BEGINNINGS OF EARLY ARMENIAN PRINTING
IN VENICE AND ROME IN THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY:
RECONSIDERATION OF RESEARCH FRAMEWORKS AND CONTEXTS

by

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Abstract

The appearance of the first printed books in a native language, although a significant advancement, does not necessarily mean formation of national print culture, as the shift from the manuscript to the printed book is a matter of long transformations. In the case of Armenian printing, as it emerged and was for a long time maintained outside the homeland – in Venice, and Rome, later also Lvov, Amsterdam and other non-Armenian cities – the differentiation of the two phenomena, i.e. first Armenian printed book and Armenian print culture, proves indeed crucial. However, as I show in my thesis, since the late nineteenth century the Armenian historiography has continuously interpreted the primary sources of the beginnings of Armenian printing within the scopes of nationalist claims, which thus has entailed a number of discrepancies in proper understanding and evaluation of the significance of early Armenian printing. The major problem in this is that the establishment of the publication of the first printed books in Armenian language has been regarded as an impulse for the national reawakening, that was otherwise oppressed under the Ottoman and Safavid rule.

My thesis argues, based on the close examination of the available sources, that the production of the first printing enterprises, all of which ceased in existence soon after the first publications, did not intend to be, could not intend to be, and finally was not a factor of the national reawakening, insofar as it had narrow personal aspirations behind. Furthermore, it points out a few contexts other than the nationalist one, thus showing that application of new contexts and new approaches will unfold new insights into the beginnings of the Armenian printing.

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Introduction

Armenian printing emerged in Venice at the beginning of the sixteenth century and continued to develop outside Armenia proper up to the mid-eighteenth century. During these two and a half centuries, Armenian printing presses were established in almost all the major urban centers that had a substantial Armenian presence. The most active among them were those in Lvov (1616), Paris (1634), New Julfa (1536), Amsterdam (1660), Livorno (1669), Marseille, 1672), Smyrna (1676), Istanbul (1568, 1677), and Venice (1565, 1687). The first printing press in the homeland was established as late as 1771. During these two and a half centuries the content of the printed books was mostly religious and, to a lesser extent, educational. The main repertoire consisted of calendars, psalters, prayer books, missals, breviaries, synaxaria, hymnals, confessions of faith, later also New Testaments and Bibles, a few Armenian-Latin dictionaries, Armenian and Latin grammar books, alphabets, a medical manual, an arithmetic book, a collection of fables that was published three times during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and so on. In fact, the printing press was reproducing merely the content of the medieval manuscripts. Often the printers pointed out their source manuscript, in other cases later researchers established those manuscripts based on the textual similarity between certain manuscripts and printed books.

The religious content of the publications was due to the fact that even if far from home and in terms of absence of religious institutions in the diasporan centers, Armenian printing was almost exclusively maintained by clergymen of various rank. Thus, this newly emerged technique of book production mostly continued the medieval tradition of manuscript production. In other words, unlike some other traditions, where the appearance of the printed book can be regarded as a prominent 'agent of change,' in the early modern Armenian culture there was no tangible shift in the key traditions of manuscript production, that is the content, the language, and the main contributors. Moreover, the emergence of

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Armenian printing could not be a revolutionary turn in the domestic history considering, first, that for a long time it was maintained outside the homeland, and second, that only sixteen Armenian-language books, each of them in no more than three hundred copies, were published during the sixteenth century.

Nevertheless, in studies of early Armenian printing and in Armenian historiography in general, it is widely held that the emergence of the first Armenian books in Venice and Rome, despite their content and the reasons behind their creation, were agents of national reawakening in the homeland. In this way, studies raise two major claims. First is that those early printers had a conscious patriotic agenda to contribute to the reawakening of domestic book production, which was allegedly in crisis because of the continuous ravages by the Ottoman and Safavid armies. Second, they assume that the establishment of the first printing workshops meant the initiation of national print culture. This approach seems to ideally fit Elizabeth Eisenstein's influential study *The Print as an Agent of Change*,[1] where her central claim is that a shift from script to print can rightly pinpoint the threshold between the two eras insofar as it was a revolutionary phenomenon "occurring in a relatively short span of time."[2] The periodization of Armenian history, another problematic issue of Armenian historiography, comes to support this claim. In particular, the main factor of transformation of the Middle Ages to the Modern era as late as the mid-seventeenth century is the national reawakening and large 'liberation' movement. The seeds of this movement, as traditionally interpreted in Armenian historiography, emerged in the sixteenth century dominantly in the form of national printing.

As this claim is the result of a fundamental misinterpretation of historical evidence, there is a need to be more explicit about the key terms and theories applied in studies on

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[1] Elizabeth Eisenstein, *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change: Communications and Cultural Transformations in Early-Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983).
[2] Elizabeth Eisenstein, *The Printing Revolution in Early Modern Europe,* second ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 127.

Armenian printing. A major caution should be taken while exploring random non-continuous appearances of printing presses and the emergence of a continuous tradition of printing within a certain culture. As a research on early Ottoman printing explains,

> The establishment of a printing house is certainly a starting point in the formation of print culture, but in different social contexts the latter could overcome the strong traditional scribal culture in a shorter or longer time.[3]

Indeed, the differentiation between the two phenomena – the first printed books in a given language and the formation of domestic print culture – proves to be applicable for the Armenian case. This approach is crucial for an accurate interpretation of the transformations and influences they entailed within the given community. The flaws and weaknesses of the studies in Armenian printing represent a typical example of the abuse of these historically distant phenomena. Although in most cases this abuse has been unintentional, it has caused a serious discrepancy especially in the interpretation of the primary material concerning the beginnings of early Armenian printers. To be sure, on the one hand, the studies agree that the early printed Armenian books were intended not for the Armenian population in the homeland, but for merchants, pilgrims, travelers, members of Armenian diasporan communities, for whom manuscripts copied and illustrated by monastic scribes were almost non-accessible due to the distance from Armenian monasteries. On the other hand, as mentioned before, the circulation of the same books is regarded as an impulse for national reawakening in the homeland. The second approach emerged due to the strong nationalist connotation of the Armenian historiography of the late nineteenth and twentieth century. Today as well, it continues to be the chief approach historians employ while working with the sources.

To be sure, this approach of Armenian historiography proves true when it is applied to the formation of national print culture much later during the eighteenth century. In this

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[3] Orlin Sabev (Orhan Salih), "The Formation of Ottoman Print Culture," in *Historical Aspects of Printing and Publishing in Languages of the Middle East: Papers from the Symposium at the University of Leipzig, September 2008*, ed. Geoffrey Roper (Leiden, Koninklijke Brill NV, 2013), 101-120.

period, continuous Armenian printing presses were established in Venice (by Mechitarist congrgation, 1717), Edjmiatsin (by Armenian Church, 1771), Madras (by Shahamir Shahamiryan, a wealthy Armenian merchant in India, 1772). Along with religious texts, these new presses represented explicitly ideas of national liberation, as they started to publish law compilations, patriotic journals, and a national constitution. In addition, they extended the usage of the vernacular as print language. This traditional approach confirms Benedict Anderson's argument in his *Imagined Communities* that the origins of national consciousness were prepared by the formation of printing in national languages.[4] Thus, as an extensive study on the political history of Armenia and Armenian diaspora by R. Panossian argues that although not always established by capitalist entrepreneurs, the eighteenth century publications both in Armenia and in the diaspora made an impact on the formation of the national imagination "beyond the confines of the specific community in which they were printed."[5] Unlike sixteenth-century printing that was a personal endeavor, eighteenth and especially nineteenth-century printing was a conscious attempt to serve national purposes. However, if applied to the Armenian printing in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, this nationalist approach entails the aforementioned ungrounded claims, as well as limits the possibility of discussion of the available primary material in new contexts.

Considering the above inconsistency in studies of early, that is, sixteenth century Armenian printing, this thesis attempts to make a contribution to the available scholarship in two directions. First is the critical investigation of the nationalist discourses in these studies and mapping the consequent weaknesses. Second is the investigation of how alteration of

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[4] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. (London: Verso, 1991), 37-46.
[5] Razmik Panossian, *The Armenians: From Kings and Priests to Merchants and Commissars* (London: Hurst & Company, 2006), 91.

the traditional frameworks and the approaches entail a complex understanding of the sources that are otherwise misused.

In order to fulfill this purpose, I first established all the known primary material concerning the sixteenth-century Armenian printing, which although have been discussed in different studies, have never been presented in their whole. This material consists of colophons of the books in focus, incunabula, and the correspondences of printers. Almost all the incunabula are accessible from the M. Mashtots Institute of Ancient Manuscripts in Yerevan, where I conducted my main research on the sources. Some of these incunabula are available also through the online webpage of the National Library of Armenia[6] and World Digital Library.[7] Although for my research I have used copies from the hardcopy incunabula, in the bibliography I indicate the URL of online versions whenever those are available. The second type of the sources, the printers' correspondences, were detected from various archives and compilations and published in journals and periodicals mostly by the early twentieth century. There are three of them, Catholicos Michael's (1562-1576) letter to Pope Pius IV (1499-1565), 1562;[8] Sultanshah's letter to Armenian Patriarch of Jerusalem David of Merdeen (1583–1613), 1583;[9] and Sultanshah's letter to Catholicos Tadeos II (1576-1590), 1583.[10] In order to trace them, I have looked through all the articles on early Armenian printing in two main historical-philological periodicals of the late nineteenth century, *Bazmavep* and *Handes Amsorya*. The references in later studies have served as very helpful indicators in this search. In addition, I have assessed the original publications

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[6] http://greenstone.flib.sci.am/gsdl/cgi-bin/library.cgi?site=localhost&a=p&p=about&c=armenian&l=en&w=utf-8

[7] http://www.wdl.org/en/

[8] Michael Catholicos, "Letter to Pope Pius IV, April, 1562," published in [Miqayel Chamchean] Միքայէլ Չամչեան, *Պատմութիւն Հայոց: Ի սկզբանէ աշխարհի մինչև ցամ Տեառն 1784* [Armenian history: from the beginning to the Lord's year of 1784], vol.3 (Venice: Mechitarist Press, 1784-1786), 519-520.

[9] Sultanshah of Tokhat, "Letter to Armenian Patriarch of Jerusalem David, 1583," published in [Alishan, Ghevond] Ղևոնդ Ալիշան, *Հայապատում. Պատմութիւն հայոց* [Armenian History], vol. 2 (Venice: Mechitarist Press, 1901), 599-601.

[10] Sultanshah of Tokhat, "Letter to Catholicos Tadeos II, October 21, 1583," published in [Isahak Srapyan] Իսահակ Սրապյան, "Նորագույն լուսավորիչներ Աբգար Դպրի մասին" [The recent illuminations about Abgar the Scribe], *Bazmavep* 11 (1906): 321-325.

of these letters, such as Odorico Raynaldi's *Compendium Annalium Ecclesiasticorum*, where the Latin versions of two letters were recorded. Another source, the Armenian version of *Story of Parez and Wenna*, a medieval chivalric romance, translated by Johannes of Terzn was accessed from its reproduction in a later study.

As one of the drawbacks of studies is that they tell an extended narrative of the beginnings of Armenian printing often reconstructing the missing links of the story based on weak arguments or assumptions, my first step is to establish this story in its scattered form, telling only what can be accessed from the sources. This narrative is available through the initiators of the first printing presses, thus I represent it in form of life-stories of those four initiators. After illustrating the basic story of the emergence of Armenian printing, I provide the extensive review of scholarship on this phenomenon drawing on its achievements and failures, as well as analyzing the reasons behind those failures. As the third step of my research, after detecting that the main failure of studies in early Armenian printing is its narrow nationalist approach to the sources, I suggest two possible contexts, the activity of the printers in the environment of Catholic Confessionalization and the possible self-perception of and sense of belonging through the available sources. With this, I prove my hypothesis that in order to unfold additional knowledge on the history of emergence of Armenian printing researchers need to apply new frameworks and approaches, rather than trying to filling in the missing links of the known sources.

The main body of my thesis consists of four research chapters that follow the aforementioned three steps (Chapters 3 and 4 corresponding to the third step, that is, discussion of primary material in new context) and the conclusion. Apart from the main body and other required components, the thesis includes an Appendix and four reproductions from the four printers of the sixteenth century as examples of what the earliest Armenian incunabula looked like. The Appendix represents the chronological list of

the sixteenth-century Armenian incunabula, including their original and translated titles (column 1), primary content (column 2), publisher and place and date of publication if available (column 3), the locations of known copies and the dates of the first findings with additional information in footnotes (column 4).

A final remark is that the translations of the relevant passages of primary and secondary material have been implemented by me and transliterated into Latin characters, as agreed with my supervisor. The transliteration corresponds to international standard ISO 9985 recommended for international bibliographic text interchange.

Chapter 1.   **Beginnings of Armenian printing: Review of the scattered sources**

This chapter aims at the brief presentation of the life-stories of the initiators of Armenian printing, their connections and connection to each other, and their contribution to the advancement of printing. By and large, the sources for these stories consist of, first, some correspondences of the printers that were discovered in archives and published mostly in the second half of the nineteenth century; and second, the colophons of the incunabula, where the printers stated the place and often the date of the publication, acknowledged in detail all the contributors, and mentioned some other particularities of the workshop. At the same time, as these sources are brief and highly scattered. This means that even in case of a very detailed reconstruction, many questions concerning the biographical data, activity, ideas and motivations of these early printers will still be longing for answers. First in this list of questions are the dates of births and deaths of these people. Indeed, there are no sources on even approximate dates of births and deaths up to such a level that researchers have desperately attempted to guess the ages of these early printers based on the woodcut illustrations inserted in the books.[11] This lack of information is due to the fact that the early Armenian printers are traceable only in the light of their printing activity, that is, the period when they resided in Rome and Venice. The sources are silent about the turns their lives took before and after the mentioned period.

As will be discussed in Chapter 2, this shortfall in sources have led the historians of Armenian incunabula to restore the missing links by their assumptions and suggestions as a part of their task of narrating the beginnings of Armenian print culture. As a result, the narrative that has so far been created in scholarship is not always necessarily based on reliable sources. Considering this weakness, this chapter aims not at restoring the missing

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[11] In particular, Abgar's, Sultanshah's, Johannes's and his son's woodcut portraits are available, but person's age based on merely a woodcut illustration is highly hypothetical information. For these woodcuts see: [Abgar the Scribe] Աբգար Դպիր, ed., *Սաղմոսարան* [Saghmosaran, Book of Psalms] (Venice, 1566), 2; Johannes of Terzn, ed., *Սաղմոսարան* [Saghmosaran, The Book of Psalms] (Venice: 1587), 152.

evidence, but telling what the sources factually contain. Therefore, although my stories will incorporate the available sources, some of their traditional interpretations, and also my standpoints in particular issues, I will draw a cautious line between them. This will be a reverse process of construction of the life-stories of the earliest figures of Armenian printing free of later reconstructions. This outlines that constitute the narrative of the beginnings of Armenian printing will serve as underlying references for the following chapters.

1.1. Jacob the Sinner [Hakob Meġapart]

The first known Armenian printed book, *The Friday Book*,[12] a compilation of prayers, was published by an ambiguous figure, most likely a priest, in 1512. There are practically no sources on this printer except the mere existence of five publications of him – a prayer book, a missal, an almanac, an ecclesiastical calendar, and a song-book, that are connected through the same printer's mark, and a colophon included in the missal.[13] This colophon is the only text where the printer ever introduced himself and indicated the place and year of his publication. In whole it reads, "This sacred text was made in 1512 the city of Venež, the city protected by God, the city of Venetic in Frankstean. Whoever reads, I beg, pray to God for absolution."[14]

The most discussed issue on the personality of this printer has been whether he was a priest or a merchant. Suggesting that Jacob's books were produced for large readership given their small sizes and the content (calendars, travel horoscopes, almanacs, simple prayers against temptations and evils), the earlier studies have proposed that Jacob was a

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[12] [Jacob the Sinner] *Հակոբ Մեղապարտ*, ed., *Ուրբաթագիրք* [Urbatagirq, The Friday Book] (Venice, 1512).

[13] [Jacob the Sinner] *Հակոբ Մեղապարտ*, ed., *Պատարագամատոյց* [Pataragamatoyc', The Book of Liturgy] (Venice, 1512/3), 47.

