The St. James Armenian Printing House in Jerusalem: Scientific and Educational Activities, 1833–1933

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St. James Armenian Printing House (SJAPH) is recognized as the first printing house in Jerusalem. Established in 1833, in the Armenian Patriarchate of Jerusalem, it quickly became a wellspring of religious, scientific, and educational literature in the Middle East. The SJAPH was integrated into the multiethnic and religiously diverse fabric of Jerusalem and took part in the city's urban citizenship processes of *citadinité*. By publishing works that reflected the debates and ideas of the times, the SJAPH positioned itself as a center for intellectual life in the city. For a century, it published religious and theological works along with prominent Armenian historical, philological, and geographical studies that emerged from St. James Convent. The publishing house ensured the circulation of translations and creative works in Armenian, and also published translated texts. In 1886, the religious-philological journal *Sion* was founded, and soon became the official organ of the patriarchate.

This chapter is based on secondary literature produced by religious and academic authorities on unexploited materials from the patriarchate's archives, works from the Calouste Gulbenkian Library, archives in Jerusalem and *Sion*, the official periodical of the patriarchate. It is constructed into three sections: the first part introduces the SJAPH, focusing on its establishment and technical capacities. The second section discusses the administrative, legal, and political challenges it faced during the Ottoman and British periods, while the third part explores the publishing activity of the SJAPH, its scientific and educational role, and its readership.

The Establishment of St. James Armenian Printing House: A Brief Narrative

The founding of the SJAPH was the outcome of an Armenian printing movement that began in Venice in the fifteenth century and reached its peak during the nineteenth century. The first Armenian book was published in Venice,

where an Armenian community settled in the twelfth century. Printing a book in a foreign language was easier to accomplish in Venice because censorship was less severe there.¹ In the early nineteenth century, Armenian printing houses grew in places where Armenian communities or churches, either Apostolic or Catholic, had clerical representation. Printing houses were usually founded either by individual clerics or by the church itself. The Jerusalem Patriarchate under Zakaria Ter Petrosian, a well-educated bishop of St. James Convent, decided to establish a printing house.

In his mid-teens, Zakaria Ter Petrosian left for the holy city of Etchmiadzin with three friends, joining a small group of students under the tutorship of Nerses Ashtaraketsi, the future catholicos (religious leader) of all Armenians (1843–57). Unhappy with the atmosphere created by the conflict between two rival catholicoses, Daniel and Davit, Ter Petrosian traveled to Constantinople. There he met two Catholic monks from the Mekhitarist Order on St. Lazarus Island in Venice. Ter Petrosian was seeking higher education, and the monks convinced him to join the Mekhitarists' seminary in Saint Lazarus. Upon graduation, the Mekhitarists asked him to join their order. He refused, instead choosing to retain his initial faith and return to Constantinople. There, he approached the Vicar of the See of Jerusalem and expressed his desire to work. He was soon appointed as the assistant to Kirakos Vardapet Mnatsakanian, Patriarch Teodoros Vanetsi's secretary.²

Ter Petrosian's experience influenced the establishment of the printing house. In the religious centers of Constantinople, he had learned about seminary activity and printing houses, and was impressed by the literary and educational activities of the Mekhitarists. He conceived the role of the seminaries and the printing house as a means for the development not only of the convent's religious life, but also of the spiritual culture of the Armenian people. His idea to establish a printing house in the Armenian Convent in Jerusalem stemmed from a desire to publish the Armenian classic manuscripts of the Apostolic Church. The Mekhitarists, who were Catholics, refused to do so.³ In 1829, when Ter Petrosian became the *locum tenens* of Jerusalem in Constantinople, he started to prepare the printing press and purchased letter matrices at his own expense. In May 1830, he was exiled to Cyprus based on

- 1 Rafael Ishkhanian, *Hay Girk'ē 1512–1920* [The Armenian book, 1512–1920] (Yerevan: Publishing House of AS ASSR, 1981), 22–26.
- 2 Haig Aram Krikorian, *Lives and Times of the Armenian Patriarchs of Jerusalem: Chronological Succession of Tenures* (Sherman Oaks: H. A. Krikorian, 2009), 383.
- 3 Tigran Sawalaniantz, *Patmut'wn Yerusaghēmi* [History of Jerusalem], 2 vols. (Jerusalem: St. James Press, 2000), 1025.

a royal command of Amira Harutiun Pezechian. His exile was in response to a request Ter Petrosian made to Sultan Mahmud II, to restore the Armenian rights to Golgotha. The request had been made without the agreement of the Armenian patriarch of Jerusalem and the Amiras (influential Armenian leaders) of Constantinople. From exile in Cyprus, he wrote to Agha Petros Yusufian, an Armenian merchant in Trieste, and asked him to offer a printing press to the patriarchate as a gift. Yusufian accepted the proposal. He bought a wooden press, as well as lead letters and letter matrices, and sent it to Jerusalem in 1830. However, lacking other necessary materials, the SJAPH could not begin printing right away. Ter Petrosian was freed from exile a year later and returned to Jerusalem.

