



Archives and Special Collections Department,  
American University of Beirut  
Beirut, Lebanon  
© 2020

**Sarrafiان Brothers Postcard Collection  
of the  
American University of Beirut,  
1900-1935**

A Finding Aid to the Collection in the University Libraries, AUB  
Prepared by: Mervat Kobeissi

Contact information:

[asc@aub.edu.lb](mailto:asc@aub.edu.lb)

Webpage:

[www.aub.edu.lb/libraries/asc](http://www.aub.edu.lb/libraries/asc)

## **Descriptive Summary**

**Call No.:** Pc:sb:1900-1935

**Library Catalog ID:** [b25907049](#)

**Collection Title:** Sarrafian Brothers Postcard Collection of the American University of Beirut, 1900-1935.

**Collection Dates:** 1900-1935

**Physical Description:** 0.3 linear foot, (1 box)

**Abstract:** The Sarrafian postcard collection provides a glimpse of the AUB Campus early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The collection is a salient asset to the history of the university as it includes photos of all Syrian Protestant College (former name of the American University of Beirut) buildings at the turn of the century; the collection includes photos of hospital buildings that no longer exist such as Eye and Ear Pavilion, Women's Pavilion, and others. The Sarrafian Brothers studio was one of the most famous studios in Beirut, Syria. The collection of 58 postcards is of value to researchers interested in urban planning, history of education in the region, as well as history of AUB.

**Language(s):** English

## **Administrative Information**

**Source:** The source of acquisition is unknown.

**Access Restrictions:** The collection can be consulted within the premises of the Archives and Special Collections Department, Jafet Library, American University of Beirut.

**Photocopying Restriction:** No photocopying restriction except for fragile material.

**Preferred Citation:** Sarrafian Brothers Postcard Collection of the American University of Beirut, 1900-1935, drawer no., envelope no., American University of Beirut/Library Archives.

## **Scope and Content**

A collection of 56 sepia, black and white and color postcards, mostly taken by Sarrafian Brothers, chiefly depicting general campus views and shots of specific buildings in the Syrian Protestant College (SPC), former name of the American University of Beirut, between 1900 and 1935.

This collection of postcards features the following buildings of SPC campus: Main Gate, Medical Gate, West Hall, Post Hall, School of Commerce, College Hall, Assembly Hall, Ada Dodge Hall, Marquand House, Athletic Field, Daniel Bliss Hall, and Fisk Hall.

Distinguished among the postcards are images of several buildings of the old hospital that no longer exist such as Eye and Ear Pavilion, Women's Pavilion, the Ophthalmic Hospital among others.

The collection also contains four postcards of SPC campus taken by A. Breger Frères a famous French publisher of postcards.

## Arrangement

The collection is arranged in two series. The first series is for postcards mostly taken between 1900 and 1920 when the institution was known as the Syrian Protestant College (SPC). The second series is for postcards taken after 1920 when the SPC was renamed as "The American University of Beirut" (AUB) mainly between 1920 and 1935.

**Series I: Syrian Protestant College postcards (SPC) 1900 – 1920 (34 postcards)**

Subseries I.1: Sarrafian Brothers (30 postcards and 17 duplicates)

Subseries I.2: A. Breger Frères (4 postcards)

**Series II: American University of Beirut Postcards by Sarrafian Brothers, 1920 – 1930 (22 postcards)**

## Biographical Sketch

The Sarrafian Brothers belong to a group of prominent talented photographers of the late 19th century in the Middle East that documented the life and culture of the area at that time. Among these photographers were Bonfils, Abdallah Brothers, and J. P. Sebah etc. The three Sarrafian brothers, Abraham, Boghos and Samuel, arrived to Beirut from Diyarbakir in southeastern Anatolia, to open their studio in 1895 in Bab Idriss area of Beirut. They soon became extremely successful and subsequently enlarged their business, establishing new branches in Syria and Palestine, Iraq.

