Port Cities and Printers: Reflections on Early Modern Global Armenian Print Culture

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Since the publication of Lucien Febvre and Henri-Jean Martin's *L'aparition du livre* in 1958 and more recently Elizabeth Eisenstein's *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change* (1979), a substantial corpus of scholarship has emerged on print culture, and even a new discipline known as *l'histoire du livre*, or history of the book, has taken shape.[1] As several scholars have already remarked, the bulk of the literature on book history and the history of print has been overwhelmingly Eurocentric in conception. In her magnum opus, for instance, Eisenstein hardly pauses to consider whether some of her bold arguments on the "printing revolution" are at all relevant for the world outside Europe, except perhaps for Euroamerica. As one scholar has noted, "until recently, the available literature on the non-European cases has been very patchy."[2] The recent publication of Jonathan Bloom's *Paper Before Print* (2001),[3] Mary Elizabeth Berry's *Japan in Print* (2007), Nile Green's essays on Persian print and his *Bombay Islam*,[4] several essays and works in press on printing in South Asia[5] and Ming-Qing China,[6] and the convening of an important "Workshop on Print in a Global Context: Japan and the World"[7] indicate, however, that the scholarship on print and book history is now prepared to embrace the "global turn" in historical studies.

This essay aims to make a preliminary contribution to the burgeoning field of global studies of print culture by examining the history of early modern Armenian print culture and book history. The rich history of Armenian print, built on a solid foundation of primary sources, makes two significant contributions to the broader scholarship on print culture and book history. First, it will restore to the historiography of global print a valuable case study of a Near Eastern print tradition thus far missing from it. Like its South Asian counterpart, the Armenian case study promises to enable scholars of print "to test generalizations offered in a specific Euro-American cultural context."[8] Second and more vital, unlike the recent spate of case studies involving South Asian, Persian, and Arabic print histories, the Arme-

nian one stretches back to the first phase of printing, coinciding and over-lapping with the early modern period and also with the "hand press" era of printing before the onset of the industrial revolution.[9] While there has been a substantial body of mostly Armenian-language scholarship on Armenian print during the past century,[10] with very few exceptions, such scholarship has not engaged with the larger study of print culture and especially book history, thus missing a golden opportunity to make a contribution toward globalizing the Eurocentric scholarship produced by scholars following the footsteps of Lucien Febvre and Henri-Jean Martin.[11] Moreover, the Armenian scholarship has not paid sufficient attention to the fact that from its inception in Venice in 1512 until roughly the early 1800s, the history of Armenian print culture was not only linked to its European counterpart but, much like it, was closely entangled with that of port cities, initially in Europe and subsequently in Asia, where Armenian long-distance merchants, or "port Armenians" as I shall describe them below, were settled. In fact, out of nineteen separate Armenian printing locations from 1512 to 1800 virtually every Armenian printing press was established either in or close to port cities, and the few that were not owed their existence to ongoing relations with port locations.[12]

In what follows, I explore the history of global Armenian print culture by imbedding my discussion both within the larger context of Euroamerican scholarship on print as well as within discussions among world historians of what they refer to as the "early modern world." I begin with a quick overview of what the concept of the "early modern world" implies and then place the early adoption of print technology by Armenians within what I call an "aquacentric" view of early modern Armenian history. Such a focus on the early modern period in global history is useful because it will enable us to foreground the hemisphere-wide or even global networks of circulation and exchange that connected or integrated[13] Armenians living in far flung and mostly coastal regions to each other (and to the wider world) in general, and the role of print technology and the circulation of the books it created as vehicles of early modern connection in particular. As far as cultural or print history is concerned, the early modern period in Armenian history, as I argue, was largely defined by events that unfolded in the great port cities of the global economy roughly from 1500 to 1800, where Armenian long-distance merchants, or "port Armenians," had established communities. After a discussion of how the histories of port cities, port Armenians, and printers were intimately connected, the essay turns to explore some of the reasons for the "shift" in Armenian history from scribal to print culture

in the early years of the sixteenth century. It concludes with some thoughts on whether Eisenstein's powerful yet controversial argument for an early modern "print revolution" in Europe also applies to the Armenian context.

An Aquacentric View of Early Modern Armenian History[14]

In recent decades, world historians such as Jerry Bentley, John F. Richards, Joseph Fletcher, Sanjay Subrahmanyam, Victor Lieberman,[15] and others have increasingly used the term "early modern" to describe a "distinct and coherent era of global history"[16] extending roughly from 1500 to about 1800 when "human societies shared in and were affected by several world-wide processes of change unprecedented in their scope and intensity."[17] According to Bentley, "a cluster of dynamic historical processes that promoted intense cross-cultural interaction and exchange"[18] gave shape and internal coherence to this period on a global scale and not one confined to the history of Europe, as was usually the case when historians used the term before the 1960s. These processes include:[19] 1) the creation of global sea passages; 2) the rise of a global economy, much of it based on maritime mercantile networks and sustained by "nodes" of port cities; 3) the proliferation across Eurasia of consolidated, centralized, and stable states; 4) the migration and forced movements of people; 5) the steady and continuous growth of the world's population; 6) the spread of new technologies such as gunpowder and, especially key for our purposes here, printing; 7) the "quickening of pace" in the circulation of men and things (including silver, spices, pathogens and diseases but also cultural commodities such as printed books, letters, etc.) across wide geographical divides, with men and information traveling faster and farther than at any time before in history. The early modern world, in short, witnessed the rise of a more integrated and "connected" world, where regions, peoples, and cultures heretofore largely separated from each other through space and time or members of the same "diaspora" such as the Armenians, found themselves to be increasingly and interactively linked and integrated through global networks of circulation and exchange. The proliferation of information, transportation, and trade networks across much of the known world that began to gather pace during the early modern world created the conditions for what David Harvey has called "time-space compression" or the "shrinking" and making smaller of the world around us.[20]

Armenian historians have thus far not demonstrated familiarity with or interest in integrating an early modern periodization scheme into their studies of the Armenian past.[21] Instead, the period 1500–1800 is either entirely overlooked as an internally coherent era in need of its own periodization label or when singled out as being particularly important in the larger context of Armenian history is collapsed into a much larger "modern period" (*ardi shrjan*) that is said to begin with the invention of Armenian printing in 1512 and to stretch into the present.[22] As is the case with other histories and other regions, integrating and studying Armenian history into an "early modern world" perspective, as opposed to studying it separately as has largely been the case to date, would lessen the extent to which this history would be "seen as exceptional, unique, exotic, and somehow detached from world history."[23] However, it would entail a number of fundamental reevaluations in the way historians look at the Armenian past, among which primacy would be given to restoring and foregrounding maritime basins such as oceans and seas as fundamental units of Armenian cultural history at least during the centuries between 1500 and 1800.

In this connection, it bears noting that Armenian historiography and especially Armenian "historical memory" seem to be fixated on the figure of the Armenian as rooted in his or her ancestral homeland. Land, for good or for ill, has been taken as the ideal and often only matrix for Armenian history. While there are good reasons for this unexamined assumption in Armenian historical writing (Armenia's mostly landlocked geographical terrain and the historical bond between statehood and territorial sovereignty not being the least of which), this "terracentric" view of Armenian history does not correspond to some basic realities of the Armenian past, especially during the crucial years between 1500 and 1800 CE.[24] Without dismissing the role of the peasantry and rural life in Armenian history, it is fair to say, I think, that during this period, arguably the most momentous changes in Armenian cultural and economic history, including but not limited to Armenians' early openness to and adoption of print technology, did not take place on the rugged terrain of the Armenian plateau, where perpetual wars between the two gunpowder empires of the Ottomans and Safavids had destroyed or pauperized much of the region's populations and local economies. Rather, they unfolded across the slippery surface of the world's major bodies of water and through the port cities dotting their shorelines. More particularly, the pivotal center of Armenian history, at least as far as long-distance trade and cultural history are concerned, during the early modern period and beyond seems to have shifted almost entirely to the port cities of the Indian

Ocean rim and, to a lesser degree, the Mediterranean basin. Consider for instance the location of the first Armenian printing press in Venice in 1512 followed by a string of presses operating from the Most Serene republic (*La Serenissima*) for several centuries and the establishment of the Mkhitarist Congregation of erudite Catholic Armenian monks, a little over two centuries after Hakob Meghapart's press, in San Lazzaro in the Venetian lagoon. It would be almost impossible for us today to imagine what is often called the "Armenian renaissance" without the learned monks who followed in the footsteps of the Congregation's founder, Abbot Mkhitar, not to mention the printing press that enabled these monks to preserve, classify, and in fact give form to the canon of Armenian literature. The same can be said of the Indian Ocean basin and its archipelago of port cities such as Surat, Madras, and Calcutta, to name a few, where the bulk of and certainly the wealthiest among port Armenians lived. What would the history of Armenian journalism be without the world's first Armenian newspaper, *Azdarar* (*Intelligencer*), published for two consecutive years by Harout'iwn Shmavonian in Madras from 1794 to 1796? What of Armenian political thought and modern constitutional thinking without Shahamir Shahamirian's *Girk' anuaneal vorogayt pařats* (Book called "Snare of Glory"), the first republican-inspired (proto)constitution of a future state of Armenia that saw the light of day not in Armenia but Madras around 1787? The same may be said of the first printed Armenian play in the world ("The Physiognomist of Duplicity," Calcutta, 1823) and arguably the first novel in vernacular Armenian (Mesrob Taghiatiants's *Vep Varsenkan*, Calcutta, 1847).

All of these achievements shared three things in common. First, their existence was made possible by the modern technology of the printing press and its mechanical (re)production of books through movable metal type. True, we should withstand the temptation to exaggerate the "revolutionary" nature of the shift from manuscript to print and the latter's impact on Armenian societies across the world as has sometimes been done by those who see print technology as causing a "communications revolution." However, as we shall see below, the recent push back to represent the appearance of the printed codex as a "blip" or "hiccup" of continuity in the *longue durée* of the history of the book should also be avoided.[25] Second, they all occurred either in or near port cities or were facilitated by maritime connections to such cities. The third commonality among these accomplishments is that their very existence was predicated on the support, both intellectual and financial, of "port Armenians."[26] Who or what were these port Armenians and how did they differ from the run-of-the-mill Armenians who did

not live in or near port cities? Are there any attributes that distinguished them, and if so what are they? And how did they contribute to Armenian print?

First, unlike their agrarian counterparts, who for the most part lived far away from the great shorelines of the world and eked out a living by tilling the land as peasants or as small-time local merchants and artisans, port Armenians were predominantly if not almost exclusively long-distance merchants whose livelihood and identity were largely shaped by their relationship to the sea. They made a living as long-distance merchants involved in the global trade of silk, spices, South Asian textiles, and precious stones. Constantly in motion across bodies of water to conduct what world historians call "cross-cultural trade," port Armenians, as their name implies, resided for the most part in the great port cities of their age such as Amsterdam, Venice, Marseille, Saint Petersburg, Astrakhan, Madras, and Calcutta—all locations for Armenian printing presses. Second, as long-distance merchants betrothed to the sea and its many ports, port Armenians, like their Sephardic counterparts in Jewish history, embodied many of the traits associated with Mercurius, the Roman god of merchants, often portrayed with "wings on his feet and head."[27] Mercurius's winged sandals and winged hat have come to symbolize the principal attributes of the "port Jew," according to historians Lois Dubin and David Sorkin, who coined the concept of "port Jew" a little over a decade ago to distinguish mostly Sephardic Jews engaged in long-distance maritime trade from their counterparts working in European courts, often known as "court Jews." The symbolism of Mercurius's winged nature was not lost on Dubin and Sorkin, both of whom identified it with movement and flight, attributes they found present in the figure of the port Jew. The latter, because of his association with port cities and long-distance commerce, was a quintessential "border-crosser" who moved swiftly through and across diverse cultural zones and was no less swift, adventurous, and cosmopolitan in the flights of his imagination and thoughts. The relationship with commerce on the seas for the port Jew and, as we shall see, for the port Armenian is therefore an integral part of his identity as a "social type." Generally speaking, individuals whose location and vocation are in ports are more likely to be open to the world around them, probably more likely to experiment with the cultural practices they encounter in the peoples with whom they come into contact, and thus are likely to have cultural identities that are hybrid and enriched through sustained contact and intermingling with others from across the oceans. Also, largely as a function of their location in port cities, themselves some of the

greatest hubs of information in the globally connected world that came to take shape during the early modern period, port Armenians were exposed to a greater volume and more diverse varieties of information than their land-locked counterparts. This meant that new technologies such as the printing press or inventions associated with it, such as novel papermaking techniques and so on, would be more easily accessible to port Armenians than their land-lubbing counterparts.