In the beginning of 1833, Ter Petrosian went to Egypt to seek permission from Mehmet Ali Pasha to acquire printing equipment and operate the printing house. A wealthy Armenian from the town of Akn, Alikhan Yeghiazarian, supported Ter Petrosian in his efforts, and offered the convent a lithographic press.⁴ In 1833, the first book was printed by the SJAPH. From then until 1835, only three small books were printed because of the lack of equipment and financial resources.⁵ In 1835, upon Ter Petrosian's request, Patriarch Pghos held a meeting about the printing situation and the expansion of the religious seminary more broadly. Ter Petrosian explained the importance of having a printing house and a seminary for the convent. The attendees voted unanimously for the establishment of both as soon as possible. Ter Petrosian was also allocated a separate fund to spend on prioritized expenses. A sum of 40,000 kurus⁶ bequeathed by Samuel Vardapet, the nuncio (representative) of the Armenian Patriarchate of Jerusalem in India, was allocated for the expenses of the SJAPH.⁷ After Kirakos became the Armenian patriarch of Jerusalem (1846–50), he ordered a new set of letter matrices to be sent from Constantinople by Hovhannes Myuhentisian, the creator of the new matrices. With the new letters, Bishop Petros Berdumiant's work *Meknut'wn T'ght'oyn Poghosi ar Yep'esats'is* (Interpretation of the Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the

4 Ibid., 987.

5 Anahit Muradian, *Yerusaghemi Hay Tpagir Grk'i Matenagitut'yunē (1833–1996)* [Bibliography of Armenian books printed in Jerusalem (1833–1996)], ed. G. A. Suqiasian (Yerevan: Lusabats Press, 2011), 11.

6 In 1844, the Turkish gold *lira* was equivalent to one hundred silver *kurus*.

7 Sawalaniantz, *Patmut'wn Yerusaghēmi*, 988.

Ephesians) was printed. The work was 804 pages long, making it the most voluminous work published since the establishment of the printing house.⁸

At the time, the SJAPH was still situated impractically in some of the convent's northeastern rooms, and its printing equipment remained outdated.⁹ The patriarch ordered a printing press from Vienna with the inscription "I Yar'ajadimut'iwn Hayerēn Matenagrut'ean Yerusaghēm K'aghak'i, Yorineal i Vienna, 1849" (For the development of Armenian printing in Jerusalem: made in Vienna, 1849). Though both Patriarch Kirakos and Ter Petrosian wished to build new facilities for the SJAPH, this wish remained unfulfilled because of insufficient finances. During the rule of the next patriarch, Hovhannes (1850–60), the patriarchate finances improved, but most of the convent budget was spent on buying land and property, as well as on building construction.¹⁰ The problem of the SJAPH's facilities remained unaddressed, though the Armenian patriarchate had already received a permit to build a printing house.¹¹

The SJAPH began to function more regularly during the patriarchal rule of Yesayi (1864–85). The National Administration of Constantinople, a representative executive body linked to the Armenian Patriarchate of Constantinople that was elected by the Western Armenian public, asked Yesayi to further develop the convent's seminary, the SJAPH, and the manuscript archive and museum. A year later, the National Administration elected Yesayi as Armenian patriarch of Jerusalem. On April 5, 1865, Patriarch Yesayi arrived in Jerusalem and concentrated his efforts on the scientific-educational activity of the convent. First, he initiated the renovation of the SJAPH's facilities. Previous patriarchs had intended to construct a new building, but restricted financial resources prevented him from doing so. Instead he decided to repurpose an existing building situated in the southern part of St. James Church, built by Patriarch Yeghiazar in 1675, which had previously been used as a stable for the horses and donkeys of pilgrims. The area of the stable was about 1,000 square meters. A year after the SJAPH had moved to the new building, a close friend of the patriarch, Jakob Ashegian, donated a large printing press with the

8 Petros Berdumiants, *Meknut'iwn T'ght'oyin Poghosi ar Yep'esats'is* [Interpretation of the Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Ephesians] (Jerusalem: St. James Press, 1850).

9 Malachia Ormanian, *Haykakan Yerusaghēm: Nkaragir At'or'oy Srbots Yakobeants'* [Armenian Jerusalem: description of St. James Convent of Jerusalem] (Jerusalem: St. James Press, 1931), 72.

10 Sawalaniantz, *Patmut'iwn Yerusaghēmi*, 987.

11 Firman from Süleyman Pasha to the Armenian Patriarchate of Jerusalem, 1850, Folder 30, Old and New Licenses of the Printing House of the Holy See, the Archives of the Armenian Patriarchate of Jerusalem, Jerusalem.

following inscription: "I Sb. Yerusaghém 1866 ógost. 14. Tpagrut'ean Mamuls Yishatak é Talastc'i Ashēgean Mets. Yakob Aghayi, vor Bnaki yAghek'sandria" (To Holy Jerusalem, August 4, 1866: This printing press is a souvenir from Jacob Ashegian Agha from Talas living in Alexandria).¹²

Part of the printing house started to be used as a place for molding and storing books, journals, and the paper used for printing. Ashegian donated about 300 Ottoman liras to renovate this part of the SJAPH. To commemorate him, the following inscription was placed on the northern wall of the SJAPH: "Erkrord Masn Tparanis Yaweleal Ibr Granots ew Dzularan Norogetsav i Patriargut'ean T. Yesayeay S. Ark'episkoposi, i Yishatak Metsahambaw Ashēgean mhi. Yakob Éféntii i Kesarioy T'alas Geghjén, 1871" (The second part of the printing house, also bookstore and smelting house, was renovated by respectful Ashegian Jacob Effendi from Kesario Talas, during the years of Patriarch Yesayi, 1871).¹³ The letter foundry was in a separate room with all its amenities. The SJAPH was equipped in accordance with modern standards, and had a hydraulic water printing press for the bindery, a lithographic press, binding machines, samplers, and other secondary equipment. It also had a quick-printing press, an aquatint machine, a cylinder press, a bookbinder and foundry equipment, a hand printing press, lithographic and headline presses, and cutting machines. It possessed not only Armenian matrices, but also Latin, Arabic, Greek, and Hebrew characters, ornamental figures, ornaments for corners and circles, *khazes*¹⁴ – in short, anything that could be used in printing.¹⁵ Apart from these, the SJAPH had the possibility to establish sections for galvanism and color pictures by Patriarch Yesayi, who had learned about them in Manchester, London, and Paris in 1863. However, due to a lack of professionals skilled in these areas, these sections did not succeed.¹⁶

During the years of Patriarch Yesayi (1865–85), the SJAPH flourished and received donations from various individuals. For instance, in 1881, Lady Soghome Astvatsaturiants, a resident of Akkerman, gifted a torno for galvanism to the SJAPH. In addition to the printing press that he donated and the expenses he paid for the renovation of the SJAPH, Ashegian earmarked 10

12 Mesrop Nshanian, *Aknark mē Yerusaghēmi S. Yakobean Tparanin vray* [Essay on St. James Armenian Printing House of Jerusalem] (Jerusalem: St. James Press, 1912), 42–47.