The Sarrafian Brothers were the official photographers of the Syrian Protestant College, for which they published a series of postcards and photographs. They were considered as one of the largest producers of postcards in the Levant at the beginning of the twentieth century.

Their photographs of people, monuments, and archeological sites made them famous in Beirut, Syria, Palestine, Yemen and Iraq.

While in Paris, France, Alcide and Arthur Breger, founded "A. Breger Frères" or "A. Breger Brothers" a postcard publishing company in 1895. This company was one of the first French publishers to use the collotype process. In 1950, Adrien Breger, son of Alcide, developed the Mexichrome patent. It became the first industrial process allowing the direct printing of color photographs on postcards.

## Subjects

Syrian Protestant College -- History -- 19th century -- Pictorial works.

Syrian Protestant College -- Postcards.

Syrian Protestant College -- Buildings -- Pictorial works.

Syrian Protestant College -- Photographs.

American University of Beirut -- History -- 20th century -- Pictorial works.

American University of Beirut -- Buildings -- Pictorial works.

American University of Beirut -- Postcards.

Universities and college -- Lebanon.

College buildings -- Lebanon.

Lebanon -- Pictorial Works.

الكلية السورية الإنجيلية في بيروت -- تاريخ -- القرن التاسع عشر -- أعمال مصورة.  
الكلية السورية الإنجيلية في بيروت -- بطاقات بريدية.  
الكلية السورية الإنجيلية في بيروت -- الأبنية -- أعمال مصورة.  
الكلية السورية الإنجيلية في بيروت -- صور.  
الجامعة الأميركية في بيروت -- تاريخ -- القرن العشرون -- أعمال مصورة.  
الجامعة الأميركية في بيروت -- الأبنية -- أعمال مصورة.  
الجامعة الأميركية في بيروت -- بطاقات بريدية.  
الجامعات والكليات -- لبنان.  
الأبنية الجامعية -- لبنان.  
لبنان -- أعمال مصورة.

## Genres and Forms

Postcards -- 1900-1930.

Photographic postcards -- 1900-1930.

## Container List

### Series I: Syrian Protestant College (SPC) postcards 1900-1920 by Sarrafian Brothers (30 postcards and 17 duplicates)

#### Subseries I.1: Sarrafian Brothers

- I.1.1 College Hall, Syrian Protestant College (671), 1 photographic print (postcard): sepia; 9 x 14 cm
- I.1.2. College Hall and Ada Dodge Hall, S.P.C. (672), 1 photographic print (postcard): sepia; 9 x 14 cm (1 duplicate)
- I.1.3 Administration Building and Ada Dodge Hall, S.P.C. (673), 1 photographic print (postcard): sepia; 9 x 14 cm
- I.1.4 Looking North East from the Main Gate (674), 1 photographic print (postcard): sepia; 9 x 14 cm
- I.1.5 Administration Building and Ada Dodge Hall, S.P.C. (676), 1 photographic print (postcard): sepia; 9 x 14 cm (1 duplicate)
- I.1.6 Under the Banyan Tree, S. P. C. (677), 1 photographic print (postcard): sepia; 9 x 14 cm
- I.1.7 Looking East from Assembly Hall, S.P.C. (678), 1 photographic print (postcard): sepia; 9 x 14 cm
- I.1.8 Ada Dodge Hall, S.P.C. (679), 1 photographic print (postcard): sepia; 9 x 14 cm
- I.1.9 Approach to Marquand House and Observatory, S.P.C. (680), 1 photographic print (postcard): sepia; 9 x 14 cm
- I.1.10 President's Residence - Marquand House, S.P.C. (681), 1 photographic print (postcard): sepia; 9 x 14 cm
- I.1.11 West Hall, S.P.C. (682), 1 photographic print (postcard): sepia; 9 x 14 cm (1 duplicate)