Third, with the exception of a small minority from the mercantile town of Agulis in the Caucasus,[28] the overwhelming majority of these port Armenians traced their ancestry to the township of New Julfa, the prosperous suburb of the Iranian Safavid imperial capital of Isfahan where their fore-bears were relocated by Shah 'Abbas I in 1604–1605 in the course of the Ottoman-Safavid wars.[29] Their original homeland, the town of Old Julfa in what is today the Azerbaijani exclave of Nakhijevan, would probably have been the last place in the world to be associated with oceans and seas had it not been for its strategic location astride a caravan route connecting Asia Minor with the Indian Ocean. Its landlocked position and inhospitable environment were traits that had caught the attention of more than one European traveler who passed through the town before its destruction in the early years of the seventeenth century. The French traveler and writer Jean Chardin, for instance, remarked, "it is not possible to find another town situated in a place that is more dry and more rocky."[30] It was Shah 'Abbas I's razing of the town to the ground and the brutal relocation of its mercantile denizens to his newly-built capital of Isfahan that altered the future trajectory of Armenian history. The Shah's granting of a royal protection and quasi monopoly of the Crown's silk trade to the Julfans (1619) and subsequent unlocking of the gates of the Indian Ocean in 1622, when the fort of Hormuz at the mouth of the Persian Gulf fell from Portuguese to Iranian control, pried open the wide watery world of the Indian Ocean to merchants from New Julfa and helped transform the Julfans into port Armenians. Like some of their counterparts who had settled or were in the process of settling in the port cities of the Mediterranean world (Venice, Livorno, Marseille, Smyrna/Izmir, and Constantinople/Istanbul, as well as on the Atlantic seaboard in Amsterdam), they did not take long to establish mercantile communities in most of the ocean's preeminent port cities. Most settled in port cities under the rule of the English East India Company such as Madras, Calcutta, and Bombay, followed by Singapore and Dutch-controlled Batavia in the nineteenth century; others resided in French and Portuguese outposts, such as Pondicherry in southern India and Macao/Canton in China

whence they plied a lucrative trade with Manila exchanging Indian textiles and spices as well as Chinese porcelain and silk for New World silver that arrived each year from Acapulco on Spanish convoys known as the Manila Galleon. But what could these port Armenians have to do with the history of the Armenian book and the printing press, which after all was almost entirely confined to its European cradle from 1512 to the late 1600s when it began to gravitate slowly to the East? This brings us to the fourth and final attribute of port Armenians, their active patronage of the arts and culture in general and of the new craft of printing in particular.

The PPP Link: Ports, Port Armenians, and Printers

The bonds that connected ports and port Armenians to printers across the oceans and occasionally over land were complex. First and foremost, the location of the printing establishment was crucial. Most Armenian printers in the early modern period, with a few exceptions, were members of the literati belonging to the clerical hierarchy of the Armenian Church. They usually set up their presses in the port cities in Europe that already had a substantial presence of port Armenians with ties to New Julfa. The port city location was preferred for several reasons. Port cities were among the most dynamic nodes of the world economy during the early modern period and therefore leading loci of technological innovation. As far as printers were concerned, port cities offered access to paper manufacturers, font casters, engravers, as well as compositors and press operators. In addition, the fact that they usually contained a substantial presence of port Armenians willing to patronize and shore up new printing presses meant that Armenian port settlements already came equipped with a diasporic community infrastructure, including churches and other community institutions. Most important perhaps, port cities afforded printers with relatively cheap and efficient access to transportation. In an age when transportation by water was almost always cheaper, safer, and faster than its overland counterpart, location in a port city meant that a printer could load his newly printed commodity (books) and have it shipped to the nearest markets of consumption. In the eighteenth century, the major reading market for Armenian books was Constantinople/Istanbul, home to the largest urban population of Armenians. The city's close to 80,000 Armenians by the second half of the eighteenth century were the prized destination for printed Armenian books that were shipped there either directly to its bustling port with its minaret-studded

skyline or by caravan routes once the books were unloaded in the port of Smyrna/Izmir in the south.[31] A few examples drawn from Armenian port city presses, such as Venice, Amsterdam, and Madras, will help clarify the points made thus far.

Amsterdam, where an Armenian press was installed in 1660, and where Armenian printers were active until the second decade of the eighteenth century, was a critical Armenian port city with a significant presence of Julfan merchants and two successive churches: *Surb Karapet* in 1663/64 followed by *Surb Hogi* in 1713.[32] In the second half of the seventeenth century, the city had clearly taken the lead as the most dynamic printing center in the world with over forty printing houses publishing in multiple languages including Armenian and Hebrew. Partly as a result of this reputation, it attracted Armenian printers beginning with the most famous of them, Oskan Yerevants'i (originally from New Julfa) who, with the active financial support of several Julfan merchants in Livorno, printed the first Armenian bible in Amsterdam in 1666.[33] After Yerevantsi moved to Livorno and Marseille with his press, his place was eventually filled by members of the illustrious family of *savants* and printers, the Vanandets'is from the region of Goghtn in Nakhijevan (in the same general area as Old Julfa), who actively published first-rate books from their settlement in the Dutch capital from 1694 to 1717, when their press was shut down because of financial troubles.[34] As Rene Bekius has pointed out in an insightful essay, another reason for Amsterdam's lure was its reputation for being a haven for persecuted minorities such as Sephardic Jews expelled from the Iberian peninsula and Huguenots from France as well as Armenian printers keen to avoid the tentacular reach of the censors of the *Propaganda Fide,* an organization founded by the Catholic Church in 1622 to spread Christianity in new areas and to combat the effects of the Reformation and the presence of what it regarded as "heresy."[35] In addition to having lax censorship laws and being relatively free of censors and spies from Rome, Amsterdam with its famous stock exchange also boasted an information and transportation network second to none, as well as paper mills producing cheaper and better quality paper due to a new innovation in production techniques.[36] The same was true of Marseille (1670s), Livorno (1640s), Venice (1512–1513, 1564–1565, 1586, 1660s to the present), Constantinople (1567, 1660s and from 1701 to the present), Saint Petersburg (1781–), Astrakhan (1796–), and especially Madras (1772–) and Calcutta (1796–). All these locations were port cities with impressive communities of port Armenians. They were also connected to each other and to New Julfa through networks of circulation through which merchants, capital, commodities, printers, as well as printed books, ideas,

and new technologies circulated. The establishment of a press in New Julfa as early as 1638 was in many ways an exception to the port city–printers pattern discussed above.[37] However, this press could have hardly existed without the financial and technical support offered to it by the township's famous merchants residing abroad in one of their many port-city settlements from Venice to Madras. For instance, when in 1686 the township's clerical hierarchy decided to reopen the press that had been shut down following an uprising in the 1640s of the suburb's scribes, if the French Huguenot traveler, Jean-Baptiste Tavernier's account is to be trusted, the primate of the time wrote a letter to the most notable Julfan merchants residing in Venice, asking them for assistance with the purchase of technical equipment (including new fonts and types as well as matrices and punches).[38]

In addition to providing Armenian printers with an institutional or community infrastructure, port Armenians provided the capital investments necessary to shore up the printing activities of the clerical elite. They did this in several ways. They were directly involved in partnerships with printer-priests as a form of what has come to be known as "print capitalism."[39] An example of this is the partnership contract that a Julfan merchant named Alexan Paolo (Aleksan Poghosian) had entered with two Armenian priests (Oannes de Ougorlou and Matheus di Hovhannes) who ran a major press in Amsterdam from 1685 to the mid-1690s. After printing 8,300 copies of Armenian books, many of them destined for Smyrna to be sold there and, one would assume, in Constantinople, the partners had a falling out and took their dispute to a notary public.[40] However, business partnerships between port Armenians and printers based exclusively on the profit motive were the exception in the history of the Armenian book, unlike its European counterpart, where printing was from its origins "a model of a capitalist enterprise."[41] The small size of the Armenian reading market, itself a function of low population numbers and even lower literacy rates, was probably the main reason why the profession of the printer was not a profitable one. Merchants were thus quick to realize that printing for capitalist motives was not a paying proposition and began supporting printing presses not necessarily with the intention of engaging in a capitalist enterprise but as a form of cultural patronage for both Church and "nation." They could have done this for reasons that we would today call "prestige power" or the vanity of having the names of their family members immortalized in the colophons of the books published through their benevolence. The case of Simeon Yerevants'i's press in Ejmiatsin—the first printing press in the homeland—as far away from a port city as one could imagine—is an example

of the latter. Established in 1772, this press was entirely paid for by a port Armenian residing in Madras known as Grigor Agha Chekigents (alias Mikael Khojajanian), who donated 18,000 rupees to the Catholicosate to help buy the appropriate material for casting of types and even for the establishment of a paper mill in 1775 on the grounds of the Catholicosate.[42] Thus when technical specialists could not be procured *in situ*, a port Armenian in Madras made sure not only to raise the required capital but also to rely on his local connections in India and dispatch to the Catholicos French technical specialists from the port settlement of Pondicherry to help the monks in their enterprise of printing. Sometimes both activities (cultural patronage and entrepreneurial investment) were combined, as was the case with Oskan Yerevants'i's press in Amsterdam, which was bought with the capital investment of Oskan's brother, Avetis Ghlijents, a merchant from New Julfa. This press was later donated by Oskan to Ejmiatsin under whose name it functioned during its various peregrinations from Amsterdam to Marseille and thence to Constantinople. Merchants also stepped in to support Armenian printers through directly commissioning works for publication.

The publication of several trade and language manuals useful to merchants, such as the celebrated *Gants ch'ap'oy kshroy twoy ew dramits' bolor ashkhari* (A treasury of measures, weights, numbers, and moneys of the entire world) (Amsterdam, 1699) and the first Armenian book in the vernacular, *Arhest Hamaroghut'ean, amboghj ev katareal* (The art of arithmetic, complete and perfect) (Marseille, 1675) are examples of such mercantile patronage of Armenian books. The same can be said for works of translation from foreign languages, such as Charles Rollin's *Histoire Romaine* (*Patmut'iwn hrovmeats*) and William Robertson's multi-volume *History of America* (*Vipasanut'iwn Amerikoy*), both commissioned by Julfan merchants with connections to India and printed or published by Mkhitarists in Venice and Trieste, respectively. In a few cases, merchants carried out the translations themselves and paid for the publication of their own works, such as Marcara Shahrimanian's translation of Petis de la Croix's *Histoire du Grand Genghizcan* (*Patmut'iwn Metsin Gengizkhani arajin kayser nakhni mghulats ev tatarats, bazhaneal i chors girs*) (Trieste, 1788).

In addition to patronizing the printing activities of priests, did port Armenians also own and operate their own printing presses? As mentioned above, the minuscule size of the Armenian reading public and the low levels of literacy made print capitalism unfeasible for port Armenians, and the few cases of merchant printers were few and far in between.[43] In the seventeenth century, Armenian merchants operated at least two printing presses in Ven-

ice: Gaspar Shahrimanian's press of 1687 and the press of Khwaja Nahapet Gulnazar Agulets'i, which published the *Psalms of David*, the second of only three printed Armenian books in the vernacular during the seventeenth century.[44] In the eighteenth century, it became more common perhaps to find port Armenians who were also owners of their own printing presses. The most celebrated case of this was the merchant prince Shahamir Shahamirian, who established in Madras in 1772 the first Armenian printing press in India and printed a number of trailblazing books including in 1787–1789 *Girk' anuaneal vorogayt' pařats* (Book called "Snare of Glory"), the republican proto-constitution for a future republic of Armenia.[45] Later this same press appears to have been used to print the first Armenian newspaper in the world, *Azdarar* (1794-1796).[46] The press of Grigor Khojamal Khaldarian, a Julfan from India who had traveled to and resided in London in the 1770s[47] and later opened Russia's first Armenian printing press in the port city of Saint Petersburg in 1781 is another case in point. It is interesting to note that the first published work by an Armenian woman, Kleopatra Sarafian's *Banali Gitut'ean* (Key of knowledge) saw the light of day on Khaldarian's press in 1788.[48] The first edition of Yeghishé Vardapet's fifth-century classic *The History of Vardan and the Armenian War* was also first printed on this press in 1787. More than anything else, perhaps, port Armenians contributed to the success of the Armenian "printing revolution" by making accessible their networks of transportation and communication to printers. The coexistence of information networks and trade routes extending across vast spaces and used by Port Armenians to conduct business was just as imperative for the success of the Armenian printing enterprise as any other technological factor related to printing itself.

In his *The Book in the Renaissance,* Andrew Pettegree following Febvre and Martin has recently given us a richly detailed picture of how much the success of the European printing revolution that predated the Armenian one was predicated upon its ability to be symbiotically interactive with networks of transportation and communication. All successful early modern printers, Pettegree notes, inserted themselves into such networks proliferating across vast parts of Europe and relied on the information contained in correspondence with their agents stationed in distant parts to gauge the state of the market and accordingly to decide what titles to print and in what print-runs. Similarly, the transportation of their prized commodity (the printed book) was carried out through the networks used for the shipment of other commodities. For Pettegree, the simultaneous existence of these Europe-wide networks partly explains why already by the sixteenth century, large quan-

tities of books were "routinely shipped and transported around Europe," much of the trade being "conducted along the rivers that linked Europe's major printing cities."[49] Echoing the findings of Pettegree, Lisa Jardine notes in her chapter examining the printing of books in renaissance Europe that "from the very beginning of printing, book-distribution followed the same routes, with the same remarkable efficiency, as other consumer goods."[50]

The Armenian case as we shall see vividly illustrates the point made by Pettegree and others regarding the importance of factors outside the world of print per se (long-distance information and transportation networks) whose existence in the early modern world was pivotal for the success of an Armenian printing revolution to the extent that there was such a revolution. The crucial difference and a lesson to be learned from the Armenian case is that such networks could operate on a scale much larger and more complex than that of renaissance Europe studied by Pettegree and Jardine and could, in fact, extend from Amsterdam to Saint Petersburg and east to Mughal India. A few specific examples will help illustrate the point. For instance, the printing press of Oskan Yerevants'i, established in Amsterdam and Marseille in the 1660s and early 1670s, used the transportation facilities that came with both port city locations to ship books to consumption centers in the East. In a 1676 letter by an Armenian bishop from Smyrna addressed to a merchant residing in Marseille, for example, the bishop passed along information he had heard regarding how Armenian printers "have printed 7,000 copies of that Breviary [*ayt Zhamagirk'n*] in Amsterdam and loaded them on a ship heading for Izmir and [thence to] Istanbul and loaded 2,000 hymn-books and another 2,000 Breviaries for Aleppo."[51] Similar use of networks already utilized by Port Armenians may be seen in the case of the publishing activities of Abbot Mkhitar (1675–1749) of the Catholic Armenian missionary order known as the Mkhitarist Congregation established in 1717 on the island of San Lazzaro in the Venetian lagoon.