13 Ibid., 47–48.

14 *Khazes* are the symbols in the traditional system of musical notation used to transcribe religious Armenian music.

15 Ormanian, *Haykakan Yerusaghém*, 75.

16 Garegin Levonian, *Hay Girqē ew Tpagrut'yan Arvestē* [The Armenian book and the art of typography] (Yerevan: Haypethrat, 1946), 194.

percent of the profit from his properties in Jerusalem for printing textbooks. Other philanthropists supported the printing house by covering the expenses of book publication. In 1871, Set Abgarian, the son of the wealthy merchant Harutiun Abgarian, and the first sheriff of the city of Kolkata, paid for the second publication of *Zhamanakagrut'wn Tear'n Mikhaye'li Asorvoy Patriark'i Haneal i Hnagoy'n Grch'agré* (Chronology by Patriarch Michael Asory).¹⁷ Kirakos Karukeants, a pilgrim from Kharberd who visited Jerusalem in 1872, paid for the publication of *Patmut'wn Hayastaneants' Ar'ak'elakan Surb Yekeghets'voy* (History of the Holy Apostolic Armenian Church).¹⁸ During the years of Patriarch Harutiun Vehapetian (1889–1910), donors continued to sponsor the printing of some books. For instance, in 1890, Abraham Pasha Bartogh and Poghos Bey Ashegian, wealthy men from Alexandria, supported the publication of *Zhamanakagrakan Patmut'wn Surb Yerusaghémi* (Chronological history of Holy Jerusalem) by Astvatsatur Hovhannisian.¹⁹ Another voluminous work, *Hamabarbar' Hin ew Nor Ktakaranay* (Concordance, Old and New Testaments), was published in 1895 by Tadewos Astvatsaturian, a member of St. James Convent. A senior priest from Kolkata, Hovhannes Khachikian, donated 100 British pounds for publishing this massive work. The printing process took four years and the patriarchate spent about 600 Ottoman liras on this approximately 1,600-page tome.²⁰

Under Ottoman and British Rule: Working in Spite of Imperial Censorship

During the patriarchate of Harutiun Vehapetian (1889–1910),²¹ more than seventy books were printed. Compared with those published during the rule of the previous patriarch, Yesayi,²² these books were superior both in quality and

17 Mikhayil Asori, *Zhamanakagrut'wn Tear'n Mikhaye'li Asorvoy Patriark'i Haneal i Hnagoy'n Grch'agré* [Chronology by Patriarch Michael Asory] (Jerusalem: St. James Press, 1871).

18 Melikisedek Murateants, *Patmut'wn Hayastaneants' Ar'ak'elakan Surb Yekeghets'voy* [History of the Holy Apostolic Armenian Church] (Jerusalem: St. James Press, 1872).

19 Astvatsatur Hovhannisian, *Zhamanakagrakan Patmut'wn Surb Yerusaghémi* [Chronological history of holy Jerusalem] (Jerusalem: St. James Press, 1890).

20 Tadewos Astvatsaturian, *Hamabarbar' Hin ew Nor Ktakaranay* [Interpretation of the Old and New Testament] (Jerusalem: St. James Press, 1895).

21 Harutiun Vehapetian was elected as the Armenian Patriarch of Jerusalem in 1885, but he stayed in Constantinople until 1889.

22 Around two hundred large and small books were published during the reign of Patriarch Yesayi. Additionally, the *Sion* journal was published for eleven years.

quantity. The reason for this is most likely that when Patriarch Vehapetian took the throne, censorship increased throughout the Ottoman Empire. Ottoman censorship, which came to the fore after the 1860s, was grounded in the sultan's regime, and reflected his desire to prevent any opposition.²³ In 1888, an unpublished censorship policy was in use. According to that policy, a statement was issued about the written works that were welcome, that is, articles on "the dearest Sultan's life and well-being" and the economic development of the country. Banned works included multipoint petitions on assassination attempts on coroneted persons and articles on demonstrations and strikes.²⁴ Under such conditions, *Zhamanakagrakan Patmut'wn Surb Yerusaghemi* (Chronological history of Holy Jerusalem) was included on the list of banned books.²⁵ This work covered the history of the struggle of the Armenian Church in Jerusalem from its beginning until the author's day, and it is likely that some ideas in this book contradicted the interests of the Ottoman government. Harutian Vehapetian did not want to oppose the Ottoman government or to endanger the patriarchate and the convent.