- I.1.12 West Hall, S.P.C. (683), 1 photographic print (postcard): sepia; 9 x 14 cm (1 duplicate)
- I.1.13 Main Stairway - West Hall, S.P.C. (684), 1 photographic print (postcard): sepia; 9 x 14 cm
- I.1.14 Looking South West from the School of Dentistry, S.P.C. (685), 1 photographic print (postcard): sepia; 9 x 14 cm
- I.1.15 The Medical Gate from the College Hospital, S.P.C. (686), 1 photographic print; (postcard): sepia; 9 x 14 cm
- I.1.16 Inner Athletic Field, S.P.C. (687), 1 photographic print (postcard): sepia; 9 x 14 cm
- I.1.17 Looking East to the Observatory, S.P.C. (688), 1 photographic print (postcard): sepia; 9 x 14 cm
- I.1.18 Daniel Bliss Hall, S.P.C. (689), 1 photographic print (postcard): sepia; 9 x 14 cm
- I.1.19 Fisk Hall, S.P.C. (690), 1 photographic print (postcard): sepia; 9 x 14 cm
- I.1.20 The Pepper Tree Grove, S.P.C. (691), 1 photographic print (postcard): sepia; 9 x 14 cm (1 duplicate)
- I.1.21 Preparatory Department, S.P.C. (692), 1 photographic print (postcard): sepia; 9 x 14 cm
- I.1.22 Eye and Ear Pavilion of College Hospitals, S.P.C. (693), 1 photographic print (postcard): sepia; 9 x 14 cm
- I.1.23 Women's Pavilion - College Hospitals, S.P.C. (694), 1 photographic print (postcard); sepia; 9 x 14 cm
- I.1.24 Beyrouth - S.P.C. Red Cross Camps, 1915 (696), 1 photographic print (postcard): sepia; 9 x 14 cm
- I.1.25 The Commercial Department, S.P.C. Beirut (1122), 1 photographic print (postcard): sepia; 7 x 10 cm
- I.1.26 The Ophthalmic Hospital, S.P.C. Beirut (1123), 1 photographic print (postcard): sepia; 7 x 10 cm
- I.1.27 The Women's Hospital, S.P.C. Beirut (1124), 1 photographic print (postcard): sepia; 7 x 10 cm
- I.1.28 Panoramic view of Syrian Protestant College, Beirut, 2 postcards; color; 9 x 14 cm
- I.1.29 S. P. C., 1 photographic print (postcard): black and white; 9 x 14 cm (1 duplicate)
- I.1.30 Syrian Protestant College, Beirut, 1 photographic print (postcard): black and white; 9 x 14 cm

**Subseries I.2: Syrian Protestant College postcards by A. Breger Frères (4 postcards)**

- I.2.1 Syrian Protestant College, Beirut - Front of Chapel, 1 postcard; black and white; 13.5 x 8.5 cm

I.2.2 Syrian Protestant College, Beirut - Main Gate, 1 postcard; black and white; 13.5 x 8.5 cm

I.2.3 Syrian Protestant College, Beirut - Medical Gate, 1 postcard; black and white; 13.5 x 8.5 cm

I.2.4 Syrian Protestant College, Beirut - School of Commerce, 1 postcard; black and white; 13.5 x 8.5 cm

**Series II: American University of Beirut by Sarrafian Brothers, 1920 – 1935  
(22 postcards)**

II.1.1 American University of Beirut - West Hall (2), 1 photographic print (postcard): sepia; 9 x 14 cm

II.1.2 American University of Beirut - West Hall (3), 1 photographic print (postcard): sepia; 9 x 14 cm

II.1.3 American University of Beirut - Post Hall (4), 1 photographic print (postcard): sepia; 9 x 14 cm

II.1.4 American University of Beirut - Daniel Bliss Hall (6), 1 photographic print (postcard): sepia; 9 x 14 cm

II.1.5 American University of Beirut - Dodge Hall (8), 1 photographic print (postcard): sepia; 9 x 14 cm

II.1.6 American University of Beirut - Administration Building and Main Gate (11), 1 photographic print (postcard): sepia; 9 x 14 cm

