

help from the authorities or benevolent organizations. It didn't help that these very conditions fuelled the subversive activities of the Armenian Bolsheviks. Caught between "the Bolshevik hammer and the Turkish anvil," as Simon Vratsian put it, Armenia had to defend itself from the advance of the Turkish army on one side, and on the other side, stand up for its sovereignty vis-à-vis the Bolshevik threat and the Red Army which was ready to invade the small republic. The two-and-a-half-year life of the Republic was a time of high hope and disappointment for Armenians all over the world and for those practically next-door in Atrpatakan. Baghdik must have lived that hope and enthusiasm, especially since he was already a member and later a leader of the Dashnaktsutjun youth organization.

The Sovietization of Armenia on December 2, 1920, was a huge blow. The uprising of February 1921, led by Dashnaktsutjun, met a tragic end. The Bolsheviks defeated Garegin Nzhdeh and quashed the uprising in Syunik, which ended the last struggle of the Armenian people and marked the end of their aspirations for an independent Armenia. As a result, a flood of ARF leaders, followed by the hopeless masses fleeing the terrors of Bolshevism, poured into Iranian Azerbaijan. Most of them took refuge in Tabriz. Even if temporary, the sojourn of ARF leaders and intellectuals in Tabriz impacted the cultural life and the Party structure in the region.

How did young Baghdik navigate that tempestuous period of six or seven years? That was a distant era my father never discussed, but the birth of an independent