After the death of Vehapetian, the patriarchal throne of Jerusalem remained vacant for eleven years, from 1910–21. As a result of World War I, the Armenian patriarchate of Jerusalem endured grave economic hardship. Thousands of Armenian refugees, survivors of the Genocide, settled in the Armenian Convent. In order to provide them with shelter and food, the patriarchate borrowed money at high interest rates and cut down on expenses. They even reduced the number of students in the theological seminary. However, the SJAPH stopped functioning only for a few years, from 1918–24. Three small booklets were nevertheless published between 1921 and 1924.²⁶

In 1915, the Ottoman government unexpectedly sued the head of the SJAPH, Mesrop Nshanian, accusing him of opening the printing house without the consent of the city's educational authorities. The clerical board presented the licenses they had (royal edicts, vizier decrees, etc.) and announced that the administration of Jerusalem had always recognized the SJAPH as functioning legally. The patriarchate argued that the government had granted it a license for passing printing materials through the customs house of Jaffa.

23 Albert Kharatian, "Osmanyen Grak'nnut'yunē ew Arewmtahay Mamumlē (1870–1890)" [Ottoman censorship and the press of western Armenia in 1870–1890], *Historical-Philological Journal*, no. 4 (1985): 103.

24 İpek K. Yosmaoğlu, "Chasing the Printed Word: Press Censorship in the Ottoman Empire, 1876–1913," *The Turkish Studies Association Journal* 27, nos. 1–2 (2003): 24–27.

25 Nshanian, *Aknark mē*, 62–68.

26 Muradian, *Yerusaghemi*, 74–75.

Moreover, the administration of Jerusalem frequently used the printing services of the SJAPH. However, the court ruled that the government had given a license only for the construction of the building and not for publishing activities. Based on that decision, the SJAPH was closed down, the head of the printing house was imprisoned for 100 days and the convent was fined 50 Ottoman pounds. The patriarchate applied to the court of appeals, but the decision was not overturned. Later, the patriarchate moved the trial to the Constantinople appeals body. The trial had been going on for more than two years when the British Mandate began, effectively putting it to an end.²⁷

When Yeghishe Durian was elected patriarch of Jerusalem in 1921, he aspired to reopen the SJAPH. Finally, in May 1925, he succeeded in getting a license from the British to do so.²⁸ The patriarch applied to Ruhi Bey Abdul Hadj, the director of the press office, to receive his agreement to reopen the printing house. In his application, the patriarch informed him that the patriarchate had received a privilege from the Ottoman Empire to open the SJAPH in 1833; however, it had closed down because of technical problems. He also mentioned that the patriarchate had declared the existence of the SJAPH to the British military authorities after they entered Jerusalem. He noted that by solving the financial and technical problems, and taking into consideration the need to publish religious literature, the patriarchate was requesting “due registration of our printing house in accordance with the legislation ordinances on the matter by the Palestine government and to which we found ourselves to follow in all its dispositions.” The patriarch concluded by emphasizing that the director of the SJAPH, Bishop Mesrop Nshanian, would always be ready to provide any information about the printing house for the government representative’s inspection.²⁹

The British authorities licensed the SJAPH on the condition that it would not publish news that might threaten the safety of the country, raise enmity between religious communities, be libel or false, or include slander, as such actions were condemnable by law.³⁰ The official promulgation decreed that

27 Mesrop Nshanian, “Tparan Ar’ak’elakan At’or’oyñ Srboc Yakobeanç Yerusakghémi, Harivrameay Yobeleaniñ art’iw 1833–1933” [Printing House of St. James Apostolic See, Jerusalem, on the Hundredth Anniversary (1833–1933)], *Sion*, no. 11 (1933).

28 Archive of the Armenian Patriarchate of Jerusalem (AAPJ), Yeghishe Durian to Ruhi Bey Abdul Hadj, November 18, 1925, doc. 4444/30, vol. 57, General Correspondence of the Armenian Patriarchate of Jerusalem, nos. 3741–4447, July 1–November 19, 1925.

29 Ibid.

30 AAPJ, Yeghishe Durian to Ruhi Bey Abdul Hadj, November 29, 1925, doc. 4483/30, vol. 58, General Correspondence of the Armenian Patriarchate of Jerusalem, nos. 4448–4951, November 20, 1925–April 24, 1926.

before distribution, a copy of any book or pamphlet printed by the SJAPH was to be sent to the chief secretary, the district commissioner, and the director of education.³¹

Thanks to the contributions of new donors, work in the SJAPH expanded. As a result, everything in the printing house and bindery was put in order. Patriarch Durian bought several pieces of printing equipment with his private resources, and donated a mechanical printing press worth about 100 British pounds to the convent.³² At the beginning of 1930, the SJAPH was functioning at full capacity, and a need arose to acquire a printing machine and binding equipment. The problem remained unresolved until 1932. On May 12 of that year, Patriarch Torgom Gushakian turned to Sargis Hovakimian, asking for three printing machines. The latter met the patriarch's request and donated 1,000 British pounds for the printing equipment. This donation was used to purchase a printing press and a binding and a folding machine; all were electrical and of modern German production. A specialist was sent to the SJAPH to install this new equipment.³³

On October 22, 1933, on Holy Translators' Day, the general assembly made a decision to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the SJAPH of the Holy See. For the occasion, *Sion* dedicated its November issue to coverage of the SJAPH's history and activities. A liturgy was dedicated to all the benefactors and workers of the press. On the same day, an opening ceremony showcasing the new equipment was organized, and that evening, there was a symposium in the Gulbenkian Library dedicated to the SJAPH anniversary.³⁴

The Publishing Program: An Intellectual and Multilingual Hub

In 1833, the SJAPH's first publication, which was sixteen pages in length, was *Tetrak Aghót'amatoyts' vasn Jermer'and Aghót'asirats', Vork' ka'm Andzamb ew ka'm Mtók' Nerkayanan i S. Tnórinakan Teghisn K'ristosi Astutsoy Meróy* [A booklet for those who pray fervently and visit the places of the Christ either

31 AAPJ, Yegishe Durian to Ruhi Bey Abdul Hadj, November 28, 1925, doc. 1680/30, Printing Press of the Holy See; Notes Exchanged with the Government.