[14] [Grec'av i taṙs i ĴKB i astowçapah k'aġak'n Venež, or ē venetik Frankstean. jeṙamb mēġapart jakobin. ov or kardayk'` meġac' t'oġowt'iwn xndrec'ēk' asytowçoy." Jacob the Sinner, *The Book of Liturgy*, 47. See the same in N. Voskanyan, et al, eds., *Armenian book in 1512-1800*, 3.

skilful merchant who deliberately selected those 'bestsellers' for merely for profit.[15] Later studies, however, tend to think of Jacob as a priest. As Devrikyan persuasively demonstrates, the edition and publication of books of religious content and especially *The Book of Liturgy* (1513) required theological education and close familiarity with the rite of liturgy.[16] Indeed, this task could hardly be performed by a merchant despite the level of his literacy. For the horoscopes and almanacs published in *The Simple Calendar*[17] and *The Almanac*,[18] Devrikyan argues that in that era many almanacs were copied and even blessed by the clergy.[19]

1.2. Abgar the Scribe of Tokhat [Abgar Dpir Tokhatetsi]

Before Jacob's *The Simple Calendar* (1513) was detected and reported in "The first-fruit of the Armenian printing" in 1889,[20] Abgar of Tokhat or Abgar the Scribe, as he calls himself in the colophons,[21] had been long honoured as the first Armenian printer. As he was also a diplomatic envoy, there are relatively more sources on him than on the other three

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[15] See, for instance, [Ghevond Alishan] Ղեոնդ Ալիշան, "Տպագրություն Հայոց. Աբգար Դպիր Թոխաթցի" [Armenian printing: Abgar the Scribe of Tokhat], *Bazmavep* 23 (1865), 214.
[Garegin Zarphanalean] Գարեգին Զարփանալեան, *Պատմություն հայկական տպագրութեան սկզբնաւորութեենէ մինչ առ մեզ (1513-1895)* [History of Armenian printing from its beginnings up to our days (1513-1895)] (San Lazzaro, Venice: Mechitarist Press, 1895), 26-27.
[Garegin Levonyan] Գարեգին Լևոնյան, *Հայ գիրքը և տպագրության արվեստը. պատմական տեսություն սկզբից մինչև XX դարը* [The Armenian book and print culture: historical theory concerning its beginnings up to the XX century] (Yerevan: Haypethrat Press, 1958), 52-53.
[16] [Vardan Devrikyan] Վարդան Դևրիկյան, *Հայ գիրքը աշխարհի խաչմերուկներում. Վենետիկից Հռոմ (16-րդ դար)* [The Armenian book in the crossroads of the world: From Venice to Rome (16th century)], vol.1 (Yerevan: Zangak Print, 2012), 35.
[17] [Jacob the Sinner] *Հակոբ Մեղապարտ*, ed., *Պարզատումար* [Parzatumar, The Simple Calendar] (Venice, 1512/3).
[18] [Jacob the Sinner] *Հակոբ Մեղապարտ*, ed., *Աղթարք* [Aġtarq, The Almanac] (Venice, 1512/3).
[19] Devrikyan, 34.
[20] [Grigor Govrikean] Գրիգոր Գովրիկեան, "Հայ տպագրութեանց ամենահին երախայրիքը" [The first-fruit of the Armenian printing], *Handes Amsorya: Zeitschrift Für Armenische Philologie* 10 (1889): 209-212. In fascination, the author of this discovery wrote, "We have spent our years in naïve belief that it was Abgar of Tokhat, who gifted his nation the first-fruit of Armenian printing due to his diligent work in the city of Venice." [Tariner anc'an, ew menk' ayn miamit hamozman ow gitowt'ean meǰ ēink', t'ē aṙaǰiin angam Abgar T'oxat'ec'in k'rtnaǰan ašxatowt'eamb Venetik k'aġak'en kënçayē iwr azgin hay tpagrowt'ean aṙaǰin eraxayrik'ë.] *ibid*, 209.
[21] Abgar the Scribe] Աբգար Դպիր, ed., *Խառնայփնթոր* [Kharanapntoir, Jumble Calendar] (Venice, 1565); [Abgar the Scribe] Աբգար Դպիր, ed., *Ժամագիրք* [Zhamagirq, The Book of Hours] (Istanbul, 1568), 58.

printers of the sixteenth century. In the brief record of his interrogation dated to 1564, Abgar is reported to have said,

> My name is Abgar, I was born in a city called Tokat, I am a cleric and a scribe. I intended to come to Rome ten years ago and bring my elder son for studies of the Catholic doctrine. But my son died and for this reason I came this much late in order to bring my son named Sultan that is now here with me. Our patriarch, when he learnt my wish, asked me to come to Rome on his behalf, where I could also fulfil my plans. And so it happened.[22]

Indeed, Abgar arrived in Rome with his young son Sultanshah, whose letter[23] later became one of the main sources for Abgar's life and activity. According to this letter, during a synod in 1562, which, as it appears, discussed the issue of liberation, Catholicos Michael (1562-1576) and the highest bishops of the Armenian Church decided to send a delegation headed by Abgar to the Pope and European princes. Abgar carried two official letters to Pius IV (1499-1565), one of which was a statement of the Armenian Church's loyalty to the Catholic Church and the second was a confirmation of Abgar's royal origin.[24] In the end of the first letter, the Catholicos stated, "And thus, if our envoy has arrived there, then he will be our mouth [*sic*, that is, speaker] for you.[25] In Rome "St. Pope Pius was in jubilation seeing [them] and kissed my father's face in front of the messy

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[22] [Anowns Abgar, hayazgi, çnaç em k'aġak' më` or kë kočowi T'ok'at. kġerakan em ew dpir. Hŕom ekay, vasn zi tasë tari yaŕaǰ owxt ëraç ēi galow ew im mek ordis berelow, orpes zi kat'oġikē vardapetowt'yiwnë sorvi: Bayc' ordi meŕaw, ew ays patčaŕaw owšac'ay aysčap' aten` orpës zi karenam im Sult'an anown ordis berel, or himy hets ē aysteġ: Mer patriark'n imanalov baġjank's, xndrec' inçme, or ink'ë šat goh piti ëllay` et'e iren anowamb Hŕom gam, orov krnam naew katarel im owxts ew aydpēs al eġav.] Published in [Grigor Galemqarean] Գարեգին Գալեմքարեան, Աբգար Դպիր և տպագրած Մաշտոց [Abgar the Scribe and Mashtots printed by him], *Bazmavep*, 7 (1912), 387.

[23] [Sultanshah of Tokhat] Սուլթանշah Թոխաթցի, "Թուղթ առ Թադեոս կաթողիկոսu, Հոկտեմբերի 21, 1583թ." [Letter to Catholicos Tadeos II, October 21, 1583], published in [Isahak Srapyan] Իսահակ Սրապյան, "Նորագույն լուսավորիւթիւններ Աբգար Դպրի մասին" [The recent illuminations about Abgar the Scribe], *Bazmavep* 11 (1906): 321-325.

[24] The letters have originally been written in Classical Armenian. The Latin translation is preserved in Odorico Raynaldi, *Compendium Annalium Ecclesiasticorum: Incipiens ab Annô 1534. Perveniens usque ad Annum 1565*, vol. 21 (Rome, Wickhard, 1730), 175. Later it was translated back into Classical Armenian in "Michael Catholicos's Letter to Pope Pius IV, April, 1562," published in [Miqayel Chamchean] Միքայէլ Չամչեան, *Պատմութիւն Հայոց։ Ի սկզբանէ աշխարհի մինչև ցամ Տեառն 1784* [Armenian history: from the beginning to the Lord's year of 1784], vol.3 (Venice: Mechitarist Press, 1784-1786), 519-520. The larger content of the latter will be discussed in the third chapter of this thesis.
The second letter concerning Abgar's origin has never been found.

[25] [Ev ard` et'ē ayn mer despan aydr žamaneal ic'ē, na ink'n eġic'i orpēs beran mer.] "Michael Catholicos's Letter to Pope Pius IV," lines 36-37.

crowd."[26] However, apparently Abgar was later led to the inquisition court, where he gave the aforementioned testimony. Besides answering the inquisitors' questions, which mostly attempted to explore the disposition of the Armenian Church to Catholicism and apparently aimed to check their loyalty, Abgar 'submitted' a brief treatise on the doctrine of the Armenian Church. A recent study identified that in this small theological treatise, the doctrine of the Armenian Church was maximum adapted to the Catholic one.[27]

Apparently, Abgar succeeded in his mission of "reminding them [the Pope and European princes] of an ancient treaty," "checking their disposition about saving Armenian [from the Tajik and Persian hegemony]," and finally "preparing Armenian bishops' visit to Rome."[28] The Pope sent him back to Armenia with a Catholic bishop and presents,[29] but the bishop died in Cyprus and the presents were sent back to Rome. Meanwhile, Abgar "got news that the Tajiks [Ottomans] have heard [*this part is erased in the letter*] and he could think of nothing else than printing a book before his departure for Constantinople, to [explain] to the authorities that for that reason he had left for Frankistan."[30] Thus, he printed a civic calendar[31] and a psalter,[32] with two woodcut illustrations depicting him and Sultanshah bowing in front of the Pope and at the palace of the Venetian doge.[33] Recent studies assume that, indeed, Abgar included these woodcuts in both his Venetian publications to convince the Ottoman authorities that he met these prominent Western leaders merely to ask for support for his printing enterprise.[34] I think, however, that if the printed books were not sufficient for hiding Abgar's diplomatic mission from the Orroman

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[26] [Ew ibrew teseal sb P'ap'n P'iows i meç c'nçowi leal ew aṙji xowṙn amboxin hambowreal zeress hòr imoy] "Letter to Catholicos Tadeos II," lines 84-85.

[27] Devrikyan, 159.

[28] *ibid*, lines 79-83.

[29] *ibid*, lines 90-91.

[30] *ibid*, lines 99-102.

[31] These new Armenian letters and this messy calendar in Venice by the hands of Abgar Safar of Tokhat. [Šinec'ò nor girs hayoc' ew ays xaṙnay p'ntowrs i vanatik jeṙamb T'oxatc'i Safar abgarin], [Abgar the Scribe] Աբգար Դպիր, ed., *Խառնայփնթոր* [Kharanapntoir, Jumble Calendar] (Venice, 1565).

[32] [Abgar the Scribe] Աբգար Դպիր, ed., *Սաղմոսարան* [Saghmosaran, Book of Psalms] (Venice, 1566).

[33] For these illustrations and their analyses see: Ishkhanyan, 204-208; Devrikyan, 193-194.

[34] *ibid*.

intelligene, then two obscure woodcuts inside them would not be either. Therefore, an earlier explanation of why Abgar inserted those woodcuts seems more realistic, as it offers that Abgar had to insert them as a way of gratitude for the financial support from those sponsors. "Otherwise, there was no sense in wasting money on those expensive woodcuts."[35]

Another widely held view within scholarship is that Abgar had been unsuccessfully searching for Jacob's types, and only when he failed did he order his own. This assumption is due to the evidence that for unknown reasons Abgar stayed long in Venice before his departure for Rome in 1564 and before his departure for Istanbul in 1566/7/8. Although many studies seek explanations on this issue, it remains unclear whether Abgar conceived the idea of printing and tried to find Jacob's type-letters during his first stay in Venice, or only before his departure for Istanbul.[36] In any case, the type-letters newly ordered for Abgar's Venetian publications, that are referred to as 'Abgar's letters' in recent studies, were used for six other books printed in Istanbul in 1567-68.[37] Two of them, *The Brief Grammar Book* and *The Book of Songs*, refer to certain unclear figures, Hotor and Farman, as their printers, other two, *The Simple Calendar* and *Mashtots*, have no colophons at all, *The Calendar* has a highly problematic colophon that will be discussed in the following pages. Thus, only the colophon of *The Book of Hours* clearly indicates Abgar as its

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[35] [Ew kerewnay t'e npasti xndirn haǰoġ elk' ownec'aç piti ëllay. hakařak dipvaçi meǰ hark čkar çaxsk' ënel ew ayn patkerë dnel i girsn.] Published in [Garegin Zarphanalean] Գարեգին Զարփհանալեան, *Պատմութիւն հայկական տպագրութեան սկզբնաւորութենէն մինչ առ մեզ (1513-1895)* [History of Armenian printing from its beginnings up to our days (1513-1895)] (San Lazzaro, Venice: Mechitarist Press, 1895), 44.

[36] A detailed discussion on these events see in Ishkhanyan, 187-204.

[37] These are: [Abgar the Scribe] Աբգար Դպիր, ed., *Փոքր քերականություն* [Poqr Qerakanutiun, The Brief Grammar Book] (Istanbul, 1567/8).

[Abgar the Scribe] Աբգար Դպիր, ed., *Ժամագիրք* [Zhamagirq, The Book of Hours] (Istanbul, 1568).

[Abgar the Scribe] Աբգար Դպիր, ed., *Պարզատումար* [Parzatumar, The Simple Calendar] (Istanbul, 1568).

[Abgar the Scribe] Աբգար Դպիր, ed., *Տօնացոյց* [Tonacuyc, The Calendar] (Istanbul, 1568).

[Abgar the Scribe] Աբգար Դպիր, ed., *Տաղարան* [Tagaran, The Book of Songs] (Istanbul, 1568).

[Abgar the Scribe] Աբգար Դպիր, ed., *Մաշտոց* [Mashtots] (Istanbul, 1568).

printer.[38] Having this evidence, it is unclear why recent studies go on suggesting that Abgar was the printer of all those publications.[39] Their explanation is that the names of the two unknown printers mentioned in the colophons are mistypes, in this way making the issue less problematic. However, instead of distorting the evidence for the sake of a smooth narrative, it can be simply acknowledged that after Abgar's letters or the movable type were transported to Istanbul, they were effectively used by local Armenians.

The last thing we learn about Abgar is that he died in a few years after his arrival in Istanbul, as in 1585 Azaria, the Patriarch of Sis, wrote in his letter to the Pope in that "[Abgar] worked a lot for our [Armenian] nation and would have done more if he had not died."[40]

1.3. Sultanshah Mark Antonio of Tokhat [Sultanshah Tokhatetsi]

As mentioned above, Sultanshah or Mark Antonio, as he is called in some sources,[41] accompanied his father Abgar the Scribe to Rome. As later he remembered in his letter (1583), soon after their arrival in Rome, Pope Pius IV adopted him.[42] He was taught "the Latin [Catholic] doctrine by the mighty cardinals"[43] and got an apartment and monthly

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[38] [Abgar the Scribe] Աբգար Դպիր, ed., *Ժամագիրք*, 58.

[39] See the latest catalogue of Armenian incunabula [N. Voskanyan, Q. Korkotyan, A. Savalyan] Ն. Ոսկանյան, Ք. Կորկոտյան, Ա. Սավալյան, eds., *Հայ գիրքը 1512-1800 թվականներին. Հայ հնատիպ գրքի մատենագիտություն* [Armenian book in 1512-1800. A bibliography of the Armenian incunabula] (Yerevan: Armenian SSR Academy of Sciences Press, 1988); as well as Levonyan, 212-230; Devrikyan, 208-240.

[40] Reported in [Grigor Galemqearean] Գրիգոր Գալեմքարեան, "Աբգար Դպիր և տպագրած Մաշտոց" [Abgar the Scribe and Mashtots printed by him], *Bazmavep* 7 (1912), 392 (Codices Armeni Bibliothecae Vaticanae, no.2, 44a).

[41] "… by the overseer Mister Sultanshah of Tokhat who is called Marganton among the Franks [that is, Latin-speakers] [… verakac'oġ tntesowt'ean paron Sowlt'anša t'owxat'c'oyn zor fṙankn Maṙgantòn koče̅]. Johannes of Terzn, ed., *Տօմար Գրիգորեան* [Tomar Grigorean, The Gregorian Calendar] (Rome: Typographia Dominici Basae, 1584), 110; Johannes of Terzn, ed., in Marco Antonio Marsili Colonna, ed., *Hydragiologia sine De Aqua Benedicta* (Rome, 1586), 504.

[42] "Letter to Catholicos," line 90.

[43] [Ev ast sna i dpṙatowns aṙ jeṙamb hzawr Kartinarac' ew am dprowe latinacwoc.] "Letter to Catholicos," lines 103-104.

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stipend from the Pope.[44] According to his letter "as the Pope had adopted me, he did not let me join my father while he was departing for Armenia."[45] Thus, he apparently remained in Rome as the Pope's contact with Armenian patriarchs, as will be discussed in Chapter 3.

Although Sultanshah never started his own printing workshop, his contribution to early Armenian printing is remarkable. According to the colophons of the relevant books, he was the proof-reader and compositor of Abgar's and Johannes of Terzn's publications. He was the compositor of two sections concerning the rite of Blessing of Holy Water in the Armenian Church in Marco Antonio Colonna's *Hydragiologia* (1586), where there is also his colophon about the publication.[46] Apart from this, with Robert Granjon (1513-1589/90), a famous French type-designer and printer, Sultanshah co-designed new Armenian type-letters, which were subsequently used in papal printing houses for publication of missionary literature.[47]

Sultanshah's diplomatic activity and the main agenda of his letter will be separately discussed in Chapter 3 in the context of Catholic confessionalization.