The Mkhitarists supplied the market for Armenian books by relying upon several methods of transportation including the shipping of crates filled with books either with their missionaries or, like Oskan Yerevants'i before them, by loading them on ships leaving the busy harbor of Venice and sailing for either Izmir, Istanbul, or Aleppo (via the nearby port facilities of Alexandretta). However, they also relied upon book peddlers, a method widely used in Europe during the same period. For instance, we know from correspondence stored at the Mkhitarist archives that one such book peddler was Khachik Hakobian, a *commenda*[52] agent working for a wealthy Julfan merchant and patron for Mkhitar, Khwaja Melik Khaldarents', re-

siding in Surat, India. Khachik regularly peddled books for Abbot Mkhitar as early as the 1720s, when he is reported to have taken a small crate of Mkhitarist books to his master in Surat upon returning home from business in the Mediterranean and Western Europe.[53] According to an entry Abbot Mkhitar made on March 21, 1732, in his accounting ledger, where he kept a detailed list of transactions pertaining to his Congregation's publishing business, when Hakobian left Venice in 1732, he took with him 817 books, and in the course of the next eight years sold them in such places as Aleppo, Smyrna, Baghdad, New Julfa/Isfahan, Basra, Surat, Madras, and Bengal (Calcutta and Chinsura).[54]

None of this global circulation of Armenian books would have been possible, however, had the shift from manuscript to print not been made two and a half centuries before.

From Manuscript to Print or from Mashtots to Meghapart

Until the late nineteenth century, it was widely regarded that the *Psalms of David*, published in Venice in 1564 by an Armenian from the Ottoman Empire named Abgar of Tokat, was the first printed Armenian book.[55] It was the chance discovery in 1865 of a previously unknown printed Armenian book "without information on the year, place of publication, and publisher," but with the previous owner's handwritten date of 1552, preserved in the library of the Mkhitarist Congregation on the island of San Lazzaro in the Venetian lagoon that eventually led to a radical reassessment of the chronology of Armenian printing.[56] By the 1890s, a scholarly consensus had emerged that pushed back the date for the origins of Armenian printing to within a half a century of Gutenberg's invention, removing the title of "the Armenian Gutenberg" from Abgar of Tokat and bestowing it on the previously unknown and still enigmatic figure of Hakob Meghapart (Jacob the Sinner), who had printed five separate books in Venice and identified himself as the printer of one in a colophon.[57] By 1912, celebrations in Armenian urban centers such as Istanbul and Tiflis marked the fourth centennial of the printing of the first Armenian book by Jacob the Sinner. Although we know next to nothing about the identity of this person and the particular circumstances that might have led him to print several Armenian books in a key Mediterranean port city with a long history of Armenian mercantile presence, we are somewhat better informed about the larger historical processes

that made the printed book an attractive alternative for the manuscript co-
dex once its influence became known among the Armenians.

Questions of supply and demand that have characterized discussions of
the shift from manuscript to print in Europe have also occupied a central
place in Armenian historiography of the origins of Armenian print culture.
Some of the main scholars of Armenian printing history, including Leo (Ara-
kel Babakhanian), Raymond Kevorkian, Jean-Pierre Mahé, Raphael Iskhan-
yan, and others, have made the scarcity of Armenian manuscripts the key
factor for the transition from the scriptorium to the printing press. When
one reconceptualizes the various, scattered bits of the conventional argu-
ment and rearranges its parts into a new whole, the following scenario for
why print eventually prevailed among the Armenians emerges. The argu-
ment assumes that on the eve of the "printing revolution" a number of fac-
tors converged to prepare the ground for Hakob Meghapart's printing press,
and for those that followed later in the century, in Venice and elsewhere.
These factors included but were not limited to the following: 1) scarcity of
manuscripts due to "constant looting and war" on the Armenian plateau, 2)
a low ebb in scribal activity in the monastic scriptoria, 3) the forbiddingly
expensive nature of traditional materials like calfskin, 4) the unavailability
of paper supplies near monastic centers, as opposed to the printing centers
in Europe, etc., and 5) the labor power invested into creating a single manu-
script codex as opposed to using movable type and mechanically multiply-
ing production and drastically cutting down price. A combination of some
or all of these factors and perhaps others contributed to increasing the price
of manuscripts and making the new technology of book-making in the age
of "mechanical reproduction" (to paraphrase Walter Benjamin) not only
attractive but necessary.

One of the earliest references to the scarcity of manuscript books among
the Armenians comes from a Catholic missionary stationed in the Armenian
mercantile center of New Julfa, Isfahan, in the early seventeenth century. In
a letter of 1629, he communicated to the Propaganda Fide the New Julfans'
desire to have an Old and New Testament printed through Rome's help on
account of "the famine [*sov*] of books, especially of the Bible, one copy of
which cost a thousand Zeccinos."[58] The colophon of the *Psalms of David*,
printed in Venice 1642 by Hovhannes Ankiwrats'i, echoes the same pressing
need for manuscripts and provides a useful insight into the mental universe
of Armenian printers operating in the sixteenth century:

> For I the humble soul Hovhannes Ankiwrats'i saw the scarcity
> of books of the Armenian nation and wavered in my mind and

> wondered whether there could be some means of multiplying the
> New and Old Testaments. Because of the shortage of books, even
> at great expense and difficulty it was barely possible to find one or
> two or three books let alone many. And for this reason I put it in
> my head to learn the art of printing with the help of the holy spirit,
> and the prayers of the holy virgin Mary, mother of God . . . I went
> with hope and desire to the city of Rome and with much toil and
> many torments [*charcharanowk*], which are not possible to put into
> writing. . . . I procured with great labor punches and matrices of
> ornaments and letters with floral design. I then came to Venice to
> undertake my work.[59]

The above references to the desire to learn "the art of printing" in order
to "multiply" books that were in high demand and also scarce might help
shed light on why the printing press was seen by most if not all of the early
Armenian printers as a panacea to the key problems facing Armenians. This
refrain about the shortage of manuscript codices appears to be widespread
and a common theme that crops up in the colophons of the period. For in-
stance, another Armenian printer/publisher operating out of Venice in 1686
shared the same motivation for resorting to the technology of print when he
noted "the rarity of clerical books, especially lectionaries and other similar
books."[60] As Mahé notes, if the dearth of liturgical manuscripts, especially
the Bible, was acute in the second half of the seventeenth century, the situ-
ation was even worse when it came to classical literature, particularly of
Armenian historians such as Koriwn, Agatʻangelos, Lazar Pʻarpetsʻi, Elishe,
and Movses Khorenatsʻi.[61]

   The micro-level evidence culled from individual colophons appears to be
corroborated by the macro-level data about the decline in Armenian manu-
script production on the eve of Armenian printing and especially during the
second half of the sixteenth century. As preliminary statistical work done
on the colophons of surviving, dated Armenian manuscripts suggests, there
were periodic upward and downward swings in scribal activity from the
thirteenth century to the eighteenth. As Dickran Kouymjian summarizes
his research notes, "the results clearly reveal that in the sixteenth century
for the first time the level of manuscript production fell below that of the
previous or fifteenth century."[62] The early decades of the sixteenth century
represent the "severest drop in Armenian manuscript production ever re-
corded."[63] The same author also states that "the half century from 1500 to
1550 represents the absolute lowest point in the production of Armenian
scriptoria until printing finally replaced the manual copying of manuscripts

altogether in the eighteenth century."[64] Interestingly the dates put forward
by Kouymjian's provisional analysis overlap precisely with the same period
when Hakob Meghapart set up his press in Venice. If there were to have
been such a severe decline in Armenian manuscripts at the dawn of the early
modern age, as statistical data seem to indicate, it would follow that there
was also a corresponding decline in copying activity in Armenian scriptoria.
Indeed, several authors have advanced such a view, attributing the decline in
manuscript copying in scriptoria to the numerous wars waged in the region
where most scriptoria were located. According to Mahé, for instance,

> the activities of copiers had been greatly reduced by the wars and
> invasions which had repeatedly fallen on Armenia since the end of
> the 14th century, but the situation had still worsened throughout
> the 15th century with the progressive decline of the larger North-
> Eastern monasteries, to the point where comparatively few manu-
> scripts were copied by hand between the years 1500 and 1550—
> during that is, the early years of printing.[65]

One could take exception to the reductionist account of attributing the
decline of Armenian manuscript copying to a single factor, namely wars
and looting, instead of exploring other socioeconomic factors not necessar-
ily reducible to the military operations on the ground. Such factors would
include movement in the price and availability of parchment and paper (the
two principal substances on which Armenian manuscripts were copied) or
swings in the demand for particular kinds of codex manuscripts, either of
which would have made the newly invented technology of print in Europe
attractive to Armenian printers and consumers of books. Since not much
work has been done on the social and economic history of Armenian manu-
script production, we cannot really say which factors—constant warfare or
rise of costs involved in producing manuscripts or both—were responsible
for making manuscripts relatively scarce at the dawn of the age of print-
ing, thus making the printing press even more attractive. We can say with
certainty, however, that the labor invested into producing one manuscript
would easily produce many more printed books and possibly as many as
500, according to one historian.[66]
    Despite some reservations, therefore, the general tenor of the argument
linking the adoption of print culture to the extreme shortage of Armenian
manuscripts strikes this writer as sound. Clearly more work needs to be
done on the cultural, social, and economic vicissitudes of scribal activity
before we can arrive at a more compelling and multifaceted account of the

shift from manuscript to print culture in the early sixteenth century. At this point, it would be useful to pause for a moment and set the shift from manuscript to print in the Armenian case within the larger context of a similar shift that first occurred in Europe at a slightly earlier period.

Whereas for the Armenians the principal reason for the shift appears to have been the scarcity of manuscripts probably due to chronic warfare in the regions where scriptoria existed, the European example has suggested to scholars, beginning with Febvre and Martin and more recently to Pettegree, that manuscript shortage was never a problem. In fact, the opposite seems to have been the case. Manuscript production had been significantly intensified to keep up with a sharp rise in the demand for books. Pettegree neatly sums up the shifting socioeconomic conditions that precipitated the expansion of the reading market:

> By the mid-fifteenth century the European book market was already very large. Aristocratic collecting opened up new markets for scribes and booksellers, and the expansion of the European university network increased traditional demand among scholars, students and theologians. The expanding function of government required more notaries, secretaries and literate public officials, stimulating a rapid growth in the number of schools. All these people required books . . . .[67]

In response to this changing situation, manuscript production techniques in Europe improved during the century preceding the advent of print. Many European scriptoria ramped up production, experimenting with new techniques or methods of manuscript copying, such as the celebrated *pecia* system.[68] As a result, output rose considerably and some scriptoria were able to produce several hundred copies of manuscripts of a given work in an attempt to meet escalating demand especially from university students.

In short, it appears that in renaissance Europe, unlike in the Armenian world, the advent of the printing revolution was not accelerated by the "scarcity of manuscripts" but rather by the rapid expansion of the book market and the rise of demand for reading material. The shift from manuscript to print was thus arguably a demand-led process; it did not stem, as with the Armenian case, from an abrupt decrease in the supply of manuscripts especially of gospels or psalters and the like that were needed by the narrow reading circles closely associated with the Church hierarchy. Obviously, more research needs to be done on reading practices and literacy levels among late medieval and early modern Armenians before we are able

to say anything more definitive on this point. For the time being, however, it seems sensible to state that the printing revolution for Armenians was, from the start, led and directed by the Church hierarchy and its literary and religious need for sacred books that could no longer be supplied by the traditional mode of hand-copying manuscripts. In other words, unlike in renaissance Europe, the manuscript-to-print shift among Armenians did not occur because the demand for books had spiked to levels that could not be met by scriptoria but simply because the scriptoria and the scribes who worked in them appear to have been largely destroyed or impoverished as a result of chronic war on the Armenian plateau. This particular set of circumstances and the primacy of the Armenian Apostlic Church in spearheading the shift to print culture will help us illuminate a crucial and early divergence between the Armenian print trajectory and its Islamic counterpart that needs to be addressed here albeit briefly for a more comprehensive understanding of global Armenian print culture in the early modern period.