32 "Surb Yakobi Matenadaranē" [St. James Archive of Ancient Manuscripts], *Sion*, no. 11 (1927): 319.

33 AAPJ, Annual Summary of Director's Assembly, May 1, 1932–April 30, 1933, December 12, 1933.

34 AAPJ, Annual Summary of Director's Assembly, May 1, 1933–April 30, 1934, June 23, 1934.

FIGURE 18.1

Cover of the SJAPH's first publication, *Tetrak Aghót'amatoyts' vasn Jermer'and Aghót'asirats', Vork' ka'm Andzamb ew ka'm Mtók' Nerkayanan i S. Tnórinakan Teghishn K'ristosi Astutsoy Meróy* [A booklet for those who pray fervently and visit the places of the Christ either physically or mentally], 1833. 2004 AF, NATIONAL LIBRARY OF ARMENIA.

physically or mentally] (fig. 18.1).³⁵ The next year, they produced “*Tesut'ivn Ant'aram Tsaghik Metsats'usts'éin*” (Commentary of the hymn for the Holy Virgin, unfading flower),³⁶ a 29-page book published by Vardan Vardapet (Archimandrite). The main mission of the SJAPH was to ensure that the publishing and printing activity satisfied religious needs. Armenian clerics and churches needed religious literature, but such books were not published by other printing presses because it was not profitable. For centuries, the heads of the Armenian Church and Armenian narrators had created religious, religious–historical, historical, literary, and other works that needed to be published or republished. As a spiritual center, the Armenian patriarchate of Jerusalem sought to upgrade itself as a scientific-educational center and become a center for Armenian typography in the Middle East. From its establishment until 1940, the SJAPH published about 526 books, booklets, and calendars, as well as *Sion*; the official organ of the patriarchate.³⁷

As the patriarchate's printing house, the SJAPH published a great number of spiritual, ceremonial, and religious literature that proved controversial,

35 *Tetrak Aghót'amatoyts' vasn Jermer'and Aghót'asirats', vork' ka'm Andzamb ew ka'm Mtók' Nerkayanan i S. Tnórinakan Teghishn K'ristosi Astutsoy Meróy* [A booklet for those who pray fervently and visit the places of the Christ either physically or mentally] (Jerusalem: St. James Press, 1833), http://greenstone.flib.sci.am/gsd/collect/armbook/books/tetrak_axotamatujc1833_index.html.

36 Vardan Vardapet, *Tesut'ivn Ant'aram Tsaghik Metsats'usts'éin* [Commentary on the hymn for the Holy Virgin Unfading Flower] (Jerusalem: St. James Press, 1834), http://greenstone.flib.sci.am/gsd/collect/armbook/books/tesutyun_antaram_index.html.

37 Muradian, *Yerusaghemí*, 11–94.

and brought on a considerable backlash. Two books, *Mashtots' Canonov Mkrtut'ean* (Canons of baptism), published in 1843,³⁸ and *Khorhrdatsut'iwn Srbazan Pataragi* (Thoughts during the liturgy) by Nerses Lambronatsi, published in 1842,³⁹ aroused Armenian Patriarch of Constantinople Astvatsatur's anger, prompting his demand that the SJAPH close down. This reaction was in response to the fact that in some of the sections, especially in Lambronatsi's work, the writer expressed a positive attitude towards the Roman Church. This caused Patriarch Astvatsatur to question Armenian Patriarch of Jerusalem Zakaria's fidelity towards the Armenian Church. His suspicion was exacerbated by the fact that Patriarch Zakaria was educated by Catholic Mekhitarists, and had been preaching Catholic principles. Dissemination of *Mashtots' Canonov Mkrtut'ean* was completely halted. However, the Armenian Patriarch of Constantinople's attitude did not intimidate Zakaria. He refused to close down the SJAPH, and boldly initiated new publications.⁴⁰ Due to popular demand, religious and ceremonial books were republished several times (fig. 18.3).⁴¹

The SJAPH also published a great number of books on rights over the Holy Places, biographies, philological and linguistic works, as well as books on Armenian art and culture.⁴² For instance, *Khndir Srbazan Tegheats' ew nora Pashtonakan K'nnut'iwnē* (Issues on the Holy Places and their official examination)⁴³ published in 1871, on Patriarch Yesayi's order, is on the rights of Armenians to the Holy Places, and describes the rows between Armenians and other Christian groups in that regard.

38 *Mashtots' Canonov Mkrtut'ean* [Canons of baptism] (Jerusalem: St. James Press, 1843), http://greenstone.flib.sci.am/gsd/collect/armbook/books/mashtoc_1843_index.html.

39 Nerses Lambronatsi, *Khorhrdatsut'iwn Srbazan Pataragi* [Thoughts during the liturgy] (Jerusalem: St. James Press, 1842), http://greenstone.flib.sci.am/gsd/collect/armbook/books/xorhrdacutiin_pataragi_srbazan_index.html.

40 Sawalaniantz, *Patmut'iwn Yerusaghēmi*, 1025–26.

41 The following books had more than two editions: *Dzer'ats' u Tsots'i Zhamagrker* [Handbooks of prayers], *Dzaynak'agh Sharakan* [Armenian chants], *Tonats'uyts'* [Liturgical calendar], *Tagharan ew Khorhrdatetr* [Songbook and advice book], while for instance, *Saghmos* [Psalm], *Narek and Aghotagirk'* [Prayer book], as well as *Ateani ew Chashu Avetarranner* [Board and dinner gospels], *Nor Ktakaran* [New Testament], were printed five or six times, while Ephrem the Syrian's *Girk' Aghot'its' Asats'eal Srboyn Yephremi Khurin Asorvoy* [A Prayer book by St. Ephrem the Syrian] was published six times, between 1848 and 1933.