1.4. Johannes of Terzn [Hovannes Terzntsi]

Johannes, the last Armenian printer of the sixteenth century, again a clergymen, is first mentioned in his own colophon as the printer of *The Gregorian Calendar* (1583).[48] Nothing is known of his previous activity except that he had not any printing experience, as

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[44] [Ev mi xostovanim zi town vkowb ownim zkarn im yavelwaçov i keans im inčs ew stac'vaçs ew harks i sb papowcn.] "Letter to Catholicos," lines 15-16.

[45] [Ew zis S. Pap'n ordegir aṙnelov iwrn, ew oč t'oġowl ënd hòrn im i patčaṙs i yet čok'eloy horn imoy i Hayoc.] "Letter to Catholicos, 234 (lines 90-91); Ishkhanyan, 231.

[46] Sultanshah of Tokhat, ed., "Canon Benedictionis Salis et Aquae," (492) and "Benedictionis Salis et Aquae Quae Fit in Diebus Dominicis" (493-504), in Marco Antonio Marsili Colonna, ed., *Hydragiologia sine De Aqua Benedicta* (Rome, 1586). The colophon is on page 504.

[47] These type-letters were part of the series of Oriental characters designed for printing certain native languages by the Catholic missionaries. They were first used to print a one-page announcement "Armenici Characteres Gregorii XIII" (Rome, 1579) and were in use until the mid-eighteenth century. More on this issue: Hendrik Vervliet, *Cyrillic and Oriental Typography in Rome at the End of the Sixteenth Century: An Inquiry into the Later Work of Robert Granjon (1578-90)* (Berkeley: Poltroon Press, 1981), 13-16.

[48] Johannes of Terzn, ed., *Տօմար Գրիգորեան* [Tomar Grigorean, The Gregorian Calendar] (Rome: Typographia Dominici Basae, 1584).

he indicated in one of the colophons, "do not blame, brothers, as this is my art."[49] All the other information that is known about this printer is as well produced by himself in his letters, colophons, and a small autobiographical poem. Included in *The Book of Psalms* (1587)[50] this poem reveals that after his wife died in Amid [Diyarbakir] and he was left with two daughters and a seven-year-old son, his certain villains made him to leave the city leaving there his daughters.[51] In Rome he joined Sultanshah apparently taking an important part in the organization of the Armenian press for the Catholic missionary purposes. Here he printed *The Gregorian Calendar* and *The Profession of Faith* "by Saint Pope Gregory XIII's order."[52] Most likely, especially considering his later translating activity, he was also the translator of these works.

According to the aforementioned poem, he then decided to "go back," but for a certain crime unknown to him he and his son were arrested and taken back to Rome.[53] After three months of hungry, thirsty, and naked life and interrogation the inquisitors separated him from his son. "The Lord is my witness from the Heavens, brothers, all that was faced and overcome were not as hard and sorrowful as that they came and took my son from me."[54] Finally, after another six months, he was set free, reunited with his son and departed for Venice, where he printed aforementioned *The Book of Psalms* (1587) at Joan Alberti's printing house.

A last time Johannes recorded the hardships of his life in his translation of *Parez and Wenna*, a medieval chivalric romance. According to the colophon of this translation (1587),

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[49] [Mi meġadrek' eġbayrk' zi aṙajin arowestn ē.] Johannes of Terzn, ed., *The Gregorian Calendar*, 111.

[50] "Tagh" [Poem], in Johannes of Terzn, ed., Սաղմոսարան [Saghmosaran, The Book of Psalms] (Venice: 1587), 152.

[51] "Poem," lines 4-7.

[52] Johannes of Terzn, trans., *The Gregorian Calendar*, 110; Johannes of Terzn, trans., *The Confession of Faith*, 95.

[53] "Poem," lines 14-17.

[54] [Rabown erknic' vka eġbark' or inč anc'k' or in ew anc'in. oč ēr džar inj ew kskiç k'an zordis yinen aṙin.] "Poem," lines 18-27.

Johannes was already in Marseille with his son trying to sail to his native land.[55] This work, as well as his diplomatic activity in Rome will be discussed in more detail in Chapters 3 and 4.

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As the sources on the beginnings of Armenian printing are mostly of autobiographical character, a researcher should be cautious in using them. For example, neither Abgar as the Catholicos's envoy, nor Sultanshah, as the Pope's representative, aimed at telling a true story. They merely represented certain mission, certain diplomatic agenda and aimed at convincing the addressees (the Pope's officials in case of Abgar and the Catholicos in case of Sultanshah) to believe them. They themselves, however, did not necessarily believe what they said. This seems especially true in case of Sultanshah's letter to the Catholicos, as he describes the poverty and helplessness of the Armenians living in Rome in order to convince the Catholicos to help him in supporting them.[56] "For me it is seems a huge shame to let them to go from door to door and to beg," he writes.[57] However, as a rule, the Armenian communities in Venice, Livorno, Rome, other Mediterranean cities consisted of wealthy merchants and were parts of an extensive and successful trade network.[58] Sultanshah himself was a well-to-do officer, as he confesses.[59] Therefore it is

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[55] Karapet Meliq-Ohanjanyan, *Patmutyun Parezi ev Wennayi* [*Story of Parez and Wenna*] (Yerevan: Armenian SSR Academy of Sciences Press, 1966), 233.

[56] Sultanshah, "Letter to Catholicos," 234 (lines 21-38).

[57] [Inj meç amòt' ew patkaṙans t'owi t'oyl taloy noc'a anknel dranē ë dowṙn, mowranar.] "Letter to Catholicos," 232 (lines 32-33).

[58] The best research done in this topic is Sebouh Aslanian, *From the Indian Ocean to the Mediterranean: The Global Trade Networks of Armenian Merchants from New Julfa* (Berkely: University of California Press, 2011).
See also, Herzig, Edmund. "Venice and the Julfa Armenian Merchants." In *Gli Armeni e Venezia: Dagli Sceriman a Mechitar: Il Momento Culminante di una consuetudine milenaria*. Ed. Zekiyan, B. L. Zekiyan and A. Ferrari (Venice: Ist. Veneto di Scienze, 2004), 141-64.
Claudia Bonardi, "Il commercio dei preziosi," in *Gli Armeni in Italia: Hayery Italyo Mej*, ed. B. L. Zekiyan (Rome: De Luca, 1990), 110-14.
Claudia Bonardi, "Gli Sceriman di Venezia: Da Mercanti A Possidenti," in *Ad Limina Italiae*, ed. L. B. Zekiyan (Padua: Editoriale Programma, 1990), 229-50.

[59] Sultanshah, "Letter to Catholicos," 232 (lines 15-19).

unclear whom he means when he speak about the Armenian poor men in Rome. To be sure, even if there were certain unfortunate merchants or pilgrims who lost their possessions, this did not apply to large groups.

Figure 1: A page from [Jacob the Sinner] Յակոբ Մեղապարտ, ed., *Ուրբաթագիրք* [Urbatagirq, Book of Friday]. Venice, 1512.
Source: World Digital Library http://www.wdl.org/en/item/11302/view/1/20/
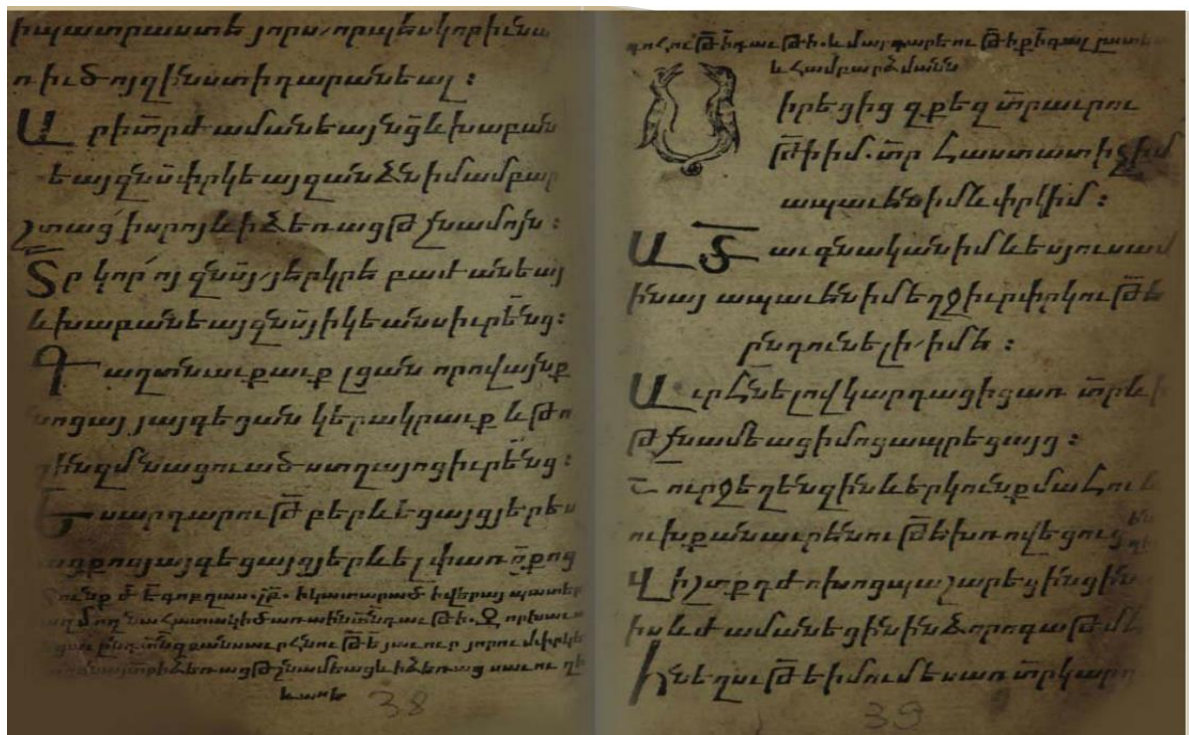
Figure 2: A page from [Abgar the Scribe] Աբգար Դպիր, ed., *Սաղմոսարան* [Saghmosaran, Book of Psalms]. Venice, 1566.
Source: National Library of Armenia
http://greenstone.flib.sci.am/gsdl/collect/armenian/Books/saxmosaran_1565_index.html
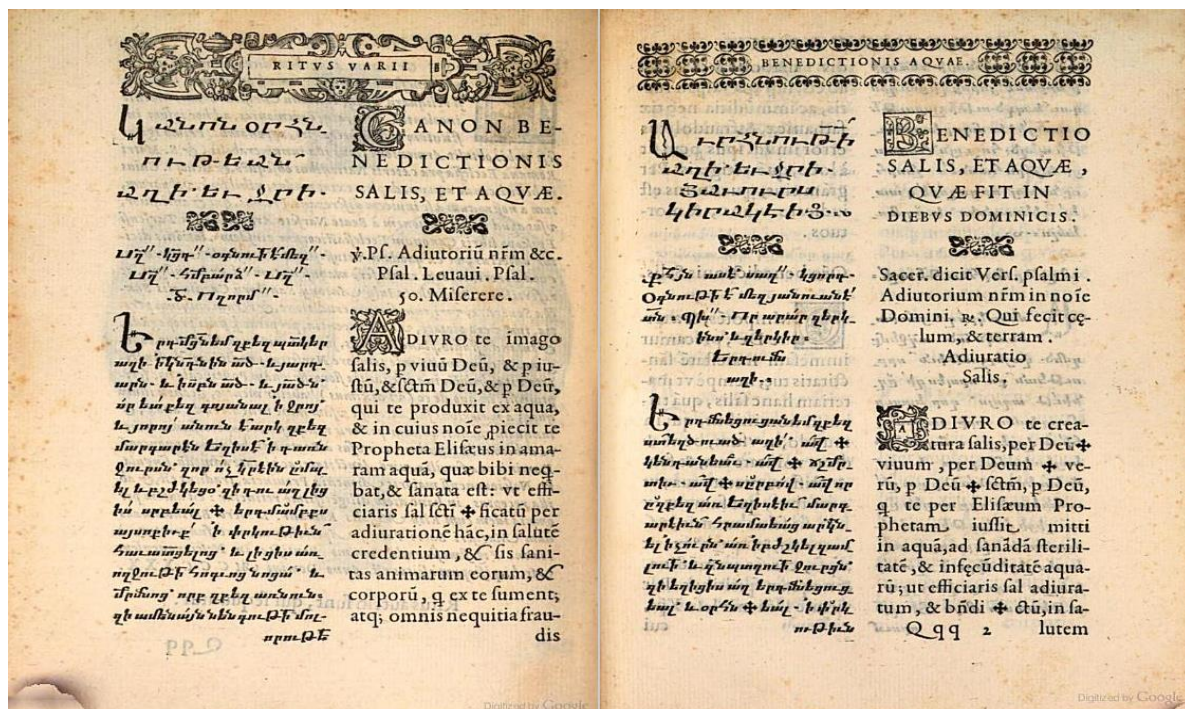
Figure 3: A page from Marco Antonio Marsili Colonna, ed., *Hydragiologia sine De Aqua Benedicta*. Rome, 1586.
Source: Google Books
http://books.google.hu/books?id=BK1P96ehtzsC&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=twopage&q&f=true
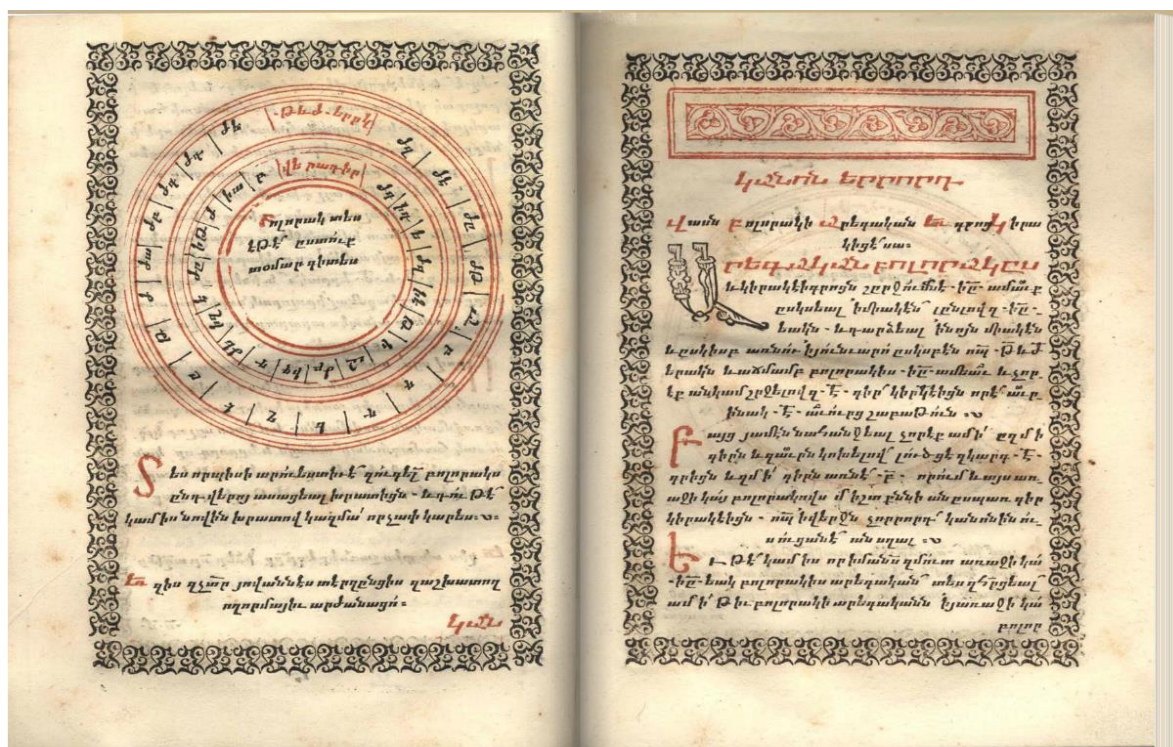
Figure 4: A page from: [Johannes of Terzn] Հովաննես Տերզնցի, ed., *Տոմար Գրիգորեան* [Tomar Grigorean, The Gregorian Calendar]/ Rome: Typographia Dominici Basae, 1584.
Source: National Library of Armenia
http://greenstone.flib.sci.am/gsdl/collect/armenian/Books/tomar_grigorean_index.html

Chapter 2.   **Studies in early Armenian printing: Critical review of historiography on Armenian incunabula**

The systematic investigation of Armenian early printing emerged in the mid-nineteenth century due to the investigations of the members of the Mechitarist congregation in San Lazzaro, Venice.[60] Within a couple of decades, around one, two, sometimes even three copies of over ten different publications were discovered in the Mechitarist and other European and Ottoman archives.[61] Those copies were repeatedly described, dated, and analyzed in monographs and scholarly articles published mainly in the journals *Bazmavep*, in Venice and *Handes Amsorya*, in Vienna. Several Soviet historians followed the Mechitarists with the attempt to tell, in an exhaustive way, the story of the beginnings of Armenian printing as part of the national grand narrative. Thus, since the mid-nineteenth century a considerable amount of literature has been published[62] exploring a relatively

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[60] Mekhitar of Sebaste, an Armenian abbot, founded this congregation of Armenian Benedictine monks in 1717, who were subsequently largely involved in Armenian studies, especially in research on classical and modern Armenian language. The congregation houses one of the richest repositories of Armenian manuscripts and incunabula.

