

taller than average, with a broad forehead, and he soon captured the attention of students and teachers alike. He was studious and scrupulous, serious but humble, always ready to help, and he had an aptitude for leadership.

Baghdik was admitted to Prelacy Central High School in Tabriz in 1919. He had teachers of high calibre such as Karapet Pionian and the Armenologist Hrachia Acharian, both of whom left a rich legacy in the history of Armenian education and an everlasting impression on my father in particular.<sup>6</sup>

This period of Baghdik's life was quite tempestuous for Armenians at large and directly impacted his immediate environment.

The local Kurdish khans of Gharadagh wreaked havoc on Armenian villagers, causing many to leave everything behind and migrate to the safer cities. The goal of the khans was to drive them out of their ancestral land and usurp their properties, and for the most part they succeeded.<sup>7</sup>

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6 Prelacy Central High School of Tabriz (Թաւրիզի Թեմական Կենտրոնական Միջնակարգ Դպրոց), founded in 1909 and closed in 1936, was a modern center of Armenian co-educational instruction with a curriculum parallel to that of Caucasian Armenian schools, and with a strong cohort of experts and educators in the faculty. Serving Armenians of Azerbaijan and beyond, the school was established midway between the two major Armenian quarters of Tabriz, Lilava (Leiliabad) and Ghala (Berdatagh; *gbala* or *kalé* meaning “fortress” in Turkish). All the Armenian schools in Iran were closed in 1936 by a decree of Reza Shah, obviously in accord with advice he had received from Atatürk, the leader of neighboring Turkey.

7 Hovsepian, in «Ղարաղաղի հայերը» (Gharadagh Armenians), tells a story of the Voghan Armenians' resistance to the Kurdish tyrants. Voghan was one of nineteen villages owned by the wealthy Tumanian brothers whose ancestors were natives of Voghan. The brothers established a large trading company in Tabriz and subsequently moved their headquarters to Baku, leaving a fellow named Baghdassar of Voghan to manage their local properties. When the brutal Haji Khan went so far as to murder Baghdassar, the Tumanian brothers raised a group