42 Muradian, *Yerusaghēmi*, 11–93.

43 *Khndir Srbazan Tegheats' ew nora Pashtonakan K'nnut'iwnē* [Issues on the Holy Places and their official examination] (Jerusalem: St. James Press, 1871), <https://archive.org/details/khndirsrbazanteoopatrgoog>.

Apart from religious and ritualistic books, the SJAPH also published works of Armenian historians and philosophers in addition to novels and dramas. In particular, works by the following authors were published: Yeghishe, Hovhan Mandakuni, Vrtanes Qertogh, Anania Shirakatsi, Narekatsi, Nerses Shnorhali and Mateos Urhaietsi. In 1865, the SJAPH published *Vasn Vardanay ew Hayots' Paterazmin* (The history of Vardan and the Armenian war) by Yeghishe.⁴⁴ *Patmagrut'iwn Yovhannu Kat'oghikosin Amenayn Hayots'* (History of Catholicos Yovhann of All Armenians) by Yovhann Draskhanakertsi, was the first voluminous work published by the SJAPH in 1843.⁴⁵ Apart from the *Chronological History of St. Jerusalem* by Astvatsatur Hovhannisian, significant historiographical works were published in 1931, such as *Patmut'iwn Yerusaghémi* (History of Jerusalem) by Tigran Sawalanyantz, *Haykakan Yerusaghém* (Armenian Jerusalem) by Malachia Ormanian, which included background about the Armenian religious presence in Jerusalem, and the rights of Armenians to the Holy Places.

Among the books published by the SJAPH, there are numerous works authored by clerics of the convent and teachers of the Theological School, who also translated works mainly from French, German, Italian, English, Turkish, and Arabic. These cover a wide range of topics, from moralistic works and translations, to logics, cosmography, psychology, and philosophy.⁴⁶ Among the books printed by the SJAPH, a unique place should be given to textbooks, dictionaries, Armenian alphabet books, and religious calendars (the latter have been published annually since 1867). A significant role is attached to alphabet books, which were essential for the teaching of Armenian. In 1837, they entered the publishing schedule. Among textbooks, *K'erakanut'iwn Gagghghiarén Lezui Hayerén Bats'atrut'eamb* (Grammar of French with Armenian explanations) by Yeghiazar Muradian is particularly noteworthy.⁴⁷

44 Mkrtych Aghavnuni, "Nakhnik' Voronts' Vorewé Mek Gortsē Tpagrvats é S. At'or'oy's Tparanin mej" [Ancestors whose works have been published in the printing house of the See], *Sion*, no. 11 (1933): 375.

45 Hovhannes Draskhanakertsi, *Patmagrut'iwn Yovhannu Kat'oghikosi Amenayn Hayots'* [History of Catholicos Yovhann of All Armenians] (Jerusalem: St. James Press, 1843), http://greenstone.flib.sci.am/gsdl/collect/armbook/books/patmagrutyun1843_index.html.

46 For instance, in 1934 *The Psychology of the Future* by Émile Boirac was translated by Patriarch Yeghishe Durian; in 1932 a work entitled *Psychology* by George L. Fonsegrive was translated by Patriarch Torgom Gushakian.

47 Yeghiazar Muradian, *K'erakanut'iwn Gagghghiarén Lezui Hayerén Bacatrut'eamb* [Grammar of French with Armenian explanations] (Jerusalem: St. James Press, 1869), 120 pages, http://greenstone.flib.sci.am/gsdl/collect/haygirq/book/qerakanutyun_gaxx_index.html.

Although the SJAPH was functioning under the auspices of the patriarchate, it also published several books on morality, psychology, philosophy, logics, geography, mathematics, and medicine. An example is *Tramabanut'iwn kam Aruest Banakan* (Logics or rational art) by Grigor Peshtmalchian, published in 1854 with an introduction by Patriarch Hovhannes.⁴⁸ This substantial work includes grounded knowledge on logics. Another work is *Nor Dasagirk' Tiezeragrut'yan* (A new textbook of cosmography) by Sahak Khapaian (Catholicos of Cilicia, 1902–39) on geometry, space, physical objects, and phenomena. At the end of the book, there are exercises and maps on cosmography.⁴⁹ This textbook was republished in 1884, which attests to its high demand.⁵⁰ Another popular textbook was *Nakhnakan Dasagirk' T'uagitut'yan* (Primary textbook of arithmetic) by Stepan Papaziants, published in 1869, for the fourth time.⁵¹ Vahan Jacobian, a member of St. James Convent, initiated the publishing of another arithmetic textbook titled *Nor T'uagitut'iwn* (New arithmetic). The first volume was published in 1880, and the second was published a year later.⁵² In 1884, the two volumes were published together as a book.⁵³

After the reopening of the SJAPH in 1925, a publishing movement called *Durian Matenashar* (Durian series) began. In 1929, on Patriarch Yeghishe Durian's fiftieth priesthood anniversary, the special committee elected by the general assembly made a decision to build a library named after the patriarch, to honor his name and legacy.⁵⁴ The donated money constituted about 3,000 British pounds, the greatest part of which was donated by Petros Crete from Greece, Poghos Nubar, the founder of Armenian General Benevolent Union,

48 Grigor Peshtmalchian, *Tramabanut'iwn kam Aruest Banakan* [Logics or rational art] (Jerusalem: St. James Press, 1854), <http://greenstone.flib.sci.am/gsd/collect/haygirq/book/tramabanutyuni854.pdf>.