II.1.7 American University of Beirut - Fisk Hall (12), 1 photographic print (postcard): sepia; 9 x 14 cm

II.1.8 American University of Beirut - Preparatory School (13), 1 photographic print (postcard): sepia; 9 x 14 cm

II.1.9 American University of Beirut - Preparatory School (14), 1 photographic print (postcard): sepia; 9 x 14 cm

II.1.10 American University of Beirut - Chemical Laboratory (15), 1 photographic print (postcard): sepia; 9 x 14 cm

II.1.11 American University of Beirut - The Observatory (16), 1 photographic print (postcard): sepia; 9 x 14 cm

II.1.12 American University of Beirut - The Marquand House (20), 1 photographic print (postcard): sepia; 9 x 14 cm

II.1.13 American University of Beirut - East End of Main Building (24), 1 photographic

Print (postcard): sepia; 9 x 14 cm

II.1.14 American University of Beirut - View from Dental Department (25), 1 photographic print (postcard): sepia; 9 x 14 cm

II.1.15 American University of Beirut - Assembly Hall (27), 1 photographic print (postcard): sepia; 9 x 14 cm

II.1.16 American University of Beirut - View from Assembly Hall (29) 1 photographic print (postcard): sepia; 9 x 14 cm

- II.1.17 American University of Beirut - Main Building and Assembly Hall (30), 1 photographic print (postcard): sepia; 9 x 14 cm
- II.1.18 American University of Beirut - Grounds near Observatory (32), 1 photographic print (postcard): sepia; 9 x 14 cm
- II.1.19 American University of Beirut - Grounds near Dodge Hall (34), 1 photographic print (postcard): sepia; 9 x 14 cm
- II.1.20 American University of Beirut - President H. Bliss in his library (36), 1 photographic print (postcard): sepia; 9 x 14 cm
- II.1.21 American University of Beirut - Interior of Assembly Hall (37), 1 photographic print (postcard): sepia; 9 x 14 cm
- II.1.22 American University of Beirut founded 1866 - Lebanon Mountains in the background, 1 photographic print (postcard): black and white; 9 x 14 cm

## Related Material

### Books

- Babikian, A. C., Eddé, C., Nordiguan, L., & Tachjian, V. (2017). *Les Arméniens du Liban: cent ans de presence*. Beyrouth: Presses de l'Université Saint-Joseph, p. 385-391. [CA 305.891:A733b](#)
- Debbas, F. (1986). *Beirut: Our memory: a guided tour illustrated with postcards from the collection of Fouad Debbas*. Beirut: Naufal. [CA:F 956.925:B422ba:c.1](#)
- Toubia, S. (2008). *Sarrafian Liban 1900-1930*. Mansourieh: Editions ALEPH. [CA:F 915.692:T722s:c.1](#)

### Digital Resources

- [One Fine Art](#). (1997). *The Sarrafian Brothers: Photographer*
- [The Fouad Dabbas Collection](#). *Sarrafian*

### Photographs

- I. [Sarrafian Brothers photographs from the E. W. Blatchford Collection](#), 1880 -1900: "Studio Sarrafian Bros", (12 photos, sepia)
  - College Hall & students, Syrian Protestant College, Beirut, built 1871- 1873, Ph:1/206s
  - Medical Hall, Syrian Protestant College, Beirut, built 1873, Ph:1/207s
  - Ada Dodge Memorial Hall, Syrian Protestant College, Beirut, built 1873, Ph:1/208s
  - Observatory, Syrian Protestant College, Beirut, built 1874, Ph:1/209s
  - Observatory, Syrian Protestant College, Beirut, built 1874, Ph:1/210s
  - President's House and Observatory [Syrian Protestant College, Beirut] [Marquand House built 1879], Ph:1/211s
  - Chapel and rear of Post Hall, Syrian Protestant College, Beirut, built 1891, Ph:1/213s
  - The Chapel interior, Syrian Protestant College, Beirut, built 1891], Ph:1/214s
  - Chemical Laboratory, then School of Pharmacy, Syrian Protestant College, Beirut, built 1893, Ph:1/215s