[61] See the *Appendix* for more details.

[62] The central monographs in this field are (given in chronological order of publications):

[Garegin Zarphanalean] Գարեգին Զարփհանալեան, ed., *Հայկական մատենագիտութիւն. Այբուբենական ցուցակ տպագրութեան զիւտէն մինչեւ առ մեզ եղած հայերէն հրատարակութեանց* [Armenian Bibliographie: Alphabetic catalogue of Armenian printed publications from the invention of print up to our days] (San Lazzaro, Venice: Mechitarist Press, 1883).

[Garegin Zarphanalean] Գարեգին Զարփհանալեան, *Պատմություն հայկական տպագրութեան սկզբնաւորութենէն մինչ առ մեզ (1513-1895)* [History of Armenian printing from its beginnings up to our days (1513-1895)] (San Lazzaro, Venice: Mechitarist Press, 1895).

[Ghevond Alishan] Ղեւնդ Ալիշան, *Հայ-Վենետ կամ յարընչութիւնք հայոց եւ վենետաց* [Armenian Venice or Armenian-Venetian contacts] (Venice: Mechitarist Press, 1896).

[Leo] Լեո, *Հայկական տպագրութիւն. Հայերը նոր պատմության մէջ. պատմական-գրական տեսութիւն. XVI-XVII դար* [Armenian printing: The Armenians in the Modern history: historical-literary theory] (Tbilisi: Hermes Print, 1904).

[Teodik] Թէոդիկ, *Տիպ ու տառ* [Type and letter] (Istanbul, 1912).

[Garegin Levonyan] Գարեգին Լեոնյան, *Հայ գիրքը և տպագրության արվեստը. պատմական տեսություն սկզբից մինչև XX դարը* [The Armenian book and print culture: historical theory concerning its beginnings up to the XX century] (Yerevan: Haypethrat Press, 1958).

[Ashot Hovhannisyan] Աշոտ Հովհաննիսյան, *Դրվագներ հայ ազատագրական մտքի պատմության* [Some episodes of the history of the Armenian liberation thought], vol.2 (Yerevan: Armenian SSR Academy of Sciences Press, 1959).

[Karapet Meliq-Ohanjanyan] Կարապետ Մելիք-Օհանջանյան, *Պատմություն Փարեզի և Վեննայի* [*Story of Parez and Wenna*] (Yerevan: Armenian SSR Academy of Sciences Press, 1966),

modest quantity of the sixteenth century Armenian incunabula and even more modest sources on their creation, creators, readers, and the like.

This chapter seeks to provide a critical observation of the studies in the history of Armenian book, highlighting the central discussions and certain drawbacks that exist within this field. In this stage of my research, I incorporate the secondary and some primary sources in order to illustrate the achievements and shortcomings of the available researches,

[Ashot Abrahamyan] Աշոտ Աբրահամյան, *Հայոց գիր և գրչություն* [Armenian book and writing] (Yerevan: Yerevan University Press, 1973).

[Rafael Ishkhanyan] Ռաֆայել Իշխանյան, *Հայ գրքի պատմություն. Հայ տպագիր գիրքը 16-17-րդ դարերում* [The history of Armenian printing: The Armenian printed book in the 16-17th centuries], vol.1 (Yerevan: Hayastan Hratarakchutyun, 1977) (in three volumes).

and the latest, [Vardan Devrikyan] Վարդան Դևրիկյան, *Հայ գիրքը աշխարհի խաչմերուկներում. Վենետիկից Հռոմ (16-րդ դար)* [The Armenian book in the crossroads of the world: From Venice to Rome (16th century)], vol.1 (Yerevan: Zangak Print, 2012) (only the first volume has so far been published).

Some of the most prominent articles are:

[Ghevond Alishan] Ղևոնդ Ալիշան, "Ազգային տպագրութեան սկզբնաւորութեանը և յառաջանալուն պատմութիւնը" [The initiation and development of the national print culture], *Bazmavep* 15 (1850): 230-234.

[Ghevond Alishan] Ղևոնդ Ալիշան, "Տպագրություն Հայոց. Աբգար Դպիր Թոխաթցի" [Armenian printing: Abgar the Scribe of Tokhat], *Bazmavep* 23 (1865): 213-221.

[Grigor Govrikean] Գրիգոր Գովրիկեան, "Հայ տպագրութեանց ամենահին երախայրիքը" [The first-fruit of the Armenian printing], *Handes Amsorya: Zeitschrift Für Armenische Philologie* 10 (1889): 210-212.

[Hrayr Tirosyan] Հրայր Տիրոսեան, "Առաջին դար հայկական տպագրութեանց" [The first century of the Armenian printing], *Bazmavep* 48 (1890): 90-104.

[Ghevond Alishan] Ղևոնդ Ալիշան, "Վենետահայ: Հայերէն տպագրութեան սկզբնաւորութիւնն ի Վենետիկ" [Venetian Armenians: the initiation of the Armenian printing in Venice] *Bazmavep* 5, 1892: 193 - 203.

[Trdat Palyan] Տրդատ Պալյան, "Հայ տպագրության ամենահին երախայիք մ'ալ" [Another oldest outcome of the Armenian printing], *Handes Amsorya: Zeitschrift Für Armenische Philologie* 8, (1894): 361-365.

[Isahak Srapyan] Իսահակ Սրապյան, "Նորագույն լուսավորիչներ Աբգար Դպրի մասին" [The recent illuminations about Abgar the Scribe], *Bazmavep* 11 (1906): 321-325.

[Grigor Galemqearean] Գրիգոր Գալեմքարեան, "Աբգար Դպիր և տպագրած Մաշտոց" [Abgar the Scribe and Mashtots printed by him], *Bazmavep* 7 (1912): 386-392.

[Grigor Galemqearean] Գրիգոր Գալեմքարեան, "1513ի հայ տպագրին զիտին պատմականը և նոր լուսավորություններ" [The story of the discovery of 1513's printer and some recent illuminations], *Handes Amsorya: Zeitschrift Für Armenische Philologie* 12 (1913): 709-718.

[Grigor Galemqearean] Գրիգոր Գալեմքարեան, "Հռոմայ առաջին հայ տպագրութիւնը 1579-ին է" [The first Armenian printing in Rome was in 1579],], *Handes Amsorya: Zeitschrift Für Armenische Philologie* 1 (1914): 17-22.

[Mesrop Grigorean] Մեսրոպ Գրիգորեան, "Մատենագիտական դատողութիւնք հայ հնատիպ գրբերու մասին" [Bibliographic discourses on the Armenian incunabula], *Handes Amsorya: Zeitschrift Für Armenische Philologie* 79 (1965): 51-64.

[Sepuh Sargsean] Սեպուհ Սարգսեան, "Հայ գիրքը՝ ազբյուր ինքնաճանաչմ an" [The Armenian book as a source for self-understanding], in *Հայ տպագրութիւնն Իրանում (1638-2011)* [The Armenian printing in Iran], ed. Sepuh Sargsean et al (Tehran: Araks Press, 2012), 16-33.

Sebouh Aslanian, "Wings on their Feet and on their Heads: Reflections on Port Armenians and Five Centuries of Global Armenian Print Culture," *The Armenian Weekly* (2012): 7-12.

as well as to shed more light on the ongoing debates. Towards the end of this chapter, it will become evident that although extensive research has been carried out within the studies of Armenian incunabula and the early Armenian printers, these studies are largely self-contained and at the present stage there is need for substantive rethinking and reevaluation.

2.1. Striving for the reconstruction of the narrative of sixteenth century Armenian book

The studies of the issue of early Armenian printing and printers (see footnote 62) often repeat each other's structure, methods, and line of argumentation. Almost every large-scale study in this field – whether by the nineteenth or the twentieth century historians – starts with a historical outline relating to the political, social, economic, cultural, and confessional situation of Armenia proper in the late fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. They call attention to the highly miserable conditions in the country due to the Safavid and Ottoman invasions, continuous ravages and persecutions. This reference to the "disastrous and backward centuries"[63] in Armenian history, when "the school, literature, and arts had almost ceased existing due to the pervasive darkness,"[64] was meant to explain and justify as to why Armenian printing emerged and for a long time was maintained outside Armenia proper. To be sure, the first Armenian printing house in Armenia proper was established as late in 1771 in the city of Vagharshapat, where the spiritual and administrative headquarters of the Armenian Church and the Pontifical Residence of the Catholicos of All Armenians were historically situated. Leo (1860-1932), one of the most celebrated Armenian historians in the early twentieth century wrote,

"The century-long circumstances draw a certain constant, permanent rule that the Armenian [*sic*] could get the light and knowledge necessary for his reawakening only in foreign cultures and only then could

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[63] [aghitic u tgitutean dareru mej], Zarphanalean, *Bibliographie Armenienne*, vi.
[64] [Tirowm ēr hamataraç xavar, dproc', grakanowt'yown, geġarvest gret'e dadarel ēin goyowt'yown. ownenalowc'.] Levonyan, *The Armenian book*, 38.

slowly transfer his achievements to his native land. In the Armenian reality no other way and means could have worked."[65]

The 'dark age' concept persisted up to the latest account on Armenian early printing. Devrikyan, a senior research fellow of the Mashtots Institute of Ancient Manuscripts, writes, "the sixteenth century produce at least one chronicler, insofar as no developments worthy for telling and reporting took place in the native land. As for the local ravages and violences, those were witnessed in the heartrending colophons of the contemporary manuscripts."[66]

After this historical background, the accounts dwell into the description of the emergence and stabilization of national printing with the chief focus on the earlier rather than later developments. The periodization of these developments was first offered by G. Zarphanalean (1827-1901), one of the earliest researchers of Armenian incunabula, a philologist, bibliographer, historian, and translator, a member of the Mechitarist congregation in his work *Historie de L'Imprimerie Arménienne* published at the end of the nineteenth century. He distinguishes three main periods – 1513-1565, 1565-1700, and 1700-1895 – considering some unclear breaks and geographical alterations as the main criteria for the division. [67] Some later works have preferred purely chronological periodization, describing the achievements of Armenian printing of each century in a separate section.[68]

The purpose of the earliest investigations within the studies in the history of Armenian incunabula was the establishment of accurate dates, locations, and circumstances,

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[65] [Darawor hangamank'nerë mšakec'in mi hastat, tewoġakan òrēnk'. hayë miayn ir gaġt'akanowt'iwnneri mēĵ piti jeṙ' berēr veraçnowt'ean hamar anhražešt loysn ow imac'akanowt'yiwnë ew apa kamac' kamac', p'ok'r čap'erov p'oxadrēr ayd stac'owaçk'ë dēpi bown hayrenik'ë꞉ Owriš miĵoc' ow čanaparh čēr t'oyl talis hayi irakanowt'iwnë.] Leo, *Armenian printing*, 75.

[66] [16-rd darë mer žoġovrdin čtvec' gone mek patmič, k'ani or patmelow ow patmowt'yan hanjnelow orewē nšanavor depk' teġi čownec'av, isk teġayin harstaharowt'yownnerë ew bṙnowt'yownnerë, inčpes naxordoġ ew haĵordoġ darerowm, teġ gtan grvoġ jeṙagreri hišatakaranneri daṙnakskiç toġerowm.] Devrikyan, *The Armenian Book in the Crossroads of the World*, 154.
Based on this, the researchers also claim that the printers were acting deliberately towards the national reawakening. The weakness of this argumentation is discussed in the following pages of this chapter.

[67] Zarphanalean, *Historie de L'Imprimerie Arménienne*, 7.

[68] Levonyan, *The Armenian book*, Ishkhanyan, *The history of Armenian printing*, and Devrikyan, *The Armenian book in the world crossroads*.

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as well as the printer or printers of the publications. This was performed through incorporation and juxtaposition of textual and visual analyses of the incunabula and various historical sources, such as colophons of the incunabula, correspondences of the printers, early modern Armenian and Ottoman chronicles, brief entries in the dictionaries and encyclopedias composed in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, etc. The content, illustrations and decorations, paper and the layout of the page, form of the punches of the letters and the level of their friability, printers' marks, etc. were examined in detail for identification of the missing data. The earliest articles on this topic, such as "The first-fruit of Armenian printing" (1889) and "Another old outcome of Armenian printing" (1894) in *Handes Amsorya*, "The recent illuminations about Abgar the Scribe" (1906) and "Abgar the Scribe and Mashtots printed by him" (1912) in *Bazmavep*, reveal the fascinating story of these discoveries and data corrections.[69] The most notable among such corrections was probably the detection of the date and the printer of the first Armenian incunable. "Another old outcome of Armenian printing" reported that it was *The Friday Book* printed by Jacob the Sinner in 1512,[70] instead of *The Book of Psalms* printed by Abgar the Scribe in 1565,[71] as it had been believed before. The arrival of new data supported the first comprehensive catalogues of the Armenian incunabula, the earliest among which was arranged by G. Zarphanalean in 1883.[72]

The second phase of the investigations started in the post-Second World War period and was led by Soviet historians. By this phase, the dating and cataloging of the found

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[69]*Bazmavep* [lit. semi-novel] (issued since 1843) and *Handes Amsorya* [lit. monthly journal] (issued since 1887) were monthly historical-philological-cultural periodicals published by the Mechitarist Congregation in Venice and Vienna accordingly.

[70] [Jacob the Sinner] Հակոբ Մեղապարտ, ed., *Ուրբաթագիրք* [Urbatagirq, Book of Friday] (Venice, 1512).

[71] [Abgar the Scribe] Աբգար Դպիր, ed., *Սաղմոսարան* [Saghmosaran, Book of Psalms] (Venice, 1565).

[72] Zarphanalean, *Bibliographie Arménienne*. There was an older catalogue made in 1850, which included only two publications from the sixteenth century: *Ցուցակ ամենայն ազգ հայերէն մատենից տպագրելոց ի Վենետիկ, ի Վեննա, ի Կոստանդնունուպօլիս, ի Կալկաթա, ի Զմիւռնա, ի Մոսկով և յայլ քաղաքս* [Catalogue of Armenian printed books in Venice, Vienna, Constantinople, Kolkata, Zmyrna, Moscow and other cities] (Tbilisi: Nersesean Print: 1850).

incunabula had been mostly accomplished. To be sure, after Sultanshah's letter to Catholicos Tadeos II, that was found in the archive of the Church of St. Anthony of Padua, Istanbul, in 1906, [73] and the only copy of Abgar's *Mashtotc* [74] that was found during cataloging the Armenian manuscripts and incunabula of the Vatican archives in 1912, [75] no new documents on sixteenth-century Armenian printing have appeared. Two large publications of general bibliographies of Armenian incunabula and their later editions have described all the available incunabula. [76] Thus, the focus of the incunabula studies shifted from the early printed books to the activity of their printers. The five monographs that have been composed since then have mainly been interested in questions concerning the professions and confessional belonging of the four known printers of the sixteenth century, the sensitive topic of sincerity of their conversion to Catholicism, the reasons behind their arrival in Venice and Rome, their choices of the manuscript texts for printing, the iconography of the printers' marks used by them, their possible portraits based on the woodcuts included in the incunabula, and so on. Apart from some disagreements upon

[73] Apparently, this document was found when the Congregation of St. Antony moved to its new building during 1906-1912. An Armenian member of the congregation reported this discovery in [Isahak Srapyan] Իսահակ Սրապյան, "Նորագույն լուսավորիչթւններ Աբգար Դպրի մասին" [The recent illuminations about Abgar the Scribe], *Bazmavep* 11 (1906): 321-325.

[74] [Abgar the Scribe] Աբգար Դպիր, ed. *Mashtotc* (Istanbul, 1568).

[75] Reported in [Grigor Galemqearean] Գրիգոր Գալեմքարեան, "Աբգար Դպիր և տպագրած Մաշտոց" [Abgar the Scribe and Mashtots printed by him], *Bazmavep* 7 (1912): 386-392.

