

There were also those who came from poor families but whose education had been financed by a few enlightened *amiras* who realized that they would need well-educated clerks, technicians and administrative assistants. During the early part of the nineteenth century, most of these young men studied in Italian universities, specifically in Rome, Padua and Pisa. Italy was geographically closer to Istanbul than the rest of Western Europe, and the Mekhitarist Congregation, based in Venice but active in the Ottoman capital, made Italy a familiar place and a reasonable first-stop for those seeking education in Europe. After the late 1840s, however, students' preferences shifted to French universities.

Among these European-educated intellectuals was Nigoghos Balian, Garabed *Amira* Balian's son, one of the most prominent *amiras* in the decade of the 1850s. The ranks of the intellectuals also included well-known figures in 1877.⁸⁴

The decline of the *amiras* and the increase in the strength of the more numerous and less autocratic *esnafs* was accompanied by yet another important phenomenon: the rise of a new generation of young Armenian intellectuals.⁸⁵ In the context of the power-struggle within the Armenian *millet*, it is ironic that the success of the *amiras*' educational enterprise was a contributing factor in the later decline of their power within the *millet*. The literate Armenians trained in various Istanbul schools, but above all the young intellectuals whom the *amiras* enabled to study in Europe, were not willing to be grateful and tolerant of the control of their *millet* by a conservative elite. It was this generation of young intellectuals⁸⁶ that fueled much

⁸⁴ **Boghossian**, *Dadian Gerdastane*, p. 127.

⁸⁵ **Artinian** calls these intellectuals Young Armenians "because of the similarities of their objectives and methods with those of the Young Ottomans." See his "Historical Development," p. 58.

⁸⁶ A striking case among these intellectuals is Nigoghayos Zoraian (1821-1859). Born in Istanbul, this youthful intellectual worked as a clerk for an Armenian commercial firm in Manchester in 1843-1844. Zoraian returned to Istanbul with strong convictions about social and economic justice. Despite his views, Hovhannes Amira Dadian engaged him as an able linguist to act as his translator during trips to Europe. As a result, Zoraian went to Paris and was there in 1847-1848, in time to see the uprisings of 1848. Returning to Istanbul, he began to write on social issues and on the need for literacy in the fledgling press of the time. It is a tribute to Djezayirlian Amira's tolerance that the latter employed him as his secretary from 1851 to 1853, during which time Zoraian published, among other essays, "Harstutean Djamban" ("The Road to