- Daniel Bliss Hall-Preparatory Dept., Syrian Protestant College, Beirut, built 1900, Ph:1/216s
- Pliny Fisk Hall. Preparatory Dept. Dormitory, Syrian Protestant College, Beirut, built 1901, Ph:1/217s
- George E. Post Science Hall, Syrian Protestant College, Beirut, built [1902], Ph:1/218s

## II. Sarrafian Brothers AUB Campus Photographs

- Ada Dodge Hall, 1873, Ph:SPC-AUB:1873:1-16:27
- American University of Beirut Photograph Album, 1924-1925, Ph:AUB:1924-1925:1-119:39
- Assembly Hall, 1891, Ph:SPC-AUB:1891(02):1-4:27
- Assembly Hall, 1902, Ph:SPC-AUB:1902(06):1-4:33
- Bliss Hall, 1900, by Sarrafian Brothers, Ph:SPC-AUB:1900:1-14:27
- Buildings on campus, American University of Beirut, 1930, Ph:AUB:1930(05):1-12:41
- Collection of photographs of the American University of Beirut, 1920s-1930s, Ph:AUB:1920s-1930s(01):1-100:38
- Collection of photographs of the Syrian Protestant College, 1907-1913, Ph:SPC-AUB:1907-1913:1-73:35
- First Lee Observatory, 1874, Ph:SPC-AUB:1874:1-17:27
- Fisk Hall, 1901, Ph:SPC-AUB:1901:1-6:28
- General views of campus, 1900s, Ph:SPC-AUB:1900s(01):1-47:28
- Jesup Hall, 1883, Ph:SPC-AUB:1883:1-11:27
- Lee Observatory, Syrian Protestant College, 1913, Ph:SPC-AUB:1913(14):1-2:36
- Medical Hall, 1872-1873, Ph:SPC-AUB:1872-1873:1-4:27
- Marquand House, 1879, Ph:SPC-AUB:1879-1880:1-9:27
- Medical buildings of the American University of Beirut, 1920s-1930s, Ph:AUB:1920s-1930s(03):1-90:38
- Nursing School and Nurses, 1923, Ph:AUB:1923(02):1-21:39
- Panoramic views of Syrian Protestant College, late 1800s early 1900s, Ph:SPC-AUB:1800s-1900s:1-16:28
- Photograph Album of buildings at the American University of Beirut, 1920s-1930s, Ph:AUB:1920s-1930s(02):1-60:38
- Post Hall and Archaeological Museum, 1902, Ph:SPC-AUB:1902:1-21:28
- Preparatory School, 1911, Ph:SPC-AUB:1911/12/01:1-10:36
- Sage Hall under construction, 1911, Ph:SPC-AUB:1911:01:36 (+9 More)
- School of Dentistry, 1878, Ph:SPC-AUB:1878:1-3:28
- School of Pharmacy at the Syrian Protestant College, 1893, Ph:SPC-AUB:1893:1-5:27
- Views of the American University of Beirut, 1920s, Ph:AUB:1930(05):1-12:41
- Views of the Syrian Protestant College, medium photos, 1900s, Ph:SPC-AUB:1900s(04):1-233:29
- Views of the Syrian Protestant College, large photos, Ph:SPC-AUB:1900s(03):1-27:29
- West Hall, 1913, Ph:SPC-AUB:1913:21:36



## **Postcards**

- [Postcard Collection of Issa Iskandar Maalouf](#) Beirut (Syria) : Sarrafian Bros. Studio, [between 1925 and 1940] (30 color postcards of different cities and towns in Syria, Lebanon, and Palestine)

## **Theses**

- Miller, D. (1981): The craftsman's art: Armenians and the growth of photography in the Near East (1856-1981) [T:2910](#)