[76] The latest editions of those bibligraphic publications are:

[Mesrop Grigorean] Մեսրոպ Գրիգորեան, "Մատենագիտական դատողութիւնք հայ հնատիպ գրքերու մասին" [Bibliographic discourses on the Armenian incunabula], *Handes Amsorya: Zeitschrift Für Armenische Philologie* 79 (1965): 51-64.

[Armenak Salmastyan] Արմենակ Սալմասյան, *Հայկական մատենագիտություն* [Armenian bibliographie] (Yerevan: Armenian SSR Academy of Sciences Press, 1969).

Vrej Nersessian, ed., *Catalogue of Early Armenian Books, 1512-1850* (London: The British Library Publishing Division, 1890).

[Hakob Anasyan] Հակոբ Անասյան, *Հայկական մատենագիտություն (V-XVIII դարեր)* [Armenian bibliographe], vol.1 (Yerevan: Armenian SSR Academy of Sciences Press, 1959).

Raymond H. Kévorkian, *Catalogue des "incunables" arméniens (1511/1695), ou, Chronique de l'imprimerie arménienne* (Genève: P. Cramer, 1986).

[N. Voskanyan, Q. Korkotyan, A. Savalyan] Ն. Ոսկանյան, Ք. Կորկոտյան, Ա. Սավալյան, eds., *Հայ գիրքը 1512-1800 թվականներին. Հայ հնատիպ գրքի մատենագիտություն* [Armenian book in 1512-1800. A bibliography of the Armenian incunabula] (Yerevan: Armenian SSR Academy of Sciences Press, 1988).

specific points, such as whether certain printers were clerics or merchants,[77] or whether they possessed their own printing workshops or took part in workshops of local printers,[78] contribution of these printers to certain publications,[79] the accounts have built on each other in constructing the printers' biographies. Their chief agenda has been the creation of a comprehensive narrative of the life-stories of the sixteenth century Armenian printers as initiators of the 'national' printing,[80] 'national' illuminators and heroes,[81] the agents of 'national reawakening,'[82] and so forth. Thus, it is not surprising that having the same historical sources and research questions and working within the nationalist historiographical tradition these works provide similar narratives and come to similar conclusions. They argue, first, that the early printers worked towards the reawakening of the supposedly declined Armenian book culture in a conscious manner, and secondly, that there is continuity between Armenian printing traditions maintained in European cities and in Armenia proper.

Both the earlier and more recent studies of Armenian incunabula have offered significant work in detecting direct and indirect sources that have shed more light on the beginnings of Armenian printing. Their efforts in interweaving all the scattered sources into a more or less coherent narrative are enormous. However, it is obvious that studies in this field have been focusing on the reconstruction of the missing links and traditional discussions already for too long. The major disadvantages of this kind of approach are that the works have become repetitive in nature, have relied too heavily on assumptions, or have taken the preceding assumptions for granted while aiming to provide more comprehensive

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[77] See Ishkhanyan, *The History of Armenian Printing,* 57-67, Devrikyan, *The Armenian book in the crossroads of the world*, 17-22, against Levonyan, *The Armenian Book*, 50-53.

[78] See Ishkhanyan, *The History of Armenian Printing,* 67-84, against Levonyan, *The Armenian Book*, 50-53.

[79] See Ishkhanyan, *The History of Armenian Printing,* 248-254, against Meliq-Ohanjanyan, *Story of Parez and Viena*, 14-15.

[80] Ishkhanyan, *The History of Armenian Printing*, 233.

[81] Levonyan, *The Armenian Book*, 4; Devrikyan, *The Armenian book in the crossroads of the world*, 154.

[82] Hovhannisyan, *History of Armenian Liberation Thought*, 50.

life-stories, and have so far failed to engage in fresh discussions or offer new perspectives for research. A typical example of these weaknesses is the latest study, *The Armenian Book in the Crossroads of the World*. This book is an accurate synthesis of the research done previously, only with slightly more data on the content of the incunabula. Some more examples follow to illustrate the aforementioned drawbacks in the researches.

2.2. Discrepancy between the sources and reconstructed narrative

The first volume of *The History of Armenian Printing* by professor R. Ishkhanyan, a philologist and bibliographer, is by far the largest account on the Armenian incunabula published in 1977. Here the author presents almost all the debates that had ever come up in the relevant literature. However, despite his critical approach to the secondary literature immediately preceding his work, Ishkhanyan tends to take most of the sources and the earliest researches for granted. For instance, he judges about Abgar's political views based on what Abgar reported to the inquisition,[83] although it is obvious that, being the Catholicos's envoy, Abgar would hardly reveal his genuine ideas if even those were different from the Catholicos's standpoint. Or, in another case, he writes, "Looking at the historical evidence about Abgar we find out that not only was he a clever and creative individual, but also a selfless, ambitious, and particularly fair national figure, though unlucky in his chief endeavors and rather a tragic personality."[84] In a third case, examining Sultanshah's letter to the Catholicos,[85] that was obviously written for the benefit of the Pope and the Catholic Church Ishkhanyan writes, "We see no reason not to believe what

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[83] In particular, Abgar is reported to have said during his interrogation, "We, the Armenians are enslaved under the Turkish and Persian rule." in Galemqearean "Abgar the Scribe," 1912. Ishkhanyan regards this as a characteristic line of Abgar's political views. Ishkhanyan, 192.

[84] [Abgari masin vaverakan nyowt'in çanot'analov parzowm enk', or na oč miayn čarpik, hnaramit anj ē eġel, ayl naew anjnazoh, hetewoġakan ow manavand azniv azgayin gorçič, t'eew ir glxavor npatakneri irakanac'man owġinerowm jaxoġak ow bavakanin oġbergakan anhat.] Ishkhanyan, 231.

[85] [Sultanshah of Tokhat] Սուլթանշահ Թոխաթցի, "Letter to Catholicos Tadeos II, October 21, 1583," in [Isahak Srapyan] Իսահակ Սրապյան, "Նորագույն լուսավորիչներ Աբգար Դպրի մասին" [The recent illuminations about Abgar the Scribe], *Bazmavep* 11 (1906): 321-325.

Sultanshah wrote and to question the absolute sincerity of his patriotism."[86] There are similar other cases, when Ishkhanyan and scholars preceding and succeeding him have regarded autobiographical material of these printers or their correspondences as uncontested historical evidence and thus have made ungrounded assumptions concerning, for instance, Abgar's arrival in Istanbul, his decision to set up printing presses, Johannes's activity in Rome, his death, and so on. Doing so, the studies that are too heavily affected by the nationalist discourse of a small republic aim at nothing more than telling a reliable and complete story about the beginnings of national printing. Another major problem is that having this main purpose, newer accounts in this field follow the preceding ones in their research questions and methodologies. Their research might have been more accurate if, instead of taking the sources for granted or interpreting them from the narrow nationalist perspective, they focused, for instance, on the reasons why those people preferred one way of self-presentation or self-fashioning to another.

2.3. Inconsistency in argumentation and interpretation

Another shortcoming is that most studies of Armenian incunabula have overemphasized the significance of the early printed books and the activity of their printers in the Armenian culture. Collectively, their assumption is that the early printing tradition established in Rome and Venice by those emigrant printers was a breakthrough in the Armenian culture, which was otherwise oppressed under the "backward Safavid and Ottoman rule."[87] This view has been put forward by the Catholic Mechitarists at the end of the nineteenth century and has never been challenged or critically questioned by later scholarship. "At the beginning of the sixteenth century, namely in 1512, a significant event took effect for the gloomy and dark life of the Armenian land insofar as the first Armenian

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[86] [Menk' orewē himk' čenk' tesnowm Sowlt'anžahi graçnerin čhavatalow ew nra hayrenasirowt'yan miangamayn ankeġçowt'yownë harc'akani tak dnelow hamar.] Ishkhanyan, 237-238.

[87] Leo, *Armenian printing*, 65.

printed book was issued in Venice,"[88] wrote G. Levonyan, a prominent literary critic and art historian in 1958. Ishkhanyan was more precise about the impact of this innovation: "In that deadly age for Armenia the publication of Armenian books in Venice reinforced the literacy in mother tongue, the latter being one of the chief factors of the survival and spiritual development of the Armenian nation."[89] Devrikyan tries to be more careful in his statement. "There is a certain significance in that the chandelier of Armenian printing was lit at the darkest and the haziest period of the history of our nation," he writes.[90]

Thus, through this line of interpretation of the emergence of the Armenian print culture, the researchers point out that, first, due to the miserable situation in Armenia proper, the emergence of printing press was possible only outside the country. Second, they argue that the early Armenian printers established their printing workshops with the deliberate agenda to enliven Armenian book culture or to contribute to domestic educational system. Second, following the tradition, they apparently claim that the sixteen Armenian publications in the sixteenth century had a decisive impact on the more steady printing tradition in Armenia proper in later centuries. This approach, however, appears to be seriously inconsistent as some of the researchers accept in parallel that the books were intended for Armenian merchants, pilgrims, other individuals who were travelling and trading in European cities.[91] As Father B. Zekiyan puts it, "it [the book production] was an individual initiative that aimed to provide a product for the merchants – to satisfy [their] needs because they [the merchants] were at the same time deeply religious and even

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[88] [Hay ašxarhi mṙayl ow mt'in kyank'i hamar 16-rd dari skzbneri, 1512 t'vakanin teġi ē ownenowm mi nšanavor depk῾ lowys ē tesnowm aṙaǰin hayeren tpagrvaç girk'ë Venetikowm.] Levonyan, 39.

[89] [Hayastani hamar ayn mahasarsowṙ žamanaknerowm, Venetikowm mayreni lezvov grk'er tpagrec' nor owž haġordelov mayreni dprowt'yanë῾ hayowt'yan goyatewman ow hogewor zargac'man glxavor gorçonneric῾ mekin.] Ishkhanyan, 179.

[90] [Meç xorhowrd owni ew ayn, or haykakan tpagrowt'yan ǰahë vaṙvec' mer žoġovrdi patmowt'yan amenamt'in ow aġot šrǰanowm.] Devrikyan, 10.

[91] Sebouh Aslanian, "Wings on their Feet and on their Heads: Reflections on Port Armenians and Five Centuries of Global Armenian Print Culture," *The Armenian Weekly* (2012), 11, 12.
Jean-Pierre Mahe, "Preface," in *Raymond Kevorkian*, Catalogue des "Incunables" armeniens (1511-1695) ou chronique de l'imprimerie armenienne (Geneva: Patrick Cramer Editeur, 1986), xxxiv.

superstitious people."[92] This contradiction in the argument is even more explicit when one asks as to why none of the copies of the earliest printed books has been found in Armenia,[93] for instance, in the monastery libraries, private collections, or elsewhere.

The printers, especially the earliest ones are, indeed, prominent cultural figures in every national imagination. So are Jacob the Sinner, Abgar the Scribe and others for the Armenians. My suggestion is, however, that insofar as the earliest Armenian printing endeavors were not intended for the audience in Armenia proper they can be regarded neither as deliberate acts towards the preservation of a domestic book culture, nor as impulses for the initiation of domestic print tradition. At the same time, I believe that this view, if adopted in the studies in the history of Armenian incunabula, will no way underestimate the remarkableness of the phenomenon of the first ever book printed in Armenian by an Armenian master printer as early as only half a century after Gutenberg's invention.

The above suggestion can be justified with plenty of historical evidence.

First, definitely, in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the economic and cultural situation not only in Armenia but also in the region in whole was, indeed, miserable due to the continuous ravages by various invaders and the formation processes of two militarily active entities – the Ottoman and Safavid empires.[94] However, as we have seen, in case of at least two printers, Abgar and Johannes (Jacob's story is not known), they left the country for completely different reasons and only after arrival in Rome and Venice decided to set up printing presses. Of course, most possibly they would not start this enterprise if they

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[92] Boghos Levon Zekiyan, *ArmenianWay to Modernity:Armenian Identity Between Tradition and Innovation, Specificity and Universality* (Venice: Supernova/Eurasiatica 49,1997), 35-36.
See also Devrikyan, 152.

[93] See the *Appendix*, where the forth column shows the locations of the existing manuscripts. The few copies that are preserved in the M. Mashtots Institute of the manuscripts, the only archive in Armenia where Armenian incunabula are kept, arrived there only later as donations.

[94] More on this era of the Armenian history: *Հայ ժողովրդի պատմություն. Հայ ժողովուրդը ֆեոդալիզմի վայրէջքի ժամանակաշրջանում (XIV-XVIII դարեր)* [The history of the Armenian people: the Armenian people in the era of the decline of feudalism (XIV-XVIII centuries)], vol.4 (Yerevan, 1979).

remaind at home, but the fact that they left their 'backward' country and ended up printing books in Italy or the fact that they were printing namely Armenian books cannot point on their conscious patriotic activity. They printed in Armenian, because it was the language that they mastered the best or because they thought that it was more rational to disseminate the printed books among their fellow emigrant countrymen, rather than establishing new networks among the locals.

Second, an unpublished quantitative study of production of Armenian manuscripts showed that there was "a steady rise in production starting in the 1550s, and more dramatically after 1610, to reach an absolute historic high during the decade ending in 1660."[95] This boom in manuscript production in the era of emergence of printing in national language clearly demonstrates that monasteries and educational centers, that is, the number one consumers of the books, handwritten or printed, did not expect any copies from Venice and Rome.[96] Apart from this, book production was entirely the prerogative of the pre-modern Armenian monastery, and it is not likely that monasteries and monastic universities would easily accept a printed copy of a book. Thus, due to these two factors, the Armenian monasteries did not need and were not disposed to welcome the printed books yet. To be sure, the leaders of the Armenian Church conceived the potential value of printed books

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[95] Dickran Kouymjian, "Revolution or Evolution? The Armenian Book from Manuscript to Print," in *Port Cities and Printers: Five Centuries of Global Armenian Print, 1512-2012*, ed. Sebouh Aslanian (Los Angeles: UCLA, 2012), 3, https://www.google.hu/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0CCMQFjA A&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.sscnet.ucla.edu%2Fhistory%2Faslanian%2FKouymjianDraftTextUCLANov1 2_1.pdf&ei=RJ2TU9SjEbHT7Abg24DgDg&usg=AFQjCNHtx-Tanwde2QVVMBi92efcrW0TsA&sig2=PAVo5bZ6OHoIjXYqEhrtgw&bvm=bv.68445247,d.ZGU (accessed May 15, 2014).

[96] For more details on the Armenian high schools and universities in the era of early printing see: [Elia Qasuni] Եղիա Քասունի, *Պատմութիւն հայ հին դաստիարակութեան* [History of old Armenian eduacation] (Beirut, Sevan Print, 1959).

[Levon Khacherian] Լևոն Խաչերյան, *Հայագիր դպրութեան ուսումնագիտական կենտրոնները. Դպրոցները, դպրեվանքերը, վարդարանները, ճեմարանները, ակադեմիաները եւ համալսարանները միջնադարյան Հայաստանում եւ Կիլիկիայում (V-XVI դդ.)* [The Armenian Learning Centers, Schools, Priesthood Schools, Vardapetarans, Seminaries, Academies and Universities in Medieval Armenia and Cilicia] (Lisbon: Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian Print, 1998).

[Arshak Alpoiajyan] Արշակ Ալպոյաճյան, *Պատմութիւն հայ դպրոցի* [History of Armenian School] (Cairo, New Star Print, 1946).

later in the seventeenth century, when Voskan of Yerevan (1614-1674) was sent to Marseille and Amsterdam to print ecclesiastical literature that was subsequently used by the Armenian Church.[97]

Third, the evidence of the establishment of an Armenian printing house in New Julfa, Isfahan, in the mid-sixteenth century demonstrates that it would be potentially possible to arrange domestic printing workshops in prominent Armenian urban centers under the Ottoman and Safavid rule in case the shortage of printed books was really felt.[98] Aslanian, the author of a recent fascinating monograph on the trade network of Armenian merchants from Kolkata to London, argues that, unlike port cities with strong Armenian presence, Armenian cities had no the required capital for initiation of printing presses.[99] However, New Julfa also was a landlocked city and its printing press was supported by the capital from Armenian merchants working in European port cities. In the same way, establishment of the first printing press was financially covered by Armenian merchants of another port city, Kolkata, with the difference that it was more than a century later than the one in New Julfa.

Finally, as discussed in the previous chapter, neither Abgar, nor Johannes and especially not Sultanshah had any conscious patriotic feelings while establishing printing workshops. In fact, Abgar appeared to start printing in order to hide his diplomatic activity, Sultanshah and Johannes were part of the Pope's expansionist policy. It becomes largely evident that the printers of the sixteenth century did not have and could not have the agenda

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[97] Ishkhanyan, 324-340.