49 Sahak Khapaian, *Nor Dasagirk' Tiezeragrut'yan* [A new textbook of cosmography] (Jerusalem: St. James Press, 1876), http://greenstone.flib.sci.am/gsd/collect/haygirq/book/nor_dasagirq1876_index.html.

50 Sahak Khapaian, *Nor Dasagirk' Tiezeragrut'yan* [A new textbook of cosmography] (Jerusalem: St. James Press, 1884), http://greenstone.flib.sci.am/gsd/collect/haygirq/book/nor_dasagirq1884_index.html.

51 Stepan Papaziants, *Nakhnakan Dasagirk' T'uagitut'yan* [Primary textbook of arithmetic] (Jerusalem: St. James Press, 1869), http://greenstone.flib.sci.am/gsd/collect/haygirq/book/naxnakan_dasagirq_index.html.

52 Muradian, *Yerusaghemi*, 46–47.

53 Ibid., 50.

54 “Yaveluats, Handés Bacman Norakar'oyc Kuilpénkean Matenadaranin Ar'ak'elakan At'or'oyñ Srboc Yakobeanc” [Appendices, the opening ceremony of the newly built Gulbenkian Manuscripts' Archive of the Apostolic See of St. James], *Sion*, no. 11 (1932): 355.

and Armenak Bey Kamsarakan, a tobacco tradesman and writer from Egypt.⁵⁵ However, this sum was still not enough to construct a new library building. For this reason, the president of the special committee, Archbishop Torgom Gushakian, met with Calouste Gulbenkian, an Armenian benefactor, in Paris. Gulbenkian promised to cover all the expenses of the new archive in memory of his parents, Sargis and Tiruhi Gulbenkians. On September 16, 1929, upon hearing of this promised donation, Patriarch Yeghishe Durian decided to name the library after the donor and to continue fundraising with the aim to publish new and classic works on Armenian studies. This book series was afterwards called the *Durian Matenashar* (Durian series), in honor of the patriarch.⁵⁶ To realize the idea of the *Durian Matenashar*, a decision was made to build a trading center called Durianashen (Built by Durian) on one of the patriarchate's donated properties. The profits gained in the center were to be directed towards the publication of the *Durian Matenashar*.⁵⁷

The SJAPH also published technical booklets and lists of published books. In 1934, *Tarats'uts'ak Tparani Srbots' Yakovbeants'* (Lists of St. James Printing House) was published. In it, matrices of letters, various symbols and numbers, Armenian *khazes* and sound marks, corner ornaments, frames, patterns, and flowers were pictured. This booklet was designed to showcase the capabilities of the printing house for clients. Judging from the list of alphabets in the SJAPH, it was possible to print French, English, Italian, Hebrew, Greek, Arabic, and Persian appendices in Armenian books or together with Armenian translations to give corresponding terms and proper names in the original languages. Besides, the matrices in the mentioned languages were sufficient to enable the printing of documents, business cards, tickets, announcements, and other administrative materials.

The languages of the books published in the SJAPH were Armenian, Grabar (old Armenian), and Armenian-lettered Turkish (ALT). The most well-known work published in ALT was *Zanazanut'iwn Hing Daruts'* (The differences between five centuries) by Patriarch Poghos (1763–1853).⁵⁸ The first of its three volumes was printed in 1838. By 1867, *Zanazanut'iwn Hing Daruts'* had been republished twice. This book included Arabic and Persian dictionaries

55 Astghik Chamkerten, *Yerusaghém ew Kuilpénkeanner* [The Gulbenkians in Jerusalem] (Lisbon: Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, 2007), 81.

56 "Yaveluats, Handés Bacman Norakar'oyc Kuilpénkean Matenadaranin," 356.

57 "Pashtonakan Yaytararut'iwn" [Official Announcement], *Sion*, no. 6 (1933): 192–95.

58 Poghos Adrianapolsetsi, *Zanazanut'iwn Hing Daruts'* [The differences between five centuries] (Jerusalem, St. James Press, 1840), http://greenstone.flib.sci.am/gsd/collect/armbook/books/pesh_tehr_index.html.

explained in Armenian and Turkish, which were published in both 1844, and 1881.⁵⁹ The SJAPH published a number of books on various topics in ALT. Beginning in the eighteenth century, ALT literature fostered the spread of Catholicism among Armenians and reached the Armenian diaspora in the West, in the Mekhitarist unions in Trieste and Vienna. To fight against the religious-moralistic publications of Catholic and Protestant preachers, the Armenian Apostolic Church published hundreds of religious and doctrinal works, preaching books, and works on the history of the church and religion. Among ALT publications, there were also dictionaries, historiographical, philosophical and fictional works.⁶⁰ Thus, the SJAPH, functioning under the patronage of the Armenian Apostolic Church, played a significant role in the publication of ALT literature.

Another achievement of the SJAPH was the publication of *Sion*, the official journal of the Armenian patriarchate of Jerusalem, which was the most considerable publishing initiative of Patriarch Yesayi. Yesayi realized this initiative in 1866,⁶¹ as soon as the SJAPH started to run regularly (fig. 18.2). The cover stated: "Sion Journal: National, Philological, Literary and Political." The first four pages of the inaugural issue outlined the journal's mission, which was "freedom to think and to speak." The journal's publishers stated that they wished to discuss various topics "both educational and entertaining." Even though there was no mention of anything religious on the cover, the board of the journal published religious articles in what became the official journal of the convent.⁶²

In 1877, the publication of *Sion* ceased, apparently due to external and internal conflicts of the Holy See. The issue of the Holy Places was exceptionally heated at that time, and inner hardships were weakening the convent and creating serious debts.⁶³ Publication of *Sion* was put on the agenda once again when Patriarch Durian reopened the SJAPH. The patriarchate referred to Ruhi Bey Abdul Hadj once again asking the British government for a license to

59 Hasmik Stepanian, *Hayatar' Turk'eren Grakanut'yuny* [Turkish literature in Armenian-lettered Turkish] (Yerevan: Armenian National Academy of Sciences, 2001), 61.