Scholars as diverse as Nile Green, Jonathan Bloom, and Francis Robinson have advanced various explanations to help solve one of the great historical puzzles of early modern print and global history, namely the question, "why did the Islamic world trail so far behind the Christian world in adopting print?"[69] In other words, why was there no significant printing of Arabic-script books by Muslims until the early decades of the nineteenth century, while Europeans and as we have seen Armenians were printing books during the Gutenberg era of the wooden handpress? In the interests of concision, we may simplify the different accounts to illuminate this puzzle as falling into at least two related camps. First, Bloom and to some extent Robinson have noted the difficulties and costly nature of designing and punch-cutting metal types for Arabic script, which unlike Latin (or Armenian for that matter) was cursive and needed many different ligature marks.[70] The difficulties of the script, of course, only made it relatively difficult but not impossible for books to appear in Arabic before the nineteenth century, as the recently rediscovered 1538/9 first printed edition of the Koran by Alessandro Paganino in Venice as well as other publications carried out in Europe mostly by Italian printers make clear.[71] Bloom also touches upon additional factors such as the veneration with which Islamic societies held the hand-written (as opposed to the printed) book, as well as well-organized scribal opposition.[72] Robinson and especially Green have built upon some of Bloom's points and advanced a significantly more compelling explanation. Both authors place emphasis on entrenched opposition by the Muslim religious hierarchy of the *ulama* accompanied by the powerful scribal guilds, which opposed mechan-

ical reproduction on grounds that it was more expensive and moreover if adapted would drive them out of business. Green sums up these arguments rather neatly:

> Before 1800, the argument that the spread of printing was delayed by the hold of bazaar copyists over the book market, and the relative cheapness of their product compared with the initial capital required to set up a printing press and sell a large enough number of copies to turn the enterprise to profit, holds some merit. This, after all, seems to have been the reason for the abandonment of Parekh's Devanagari Press. When indigenous printing did eventually develop in Indian and other Islamic settings, in economic terms the key (if long unrecognized) enabling factor was the invention in 1800 of the mass-produced iron handpress.[73]

As with our earlier comparison with the European print tradition, the Armenian case presents a number of striking peculiarities when compared to the Perso-Arabic print trajectory that may help explain why, unlike its Muslim counterpart, it was already flourishing during the Gutenberg era. First, unlike Arabic script, Armenian is a script with thirty-six letters and more importantly can be and was indeed printed without being cursive and with separate letters without the extensive use of ligatures as was the case with Arabic. This meant that font casters in European port cities and later elsewhere could design and punch cut Armenian type with considerably less difficulty and expense than they would have with Arabic script. Second, unlike their Muslim counterparts, Armenians had from very early on a sustained presence in and interaction with European port cities, which were the leading hubs of print technology. The third factor is perhaps the most significant one from the perspective of our earlier discussion on the peculiar nature of the shift from manuscript to print among early modern Armenians in comparison to the earlier shift in renaissance Europe. As stated earlier, the Armenian transition to print culture beginning in 1512 occurred in an environment when Armenian manuscript production had reached an all-time low ebb during the fifteenth to sixteenth centuries when scriptoria were largely destroyed or interrupted as a result of chronic warfare between the Ottoman and Safavid empires where the overwhelming majority of the Armenian population lived and where manuscript production centers were largely clustered. The crucial decline in the supply of manuscripts and particularly of religious works like Bibles and psalters was the principal motive force stimulating members of the Armenian Church hierarchy to send their

literati, such as Abgar Dpir of Tokat in the 1560s, to European cities to learn the craft of printing and fill the demand for books fueled by the religious class as well as the rising group of long-distance merchants who were largely also pious and literate. In other words, unlike the case with Arabic-script printing, Armenian-script print culture was fostered by the religious establishment as opposed to the latter being either indifferent to its use or even at times hostile as was sometimes the case with printing in the Islamic world before the nineteenth century. In effect, Armenian print culture was a creature of the church. Unlike the world of Islam as well, and notwithstanding the partial exception of Julfa in 1650 (when Armenian scribes forced the temporary shutting down and indeed destruction of a printing press that had been transported from Europe[74]), there was, on the whole, little if any opposition by Armenian copyists to the new technology of mechanical reproduction. The fact that scribal centers, along with their scribal communities, appear to have been devastated during the long century of Ottoman-Safavid warfare in the 1500s did not help organize concerted scribal opposition to the intrusion of the new technology as was the case with the brief interlude of Muslim printing in Istanbul in 1721–1729 under the Hungarian convert to Islam, Ibrāhīm Müteferrika.[75] The opposite, in fact, was more likely the case with the Armenians.

As Kouymjian and others have reminded us, it is essential to keep in mind that the shift to print did not spell the death of the scribe or the scriptorium.[76] Indeed, "Armenian manuscript production finally gave way to the printed book, but only in the early eighteenth century, some 300 years after Armenian books were first issued."[77] Given the continuity of manuscript production in light of ever-increasing printing, where does the historical transformation of early modern Armenian print fall in Euroamerican scholarship's debate over "printing revolution" as opposed to evolution and continuity? Was the shift to movable metal type a real break or rupture from the past or merely part of a longer, slower evolutionary change?

An Early Modern Armenian Communication Revolution or Evolution?

Over the last few decades, much attention in the Euroamerican scholarship on *l'histoire du livre* has been focused on reassessing the powerful claims made by Elizabeth Eisenstein's seminal work on the "printing revolution in early modern Europe." Eisenstein, argued, in her 1979 work and

its abridged sequel, that the invention of printing by movable type was an "unacknowledged revolution" that radically transformed European and by consequence world history. Not only did print technology usher in what she termed a "communications revolution," but it also made possible the European renaissance and modern scientific secular culture. More recent scholarship, however, has questioned several aspects of her work including, most significantly perhaps, the claim that print technology introduced a kind of revolutionary rupture in history. Instead of revolution, some of the more recent scholarship has discovered evolution or deep continuity. To be sure, this reevaluation has resulted from an Annales-inspired *longue durée* framework whose most brilliant spokesman is Roger Chartier. The most effective way to appreciate the real nature of the historical transformations that followed Gutenberg's invention, according to Chartier, "requires a long-term perspective, which would place the important rupture of the mid-fifteenth century in perspective with other changes."[78] The reference here is both to local and short-term transformations such as the printing of unique broadsides, or of particular practices of reading that are either downplayed or overlooked in Eisenstein's truly transformative work. At the same time, Chartier counsels us to embed these developments, along with the invention of print technology itself, within a history of changes in the *longue durée* that include the shift from the *volumen* or scroll, the traditional format through which textual information was transmitted to individuals, to the codex or book divided into quires in the early centuries of the Christian era. Other changes include the replacement of papyrus by parchment and subsequently the dominance of paper. Chartier also includes the transformation of the traditional practice of oral reading to groups of people to solitary silent reading, which, contrary to the prophetic and celebratory remarks of Marshall McLuhan in the 1960s, did not originate with print culture but predated it in the age of the manuscript codex.[79] In short, for Chartier, to "understand the printed book, one cannot consider it in splendid isolation; on the contrary, one must place it within the context of a total history of written objects, understood either in their long-term history or for a specific period in all of their diversity."[80]

Not surprisingly, set in this long-term and more composite framework of the history of technologies of communication, Gutenberg's invention loses some of its revolutionary edge.[81] The historian of early modern American print, Robert Gross, has summarized the recent consensus quite forcefully, albeit in ways that Chartier himself might not fully endorse:

The current consensus, neatly summarized by the French historian Roger Chartier, is that the change from the manuscript to the printed book *was no big deal*. In its physical design, the newcomer kept the old ways. It employed devices developed in monastic scriptoria to order the text: signatures, page numbers, columns and lines, ornaments, alphabetical tables, systematic indexes. It inherited a hierarchy of sizes, from the learned folio to the humanist quarto down to the bedside libellus. And it called upon methods of silent reading of long standing in medieval universities and popularized among aristocratic laymen in the fifteenth century. The printing press thus depended on, rather than altered, the fundamental form of the book.[82]

Does this discussion in the Euroamerican scholarship in the history of the book have any resonance for the study of the Armenian book? In other words, what role should historians ascribe to the use of movable metal type in Armenian history? Does the shift from manuscript or scribal culture to print culture that took place beginning with Hakob Meghapart and his early successors represent a revolutionary break or rupture in the way most Armenians accessed and shared information and socially interacted with one another and the world at large, a kind of Armenian communication revolution as many have suggested? Or is it more accurate to describe this change in terms of a deep continuity with the nearly millennium-long age of the manuscript codex preceding it? Before addressing these questions, it will be useful first to touch upon the technological dimension of the early modern printing press, a topic that almost always gets left out from scholarship on Armenian print.[83]

As Febvre and Martin noted long ago and as others have since confirmed, the technology of printing remained more or less unchanged from Gutenberg's press to the late eighteenth and even first or second decades of the nineteenth centuries.[84] Over three hundred years after its invention, "the print shop operated in much the same way as it had in Gutenberg's era."[85] In other words, the presses that were used to print Armenian or any other books were hand presses, also known as "platen presses," originally used to press olives and grapes and on the eve of the printing age, used for making block prints. Obviously, all this changed with the coming of the industrial revolution during the nineteenth century and the invention of the iron "Stanhope press" (1803) and the subsequent "mechanization of print" that came in the wake of the application of steam power to printing (1810). This "quantum leap" in printing, that Nile Green has justly dubbed "the

second printing revolution,"[86] was in many ways symbolized in Frederick Konig's invention of the cylinder press in 1814 that essentially consigned Gutenberg's hand press to the dustbin of history. As one scholar has noted, the period from 1827 to 1893, which saw the industrialization of print, represented a three-hundred-fold increase in the speed of printing.[87]

In addition to the industrialization of knowledge through steam technology, the nineteenth century also saw improvements in the technology of manufacturing paper. All these essentially technological changes occurring in near-simultaneity during the first half of the nineteenth century accompanied by some socioeconomic changes such as the rise of mass literacy indicate that in the Euroamerican context it was the nineteenth century that saw a real radical break or rupture in the shift from manuscript to print that had first begun with Gutenberg. Did a similar pattern of early modern continuity followed by nineteenth century rupture also characterize the history of the Armenian book? Let us examine the issue by looking for evidence in three distinct yet related registers in the history of Armenian print culture: 1) the physical appearance of the printed codex in comparison to its hand-copied ancestor, 2) the persistence or death of manuscript copying after the invention of print, and 3) the print runs of typical Armenian printed books.

On the basis of appearance or format, there is no question of a rupture associated with printing in the larger history of the Armenian codex. In fact, there is a remarkable degree of continuity in the long continuum stretching from the adoption of the manuscript codex by Armenians soon after the invention of the Armenian script by the monk Mashtots' in c. 405 CE to the acceptance of print technology by Meghapart in 1512. As in the case of European printing, the new technology used traditional forms associated with the history of manuscript culture, and it was only in the nineteenth century that significant discontinuities emerged in the physical appearance and format of the printed Armenian book. For instance, the letters or fonts Armenian printers had cast for them were designed in such a way as to imitate if not mimic those found on Armenian manuscripts, including capital letters in animal, vegetal, or organic forms. Moreover, like Armenian manuscripts, the custom of using the *pativ* sign (an abbreviation symbol no longer used in modern Armenian) to indicate condensation of words was carried over into the age of print.[88] Even book binding techniques and practices were largely carried over from the manuscript age, further reinforcing the physical continuity of the printed book.[89] Most important perhaps, the custom of including colophons (*hishatakarans*) or memorials at the end of the book, where author or printer carefully noted the time, place, and

(historical) conditions under which a given work was produced, persisted with early printed books. Only in the nineteenth century do we really see a rupture in format, when the colophon, along with the *pativ* sign and floral/ vegetal capital letters, and binding, all vestigial tissues of continuity, were for the most part dropped. If there was no instant rupture or "revolutionary break" in the format and appearance of the printed book, what then for the actual craft of the scribe?

We saw earlier that one possible factor in the willingness of Armenians to embrace print technology so early on was the severe dearth of manuscripts in the first half of the sixteenth century resulting from a low ebb of manuscript copying in Armenian monastic scriptoria. How did the manuscript fare once the newcomer had settled in a century later? Here again, the story is one of a smooth continuity, rather than an abrupt break, between scribal and print cultures. Indeed, after an initial slump in manuscript copying in the first half of the sixteenth century, caused not by the rise of a rival system of duplicating texts but more likely by the Safavid-Ottoman wars that mostly unfolded in the border region where the scriptoria were located, manuscript copying picked up in the late sixteenth century and continued to provide an alternative means of sharing knowledge, alongside printing, until the first half of the eighteenth century.[90] One possible reason for the manuscript's remarkable resilience among Armenians was the fact that, as we shall see below, the print runs of Armenian incunabula before the late seventeenth century were extremely small, usually not exceeding a few hundred copies. This meant that printed books were not widely accessible and, as a result, also relatively expensive, thus leaving enough room for scribes to carry on supplying books according to the old technology. As with the other factors discussed here, it was only in the nineteenth century that the age-old custom of copying manuscripts by hand permanently gave way to the hegemonic grip of the printed book.