[98] New Julfa [Nor Juła] was a suburb of the Safavid capital of Isfahan, where the commercial elite of the Iranian Armenians was concentrated. In 1636 Khachatur Kesaratsi, the primate of *All Savior's Monastery* in New Julfa, arranged a self-made printing press in his monastery, where the first publications were a psalter (1638), a missal (1641), a book of liturgy (1642), and so on. More on the Joulfan printing:
V. Ghougassian, "The Armenians of New Julfa and their Cultural Heritage," *Journal of Eastern Christian Studies* 52/3-4 (2000): 201-20.
[Levon Minasean] Լեւոն Մինասեան, *Նոր Ջուղայի տպարանն ու իր տպագրած գրքերը (1636-1972)* [The printing press in Nor Juła and the books published there] (New Julfa: All Saviour's Monastery Print, 1972).

[99] Sebouh Aslanian, "Wings on their Feet and on their Heads: Reflections on Port Armenians and Five Centuries of Global Armenian Print Culture," *The Armenian Weekly* (2012), 11.

or the mission of printing confessional literature for domestic universities and monasteries. Consequently, on the contrary to what Armenian historiography describes them, their investment in reawakening domestic print culture was minor, if any. The sixteenth century Armenian incunabula were too limited in their number and too insufficient in their content to benefit any national reawakening. They provided neither Bibles or, at least, new Testaments, nor extensive maps and dictionaries, nor folk literature, as it was the case with seventeenth-century Armenian printing.[100] In the era of the decline of Classical Armenian and the emergence of the Middle Armenian, the language of these books was flawed being neither pure classical, nor purely vernacular. Thus, these books were not innovative in the terms of their language either. Furthermore, as discussed in the Introduction, the emergence of the first printed books did not entail any tangible changes in the domestic culture.

It seems that the disregard of this aspect or its misinterpretation in studies in Armenian printing is again due to the failure to examine the historical evidence from a perspective different from the prevailing nationalist one.

2.4. Need for new research directions in studies on Armenian printing

After two centuries of investigations in almost all the possible European, Turkish (Ottoman), and Armenian archives and libraries, it seems that all the surviving sources directly related to the first Armenian printers and their publications are detected and analyzed. In this sense, it is highly impractical for recent incunabula studies to continue the century-long debates over the biographical data of the early Armenian printers or any other details regarding the creation of Armenian incunabula. Considering the recent studies in this topic, such as Devrikyan's book, it becomes obvious that, in fact, the lengthy debates on

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[100] For instance, there were *Gospel* (Suceava, 1649); *Bible* (New Julfa, 1650); *Bible* (Amsterdam: Voskan of Yerevan Print, 1668); *New Testament* (Amsterdam: Voskan of Yerevan Print, 1668); *Ashkharacoic Movses Khorentsu* [World map of Moses of Khoren] (Amsterdam: Voskan of Yerevan Print, 1668*); Aghvesagirq Vardan Aygektsu* [Compilation of Fables of vardan of Aygek] (Amsterdam: Voskan of Yerevan Print, 1668), and so on.

life-stories do not entail decisive outcome any more. In order to overcome this deadlock in incunabula studies and to get more insights concerning the emergence of Armenian printing new approaches are required. There is a need to explore the sources in some new contexts, such as the printing enterprise in view of restrictions in the post-Tridentine Catholic world and in parallel with other immigrant, in many cases Protestant, printers. Another investigation can be on the perception of the Catholic doctrine by the Catholicized Armenian printers in view of the textual alterations they made in their publications of confessional material. A third one can be on the printers' sense of belonging and perception of travel based on the relevant sources. Finally, one can investigate the fascinating topic of the contribution of early Armenian printers to the early modern transfer of ideas. Any of these and other contexts will unfold the history of the beginning of Armenian incunabula in more details and will provide new insights into the causes and motivations behind this phenomenon.

In the following two chapters, I will discuss the available sources in view of two possible contexts with the double aim to retrieve new knowledge on early Armenian printers and to prove that the adoption of new contexts, in fact, gives new insights into the story.

Chapter 3.   **Rethinking the activity of the Armenian printers in post-Tridentine Rome and Venice in the second half of the sixteenth century**

As discussed in the previous chapter, studies of the beginning of Armenian printing have entered a deadlock due to their one-sided interpretation of the primary sources on the first Armenian printers and failure to integrate broader frameworks for the analysis of the available sources. Therefore, in this chapter I attempt to introduce Catholic confessionalization and the key transformations that it entailed in Rome and Venice as a new possible setting in which the first Armenian printers, Abgar, Sultanshah, and Johannes, started their printing activity. In particular, these were the few decades immediately following the Council of Trent (1545-63). Jacob the Sinner, who started his enterprise in Venice in 1512, is not involved in this discussion as his activity was well before the European cities experienced the main features of the Age of the Confessionalization. The main outcome of this chapter is that, first, it integrates the primary material on the early Armenian printers into the recent debates of Catholic and Protestant confessionalizations, and second, it gives somewhat broader insight into the motivations behind the printing endeavors of these people. In particular, it becomes more explicit that none of them had the national reawakening in mind when they started their enterprises.

3.1. Post-Tridentine Inquisition and Index against the immigrant printers

In the age of Catholic Confessionalization or Catholic Reform, due to intense confessional transformations and reforms, widened demographic movements, and spread of printing, the image of Rome and Venice started to alter greatly. Most studies demonstrate how in the years following the Council of Trent, when the non-Catholic masses living in Papal States and Venice had either to dissimulate or flee due to their easy attainability by

the post-Tridentine Catholic institutions.[101] However, the general idea that in Rome and Venice the Protestantism and other 'heresies' were effectively fought out by the post-Tridentate Inquisition, is not necessarily true. In particular, in the second half of the sixteenth century wide variety of dissident religious ideas appeared in Northwestern Italy and in Rome. Especially Venice and its possessions served as entrance, temporary refuge, and exit for heretics. As an article in *The Cambridge History of Christianity* argues, "Inquisition courts functioned most actively in Italy from about 1580 to 1620, as by 1580s heresy had receded as a threat there."[102] The network of inquisitorial offices – reactivated in 1542 to reveal and investigate the heretical beliefs within the Papal States – represented, perhaps, the most influential among the Post-Tridentine tools for church disciplining 'from above.' Everyone – both laity and elites, patricians, merchants, artisans, workers, somewhat liberal Catholics, literati, artists and so on – was under the danger of being accused, especially by anonymous informers. "Perhaps the most harmful effects of the Inquisition lay in fear and in an intimidation of intellectual life."[103] Thus, in fact, the heretical ideas continued to exist in the Papal States in disguised forms and in dissimulation rather than being completely burnt-out.

The other essential apparatus for detecting and restricting the sources of heretical ideas was Index, the list of the prohibited books that were disseminated to the Catholic public primarily in printed form. Indeed, due to their relatively large networks that reached both literati and artisans, early printers potentially could disseminate 'dissident' teachings. At the same time, they were the main agents who smuggled the prohibited volumes into the Catholic realms. Therefore, attempting to surpass the circulation of heretical books and to

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[101] See for example, Guy Bedouelle, *The Reform of Catholicism, 1480-1620* (Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 2008); Ronnie Po-Chia Hsia, *The World of Catholic Renewal: 1540-1770* (Cambridge University Press, 2005); John O'Malley *Trent and All That: Renaming Catholicism in the Early Modern Era (Harward University Press, 2002).*

[102] Robert Brieley, "Redefining Catholicim: Trent and Beyond," in *Cambridge History of Christianity,* ed. P-Chia-Hsia, 153.

[103] *ibid*, 153.

prevent the spread of heresy in their cities, "throughout the next several decades [after 1548], the inquisitors sent around inspectors to bookshops and harassed printers on a variety of fronts – from surveillance of books passing through customs to the occasional trials of individual printers." [104] As *Printing, Writers and Readers in Renaissance Italy,* an innovative study on printing in the Age of Confessionalization shows, although the Tridentine Index was relatively moderate than the previous lists of prohibitions, the control upon the book industry was more cautious and the repression was harsher – up to the level that the booksellers complained that "because of the fear arouse by the Inquisition, 'no more books are being sold,' nobody wanted to run bookshops."[105]

Non-Catholic immigrants were another source through which the dissident ideas were introduced into the Papal States. Upon their arrival, the immigrated artisans and other workers got involved in guilds or other collective works and thus formed a potential nucleus of such prosecuted ideas. Thus, the immigrant printers or immigrant employees of printing houses, in case they were followers of non-Catholic Christianity were under a dual attack. Under such circumstances, 'dissident' printers could choose to continue working in the prominent Italian centers of printing and trying to disguise their 'anti-Catholic' ideas. Otherwise, they chose to leave the Papal States.

The first Armenian printers were among the immigrant printers in Venice and Rome and they had to face the control and censorship by the Papal institutions. Abgar the Scribe, Catholicos Michael's envoy to Pius IV, first time arrived in Venice in around 1564, shortly after the Counsil of Trent. Once again he resided in Venice in 1565, after fulfilling or partially fulfilling his diplomatic mission.[106] Besides being merely a non-Catholic printer, Abgar represented the clergy of a non-Catholic church. Hence, his printing enterprise might

[104] John Jeffries Martin, *The Myth of Renaisance Individualism* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 25.
[105] Brian Richardson, *Printing, Writers and Readers in Renaissance Italy* (Cambridge University Press, 1999), 46.
[106106] See Abgar'story in Chapter 1.

be interesting for the papal inquisitors. Both of his publications in Venice, the brief calendar (1565) and the psalter (1566) included two woodcut illustrations depicting his obedience to the Pope and the Dodge of Venice, Girolamo Priuli (1559–1567). As discussed in Chapter 1, there are two differing explanations of why Abgar was so keen to insert those illustrations in his two publications. Considering the harsh disciplining policy in Venice, a third explanations can be that expressing his obedience to the political and religious authorities in the Catholic world through the woodcuts, Abgar attempted to escape a new possible meeting with the Inquisition officials (as he had another one in Rome).

Soon after the first two publications, Abgar left Venice for Istanbul carrying his type-letters with him. This shows that he was planning to continue his printing activity, but he preferred Istanbul to Venice. Studies usually explain that this choice was because he regarded Istanbul as home.[107] However, there can be another reason. In Istanbul Abgar printed a missal where, in the relevant section, the Catholicos was mentioned as the leader of the liturgy, and therefore the sovereign leader of the Armenian Church.[108] The book was supplemented by woodcut illustrations depicting the hierarchy of the Armenian Church starting from the Apostles and the Catholicos as their successor.[109] Obviously, this missal could not be published in Venice. Thus, the intensified disciplining employed by the post-Tridentine policy of the Catholic Church is a possible explanation of why Abgar continued his printing activity in Istanbul.

Johannes of Terzn was not as fortunate in his endeavors as Abgar was. Arriving in Rome before 1583, he was apparently employed by Sultanshah who was already the overseer of the Armenian community in Rome. This can be traced in the two colophons of

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[107] Ishkhanyan, 204-208; Devrikyan, 193-194.

[108] This explanation is given in Devrikyan, 84, 100, however, without further elaborations.

[109] [Abgar the Scribe] Աբգար Դպիր, ed., *Սաղմոսարան* [Saghmosaran, Book of Psalms] (Venice, 1566), 7.

Johannes's publications in Rome, where he mentioned Sultanshah as his supporter.[110] Unlike this first phase of his printing activity, when he carries out the translation and printing of *The Gregorian Calendar* and *The Confession of Faith*, two crucial publications for the Catholic mission among the Armenian communities in Armenian and in the Middle Eastern countries.

After these two publications, towards the end-1580s, when the atmosphere in Rome and other Italian cities became unprecedentedly stifling due to the papal censorship and Inquisitorial trials,[111] Johannes decided to leave Rome. Perhaps this decision of the former priest of the Armenian Church (presumably he had converted while working for the Papal propaganda), seemed suspicious to the Inquisition court. As J. J. Martin points out, in the Renaissance society, the dissimulation of confessional beliefs was a widespread way of representation in the confessional and everyday behavior. "It was often a matter of survival for those who held heretical beliefs to dissimulate, to conceal them, to be prudent about exposing their internal convictions to others."[112] As he informs in his poem, he was imprisoned on his way to Venice. After spending around ten months in several inquisitorial prisons, he managed to leave for Venice then to Marseille. This was the period of the French Wars of Religion (1562-98) when, as he complained in the colophon of his translation of *The Story of Parez and Wenna,* "the land and the sea were closed, there is no permission for those who want to leave, but the incomers are always welcomed."[113]

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[110] Johannes of Terzn, trans., *The Gregorian Calendar*, 110; Johannes of Terzn, trans., *The Confession of Faith*, 95.

[111] Richardson, *Printing, Writers and Readers*, 40-46.

[112] Martin, *The Myth of Renaissance Individualism*, 32.

[113] [C'amak' ew çov kapeal mnay, ert'ac'oġin hramank' či kay, apa ekoġn t'oġ mišt gay], in *Պատմություն Փարեզի և Վեննայի* [The story of Parez and Wenna] (Yerevan, Armenian SSRnAcademy od Sciences, 1966), 233, lines 12-14.

3.2. Expansionist policy of the post-Tridentine Catholic Church and the immigrant

printers

As Po-Chia Hsia and other historians characterize, "the early modern papacy represented the precursor of the early modern state" as far as, among other functions, it "sponsored mercantilism by developing roads, ports, industry, and trade."[114] In this way, the Papal States gradually became attractive centers for international commerce. The Renaissance popes commissioned a large number of artworks thus attracting Italian and foreign artists to the city. However, parallel to the growth of the multi-cultural and multi-ethnic population in the city, the rights of the religious minorities were being narrowed. The most vivid example of this policy is, perhaps, the Catholicizition of the Greek community in Rome. Aiming at confessional polarization, Pope Pius IV "annulled the right of Greeks under Roman jurisdiction to keep non-Latin rites. A Greek congregation was founded in 1573. *The Roman Catechism* was translated into Greek."[115] The practice in such cases was that the non-Catholic bishops who had declared their subjection to the see of Rome – willingly or under pressure – signed a formula of the Catholic Creed in Rome, and were ordained in their titles for the second time or were assigned to new titles. In the same pattern, in the second half of the sixteenth century the Armenian community in Rome and in Venice were Catholicized. Of course, this conversion was a result of certain interrelated economic and cultural processes, but the papal propaganda played its remarkable role, too.

Despite the successful reform and a series of significant inner improvements, the hierarchical structure of the Catholic Church remained substantially the same. As Po-Chia Hsia puts it, "the council [of Trent] did meet under the authority of the pope and it focused on the reform of the members of the Church, leaving the reform of its head to the Roman

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[114] Ronnie Po-Chia Hsia, *The World of Catholic Renewal: 1540-1770* (Cambridge University Press, 2005), 103.

[115] Mikhail Dmitriev, "Western Chritianityand Eastern Orthodoxy," in *Cambridge History of Christianity:* ed. Po-Chia Hsia, 322.

Curia itself."[116] The pope continued to be the absolute authority. On the one hand, the institutes of nepotism and patronage, and on the other hand, "the time-honored methods of raising revenues: taxation and the sale of offices"[117] persisted at the papal court. Indeed, according to his studies, between 1520 and 1565 the number of offices sold had risen to 3,635 from 2,232. This means, people around the Pope, whether nephews, protégées, receivers of other types of advancements, and so on, were fully dependent on the Pope's favor. According to his letter, Sultanshah or as he was called in Rome, Mark Antonio, was one those people.[118] As a protégée of the Pope, he was ascribed the position of the overseer of Armenian community in Rome and got monthly stipend from the Pope. In response, Sultanshah was active both in the process of Catholicization of the Armenian community in Rome and in the expansionist policy of the post-Tridentine Catholic Reform.

Thus, his two letters to Armenian Patriarch of Jerusalem David (January/Fabruary, 1583) and Catholicos Tadeos II (October, 1583) are now available. In both the letters Sultanshah describes the situation "impoverished" Armenian community in Rome,[119] the poverty and helplessness of these Armenians[120] and asks for financial aid, that is, "any particles of the sacred relics of the holy apostles or holy martyrs that have significant fame among the Romans [i.e. Catholics]"[121] or "some holy water, golden crosses, blessed rings, and relics of Jude the Apostle."[122] Aiming at their conversion into Catholicism Sultanshah invited them to Rome to visit Rome, to adopt the Pope's power, "become his protégée," and "recover his right of patriarch."[123] It is interesting that he mentions that many other bishops "from Ethiopia, Arabia, Syria, Georgia, Armenia, Mesopotamia, Palestinia" have already

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[116] Po-Chia Hsia, *The World of Catholic Renewal,* 25.
[117] *ibid,* 105.
[118] See footnotes 42-45 in Chapter 1.
[119] "Letter to Patriarch,"
[120] "Letter to Catholicos," lines 22-37.
[121] "Letter to Patriarch, "
[122] [meṙon, xač oski, matani òrhneal, znšxars S. T'adeosi vkayi, zc'ank amenayn teġeac'], "Letter to Catholicos Tadeos II,"
[123] "Letter to Patriarch, "

done so.[124] Thus, besides being tools for the papal expansionist propaganda, these letters witness a tricky method of raising revenues for the Catholic Church.

