *Փտուրեանի օճախը* (The Hearth of Corruption, 1908); *Հայրուկիին աղօթքը* (The Prayer of the Freedom Fighter); *Իննսուներեք* (Ninety-Three, 1910); and *Մեր բողոքներն ու Դաճնակցութեան ուժը աննոց հանդէպ* (Our Protests and the Power of the [Armenian Revolutionary] Federation Against Them, 1911).

The newspaper *Լոյս* (Luys, “Light”) was published by [Mikayel] Minasian from 1901–06). Its distribution in Turkey was not forbidden during the old regime because of its educational and agricultural contents.

The “Pilibosian and Dikranian” Press published *Աստղիկ* (Asdghig) in 1904 and also *Պատկեր հայ յեղափոխութեան* (Image of the Armenian Revolution).

“Atlantian” Press published the following books between 1905 and 1909: *Հայկական եզրաժամը եւ վերածնութիւն* (The Armenian Crisis and Renaissance); *Պատանեկան յոյզեր* (Youth Emotions); and *Կրթական սկզբունքներ եւ իտէալներ* (Educational Principles and Ideals).

I. A. Yeran (Yeran Press) published in recent years *Բառարան անգլիերէնէ հայերէն* (Armenian-English Dictionary); *Բառարան անգլիերէնէ հայերէն* (English-Armenian Dictionary); *Պատկերազարդ գրուցատարութիւն հայերէնէ անգլիերէն* (Armenian-English Illustrated Phrase Book); *Գործնական առողջաբանութիւն* (Practical Health); *Սեռային առողջաբանութիւն* (Sexual Health); and *Ժողովրդային երգարան* (Popular Song Book).

“Guilligua” Press belongs to Bishop Mushegh Seropian and has published *Ամերիկահայ տարեցոյց* (Armenian-American Yearbook) and *Բանախօսութիւններ* (Speeches, 1912).

Other cities

The following newspapers have been published in Fresno: *Քաղաքացի* (*Kaghakatsi*, “Citizen,” 1902, edited by H. Eginian) and *Ասպարէզ* (*Asbarez*, “Arena,” published for the last five years and edited by S. G. Seklemian).¹² *Պահակ* (*Bahag*, “Guard”) has been published since 1912 in Providence by the Reorganized Hinchakian Party. This newspaper was the first published in Boston since January 1911, successively edited by Hrach Yervant, Yervant Mesaiyan, and Dr. Arshag Der Margosian.¹³

Many of the American presses did not have printing machines, and thus various Armenian books and newspapers were printed by the foreign presses. □

Translator’s Notes

1. Given the nature of the article, the transliteration of names is based on Western Armenian phonetic values.
2. This is the Armenian translation of John Bunyan’s *The Pilgrim’s Progress*.
3. This book was published in Turkish with Armenian characters.
4. The English version is probably included in Rev. A. W. Williams’ *Bleeding Armenia: Its History and Horrors under the Curse of Islam* (Chicago: Publishers Union, 1896).
5. “*Gochnag*” was published in New York until 1968.
6. “*Yeridasart Hayastan*” was published until the late 1990’s (in New Jersey, in its last years).
7. This is the translation of the wisdom sayings (*andarz*) of a 4th-century Zoroastrian priest, made by a noted Armenian Iranist, Harutiun Tiryakian.
8. “*Armenia*” was continued by “*New Armenia*” and published until 1929.
9. This is the translation of *L’affaire Crainquebille*, by French novelist Anatole France.
10. The first issue of “*Tzayn Haireniats*” appeared in 1899.
11. The Armenian Democratic Constitutional Party was founded in 1908 in Constantinople and lasted until its merging with the Armenian Democratic Liberal Party in 1921.
12. “*Asbarez*” was founded in 1908.
13. “*Azk*” and “*Bahag*” became forerunners to “*Baikar*,” the organ of the Armenian Democratic Liberal Party since 1922.

Cyrillic fonts, and in 1818 he had his masterpiece, the first Serbian dictionary, published there. Karadzic’s dictionary was the first Serbian book in history that was written following new grammatical rules, and in the vernacular. It was also the first Serbian, and in fact Slavic, book that was printed by Vienna’s Mkhitarists.

Following the publication of Karadzic’s work, the Mkhitarists also published the first Serbian Alphabet book (1827); the philosophical work, *The Mountain Wreath* (1841), by the Serbian Orthodox Prince-Bishop of Montenegro Petar II Petrovic-Njegos, as well as his other work, *Three days in Trieste in the Month of January in 1844* (1844).

In the history of Moldovan printing, Akim Ivanovich Popov (most likely Papiian) has left his mark, as Chisinau’s first publisher. He was an Armenian from the city of Grigoriopol. In June of 1840, Popov began his publishing work, printing books in Moldovan, French, Russian, and Armenian. He published *Normal Contact* (1846), *The Book of Armenopulo-Donic* (1850), as well as an alphabet book and elementary level books, the works of Ion Sirbu. Popov died in 1885.

Even in the 20th century, when most people already had a printing press, Armenians continued their pioneering work in the field. In Addis Ababa, due to the efforts of the president of the Publishing House of Fine Arts G. Jerahian, for the first time in history the ancient Ethiopian language of Amharic appeared in print in 1956; the printed work was the Gospel According to St. John.

This brief account paid homage to eight Armenians who contributed to the field of publishing in Europe, Asia, and Africa between the 16th and 20th centuries. Their work impacted nine peoples (Polish, Moldovan, Bulgarian, Turkish, Lebanese, Georgian, Ethiopian, and also Serb), not mentioning Anton the Armenian who observed the printing process in China. For Armenians, interest in the printing press was a reflection of their gravitation toward modernity. As Father Levon Zekiyian had rightfully noted, “I consider the very quick assimilation by Armenians of the printing as a signal of ‘modernization’ not only for the technical change in the way of producing books, but for a series of circumstances which show that we find ourselves before a changing social and economic reality.” □

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—(TRANSLATED BY NANORE BARSOUMIAN)