Finally, the evidence indicates that no revolution or rupture took place in the ability of the printed book to flood Armenian reading market(s). In this connection, Kevorkian and following him Pehlivanian have pointed out that print runs for most Armenian printing establishments were very tiny during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, running from a few dozen to 500 copies. It was only after the establishment of the Oskan Yerevants'i press in Amsterdam in the 1660s that we begin to see a serious rise in print runs of 1,000 to 3,000 copies and only for popular religious texts such as gospels and psalters.[91] The production of such large print runs could be, in turn, related to the eventual retreat of manuscripts in the mid-eighteenth

century. But even then, before we rush to judgment and accord the printed book more agency in revolutionizing Armenian life during the early modern period, let us remember that the notable secular publications of the Madras group in the 1770s and later had very small print runs. The first Armenian newspaper in the world, the Madras-based monthly *Azdarar* (1794–1796), had a minuscule print run corresponding to its subscriber base of twenty-nine paying readers in Madras and three overseas in the Russian Empire.[92]

With industrialization, print runs almost immediately exceeded the usual hand-press runs of 200 to 3,000 as books and newspapers began to appear in runs of tens of thousands in Europe and probably several thousand in the Armenian world. The rise of Armenian "mass literacy" as a result of educational reform, the emergence of social hygiene and the resulting extension of life expectancy, again only in the nineteenth century, also contributed to a true revolution in print. Running parallel to all these fundamental processes and yet to be seriously explored in the Armenian context was possibly a "reading revolution," a concept associated with the work of Rolf Engelsing according to which, in northern Germany, during the second half of the eighteenth century, "the intensive reading of a small collective canon of texts mostly of a religious kind and primarily the Bible, that were familiar, normative and repeatedly recited, was replaced with an extensive form of reading . . . characterized by an eagerness to consume new and [mostly secular] varied materials for information, and for private entertainment in particular."[93]

In this connection, while Engelsing's findings and research on northern German readers have been found to be dubious by some scholars,[94] his general idea of a shift from mostly religious, Bible-centered intensive mostly "oralized" reading before the late eighteenth century to one that is based on a greater variety of secular, diverse books read "extensively" and in silence seems to be a promising way of looking at the Armenian evidence from the same period. As preliminary findings have indicated, gospels and psalters for Armenians carried over into the age of print the "bestseller" status they enjoyed during the manuscript age until well into the second half of the eighteenth century.[95] They were only displaced by other more diverse, more secular reading material during the closing decades of the eighteenth century and especially as Armenians entered the nineteenth century. Again, the evidence from the history of Armenian print culture suggests that a "reading revolution" most likely did take place as a result of print culture but not until the turn of the nineteenth century. Alongside these larger shifts, people's reading habits and methods of reading also changed; as the work of Roger

Chartier has demonstrated, "silent reading" that existed in pre-Gutenberg age became intensified and "normalized," eventually displacing public or oralized reading. In short, the evidence suggests that if we were to follow Chartier and his school and limit our criteria for distinguishing revolution versus "deep continuum" in the history of print and the book "to the form of the object" and not "its manufacturing technique," then the conclusion would be quite clear.[96] Until the impact on printing of the industrial revolution in the nineteenth century, there does not seem to be much reason to speak of a "printing revolution" for the Armenians as for others. Print technology did not constitute a radical rupture or a "*coupure technologique*" in the way Armenians accessed, shared, and consumed written information. Rather than a "great divergence" in technologies of written communication, the initial adoption of print technology appears to mark a blip of continuity in the *longue durée* of the history of the Armenian codex.

However, this is not to say that the transition from manuscript to print culture among Armenians as among Europeans was, to quote Gross, "no big deal." Though Chartier and others are probably correct in claiming that the invention of printing, when embedded in a *longue durée* view of history stretching from the clay tablet, scroll/volumen, and codex to the Kindle and Nook, "does not constitute . . . the same sort of rupture as that which occurred during the second and third centuries A.D., [i.e., the shift from scroll to codex],"[97] it would be perilous to downplay entirely the significance of print *technology* in the shift from scribal to print culture.[98] Eisenstein is to some extent correct in contending that a near-exclusive focus on the format of the book may not be the best way of assessing the revolutionary nature of the socio-cultural *impact* of print technology. Such an impact, as she points out, is undeniable when one considers the remarkable preservative powers of print as "a new method of duplicating handwriting—an *ars artificialiter scribendi.*"[99]

Unlike the traditional technology of making books by hand, the invention of movable metal type in the mid-fifteenth century enabled printers to produce not one or even a few but several hundred and possibly thousands of copies of the same book in a nearly identical fashion.[100] This meant a drastic reduction in the time and manpower required to produce books and thus a reduction of the cost per book. Just as valuable, the standardization and "fixity" created by print enabled rare and endangered manuscripts to survive the vagaries of time and the corrupting hands of scribes in multiple replicated copies and to become accessible to many more readers than any manuscript heretofore was able to do. Beyond these two revolutionary

characteristics, print for Eisenstein also expanded the "republic of letters" and eventually helped create what the German philosopher Jürgen Habermas has called the "public sphere." For Eisenstein as for Habermas, print technology introduced "new forms of sociability" in the early modern period. Writing about the "communications revolution" ushered in by print culture, she explains how the typographic era weakened local community ties and "changed the sense of what it meant to participate in public affairs,"[101] a topic to which we shall return later.

> The wide distribution of identical bits of information provided an impersonal link between people who were unknown to each other . . . Even while communal solidarity was diminished,[102] vicarious participation in more distant events was also enhanced; and even while local ties were loosened, links to larger collective units were being forged. Printed materials encouraged silent adherence to causes whose advocates could not be found in any one parish and who addressed an invisible public from afar. New forms of group identity began to compete with an older, more localized nexus of loyalties. Urban populations were not only pulled apart, they were also linked in new ways by the more impersonal channels of communication.[103]

Presaging in many ways Benedict Anderson's celebrated account of print capitalism and its ability to generate and sustain "imagined communities" in "horizontal, transverse time," this remarkable passage in Eisenstein's work and others like it on newspapers suggest that printing for her was much more than about preserving literary and cultural heritages. Indeed, it is on her emphasis on print technology's ability to stimulate novel ways of constructing group identities based on virtual communication through the public sphere provided by print that, I believe, the originality of Eisenstein's scholarship rests. Since the bulk of the scholarship on print's importance, especially in connection with newspapers and novels, has been almost exclusively explored in its Eurocentric focus, the question naturally arises as to its applicability in the non-European world and especially in the context of diasporic communities that were, by nature, spatially dispersed. Does print technology during the early modern period have "revolutionary" implications for communities like the Armenians who as we have seen were scattered from London to Manila exactly during the period overlapping with the period of the hand press invented by Gutenberg?

Two useful examples will shed light on this question and both concern the ties between the Armenian communities in Madras and Calcutta and their

counterparts in Europe, especially in Venice and Amsterdam. By the second half of the eighteenth century, Madras had about two hundred and eighty resident port Armenians, most with connections back home in New Julfa. As a dynamic early modern port city, Madras had an Armenian church, a school, and a printing press operating from the compound of the Armenian Church of Saint Mary. Roughly the same can be said about Calcutta to the north.

The first example to demonstrate and assess the importance of print technology for the Armenians as a whole concerns the 1772 printing, in Madras, of a political pamphlet entitled *Nor tetrak or kochi hordorak* (New pamphlet called "exhortation"). The pamphlet, as its subtitle indicates, was "composed for the awakening of the Armenian youth from the timid and apathetic *torpidity* of the sleep of slothfulness." In addition to exhorting the Armenian youth to carry out an uprising against their Muslim imperial rulers and install a system of constitutional monarchy in an independent state of Armenia with a representative assembly or parliament, the pamphlet had an entire chapter entitled "An Explication of the Monarchic Rule and Sovereignty of the Armenians," dedicated to chronicling Armenian history from antiquity to the late eighteenth century. Its principal author, Jacob Shahamirian, himself the son of an eminent port Armenian, frames the questions raised in his text with the following remarkable passage at the outset of his historical account, which will be of more than a passing interest to our discussion of Armenian printing and its relationship to manuscript culture:

> Although there exist some rare history books, and even these in their abridged forms, or ultimately some authentic histories or even philosophical tracts or manuscripts of rhetoric, they are only available to the very few because they are preserved in remote and inaccessible places. For that reason, there are many among us, especially today, who have never thought about or have never even heard about the history of our great men, of our valiant and conquering kings.[104]

This passage indicates several things relevant to our larger discussion on the shift from scribal to print culture. First, by the concluding decades of the eighteenth century many Armenians and particularly those living in port cities, who were connected through networks of circulation and exchange to urban centers in Europe, demanded access to knowledge and particularly to secular (*askharhik*) knowledge about philosophy, rhetoric, and especially about history. The demand for "secular" books with new subject matter

(*noralur*) at the expense of psalters and commentaries on the gospels is a common trend one sees in Armenian reading habits at the conclusion of the eighteenth century and suggests, as mentioned earlier, that a "reading revolution" was possibly underway. We see it not only among Armenian readers in Surat and Calcutta in India, but also in Istanbul/Constantinople as well as in Madras as this passage and others like it indicate. Second, the passage also indicates that it was increasingly difficult for manuscript codices to meet such demand since most early modern Armenians were, after all, located in regions far from scriptoria and monastic centers. Third, such manuscripts as had survived the ravages of time and military and political instability were extremely "rare," "preserved in remote and inaccessible places," and thus "only available to the very few."

To overcome such constraints, Armenians in Madras, as elsewhere in the early modern world, relied on printed editions of rare manuscript histories published most of the time either in Amsterdam or Venice. In fact, the sources cited in chapter five of the work—in effect the first attempt to write a unified history of the Armenians since the medieval period—are almost entirely printed editions of classical Armenian authors. For instance, the most cited authority, the classical Armenian historian Moses of Khoren (also known as the "father of Armenian history" or *patmahayr*) was evidently not available to the authors in manuscript form but through the printed edition of either Amsterdam (1695) or Venice (1755). The same could be said about almost every source consulted by the authors, including the first volume of a *Dictionary of the Armenian Language* (*Bargirk' Haikazean Lezui*) published by the Armenian monks in San Lazzaro, Venice, in 1749, upon whose long historical entries of historic Armenian place names or proper names of important personalities the authors evidently heavily depended.[105]

The second example from Madras that sheds light on the place of print technology in early modern Armenian life concerns the city's Armenian-language periodical, *Azdarar*. Published consecutively for eighteen months from 1794 to early 1796 and modeled on one of the settlement's English-language newspapers, *Azdarar's* main mission was to provide a public sphere for Madras's overwhelmingly Julfan mercantile community of port Armenians. It sought to do this by offering community members information about the prices of various commodities, timetables of arriving and departing ships in the city's bustling port, reporting on news concerning political and economic developments in India, Manila, Canton (China), Iran, the Caucasus, the Russian Empire, and, of course, Europe. In this fashion, the pages of *Azdarar*, enabled local Armenians in Madras to be connected

with Armenians in other, distant locations around the globe. Interestingly, the "hottest" international news covered in its pages concerned the French Revolution as it was rapidly unfolding in Europe during the years *Azdarar* was published.[106] Perhaps most critical for our purposes, *Azdarar*'s "journalists" engaged in the first-ever public political debate in Armenian history, one that directly concerned the relevance of the French Revolution and its ideals for the Armenians.[107] They were able to do so because the journal was specifically designed to attract public contention and to foster an atmosphere of Habermasian "rational public debate." To solicit literary contributions to the journal and, therefore, to promote an atmosphere of public engagement in debate and discussion, the editor encouraged local community members to submit their "communications" by having them dropped off in a box or chest (*snduk*) kept at the foot of the bell tower in the courtyard of Madras's Saint Mary's Armenian Church.[108] Also like the English gazettes appearing in Madras and Calcutta to the north, *Azdarar* devoted space for the publication, in serial form, of various literary and historical works written or translated either by local literati in Madras or their counterparts in Julfa or Saint Petersburg in the Russian Empire, where the journal maintained several overseas "correspondents."

Both the examples of *Azdarar* and the *Nor Tetrak* demonstrate that print technology did indeed have revolutionary consequences for Armenians that have to do with the multiplication and preservation of rare texts as well as with print's ability to carry out what Eisenstein calls a "communication revolution." Moreover, print functioned as "an impersonal channel of communication" through which Armenians, otherwise separated by time and space and not necessarily known to each other, could "vicariously participate in distant events" and thereby build "novel forms of group identity." All these significant changes—many of which would not be recognized by proponents of the continuity thesis who privilege the format of the text over the sociocultural implications of technology—got underway during the early modern period and were largely facilitated by the revolutionary technology of print. To be sure, though, for the full revolutionary impact of print to be experienced by larger masses of readers as opposed to the forty of so subscribers of *Azdarar*, Armenians like others had to wait for the industrial revolution of the nineteenth century and its post-Gutenberg steam presses, literate masses, and daily newspapers printed in the tens of thousands. Only then would print give rise to what Anderson has called the "imagined community" of the nation, a basis for what Eisenstein anticipating him called a "novel form of group identity" born and sustained by print.

Conclusion

In his influential essay on the concept of the early modern world, historian John F. Richards notes that the diffusion of several new technologies, among them gunpowder and printing, was among the major large-scale processes characterizing and constituting the increasingly interconnected early modern world. "In retrospect," Richards writes, "the most potent new technology of the period was printing with movable metal type."[109] Richards, it appears, believes print technology to have been an essential component of the early modern world in so far as it fostered and even made possible the expansion of European power on a global scale, a topic he mentions but hardly pursues. What Richards does not explore is print technology's inherent power to promote global integration and connectedness other than simply by means of empire.

The Armenian case demonstrates that the adoption of printing by movable type was not only pivotal as a "preservative art" by means of which the Armenian literary and cultural tradition were preserved, but also for keeping Armenians residing in scattered places, from London and Amsterdam to Calcutta and Madras, connected to one another in one large "imagined" diasporic community whose members knew of each other's existence through the printed books and periodicals they read. Thus, mechanical reproduction of books through movable type provided useful and reliable information about goings on in different parts of the global Armenian diaspora to members who would otherwise not be exposed to such information. In some cases, print encouraged and enabled Armenians residing in Madras or elsewhere to develop what Eisenstein refers to as "silent adherence to distant causes." The printing in Amsterdam and Venice of rare works of Armenian history heretofore available only in rare and inaccessible manuscripts was thus crucial for the writing of an Armenian national history in Madras based not on manuscripts but almost entirely on printed editions that circulated to Madras alongside other commodities and men.