Another common enterprise of Sultanshah and Johannes of Terzn was the translation and printing of the new Gregorian calendar[125] "by the order of His Holiness Pope Grigor XIII"[126] in 1584. As it becomes obvious in a letter from Catholics Azaria to the Pope in 1585, where he asked for a printed Bible besides the new calendar and the confession of faith that had previously sent to him.[127]

The cases discussed above demonstrated how profoundly the processes of ongoing confessional disciplining imposed by the Papal Curia and the religious wars could shape the life and activity of a single printer. These cases are vivid reflections of the post-Tridentine Catholic Church policies that aimed at elimination of dissident ideas in its domains, at incorporation of new masses of believers in Ottoman lands and the Middle East, China and New World; and lastly, at ensuring more income through selling offices and through incoming donations. Therefore, a closer and broader examination of the activities of Armenian printers in European cities would be a worthy addition to the large and still growing body of literature over the confession-building processes in early modern Europe and the Ottoman Empire.

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[124] *ibid*, 324.

[125] [Sultanshah of Tokhat and Johannes of Terzn] Սուլթանշահ Թոխատեցի և Հովհաննես Տերզնցի, trans. *Tomar Grigorean [Gregorean Calendar]* (Romae ex typographia Dominici Basae, 1584).
At least this is what is mentioned in the colophone. However, some Armenian scholars of the history of early printed books argue that indicating Sultnshah as one of the co-organizers of these and subsequent publications by Johannes was a symbolic way of respect, as the former was the orderer of the books.

[126] *ibid*, 110.

[127] Reported in [Grigor Galemqearean] Գրիգոր Գալեմքարեան, "Աբգար Դպիր և տպագրած Մաշտոց" [Abgar the Scribe and Mashtots printed by him], *Bazmavep* 7 (1912), 392 (Codices Armeni Bibliothecae Vaticanae, no.2, 44a).

Chapter 4. **Sense of belonging and perception of travel in Johannes of Terzn's translation of *Parys and Vyenne***

The early modern era – equipped with already widespread printing presses in almost every significant urban center in Europe – witnessed rapid increase in translations of travel reports and pieces of popular literature. Those translations not only simply turned a text into another language, but also offered rather considerable degree of adaptation of the text in order to make it relevant to the taste and values of the new audience.[128] In other words, in terms of the absence of any copyrights, the adapted translation was an essential tool for making the written knowledge – through abridgments, amplification with new messages, paraphrasing, and other interventions – utmost transferrable into another culture. In addition, the alterations from the original narrative are often made based on certain personal preferences. As Burke writes, "Early modern translators of medieval or modern works seem to have viewed themselves as co-authors with the right to modify the original text."[129] Thus, according to Burke, close examination of what was added and omitted in translations proves "one of the most effective ways of identifying differences between cultures," [130] seen through lenses of translators. Moreover, it is to a considerable degree reliable indicator of the translator's preferences, attitudes, outlook, taste, also his understanding of the taste of the time.

Considering the above, a distinctive source for the scrutiny of the biographies and perceptions of the immigrant printers is a tradaptation[131] – an adapted translation – of *The Story of Parys and Vyenne*, a medieval romantic fiction of chivalric character that was translated into Armenian by Johannes of Terzn. This chapter aims to show that while

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[128] Peter Burke and R. Po-Chia Hsia, eds., *Cultural Translation in Early Modern Europe*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007, 54.

[129] Peter Burke, *Cultural Translation in Early Modern Europe*, 34.

[130] *ibid*, 38.

[131] This term was first offered by Michel Garneau. Quoted in Peter Burke and R. Po-Chia Hsia, eds., *Cultural Translation in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 33, footnotes.

translating the romance Johannes managed to incorporate the geographical locations and perceptions of his native land into the original narrative. What is even more essential, he imported certain details that significantly overlap, with his biographical data that are known from other sources. There are also some personal insights traceable in the text. Therefore, I argue, that this translation, largely ignored by the studies on early Armenian printers, is a significant source both for biographical data and for perceptions of one of the printers.

4.1. Historical background

In brief, *The Story of Parys and Vyenne* is the love story between Vyenna, the daughter of the duke of Vienna, and Parys, a young knight of relatively lower rank, but a son of respected parents. Several failed attempts of union eventually cause the lovers to physical and mental tortures, imprisonment, separation, and exile. The story reaches its happy ending when Parys, disguised as a moor and already fluent in Arabic language and Middle Eastern customs and manners, arranges his old seignior's – Vyenne's father – escape from the Alexandrian prison, where the latter was jailed with accusation of spying for the French crusader king. As a reward, he gets the duke's beautiful daughter Vyenna.

Originally in Catalonian, *Parys and Vyenne* was translated into French by Pierre de la Cépède in 1459 and printed by Gerard Leeu in Antwerp in 1487. Two editions, in Tuscan and in English, were published in prior to this French version, respectively in 1482 and 1485 (by William Caxton). Soon after, the romance became widely popular throughout Europe via Flemish, German, Dutch, Swedish, Castilian, and other languages, mostly in printed versions. Relatively later the romance was translated into Latin (printed in Venice in 1516 and in Paris in 1517), Armenian (in 1540/1584, not printed until the eighteenth century), Yiddish (in 1514, printed in Verona in 1594), and Greek (in 1640).

The Armenian translation of the romance is over 2000-verse-long poem written in 11-metric quatrain that is typical for medieval Armenian poetic tradition. This version is much shorter than the translations in other European languages. It was first partially published in Istanbul two centuries after its translation,[132] prior to which it apparently circulated in manuscripts. Six distinct versions of the initial text by Johannes of Terzn copied by different scribes in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries are available at present.[133] This fact led to much ambiguity and controversy about this piece of literature, concerning especially, first, the date of the translation, and second, the initial text based on which this translation was created and other circumstances. In her chapter on the multilingual translations of the romance, Catherine Léglu believes that the Armenian version was translated from the Tuscan text as early as in 1540.[134] The Armenian historiography, however, dates this edition much later, around 1587, when Johannes of Terzn and his son arrived in Marseille from Rome. This later date seems more reasonable, as the one offered by Léglu precedes by forty years *The Gregorian Calendar*, Johannes' first known publication in Rome.

The main commentator on the Armenian translation, Karapet Meliq-Ohanjanyan, argues that in terms of the usage of geographical and personal names the Armenian translation proves the closest to the earliest translations of the novel into Italian vernaculars.[135] The seventeenth century scribal copies of this Armenian version also state that it was translated from the Frank language, that is, the early modern *lingua franca* of the

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[132] Garegin Srvandztyan, ed., *Patmutyun Parezi ev Wennayi* [*Story of Parez and Wenna*] (Constantinople: Manana, 1876), 282-286.

[133] As well as a later translation into Ottoman Turkish, which, as shown in textual analysis of the tradaptaion by KarapetMeliq-Ohanjanyan, is translated from the Armenian version and is surprisingly written down in Armenian transliteration of Ottoman Turkish. Unfortunately, at this stage I could not trace any secondary literature on this extraordinary translation in order to provide more confident data. *Patmutyun Parezi ev Wennayi*, 58-67.

[134] Catherine E. Léglu, "Multilingual Paris and Vienna." In *Multilingualism and Mother Tongue in Medieval French, Occitan, and Catalan narratives* (Pennsylvania State University Press: Pennsylvania, 2010), 143.

[135] Karapet Meliq-Ohanjanyan, *Patmutyun Parezi ev Wennayi* [*Story of Parez and Wenna*] (Yerevan: Armenian SSR Academy of Sciences Press, 1966), 54-55.

Mediterranean basin, which was dominantly composed from different Italian vernaculars. Indeed, this should have been the language that Johannes of Terzn mastered the best. In this sense, it was an indirect, as Burke qualifies, 'second hand' translation, that is, translation of the original text via a second language, in this case one of Italian vernaculars.

Based on the above argument it is possible to speculate further about the certain version used by Johannes of Terzn for his translation. In 1571, shortly before Johannes supposedly started his work on the Armenian translation, an Italian translation of the romance was published in Genoa by Mario Telluccini.[136] Hypotetically, this book could have even been the first sparkle for Johannes's inspiration for the Armeian translation after he got acquainted with this book contemporary to him either through his professional network, or out of pure interest, or just accidentally. As Geoffrey Baldwin argues, "texts could be translated as interesting or eye-catching, or because of their relevance to a particular political situation, or because of more general significance."[137]

This analysis, insofar as it aims at revealing the distinct autobiographical passages incorporated into the romance by the translator, does not consider clear differentiation between the translations into various European languages. Thus, in this research the latter are treated collectively and are represented through an English version published in 1485 by the William Caxton.[138]

4.2. Textual alterations as indicators of the translator's sense of belonging

As was said, the Armenian translation is a much briefer version of the original romance. Here the numerous twists of the romance are reduced down to only those strongly

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[136] Mario Telluccini, Antonio Bellone, Pierre de la Ceĺ peĺ€de, *Paride, e Vienna* (Genova: Appresso Antonio Bellone, 1571).

[137] Geoffrey Baldwin, "The Translation of Political Theory," in Peter Burke and R. Po-Chia Hsia, eds., *Cultural Translation in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 105.

[138] *Parys and Vyenne: Thystorye of the noble right valyaunt and worthy knyght Parys and of the fayr Vyenne the Daupphynsdoughter of Vyennoys* (Westminster: William Caxton's printing house, 1485). Published in William Carew Hazlitt, ed. *Paris and Vienne* (London: Wittingham and Wilkins, 1868).

connected to the main narrative. For example, large passages about Parez's second letter to his fellow Eduard, or the Pope's role in raising a new crusade are completely omitted. In fact, the Pope does not figure in the Armenian version at all. In the same way, the repeating actions, such as Parez's combats against the duke's soldiers or the tournaments in Paris held by the French king are compressed into single scenes. In addition, the Armenian version excludes the long lyrical intermezzo typical for the Renaissance courtly poetry of that era. Obviously, the translator-editor considered these passages irrelevant to the Armenian-reading audience.

The most remarkable intervention into the original text is the narrative of Parez's ten-year-long wandering in the East after his escape to Genoa. This passage is inserted in the thirteenth chapter "Returning to Parez to tell what happened after he read the second letter from Wenna, and how, in escape from everybody, turned to Hayk and Parsik.[139] Unlike the original text of the romance, where aiming to go on pilgrimage in Jerusalem, Parez departs for Alexandria directly from Venice, in Johannes of Terzn's translation Alexandia is only the last point of Parez's journey. This outstanding passage is not merely a spontaneous improvisation of the text. It reveals further illustrations that directly link to the known facts of Johannes of Terzn's distressful life. The new entries, I suggest, are autobiographical, insofar as the narrative of Parez's self-exile, his separation from his beloved ones and homeland, and his endless travels reveal direct parallels with the homesick – as states in other sources – refugee printer-translator. A vivid example is that Parez apparently repeats Johannes's possible voyage from his hometown to Venice. He went on board in Genoa, "But soon after sailing into the Mediterranean / He faced plenty of evil misfortunes / And was almost drown in the waters of sea."[140]

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[139] That is, Armenia and Persian land, it should still be decided whether to translate these toponyms to English or keep the original Armenian versions.
[140] *Patmutyun Parezi ev Wennayi*, 200.

This lingering journey then leads the hero to Cilicia,[141] from where he crossed to the historical lands of Minor and Greater Armenia, and then Georgia. In the Orient, chief mission of "original" Parez is to visit the Holy Land. To be sure, a whole chapter[142] illustrates his "great will to go to Jerusalem / for to see holy sayntuaryes / & taccomplyes the holy pylgremage," the preparations, "How parys wente to shyppe at venyse / for to goo to the holy sepulcre in Ierusalem." [143] In contrast, in the Armenian version Parez's pilgrimage is first of all embodied in his visit to the city of Ani, "that is a great fortification,"[144] the last capital city of the perished Armenian kingdom.[145] Needless to state that this pilgrimage is illustrated in the romance exceptionally due to the Armenian origin of its translator and his nostalgic feelings about Ani. After this region, Parez settles, for a longer period, in Tabriz.[146] Then he "overpasses Mesopotamia on its core,"[147] probably south-north and arrives to another historical city, Tigranakert-Diarbekir, then Urfa, Beria, Babi Dur - Al-Bab, and finally arrives to Aleppo-Halab. Indeed, all these cities are perfectly connected through a reasonable route leading to Aleppo. We do not know the route that Johannes of Terzn and his son chose to arrive to Italy. The small town of Terzn or Terzi was situated somewhere between Urfa and Diarbekir. Therefore, the described route could be a possible option for sailing to Venice from Alexandria by leaving out Istanbul.[148] After Aleppo and Damascus, he visits Jerusalem, as it was mentioned above, and "sees all the

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[141] *Patmutyun Parezi ev Wennayi*, 200.
[142] *Parys and Vyenne,* 69.
[143] *Parys and Vyenne,* 69-71.
[144] *Patmutyun Parezi ev Wennayi*, 199.
[145] There is a remark about Parez visiting Jerusalem, but it is not as massively emphasized as it is in the original narrative. *Patmutyun Parezi ev Wennayi*, 203.
[146] *Patmutyun Parezi ev Wennayi*, 201.
[147] *Patmutyun Parezi ev Wennayi*, 201.
[148] It should be mentioned that at first the connection between these cities is not recognizable, insofar as Karapet Meliq-Ohanjanyan's sone non-exact interpretations. First, he identifies Johannes of Terzn's toponym Babi Dour (both meaning 'door' as translated respectively from Arabic and Armenian) with Bab el-Mandeb strait. Secondly, among the parallel readings in the manuscripts regarding Diarbekir (Tigranakert in Armenian, Amed in Kurdish) he prefers – obviously favoring the quantitative aspect – the version "He comes and arrives in Tigranakert / Where he explores its? or his [Parez's] name as Amet," instead of "... / Which [the city] is nicknamed Amet. Unlike the very vague formulation of the first – which causes to think that Parez changed his name – the second gives clear referral simply to another name of the city.

places of the Lord."[149] Eventually, he makes up his mind to travel to Egypt straight away to be informed about Wenna's father's arrest from a Christian monk. After this point, the narrative proceeds closer to the original one.

A remarkable thing is that after the geographical turn of the story from Europe to the Orient, the translator no more creates – and actually no more has the need to create – blurred versions of the original toponyms. Instead, he uses the versions familiar to him from his native tongue, such as Msr instead of Egypt,[150] Sham instead of Damascus,[151] Tajkac land instead of Turkish land,[152] and so on.

During his wanderings in the East, Parez had to conceal his identity for security concerns. The original narrative mentions "And in that whyle hys berde grewe longe / And after he tooke the habyet of a more / And also lerned alle the custommes and manners of the contree."[153] In the translation Johannes adds also that "Parez always changed his garments and face / And always had on clothes [typical for] Persians / Or whatsoever new land he entered / He swiftly put on garments like them."[154] This episode is apparently an echo of the widespread custom of changing the original clothing practiced by merchants, pilgrims, renegades, etc. – most probably by Johannes, too – traveling back and forth the frontiers of the Ottoman Empire. Alternatively, in another event, "He used to follow their [local Muslims] prayers /... / was always trying to imitate them / Not to give way for people's suspicion."[155] In the text, there are a few more remarks about this type of imitations.

Thus, considering the discussed passages, it can be argued that whatever is altered, added, or omitted in the main body of the romance is a result of the translator-printer's conscious adaptation of the content. Moreover, the primary pattern along which the

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[149] *Patmutyun Parezi ev Wennayi,* 203.
[150] *Patmutyun Parezi ev Wennayi,* 203.
[151] *Patmutyun Parezi ev Wennayi,* 202.
[152] *Patmutyun Parezi ev Wennayi,* 196.
[153] *Parys and Vyenne*, 69.
[154] Ibid, 201-202
[155] *Patmutyun Parezi ev Wennayi*, 204.

adaptation was implemented proves to be the incorporation of personal elements of the translator's life into the narrative. Following this principle, it is valid to argue that the further incorporations into the Armenian translation, about which there are no other sources – can similarly carry hints on the translator's memories, experience, and perceptions. Memories of the tortures and calamities experienced by the translator during his refuge are illustrated in the following episode. In Venice Parez tries, without success, to catch the boats "Which were sailing to give battle against the tajiks [i.e. Turks] / and Parez had the desire for volunteering."[156] Apparently this is an echo of the Fourth Ottoman-Venetian War (1570–1573), resulting in the capture of Cyprus by the Ottomans, and the defeat of their fleet in Lepanto in 1571.