60 Hasmik Stepanian, *Hayatar' Turk'erén Grk'eri ew Hayatar' Turk'erén Parberakan Mamuli Matenagitut'ıwn* (1727–1968) [Bibliography of Armenian-lettered Turkish books and press (1727–1968)] (Istanbul, Türkuaz Press, 2005), 17–18.

61 Ferman from the mutessarif of Jerusalem, Izzet Pasha, to the Armenian Patriarchate of Jerusalem, November 29, 1865, folder 30, Old and New Licenses of the Printing House of Saint See, the Archives of the Armenian Patriarchate of Jerusalem, Jerusalem.

62 "Azat Baroyakanut'yan" [Free morality], *Sion*, no. 2 (1866): 319.

63 Garegin Levonian, *Hayoc Parberakan Mamulē* [The Armenian press] (Alexandrapol: Abraham M. Malkhasian Press, 1895), 283.

FIGURE 18.2

First page of the January 1870 issue of the SJAPH journal *Sion*, with the image of St. James Armenian Cathedral.

POGHARIAN COLLECTION, 287, N. 1, 1870, FUNDAMENTAL SCIENTIFIC LIBRARY, YEREVAN.

republish *Sion* and to register it.⁶⁴ It is clear that *Sion* followed the publishing rules and regulations of the time. After each publication, four copies were sent to the government for censorship. However, during the British Mandate years, this was a mere formality. Mesrop Nshanian's letter to the government informs us of the trusting relationship that existed with the editorial staff of *Sion*, who were permitted to publish their journal without it being examined.⁶⁵ In an editorial, Bishop Babken Kuleserian, the journal's next editor, expressed hope that the journal would entertain the intellectual life of the convent, advance and empower refugees with religious inspiration, and cherish the crystal-clear purity of the mother tongue, while at the same time remaining reasonable and critical. In 1930, Babken Kuleserian brought together all the materials of the new phase of *Sion* and assessed it. According to him: "With its various topics, *Sion* sought to reflect the values of the past to show the Armenian nation that they are not just a worthless mass, but a nation with the right to live on and

64 AAPJ, November 18, 1926, doc. 5824/30, Printing Press of the Holy See; Notes Exchanged with the Government.

65 AAPJ, Calouste Gulbenkian Library, Mesrop Nshanian to Smbat Gazazian, October 18, 1927, Letters of Archbishop Mesrop Nshanian, 1924–28, vol. 1.

develop, a nation that has had a role in the history of civilized people and can still play an important role if it keeps close to its traditions.”⁶⁶

Judging by the publications and technological capacities of the SJAPH, it can be inferred that its readership was largely Armenian. In 1870, the SJAPH started publishing a catalogue of its published works, making it possible for Armenians worldwide. Though *Sion* had a fixed price (the annual subscription was \$1.50 and each issue cost LE 2), the patriarchate attempted to encourage its distribution to all Armenians. An announcement was printed in the first issue of the journal in 1927, in which the patriarchate explained that *Sion* could reach orphanages, benevolent organizations, poor schools, and pilgrim clerics if kind-hearted and educated Armenians made donations covering five to ten issues. The patriarchate promised to mention the names of benefactors in their next issue. Moreover, clerics who could find subscribers among their acquaintances would receive free issues of the journal.⁶⁷ The patriarchate aimed to cover the expenses of publishing the journal, but it also wished to make *Sion* an outstanding and popular publication among Armenians.

Conclusion: The St. James Armenian Printing House, from Local to Global

The SJAPH was the result of a scientific-educational movement that emerged from the Mekhitarists in Venice in the fifteenth century. The main responsibility of the Jerusalem Patriarchate was the protection of the religious and ethnic rights of Armenians regarding the Holy Places. Together with this responsibility, some members of St. James Convent started engaging in scientific-educational activities. They did not limit publication to historical, critical, religious, and fictional works of Armenian historians and philologists. The brotherhood also encouraged and published the works of Mekhitarists. Neither financial issues nor Ottoman censorship could dissuade Armenian clerics from publishing and spreading scientific and philological works on the history, culture, literature, and church history of the Armenian people. Moreover, they did not limit themselves to publishing only Armenian authors. Foreigners were published as well.

Many Armenian benefactors and donors came to the fore to support these initiatives through covering the expenses of books, buying printing equipment,

66 Editorial, *Sion*, no. 1 (1927): 2–5.

67 Editorial, *Sion*, no. 1 (1927): cover page.

FIGURE 18.3 Page from Zhamagirk' Hayastaneats' S. Ekeghets'wots' [Prayer book of the Holy Armenian Church], published by SJAPH in 1881.

264 J-21, NATIONAL LIBRARY OF ARMENIA, YEREVAN.

and renovating the building of the printing house. It was obvious, however, that the steady running of the printing house could not be ensured by donations alone. To solve this problem, the patriarchate built the Durianashen building and used its profits to publish the *Durian Matenashar*.

Considering the hundreds of books published by the SJAPH over a 100-year period, we can conclude that the printing house relied on the financial, human, and other resources of the patriarchate, but also on individuals who supported it financially or technologically. Its activity was not merely religious, but encompassed nearly all branches of science. Its educational leg published numerous textbooks and alphabet books. The SJAPH was not just a printing house, but a respected publishing house that became a center for the circulation of Armenian knowledge, translation, ideas, and thought in the Middle East.