As Armenians across the world celebrate the quincentenary of the printing of Hakob Meghapart's books in Venice, it bears remembering that many fundamental aspects of the history of the Armenian book remain to be properly scrutinized and studied. These include critical questions such as: How does the study of the printed book in its multifaceted dimension—from its production site in port cities or elsewhere to its destination into the hands of readers—contribute to our understanding of the *mentalité* of Armenian diasporic society? In other words, how do printed books begin to transform the

mental universe of ordinary readers once they are released into a network of circulation? Who were the principal readers among early modern Armenians, what was the literacy rate, and how does one even begin to measure it? How does Armenian book history compare to other book histories of the period and what is its proper place in a global history of print? In addition, the "history of reading" or who read what, *how*, and where is a topic that has occupied center stage in the discipline of the history of the book in Europe and North America but remains *terra incognita* in the scholarship on the Armenian book. All these questions and many more remain to be explored. One can only wish that in the wake of the celebrations of five hundred years of Armenian printing new and theoretically vigorous studies will bloom in the study of the printed Armenian book. If we are fortunate, this crop will be conceptually informed by the most recent Euroamerican scholarship in the tradition of the post-Annales *histoire du livre* while simultaneously being archivally grounded in notarial and other documents. In doing so, the coming scholarship on global Armenian print, to which this essay is but a modest contribution, may both benefit from the already rich corpus of scholarship produced by the largely Euroamerican corpus of knowledge on print culture and book history as well as to contribute to further "globalizing" the study of print.

Notes

1. Appeared in English translation as *The Coming of the Book: The Impact of Printing, 1450–1800,* tr. David Gerard (London: New Left Books, 1976); Eisenstein's classic was reissued in its abbreviated and revised edition on several occasions beginning in 1983, as *The Printing Revolution in Early Modern Europe,* revised 2nd edition, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005). All subsequent references are to this edition. For *l'histoire du livre,* see Roger Chartier, "Frenchness in the History of the Book: From the History of Publishing to the History of Reading," *American Antiquarian Society Proceedings* 97 (1987): 5–35, and Robert Darnton, "What Is the History of Books?," in *The Kiss of Lamourette: Reflections in Cultural History* (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1990). Two useful introductions to the topic are Martyn Lyons, *A History of Reading and Writing in the Western World* (London: Palgrave McMillan, 2010), and David Finkelstein and Alistair McCleery, *An Introduction to Book History* (New York: Routledge, 2005).

2. See John E. Wills Jr. "Print and Polycentrism: Themes in the History of the Early Modern World," forthcoming.

3. Jonathan Bloom, *Paper Before Print: The History and Impact of Paper in the Islamic World* (New Haven: Yale Univeristy Press, 2001).

4. Nile Green, *Bombay Islam: The Religious Economy of the West Indian Ocean, 1840–1915* (New York, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011); idem, "Persian Print and the Stanhope Revolution: Industrialization, Evangelicalism, and the Birth of Printing in Early Qajar Iran," *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East*, 30/3 (2010): 473–90.

5. Anindita Ghosh, "An Uncertain 'Coming of the Book': Early Print Cultures in Colonial India," *Book History*, 6, (2003): 23–55; and Abhijit Gupta and Swapan Chakravorty, eds., *PrintAreas: Book History in India* (Delhi: Permanent Black, 2004).

6. Cynthia Joanne Brokaw, "Book History in Premodern China: The State of the Discipline," *Book History*, 10 (2007): 253–90; Christopher A. Reed, "Gutenberg and Modern Print Culture: The State of the Discipline II," *Book History*, 10 (2007): 291–315.

7. The workshop was organized by John E. Wills and took place at the USC-Huntington Early Modern Studies Institute in November of 2008. The proceedings are now in the process of being published.

8. Ghosh, "An Uncertain 'Coming of the Book,'" 23.

9. Thus, in an essay that aims at integrating Persian print into a global context, Nile Green has argued that "Iranian (and wider Arabic-script) printing emerged through the global repercussions of the early British industrial revolution" and the "industrialization of printing in Britain and Germany" following the invention of the Stanhope press. To Green, the nineteenth century witnessed a "second printing revolution that emerged from Europe's industrialization to be played out on a truly global rather than a European and settler European stage" (474). While Green's larger point that Arabic-script printing should not be judged as being "delayed" in comparison to its European counterpart, but should instead be seen as an early and active participant in a second and bigger wave of a printing revolution occurring during the nineteenth century, is commendable, his implicit assumption that the first phase corresponding to the hand press period (c. 1450–1800) was merely a European affair, confined exclusively to a "European and settler European stage," needs to be rethought in light of the Armenian case.

10. For a quick historiographic survey and assessment of the scholarship on Armenian print, see Sebouh D. Aslanian, "Reader Response and the Circulation of Mkhitarist Books Across the Armenian Communities of the Early Modern Indian Ocean," *Journal for the Society of Armenian Studies* 22 (2013): 31–70. The key Armenian-language scholarly surveys of Armenian print, are the two-volume classic by Leo (Arakel Babakhanian), *Hayk'akan tbagrut'yun* (*Armenian printing*) (Tiflis, 1901–1902); see also Garekin Levonyan, *Hay girk'ĕ ev tpagrut'yan arvestĕ: patmakan tesut'yun skzbits' minchev XX dare* (The Armenian book and art of printing: An historical survey from the beginning until the twentieth century) (Yerevan: HSSR GA Hratarakch'ut'yun, 1946); Raphael Ishkanyan, *Hay hnatip girk'ĕ* (Armenian incunabula) (Yerevan: Haykakan SSH "Gitelik'" Ěnkerut'yun, 1968); idem, *Hay grk'i patmut'yun*, vol. 1 (History of the Armenian book) (Yerevan: "Hayastan" Hratarakch'ut'yun, 1977); idem, *Hay girk'ĕ 1512–1920* (The Armenian book 1512–1920 (Yerevan: Haykakan SSH GA Hratarakch'ut'yun, 1981). Two accessible English-language surveys are Boghos Levon Zekiyan, "The Armenian Way to Enlightenment: The Diaspora and its Role," in *Enlightenment and Diaspora: The Armenian and Jewish Cases*, ed. Richard G. Hovannisian and David N. Myers (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1999), 45–86, and Razmik Panossian, *The Armenians: From Kings and Priests and Merchants to Commissars* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006), 75–109.

11. One exception is Raymond H. Kévorkian whose dissertation, later published as *Catalogue des 'incunables' arméniens (1511–1965) ou chronique de l'imprimerie arménienne* (Ge-

neva: Patrick Cramer, 1986), was supervised by Henri-Jean Martin and used as the basis for the latter's references to Armenian printing in his *The History and Power of Writing,* translated by Lydia Cochrane (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995); see also idem, "Livres Imprimé et Culture Écrite dans L'Arménie des XVI et XVII siècles," *Revue des études arméniennes* (1982); idem, *Les imprimés arméniens des XVIe et XVIIe siècles* (Paris, 1987); idem., *Les imprimes arméniens 1701–1850* (Paris, 1989).

12. I have taken the figure of nineteen cities from Elizabet Tajirian, "Amsterdami Hay tpagrutiwně: tipabanakan verlutsut'iwn (The Armenian printing of Amsterdam: a typological analysis), paper presented at the conference on "Port Cities and Printers: Five Centuries of Global Armenian Print," UCLA, November 9–11, 2012. In total there were slightly over a thousand separate titles printed in Armenian with an estimate of around 750,000 copies of books, based on an average print-run of 750 copies.

13. Throughout this essay, I use the terms "integrated" and "integration" to signify "sustained interaction" and spatial "connection" between different regions, societies, or cultures in the world. For some notes on some of the difficulties involved with the concept of "integration," see my comments in "AHR *Conversation*—How Size Matters: The Question of Scale in History," in *American Historical Review* 118/5 (December, 2013), 1468–69. For a useful survey of early modern "global integration of space" see Charles H. Parker, *Global Interactions in the Early Modern Age, 1400–1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

14. My thoughts in this section of the paper were first inspired by my reading of Jerry Bentley's "Sea and Ocean Basins as Frameworks of Historical Analysis," *Geographical Review*, vol. 89, no. 2, Oceans Connect (Apr. 1999), 215–24; and Kären Wigen, "AHR Forum Oceans of History: Introduction" *American Historical Review* 118/5 (June 2006): 717–21.

15. On the "early modern" as a distinct period in world history, see Jerry Bentley, "Early Modern Europe and the Early Modern World," in Jerry Bentley and Charles Parker, eds. *Between the Middle Ages and Modernity*, (London: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2004), 13–33; and idem, "Cross-Cultural Interaction and Periodization in World History," *American Historical Review* 101 (June 1996): 749–70. For the best applications of the concept to Eurasian history, see Sanjay Subrahmanyam, "Connected Histories: Notes towards a Reconfiguration of Islamic Eurasia," *Modern Asian Studies* 31, 3 (Jul. 1997): 735–62; Joseph Fletcher, "Integrative History: Parallels and Interconnections in the Early Modern Period, 1500–1800," in *Studies on Chinese and Islamic Inner Asia*, by Joseph Fletcher, edited by Beatrice Forbes Manz, Variorum, (London: Variorum, 1995), 1–46; John F. Richards, "Early Modern India and World History," *Journal of World History* 8, 2 (1997): 197–209; Victor Lieberman, *Strange Parallels: Southeast Asia in Global Context, c. 800–1830*, 2 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003 and 2009). See also chapter one of Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *The Portuguese Empire in Asia, 1500–1700* (London: Longman, 1992).

16. Bentley, "Early Modern Europe and Early Modern World," 13.

17. Richards, "Early Modern India," 197.

18. Bentley, "Early Modern Europe and Early Modern World," 13.

19. This list is compiled mostly from Richards, Bentley, and Fletcher.

20. David Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity: An Enquiry into the Origins of Cultural Change*, (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 1991), 240ff.

21. I taught the first graduate seminar in North America and probably in the world as well on "Early Modern Armenian History" at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, in 2008. There are a few scattered instances of historians before me using the label "early modern" in conjunction with Armenian history but without ever explaining the meaning of the term or highlighting in what way the early modern label was applicable or relevant to Armenian history.

22. Periodization in general has not attracted any significant attention in Armenian historiography neither in the diaspora nor in Armenia. During the Soviet period, the dominant

periodization scheme deployed in the state-sanctioned seven-volume *History of the Armenian People* (*Hay zhoghovrdi patmut'yun*) (1965–1982) was one imported from Soviet Marxism, itself a distortion of Marx's theory of "historical materialism," according to which all human societies went through distinct stages of development corresponding to what Marx and Engels called "modes of production," such as Slave-owning, to Feudal to Capitalist and so forth. The only historian to come close to an early modern periodization was Leo (Arakel Babakhanian), who sensed something unique or distinct was underway beginning roughly around 1500 and listed some of the same processes mentioned by early modern world historians, but simply referred to the period starting with Gutenberg and the fall of Constantinople to the Ottomans as the "newest period" or "modern times." See Leo (Arakel Babakhanian), *Khojayakan Kapitalĕ ev nra kaghakakan-hasarakakan derĕ hayeri mej* (Khoja capital and its sociopolitical role among the Armenians) (Yerevan: Petakan Hratarakch'ut'yun, 1934), and idem, "Hayk'akan Tpagrut'iwn" (Armenian printing), volumes 1 and 2, in *Erkeri Zhoghovatsu* (Collected works), vol. 5 (Yerevan: Hayastan Hratarakch'ut'yun, 1986, original publication dates 1901 and 1904). The only scholar in the diaspora to write on the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in Armenian history as delineating the start of a distinct period is Dickran Kouymjian in his insightful but all too brief piece, "From Disintegration to Reintegration: Armenians at the Start of the Modern Era," *Revue du monde arménien* 1 (1994): 9–18. Kouymjian does not refer to either the early modern period nor to world or global history. Rather, his focus is on the "modern era," which he traces back to the seventeenth century. Instead of referring to the historical process occurring during this era as "modernization" or more properly as "modernity," Kouymjian oddly uses the art historical term "modernism" (whose use is usually restricted to designating certain trends in art, architecture, or literature) throughout his essay.

23. This is Richards's argument for the study of Mughal history. See Richards, "Early Modern India and World History," 197.

24. See Sebouh D. Aslanian, "Silver, Missionaries, and Print: A Global Microhistory of Early modern Armenian Networks of Circulation and the Armenian Translation of Charles Rollin's *Histoire Romaine*," unpublished paper, 2009.

25. Eisenstein. *Printing Revolution*, 316.

26. My thoughts on Port Armenians have been influenced by the work of Lois Dubin and David Sorkin in Jewish Studies. See David Sorkin, "The Port Jew: Notes Toward a Social Type," *Journal of Jewish Studies* (Cambridge, England) 50 (Spring 1999): 87–97, and Lois Dubin, "'Wings on Their Feet' and 'Wings on Their Head': Reflections on the Study of Port Jews," in *Jews and Port Cities, 1590-1990: Commerce, Community, and Cosmopolitanism*, ed. David Cesarani/ Gemma Romaine (London: Vallentine Mitchell, 2006), 14–30.

27. See Dubin, "'Wings on Their Feet'," 14–16.

28. Armenian merchants from Agulis were particularly active alongside Julfans in Mediterranean port cities such as Venice, Livorno, and Marseille. Other Armenian merchants from Mediterranean port settlements such as Izmir/Smyrna, Istanbul/Constantinople, as well as those from Tiflis (Georgia) who traded and resided in port cities could also be included in the "port Armenian" category.