Another significant element in this autobiographical passage is that during his travels in the Middle East he was accompanied by a young servant. In the English version, there is only a single remark about this young man in the scene when Parez arrives to Alexandria and "he and his varlet took the waye towards ynde."[157] Johannes of Terzn has several entries about this persona, who appears in his narrative as soon as Parez arrives to the Arab lands. Thus, "There was a young servant, a wise one / Who was a counterpart [Parez's] countryman and was always with him."[158] In another passage, right before they meet the court official of the Egyptian sultan, it appears that these two used to spend their free time together: "One day on the river bank / He [Parez] and his young lad were gazing the waters ... ."[159] These two peculiarities – the young man being wise and the closeness of the two – directly point on a young figure, Khachatur of Tokhat, most probably Johannes of Terzn's son according the latter's earlier testimony. He is mentioned nearly in every introduction-acknowledgement of the books published by his father – except the last two -

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[156] *Patmutyun Parezi ev Wennayi*, 199.
[157] *Parys and Vyenne*, 69. *This statement needs to be compared with the Italian version.*
[158] *Patmutyun Parezi ev Wennayi*, 201.
[159] *Patmutyun Parezi ev Wennayi*, 203.

as the latter's assistant and companion, although during the publishing activity of Johannes of Terzn he should have been merely a teenager. If so, then he should have been a learned and smart youth at his early age and perfectly fits the character, Parez's varlet, mentioned in the tradaptaion. Thus, it can be argued – especially considering as well the close relations and cooperation between Parez and his varlet and Johannes and his son – that young Khachatur, the translator's son, had his role in his father's works. In turn, this presence confirms the autobiographical character of the alterations from the original narrative.

4.3. *The circumstances underlying the process and motivation of the translation*

The available sources represent Johannes of Terzn as a well-learned priest. This is confirmed at least through the fact that he was chosen by Sultanshah for translating and printing the papal propaganda books. It can be speculated that he mastered Italian, insofar as the translation, as mentioned above is most probably done from that language. Living in Rome and being a printer connected in different ways to the Pope, he should have known also Latin. Similarly, it is safe to say that, due to the location of his birthplace or his main dwelling city in the Ottoman Empire, he was probably speaking also Ottoman Turkish. However, except these indirect testimonies, there are no comments on the education Johannes of Terzn got or the languages he mastered. This question can be speculated upon – continuing the above pattern – through examination of the alterations occurring in the Armenian version of Parez and Wenna. As it was mentioned previously, this narrative is half as long as those in English or Italian with a number of massive abridgments. However, for Johannes it was important to mention in several occasions that Parez, the hero through which he tried to tell his own story, took pains to learn the local languages of any community he was hosted in. First he learns Persian language and script[160]

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[160] *Patmutyun Parezi ev Wennayi*, 201.

and in Halab-Aleppo the Arabic language.[161] The moving imperative, as it was in case of the changing the clothing and appearance, was to avoid revealing his true identity in foreign lands. Thus, when being acquainted with sultan's officer on the river bank in Cairo, he introduces himself as a Persian who has set for exploring the world according to his old father's will.[162] In general, "If one would face him with questioning / He could answer in several languages / Insofar as any land he stepped in / Its language and script was fully learning."[163] There is another noteworthy episode in this topic. While traveling in Armenia and Georgia, or only in Georgia – the narrative does not make it clear – Pariz "had his dragaman for mutually known languages."[164]

Nevertheless, even considering Johannes of Terzn's learnedness and proficiency in languages, it should have been an enormous effort to translate the romance without dictionaries. And the dictionaries were nit available. The catalogues of manuscripts or early prints do not reveal any Italian-Armenian or even Latin-Armenian dictionary available in the age of this translation. Francesco Rivola compiled the first Latin to Armenian dictionary much later, in the first half of the seventeenth century.[165] Italian to Armenian, French to Armenian, and other bilingual dictionaries were produced even later, in the eighteenth century. The above assumption is confirmed by Burke's point that there existed "scarcity of resources available to assist translators in the early modern period... The lack of bilingual dictionaries of European vernaculars is particularly striking."[166] In this case, Burke would consider Johannes a semi-professional translator, that is, one who combines "the career of translator teaching languages, interpreting, acting as a secretary ..."[167] and other activities in the scope of skills of a learned man, which includes, undoubtedly and first of all, printing

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[161] *Patmutyun Parezi ev Wennayi*, 202.
[162] *Patmutyun Parezi ev Wennayi*, 205.
[163] *Patmutyun Parezi ev Wennayi*, 204.
[164] *Patmutyun Parezi ev Wennayi*, 200.
[165] Francesco Rivola, *Dictionarium Latino-Armenun* (Paris, 1633).
[166] Peter Burke, ed. *Cultural Translation in Early Modern Europe*, 13.
[167] Peter Burke, ed. *Cultural Translation in Early Modern Europe*, 13.

entrepreneur, as in case of Johannes.[168] Thus, it can be assumed that the translation was carried out exceptionally based on the translator's linguistic knowledge and skills and would have taken a considerable period of time. This is an important factor especially because the period of translation overlaps with the persecutions of the translation by the inquisitional court, as well as because of absence of a financial patron or a notable customer behind it. It remains to suggest that, indeed, the translation was carried out due to the translator's own initiative.

This suggestion, along with the mentioned difficulties, raises the question why the piece – although quite an entertaining reading even for a modern reader – has never been published by its translator-printer. One of the possible explanations could be printer-translator's doubts about the work's "requiredness" by reasonable number of customers. However, the efforts invested into the translation, the certain degree of thorough domestication, so to say, "armenification" of the narrative imply that Johannes of Terzn should have had quite a defined readership in his mind. Besides, as it was mentioned, the Armenian version of the romance was circulated in handwritten copes, consumed among the Armenian neighborhoods in Italian or generally European cities, or shortly-visiting pilgrims, merchants, delegates, etc., or in Armenia and in regions which had more constant and larger Armenian populations. Another explanation for the romance not being printed, can be, obviously, the interruption of Jonh of Terzn's social-cultural activity whether because he consciously gave it up after the persecutions or even because of his death shortly after the translation was accomplished. The sources leave no room for further suppositions.

The Armenian translation of the popular medieval European romance is not merely a piece of entertaining literature, as its counterparts in other languages prove to be, but is a

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[168] As it will be elaborated in the previous chapter, the printers were among the most literate people during this early stage of broad literacy in Europe.

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conscious adaptation of ideas making them transmittable from one language into another and thus from one culture into another. It can be even considered a disguised, nonetheless self-standing autobiographical piece inserted into the main narrative of the popular romance.

Conclusion

Having been initiated in the most prominent cultural and political centers of early modern Europe as early as the beginning of the sixteenth century, Armenian printing has always been honored by the later generations as one of the most significant advancements of Armenian culture. This significance has been intensified due to the historical background – the Ottoman and Safavid ravages, scorched-land policy, and dramatic cultural decline – in which the Armenian historiography has continuously interpreted the appearance of the first Armenian printed books. However, despite the political decline in the country, in the second half of the sixteenth century the manuscript production in Armenian monasteries reached its highest peak challenging the significance of the early printed books as impulses of national reawakening.

The contemporary domestic studies of Armenian printing, however, have so far failed to interpret the history of the beginning of Armenian printing in a non-nationalist context, as well as have failed or refused to recognize the differentiation between the publication of the first printed books in national language and formation of the national print culture, the latter, indeed, being a crucial factor for national reawakening. This failure and slow adaptation of the recent European scholarship in the history of printing, has entailed a number of discrepancies in traditionally accepted interpretations.

Therefore, the first step taken in my thesis was to point out the most visible inconsistencies and weaknesses in present studies of Armenian printing. In this I put forward the idea that the development of these studies does not necessarily depend on discovery of new sources, as it is widely held by many Armenian historians. Instead, it would be more fruitful, if the historians of Armenian printing focused on rethinking of the contexts in which more knowledge on Armenian printing will be unplugged. This does not mean that the previous studies and analysis of the available primary material should be

entirely discarded. On the contrary, any new studies will largely benefit if they build on the knowledge already accumulated in this field, insofar as the studies of early Armenian printing have offered an indeed extensive narrative and several, though one-sided, interpretations of the sources. However, critical approach both towards the sources and the secondary literature should be employed, along with posing fresh research questions and more proper contexts.

One major step in this recontextualization has recently been taken by Sebouh Aslanian, a UCLA professor of Early Modern Middle Eastern Studies and primarily Early Modern Armenian trade networks, in his brief article (2012) on the interplay between the strong Armenian presence in European port cities its impact on initiation of Armenian print culture.[169] This study reflects on Armenian printing primarily in the seventeenth century.

Drawing on earlier, sixteenth century sources on the beginnings of Armenian printing, my thesis, in its second step, offered two new possible frameworks – the Age of Catholic Confessionalization and its imprint on the activity of the first Armenian printers and the self-perception and development of the sense of belonging in the era of religious and cultural transfers across the early modern Mediterranean. The two separate examinations that have been done in the scopes of this thesis are still very raw and need for essential improvement. Nonetheless, each of them serve as a base for future studies.

Due to imaginative questioning, many other aspects of early Armenian printing will prove worthy for investigations. As Aslanian points out in the aforementioned study, "There are entire areas of the history of the Armenian book that remain not only untouched but whose very existence has not even been properly acknowledged and therefore examined."[170] In turn, the new investigations will help to reevaluate – eliminating the nationalist

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[169] Aslanian, Sebouh. "Wings on their Feet and on their Heads: Reflections on Port Armenians and Five Centuries of Global Armenian Print Culture," *The Armenian Weekly* (2012): 7-12.
[170] *ibid*, 11.

connotations that have so far applied – the Armenian contribution to the transfer of ideas and in the shaping of cultural and religious frontiers in the early modern Mediterranean.

Appendix. **Brief catalogue of the Armenian incunabula in the sixteenth century**

Name of the incunabulum in Latin transliteration and its lit. translation	Primary content	Printer, Place and date of publication[171]	Place first found from and the registered date of finding	Availability in the first academic catalogue of Armenian incunabula in 1883[172]
Urbatagirq (lit. The Friday Book)	Compilation of prayers for protection and curing, and against evil eye	Jacob the Sinner, Venice, 1512	Saint Karapet Monastery, Kesaria, 1894 Mekhitarist library, Venice Mekhitarist library, Vienna (2 facsimiles) Saint Jacob Monastery, Jerusalem (2 facsimiles)	available without mentioning place and date of publication
Pataragamatoyc' (lit. The Book of Liturgy)	Missal	Jacob the Sinner, Venice, 1513	Armenian Patriarchate, Jerusalem, 1892[173] Saint Karapet Monastery, Kesaria, 1894[174]	
Aghtarq (lit. Almanac)	Weather fiorecasts	Jacob the Sinner, Venice, 1513	Mekhitarist library, Venice (2 facsimiles), 1865[175] Saint Jacob Monastery, Jerusalem, 1890 Saint Karapet Monastery, Kesaria, 1894 Manuscript House, Yerevan	available without mentioning place and date of publication
Parzatumar (lit. Simple Calendar)	Brief ecclesiastical calendar-based manual	Jacob the Sinner, Venice, 1513	Mekhitarist library, Vienna, 1889[176] Saint Jacob Monastery, Jerusalem, 1890 Bavarian State Library, Munich, 1895	not available

[171] According to [N. Voskanyan, Q. Korkotyan, A. Savalyan] Ն. Ոսկանյան, Ք. Կորկոտյան, Ա. Սավալյան, eds., *Հայ գիրքը 1512-1800 թվականներին. Հայ հնատիպ գրքի մատենագիտություն* [Armenian book in 1512-1800. A bibliography of the Armenian incunabula] (Yerevan: Armenian SSR Academy of Sciences Press, 1988).

[172] [Garegin Zarphanalean] Գարեգին Զարփանալեան, ed., *Հայկական մատենագիտութիւն. Այբուբենական ցուցակ տպագրութեան չինտէն մինչեւ առ մեզ եղած հայերէն հրատարակութեանց* [Bibligraphie Armenienne. Alphabetic catalogue of Armenian printed publications from the invention of print up to our days] (San Lazzaro, Venice: Mechitarist Press, 1883).

[173] [Grigor Galemqarean] Գարեգին Գալեմքարեան, "1513ի հայ տպագրին չինտին պատմականը և նոր լուսավորութիւններ" [The story of the discovery of 1513's printer and some recent illuminations], in *Handes Amsorya: Zeitschrift Für Armenische Philologie* 12 (1913): 709-718.

[174] *ibid.*

[175] [Ghevond Alishan] Ղևոնդ Ալիշան, "Տպագրություն Հայոց. Աբգար Դպիր Թոխաթցի" [Armenian printing: Abgar the Scribe of Tokhat], *Bazmavep* 23 (1865): 213-221.

[176] [Grigor Govrikean] Գրիգոր Գովրիկեան, *Հայ տպագրութեանց ամենահին երախայրիքը* [The first-fruit of the Armenian printing], *Handes Amsorya: Zeitschrift Für Armenische Philologie* 10 (1889): 210-212.

Name of the incunabulum in Latin transliteration and its lit. translation	Primary content	Printer, Place and date of publication[171]	Place first found from and the registered date of finding	Availability in the first academic catalogue of Armenian incunabula in 1883[172]
			Bibliotheque Nationale, Paris, 1906[177]	
Tagharan (lit. Book of Songs)	Religious and secular songs, contains also 138 medieval riddles	Jacob the Sinner, Venice, 1513	Saint Jacob Monastery, Jerusalem, 1890	
Kharanapntoir (lit. Jumble)	Comprehensive civic calendar, one page	Abgar the Scribe, Venice, 1565	Biblioteca Ambrosiana, Milan, 1910	
Saghmosaran (lit. Book of Psalms)	Psalms 1-150	Abgar the Scribe, Venice, 1566	Biblioteca Ambrosiana, Milan, 1850[178] Mekhitarist library, Venice The Vatican library[179] Three copies in Matenadaran	available
Brief Grammar Book		Abgar the Scribe, Istanbul, 1567	Biblioteca Ambrosiana, Milan[180]	
Zhamagirq (lit. The Book of Hours)	Breviary	Abgar the Scribe, Istanbul, 1568	Mechitarist library, Venice Biblioteca Ambrosiana, Milan	available
Parzatumar (lit. Simple Calendar)	Brief eclesiastical calendar	Abgar the Scribe, Istanbul,	Bavarian State Library, Munich, 1895[181]	

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[177] [Grigor Galemqarean] Գարեգին Գալեմքարեան, "1513ի հայ տպագրին զիւտին պատմականը և նոր լուսավորութիւններ" [The story of the discovery of 1513's printer and some recent illuminations], in Handes Amsorya: Zeitschrift Für Armenische Philologie 12 (1913): 709-718.

[178] [Ghevond Alishan] Ղևոնդ Ալիշան, "Ազգային տպագրութեան ակզրնաւորութիւնը և յառաջանալուն պատմութիւնը" [The initiation and development of the national print culture], *Bazmavep* 15 (1850): 230-234.

[179] Grigor Galemqarean] Գարեգին Գալեմքարեան, Աբգար Դպիր և տպագրած Մաշտոց [Abgar the Scribe and Mashtots printed by him], *Bazmavep*, 7 (1912): 391.

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Name of the incunabulum in Latin transliteration and its lit. translation	Primary content	Printer, Place and date of publication[171]	Place first found from and the registered date of finding	Availability in the first academic catalogue of Armenian incunabula in 1883[172]
		1568		
Tonatsuyts (Synaxary)	Calendar of ecclesiastical holidays	Abgar the Scribe, Istanbul, 1568	Mechitarist library, Vienna, 1890[182]	
Tagharan (Book of Songs)	Religious and secualr songs	Abgar the Scribe?, Istanbul, 1568	Church of St. Trinity, Gherla, 1888[183]	
Mashtots	Compilation of Gospel of John, some epistles, canon law, some psalms, etc.	Abgar the Scribe, Istanbul, 1568	The Vatican library, 1912[184]	
Tomar Grigorean (lit. The Gregorian Calendar)	Instructions for its usage, supplemented with several tables	Sultanshah and Johanes of Terzn, Rome, 1584	Matendaran, Yerevan Victoria and Albert Museum library, London[185]	available
Davanutyun ughghaparutean (lit	Profession of Faith	Sultanshah and Johanes of Terzn, Rome, 1584		
Saghmos (lit. Book of Psalms)	Psalms	Johanes of Terzn, Venice, 1587	Matenadaran, Yerevan British Museum, London[186]	available

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