

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 վերածնունդը* (The Armenian Crisis and Renaissance); *Պատանեկան յոյզեր* (Youth Emotions); and *Կրթական սկզբունքներ եւ իսկալներ* (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)

A World History of Armenian Printers

BY ARTSVI BAKHCHINYAN

Scholars studying the early history of the printing press have noted the role played by the Catholic Armenian Archbishop Anton Sultaniatsi of Venice. In the 1330s, Sultaniatsi traveled to China and wrote, *Information on the Great Khan's State in China*, in Latin. Anton's name was forgotten for centuries. In the 17th century his name resurfaced, particularly in the works of the Ambassador of the Russian Empire to Beijing, Nicolae Milescu Spatarul (1638-1708), who wrote in his *Travel Notes and Description of China*, "It is true. Other countries learned about the production of real silk from the Chinese. Not only that. Also, how to cast canons and sail in a raft. Similarly, the Europeans learned about **printing** from the Chinese. Because when the Tatars came to China, with them came Father Odoric. Anton the Armenian, and Marco Polo the Venetian; in truth, it was they who brought these skills to Europe." (The emphasis is mine—A. B.)

In the 16th century, when Armenian printing was already an established reality, Armenian printers came onto the scene in various Armenian communities. During the first century of printing in Poland, Lazar Andrisowicz, whose Armenian name was most likely Ghazar Andreasian, left his mark. In 1550, Andrisowicz founded a printing house, which he managed until 1577. After his death, his son, Jan Januszewski, took over his publishing business.

Armenian printers in the Ottoman Empire played a particularly significant role. They contributed not only to Armenian and Turkish printing, but also to other nations that were part of the Empire. Among them, the most famous was Boghos Arabian (1742, Apucheh, near Agn—1835, Constantinople). He worked in printing in Constantinople and became the best known printer in the Empire. He created Armenian typefaces, and founded Armenian printing houses. He

On the occasion of the 500th anniversary of Armenian printing, it is worth remembering Armenian printers who were pioneers in publishing in various countries. Driven by a yearning for enlightenment, a curiosity for what was new, and a mission to spread the products of modern civilization to populations in their region, these Armenians appreciated the printing press, the new revolutionary invention, and worked towards its development in different countries and cultures.

also created the Turkish "Nesih" and "Taliq" fonts, which were named "Arab Oglu" after him. In 1770 he traveled to Tbilisi on the invitation of King Erekle, where he created Georgian fonts, established printing houses, and published Georgian language books. He also contributed to perfecting the newly founded printing house in Echmiadzin.

Beginning in 1839, Hovhannes Mouhendisian (1810–1891) worked on the creation and casting of various fonts for the press. He was a well-known engraver and musician, who studied under the renowned Hampartsoum Limonciyan. His work began in the creation of Armenian fonts, but in 1843 he began designing also Turkish and Arabic typefaces, which were later known as "Mouhendisian letters." He published Armenian and Turkish language books and newspapers, and also designed and illustrated some Turkish banknotes. He was called "The Turkish Gutenberg."

One of the pioneers of the Bulgarian printing press is Tatevos Divitjian (1810 Constantinople—died in Bulgaria). In 1841, with his help, Constantine Ognyanovitch founded the first Bulgarian publishing house, "The Hardworking Bee," in Constantinople. Divitjian molded Bulgarian fonts, and published 77 books in Bulgaria—some original, while others translations. For his activities, he was arrested numerous

times, until he finally sought refuge in Bulgaria. His student A. Minasian published 97 books in Bulgarian in Constantinople between 1856 and 1873. It is noteworthy that out of the 452 Bulgarian language books published in Constantinople—until Bulgaria gained independence in 1908—221 of them were published at the initiative of Armenian publishers.

Publisher George Meger (Kevork Megerian) was a descendent of the Meger family in Constantinople. He lived in Beirut from his childhood, and later studied printing with the Jesuit Fathers. He traveled to France, then to Tunisia, where he published an Arabic language newspaper to counter Italian propaganda. In France, he met with Prime Minister [Léon] Gambetta (who served as Prime Minister from Nov. 1881 to Jan. 1882) to discuss the creation of a print media in Arabic. After moving to Leiden (Holland) he preoccupied himself with printing books in Arabic. He purchased a printing press in France, and brought it with him to Lebanon, where he founded an Arabic printing house. Later, he also acquired Armenian fonts, and published Armenian language books.

Armenians also contributed to Serbian culture and language. Renowned Serbian enlightener, philologist, and founder of the modern Serbian language Stefanovic Karadzic (1787–1864) had his historical dictionary published at the Mkhitarist printing house in Vienna. His first books were published in Serbia, without permission from a Serbian metropolitan. That had greatly angered the Serbian religious leaders, because at that time they had tight control over the printing press. Karadzic moved the operation to Vienna, which was away from the metropolitan's reach. He discovered that the Mkhitarist printing house possessed

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