29. For information on Julfa and its merchants, see Sebouh David Aslanian, *From the Indian Ocean to the Mediterranean: The Global Trade Networks of Armenian Merchants from New Julfa, Isfahan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011).

30. Jean Chardin, *Voyages du Chevalier Chardin en Perse, et autres lieux de l'Orient*, ed. L. Langles, 10 vols. (Paris: Le Normant, Imprimeur-Libraire, 1811), 2:304.

31. We don't have exact population figures for the Armenian community in Istanbul/Constantinople during the early modern period. My figure here is drawn from Raymond H. Kévorkian, "Le Livre Imprimé en milieu arménien ottoman aux XVIe-XVIIIe siècle," *Revue des Mondes Musulmans et de la Méditerranée*, (September 1999), 173–185 (176). A slightly higher number of 100,000 for around the same period is provided by H. M. Ghazarian, "Merdsvor

arevelki haykakan gaghtochakhnerĕ: Constantnopolsi zmyuřiayi gaghtochakhnerĕ" (The Armenian diaspora settlements of the Near East: The diaspora settlements of Constantinople and Smyrna) in *Hay zhoghovrdi patmut'iwn* (History of the Armenian People), vol. IV, 202. For a smart discussion of the dissemination of printed books, see the following works by Raymond H. Kévorkian, *Catalogue des 'incunables' arméniens (1511–1965) ou chronique de l'imprimerie arménienne* (Geneva: Patrick Cramer, 1986); idem, "Livres imprimé et culture écrite dans L'Arménie des XVI et XVII siècles," *Revue des etudes arméniennes* (1982), idem, *Les imprimes arméniens des XVIe et XVIIe siècles* (Paris, 1987); idem, *Les imprimes arméniens 1701–1850* (Paris, 1989).

32. Aslanian, *From the Indian Ocean to the Mediterranean,* 79-80.

33. For the involvement of three Julfan merchants in the printing Yerevants'i's Bible, see Karapet Amatuni, *Oskan Vrd. Erevants'i ev ir Zhamanakĕ: lusavor ej mĕ Zhē daru yekeghets'akan Patmut'enēn* (Oskan Vardapet Yerevants'i and his time: A luminous page from the history of 17th century ecclesiastical history) (Venice: San Lazzaro, 1975), 150–52, and Alessandro Orengo, "Ov Dateos dow Elkeli: Le Disavvenure di un Mercante Armeno Nella Livorno del XVII Secolo" (Ov Dateos dow Elkeli: The misadventures of an Armenian merchant in XVII century Livorno), in *Gli Armeni Lungo Le Strade d'Italia* (Livorno, 1998), 55–68.

34. Sarukhan, Arakel, *Holandan ew Hayerĕ* (Holland and the Armenians) (Vienna: Mkhitarist Press, 1925); Mesrop Gregorian, *Nor niwt'er ew ditoghut'iwnner hratarakich' Vanandets'woh Masin* (New materials and observations on the Vanandets'i family of publishers) (Vienna: Mkhitarist Press, 1966); and Sahak Chemchemian, *Hay Tpagrut'iwnĕ ew Hrom (ZhE. dar)* (Armenian printing and Rome in the seventeenth century) (Venice: San Lazzaro, 1989).

35. René Bekius, "Polyglot Amsterdam printing presses: a comparison between Armenian and Jewish printers," unpublished paper.

36. See Bekius and also the excellent overview in Meliné Pehlivanian, "Mesrop's Heirs: The Early Armenian Book Printers," *Middle Eastern Languages and the Print Revolution: A Cross-cultural Encounter*, eds. E.Hanebutt-Benz, D. Glass, G. Roper (Westhofen: WVA Verlag Skulima, 2002), 53–92.

37. The press in Lvov established in 1616 was also an exception to the port city pattern; however, it too was patronized by the town's Armenian merchants some of whom had maritime connections in the Black and Mediterranean Seas.

38. The document is a letter written by Primate Stepanos Jughayets'i in New Julfa and addressed to the "pious and Christ-loving Julfan Merchants residing in the city of Venice," dated September 27, 1686, New Julfa, Isfahan. See Archivio di Stato di Firenze, *Acquisti e doni* busta123, nn. 77–7. I thank Meroujan Karapetyan for bringing this document at my attention. For a detailed discussion of the Julfa press based on this and other documents in the same collection, see Sebouh D. Aslanian, "The Early Arrival of Print in Safavid Iran: New Light on the First Armenian Printing Press in New Julfa, Isfahan (1636–1650, 1686–1693)" forthcoming in *Handes Amsorya* (Vienna/Yerevan: 2014).

39. For this well-known concept, see Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, 2nd and revised edition (London: Verso, 1991)

40. See Sarukhan, *Hollandan ew Hayerĕ*, 102–3, for the translation of a notarial document where the dispute between the involved parties is discussed, and Gregorian, *Nor niwt'er ew ditoghut'iwnner,* 48–49, for a brief discussion.

41. Fernand Braudel, *The Structures of Everyday Life: The Limits of the Possible*, volume one of *Civilization and Capitalism*, trans. Sian Reynolds, 401. See also Anderson, *Imagined Communities,* and Lucien Febvre Martin, *The Coming of the Book*.

42. For the Catholicosate's first printing press, see Sebouh Aslanian, *Dispersion History and the Polycentric Nation: The Role of Simeon Yerevantsi's Girk' or Kochi Partavjar in the Eighteenth Century Armenian National Revival* (Venice: Bibliotheque d'armenologie "Bazmavep," 39, 2004), 30–31.

43.   I thank Meroujan Karapetyan for discussions on this matter.

44.   See Pehlivanian, "Mesrop's Heirs," 62, and Jean-Pierre Mahé, "The Spirit of Early Armenian Printing: Development, Evolution, and Cultural Integration," *Catalogue des 'incunables' arméniens (1511/1695), ou, Chronique de l'imprimerie arménienne*, Raymond Kévorkian (Genève: P. Cramer, 1986), xvi.

45.   See Aslanian, *Dispersion History* and "Silver, Missionaries, and Print," for fuller discussion of these works.

46.   *Azdarar* was printed by Harut'iwn Kahana Shmavonian on a press he had acquired from Shahamirian and operated from the same location in Madras's Armenian Church of Saint Mary's. However, while the actual wooden hand press was Shahamirian's, the fonts were newly cast by Shmavonian. See Hayk Khachatrian, "Matrasi Tbagratan patmut'yunits" (From the history of the Madras printing press), *Lraber Hasarakakan gitut'yunneri* 3 (1984): 41–50.

47.   For Khaldarian's stay in London, see Willem G. Kuiters, *The British in Bengal, 1756–1773: A Society in Transition Seen through the Biography of a Rebel, William Bolts (1739–1808)* (Paris: Indes savants, 2002), 237–260.

48.   Pehlivanian, "Mesrop's Heirs," 75.

49.   Andrew Pettegree, *The Book in the Renaissance* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010), 78.

50.   Lisa Jardine, *Worldly Goods: A New History of the Renaissance* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1998), 319.

51.   Letter of Hovsep Vardapet, the primate of Izmir/Smyrna, to an Armenian merchant in Marseille, dated 1 September 1686. «եւս աստէլ այդ ժամագրէէն Մակրդոս էէւ [7,000] ստամբայ էն տպեալ եւ բարձեալ նաս, որ գնալոյ է Իզմիր, ի Ստամսոլ. եւ բս [2,000] Ճարակլնոլ եւ բս [2,000] այլ ժամագիրք դեպի հալալ են բարձեալ.» *Archivio di Sacra Congregazione per L'evangelizzasione dei Popoli o "De Propaganda Fide,"* "S.C. Armeni," vol. 4, folio 202 r. I thank Meroujan Karapetyan for bringing this document to my attention.

52.   On *commenda* agents in Julfan trade, see Sebouh Aslanian, *From the Indian Ocean to the Mediterranean*, 121–65, and idem, "Circulating Credit and Merchants in the Indian Ocean: The Role and Influence of the *Commenda* contract in Julfan Trade," *The Journal of the Social and Economic History of the Orient* 50, 2 (2007): 124–71

53.   For a reference to Khachik Hakobian as a *commenda* agent for Khwaja Melik Khaldarents in the 1720s, see Abbot Mkhitar's letter to Melik dated 1724 in *Namakani tsarayin Astutsoy tearn Mkhitaray Abbayi eranashnorh himnadri Mkhitarean Miabanutean* (Letter book of the servant of God, Abbot Mkhitar, the blessed founder of the Mkhitarist Congregation) (Venice: San Lazzaro, 1961) vol 1, 450–51. Members of the Mkhitarist order printed this valuable collection of correspondence for private consumption. I am grateful to Abbot Yeghia Kilaghbian for allowing me to consult it.

54.   The ledger is stored at the Mkhitarist Archives on San Lazzaro (henceforth ASL) and bears the title in Mkhitar's hand of "Տոմար Գրեանց, 1729–1737" (Register of books, 1729–1737). Sahak Djemjemian has extensively used this source in his *Mkhitar Abbahor hratarakchakan arak'elutiunĕ* [The publishing mission of Abbot Mkhitar] (Venice: San Lazzarro, 1984) and following him so has Meroujan Karapetyan. I thank Dr. Karapetyan for making a copy of this valuable source available for me. The entry for March 17, 1732, lists a total of 817 books by title that Mkhitar handed on consignment to Hakobian. On April 15, Mkhitar notes that he sent another 58 books to Hakobian in Livorno, bringing the total to 883 books as Mkhitar himself notes. Djemjemian (*Mkhitar Abbahor hratarakchakan*, 305) was the first to discuss this list but appears to have made an error in calculating the total number of books in Hakobian's possession, which he lists as 767 instead of the 817 in initial consignment. See the conclusion below for a discussion of the contents of this list as well as Djemjemian, *Mkhitar Abbahor hratarakchakan,* 305–7. For an exploratory study of Hakobian's correspondence with Abbot Mkhitar and what they reveal about shifting patterns of reading tastes among

early modern Armenians across the Indian Ocean during the eighteenth century, see Aslanian, "Reader Response and the Circulation of Mkhitarist Books."

55. There does not seem to be any historiographic survey of the field of scholarship on the Armenian book. The studies on the question of what was the first Armenian printed book began during the second half of the nineteenth century and appears to have been prompted by the discovery of one of Hakob Meghapart's books in the library of the Mkhitarist fathers at San Lazzaro, Venice. As late as 1797 if not well into the nineteenth century, the consensus seems to have been that Oskan Yerevants'i, the printer of the first printed Armenian Bible in Amsterdam in 1666, was the first Armenian printer. This view was elaborated by Movses Baghramian in his long Appendix to *The History of Abraham of Crete* (Calcutta, 1796, page v). By the 1850s, the focus must have shifted to Abgar Tocats'i (Abgar of Tocat), who printed several titles in Venice in the 1560s. The great Mkhitarist *savant*, Ghevont Alishan, seems to have been the first to raise the possibility that the first Armenian printed book predated 1565 and pointed in the direction of a book that later turned out to be Hakob Meghapart's *Akhtark* of, most likely, 1513. For the fascinating thread of discussion, see Alishan, "Chorrord Daramut Tbagrutean Hayots: Abgar Dpir Tokhatests'i" (Fourth centenary of Armenian printing), *Bazmavep* (July 1865), 213–21; H. A. Tiroyean, "Arajin Dar Haykakan Tbagrueants'" (The first century of Armenian printing), *Bazmavep* (Venice, 1890), 90–104; Garegin, Galemkarian, "Hay Tbagrutean erakhayrikm'al," *Handes Amsorea* (July 1890): 161–63; Garegin Zarbanalian, *Patmut'iwn Hay Tbagrut'ean* (History of Armenian printing) (Venice: San Lazzaro, 1895); Garegin, Galemkarian, "1513i Hay Tpagrin Giwtin Patmakanĕ ev nor lusavorutiwnner" (New clarifications and the history of the invention of Armenian printing), *Handes Amsorea* (1913): 709–18. For a helpful overview, see Raphayel Ishkhanyan, *Hay grk'i patmut'yun, vol. 1* (History of the Armenian book) (Yerevan : "Hayastan" Hratarakch'ut'yun, 1977), 30–180, and idem, *Hay girk'ĕ 1512–1920* (The Armenian book: 1512–1920) (Yerevan: Haykakan SSH GA Hratarakch'ut'yun, 1981).

56. See Alishan, "Chorrord daramut tbagrutean Hayots." After mentioning that there is evidence of the Armenian alphabet appearing in printed books of "some European scholars" before the first half of the sixteenth century, Alishan writes, "a complete printed Armenian book appears to have been published a century after the invention of printing by Gutenberg, although the year, place of printing, and publisher remain unknown still" (214). He goes on to say, "I have seen a book concerning which although I cannot say with absolute certainty the first printed book, it may be said about it that it is the first one or the oldest among known printed books—more than three centuries old—whose place of publication, year, and publisher are perhaps deliberately and carefully [*khorhtov yev zgushut'eamb*] omitted because the book is *unworthy* of [coming in at] first place or of being the oldest, nor even of being published . . . "(214, emphasis added). In a footnote to this astonishingly narrow-minded claim, Alishan points out that the book in question is entitled *Aght'ark* [Astrological manual] and has no publication date but bears the date of 1552 written by hand of one of its previous owners. It is because of his dismissal of the genre (astrological manual), poor quality of fonts and printing, and primitive appearance that Alishan quickly mentions this work and proceeds to celebrate Abgar of Tokat as the "Armenian Gutenberg" and the printing of his Psalms of David as the occasion to celebrate the three-hundredth anniversary of Armenian printing (1565–1865). By the 1890s Alishan's fellow priest-scholars both from San Lazzaro and from the splinter monastery in Vienna had come around to bestowing the recognition of "Armenian Gutenberg" onto Hakob Meghapart, the printer of Aght'ark and his earlier work, *Urbat'agirk'* (Book of Fridays), published in mysterious circumstances in 1512 in Venice as the first printed Armenian book. See footnote 9 for essays published on Meghapart during the 1890s and early twentieth century.

57. Of Meghapart's five separate editions, all have the same symbol indicating his press and consisting of the mysterious letters DIZA still to be definitively identified. Only one book, the *Patarakatetr* (Missal) has a colophon, indicating place and date of publication (Venice,

1513) and printer's name, Hakob Meghapart (Jacob the Sinful). For the short colophon, see Raymond H. Kevorkian, *Catalogue des 'incunables' arméniens (1511–1965) ou chronique de l'imprimerie arménienne* (Geneva: Patrick Cramer, 1986), 24. The first book by Meghapart is believed to be the *Urbat'agirk'* (Book of Fridays) most likely printed in 1512, based on a calendar used in the book that begins with the same year. For the dating of these different works, see Ninel Voskanyan, K'narik Korkotyan, and Ant'aram Savalyan, eds. 1988. *Hay Girk'ě, 1512– 1800 tvakannerin: hay hnatip grk'i matenagitut'yun* (The Armenian book in the years 1512–1800: A bibliography of old Armenian books] (Yerevan: Al. Myasnikyani Anvan hssh Petakan Gradaran, 1988), 2 and 5.

    58.   The quoted material is from a letter to the Vatican by the Carmelite monk, Giovanni-Tadeo, stationed in Isfahan in 1629. It is quoted in Armenian translation in Sahak Djemjemian, *Hay Tpagrut'iwně ew Hrom (ZhE. dar)* (Armenian printing and Rome in the seventeenth century). (Venice: San Lazzaro, 1989), 25. The *Zeccino,* also known as a Sequin, was a gold Venetian coin.

    59.   The original of this colophon is in Kevorkian, *Catalogue des 'incunables' arméniens*, 37. Translation is mine and differs slightly from that provided by Mahé in ibid., xxiv.

    60.   Tadeos Hamazaspean Yerevants'i quoted in Jean-Pierre Mahe, "The Spirit of Early Armenian Printing: Development, Evolution, and Cultural Integration," *Catalogue des 'incunables,'* xxiv.

    61.   Ibid.

    62.   Dickran Kouymjian, "Dated Armenian Manuscripts as a Statistical Tool for Armenian History," in T. Samuelian & M. Stone, eds. *Medieval Armenian Culture* (Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1983), 428. Kouyumjian's hypothesis was quite novel in the context of Armenian scholarship in 1983 or even up to the present, where statistical work that had long been practiced and become quite routine by the third generation of the Annales school and was known as "serial history" was entirely unknown. As promising as his findings and approach are, however, one should keep in mind that the statistical data is based on colophonic material found only in surviving Armenian manuscripts, which may or may not be a reliable gauge for how many manuscripts there were in the past.

    63.   Ibid., 429.

    64.   Ibid. See also the graph at the conclusion of the article charting manuscript production rates with that of printed books.

    65.   Mahé, "The Spirit of Early Armenian Printing," xxii.

    66.   The figure of 500 printed books is from Ishkanyan, *Hay Girkě, 1512–1800*, 24. The author does not provide any evidence for this bold claim, however.

    67.   Pettegree, *The Book in the Renaissance*, 17.

    68.   Febvre and Martin, *The Coming of the Book,* 28ff. "So, from the mid-13th century, copysts were forced to improve their methods to meet the growing demand, and this in turn led in some workshops to something like standardized mass production. By using the pecia system they succeeded in multiplying university textbooks while avoiding the dangers of reproducing copying mistakes in manuscript after manuscript" (28).

    69.   Francis Robinson, "Technology and Religious Change: Islam and the Impact of Print," *Modern Asian Studies*, 27, 1 (1993), 233.

    70.   "The Arabic script therefore presents typographical problems quite unlike those presented by other alphabets or even by Chinese with its thousands of discrete characters. Arabic type requires an extremely high level of skill in punch cutting to imitate calligraphic norms. A complete font of Arabic texts, including vowel marks required for Koranic and other vocalized texts, can easily run to more than six hundred sorts, or individual characters, plus huge quantities of leads and quadrats to be placed between vowel marks and lines." Bloom, *Paper Before Print,* 218.

71. See Angela Nuovo, "A Lost Arabic Koran Recently Rediscovered," *The Library*, 12/4 (1990): 273–94. For earlier works, see Miroslav Krek, "The Enigma of the First Arabic Book Printed from Movable Type," Journal of Near Eastern Studies, 38, 3 (1979): 203–12. The argument that the difficulty of the script is not entirely a convincing as an explanation of the delayed nature of Perso-Arabic printing is made by Francis Robinson in his influential essay, "Technology and Religious Change: Islam and the Impact of Print," *Modern Asian Studies*, 27, 1, (1993): 229–59.

72. Bloom, *Paper Before Print*, 218ff.

73. Nile Green, "The Uses of Books in a Late Mughal Takiyya: Persianate Knowledge Between Person and Paper," *Modern Asian Studies,* 44,2 (2010): 242. On the fascinating case of the Devanagari press in Surat, which has potential parallels to Armenian printing in Julfa, see J.B. Primrose, "A London Printer's Visit to India in the Seventeenth Century," *The Library,* 4, 20 (1939): 100–104.

74. Aslanian, "The Early Arrival of Print in Safavid Iran," for a detailed discussion.

75. On Müteferrika's press, see Maurits H. van den Boogert, "The Sultan's Answer to the Medici Press? Ibrahim Muteferrika's Printing House in Istanbul," in *The Republic of Letters and the Levant,* edited by Alastair Hamilton, Maurits H. van den Boogert, Bart Westerweel (Leiden: Brill, 2005). Discussing Müteferrika's press, Stanford Shaw's comments, in this instance, seem sensible: "There was considerable opposition to the plan from the scribes, who feared the loss of their jobs and position in the Ruling Class." A "compromise" was then reached through the şehulislam, according to Shaw, "agreeing to allow the printing of books on all but the traditional religious subjects, thus preserving for the scribes their most lucrative source of income and leaving Müteferrika free to print whatever he wanted in history, languages, mathematics, geography, and the sciences." Stanford Shaw, *The History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey*, volume 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976), 236

76. Kouymjian, "Dated Armenian Manuscripts," 430–31.

77. Kouymjian, "From Manuscript to Printed Book: Armenian Bookbinding from the Sixteenth to the Nineteenth Century," Paper presented at the 2nd International Symposium Printing and Publishing in the Languages and Countries of the Middle East 2–4 November 2005, 3.

78. Chartier,"Frenchness in the History of the Book," 15.

79. Marshall McLuhan, *The Gutenberg Galaxy: The Making of Typographic Man* (Toronto: The University of Toronto Press, 1962).

80. Chartier,"Frenchness in the History of the Book," 20.

81. Ibid., 15. "The passage from 'scribal culture' to 'print culture' loses its revolutionary aspect when it is placed within the long-term history of the book (which Gutenberg did not invent). On the contrary, it becomes apparent just how much the printed book is heir to the manuscript."

82. Robert A. Gross, "Communications Revolutions: Writing a History of the Book for an Electronic Age," *Rare Books and Manuscript Librarianship*, 13 (1998) 15 (emphasis added). Chartier's position appears to be subtler than the way Gross characterizes it. See Chartier,"Frenchness in the History of the Book, 16–18.

83. Neither the major works on printing and Armenian books by Leo, Ishkhanian, and Kevorkian, nor the essay-length surveys of Pehlivanian, Bekius, and Nersessian devote any attention to the actual technology of the printing press.

84. Febvre and Martin, *The Coming of the book*, 12. See also Fernand Braudel, *The Structures of Everyday Life: The Limits of the Possible*, 400.

85. Nicole Howard, *The Book: The Life Story of a Technology* (Baltimore, Ma.: John Hopkins University Press, 2009), 113.

86. Green's comment here refers more to the revolutionary and global implication of the Stanhope press, which according to him, helped launch a major wave of globalizing print in the

nineteenth century that swept across and transformed multiple literary and cultural traditions, including Persian, Arabic and others. See Green, "Persian Print and the Stanhope Revolution," 474.

87.   James Beniger, *The Control Revolution: Technological and Economic Origins of Information Society* (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 1989), 18, 285–86. For background on the technological changes occurring in the nineteenth century, see the dated but still useful discussion in Sigfrid Henry Steinberg, *Five Hundred Years of Printing* (London: Faber and Faber, 1959), 197–206.

88.   Ishkhanyan, *Hay Girk'ĕ, 1512-1920*, 20.

89.   Dickran Kouymjian, "From Manuscript to Printed Book: Armenian Bookbinding from the Sixteenth to the Nineteenth Century," paper presented at the 2nd International Symposium, Printing and Publishing in the Languages and Countries of the Middle East, 2–4 November 2005.

90.   Ibid., and idem, "Dated Armenian Manuscripts."

91.   Pehlivanian, "The Heirs of Mashtots," 62.

92.   Sebouh D. Aslanian, "A Reader Responds to Joseph Emin's *Life and Adventures*: Notes towards a History of Reading in Late Eighteenth Century Madras*," Handes Amsorya* (Vienna/Yerevan, 2012), 9–64 (30ff).

93.   Reinhard Wittmann, "Was there a Reading Revolution at the End of the Eighteenth Century," in Guglielmo Cavallo and Roger Chartier, *A History of Reading in the West*, (Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 2003), 285. Darnton, "What is the History of Books?," 133.

94.   See Wittmann's intelligent comments in "Was there a Reading Revolution," and Darnton, "What is the History of Books?" and "First Steps Toward a History of Reading," *The Kiss of Lamourette*, 165–66.

95.   I have elaborated on this in Aslanian, "Silver, Missionaries, and Print."

96.   Chartier, "Frenchness in the History of the Book," 15–17.

97.   Chartier, "Frenchness," 17. For the earlier scroll-to-codex shift, which most authorities believe occurred circa 100 CE, see among others, Leila Avrin, *Scribes, Script, and Books: The Books Arts from Antiquity to the Renaissance* (Chicago: American Library Association; London: The British Library, 1991), 173–75.

98.   Chartier appears to recognize the revolutionary elements in printing once the focus shifts from form to manufacturing technique or technology, but chooses to redirect his discussion to the book as an object with a form instead. See "Frenchness," 17 ff.

99.   Eisenstein, *Printing Revolution*, 119.

100. Ibid., 46ff.

101. Eisenstein, *Printing Revolution*, 95.

102. The notion that printing probably contributed to the weakening of local, communal forms of solidarity rests on the assumption that it accelerated the practice of "silent reading" and promoted what Roger Chartier calls the "privatization of reading" that had already been around during the manuscript age. However, while "silent reading opened new horizons for those who [had] mastered it," we should bear in mind that as late as the eighteenth and probably into the nineteenth century a large number of "ordinary" people who were illiterate or semiliterate had access to the printed word primarily through communal reading, or the "oralizing" of texts for a public of listeners. See Chartier, "The Practical Impact of Printing," in *A History of Private Life: Passions of the Renaissance*, volume 3, ed. Roger Chartier (Harvard: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1989), 125. For "oralization" of texts in the early modern period, see Chartier, "Reading Matter and 'Popular' Reading: From the Renaissance to the Seventeenth Century," in *A History of Reading in the West*, ed. Cavallo and Chartier, 276–77. See also Manguel, *A History of Reading*, 41–55.

103. Eisenstein, *Printing Revolution*, 95–96.

104. See Poghos Khachatryan, "Mkhitaryanneri het Shahamiryanneri matenagrakan aṙnchutyunneri patmut'yunits': 'Baṙgirk' Haykazean lezui'n ibrev 'Nor tetraki' aghbyur" (From the History of Bibliographic connections between the Shahamirians and the Mkhitarists: Bargirk Haykazean Lezui as a Source for Nor Tetrak) *Patmabanasirakan Handes* (2002): 128-137. See pp. 132–134 for a detailed discussion.

105. Jacob Shahamirian, et al., *Nor tetrak or kochi hordorak* (Madras, 1772, translated into Eastern Armenian by P. M. Khachatryan, Yerevan, 1991). The passage appears on p. 54 of 1991 edition but 53 of the original edition.

106. Robespierre, Mirabeau, Rousseau, Thermidor, are all mentioned and at times heatedly debated in *Azdarar's* pages. See Tadevos Avdalbekyan, "Fransakan mets heghapokhut'yunn u zhamanakakits hayerě" (The great French Revolution and its contemporary Armenians), *Hayagitakan Hetazotut'yunner.*

107. Ibid., 250, and idem, "Fransakan Mets Heghapokhut'yunn u Zhamanakakits Hayerě," 237.

108. See Hakob Irazek, *Patmut'iwn hndkahay tbagrut'ean* (History of Indo-Armenian printing) (Anteleas, Beirut: Catholicosate of the Greater House of Cilicia, 1986), 448: and Aslanian, "A Reader Responds to Joseph Emin's," 37–38.

109. Richards, "Early Modern India and World History," 203.