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UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA LOS ANGELES

**The ideology of Armenian Liberation.
The Development of Armenian Political Thought Before the Revolutionary
Movement (1639-1885)**

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degree or Doctor of Philosophy in History**

**by
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**The Ideology of Armenian Liberation and the Development of Armenian
Political Thought
Before the Revolutionary Movement (1639-1885)**

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Recent Armenian history has generally been seen as a series of conflicts between idealistic and freedom loving but oppressed Armenians and foreign overlords. This linear interpretation of history has tended to ignore the social stratification in Armenian society and the impact of that stratification on the ideology, strategy and tactics of various elements, which at different times were involved in liberation activities.

The dissertation focuses on the period preceding the late nineteenth century revolutionary movement. By analyzing the written documents and actions of the various actors in Armenian history, this study attempts to determine the relationship between ideology and praxis of the various privileged groups—clergy, remnants of the feudal order, merchants and a rising middle class—that succeeded each other in claiming leadership of the Armenian people and developing plans to liberate Armenia. The study attempts to answer a series of questions: what is the actual motivation for the involvement in political activities by these elements? What is the relationship between their economic position within larger society and their leadership position within the Armenian community? What is the relationship between their class interests and their dreams of liberation?

The attempts by succeeding elements in Armenian society to develop a liberation strategy can be interpreted as being responses to challenges to their privileges—challenges both from within and without the community. The strategies of liberation and the degree of persistence were determined to a large extent by these challenges rather than by an abstract dedication to an ideal of a liberated homeland. As these challenges were resolved outside the context of an Armenian state, the visions of the latter became irrelevant, if not undesirable, to these classes, leaving the lower classes without hope and without accepted channels to solve their problems.

As a result of the adjustment of privileged classes to a status quo unacceptable to the peasantry and lower middle classes, there occurred a gradual secularization and democratization of the leadership, which by the 1880s made possible the rise of the socialistic revolutionary parties led guerrilla fighters and an intelligentsia from the poorer and lower middle classes, radicalized by the behavior of the privileged Armenian classes as much as by the repressive policies of the Ottoman and Russian governments.

INTRODUCTION

The historiography of Armenia often reflects the popular belief that history was made by a long line of heroes who, beginning with the epic progenitor Hayk, labored selflessly in the struggle against oppression. The terms freedom and liberation have been applied indiscriminately to describe the aims of pre-Armenian Urartuans opposing Assyrian armies, nineteenth century guerrilla fighters struggling against Ottoman rule, and the more recent activists striking against representatives and symbols of the Turkish state.

The external foe has been a dominant theme in the Armenian ethos. In a history marked by ever-present threats from neighbors, invasions, and long periods of foreign rule, the external foe emerges in the popular and historical imagination as the main factor disturbing an otherwise idyllic existence.¹ However convenient, reducing the past to a simple, recurrent pattern of conflicts between Armenian and non-Armenian has tended to minimize the importance of social stratification and internal dynamics in the content, purpose, and strategy of emancipatory movements.

This study was intended to be the introductory section of a larger project on the ideology of the Armenian liberation movement between 1885 and 1908, when the socioeconomic dimension of the struggle acquired a dominant role; the present section was to have provided the background on the rise of revolutionary parties—the Hnchakians in 1887, the Dashnaksutiun in 1890, and various Marxist groups in the 1900s—that fought against the Ottoman and the tsarist regimes.² That investigation was to address the question: what was revolutionary in the liberation movement led by these parties during that period?

An adequate answer to that question necessitated a treatment of the introductory section more comprehensive and extensive than originally planned. The revolutionary dimension of the movement after the 1880s was predicated not only upon predominant conditions then but also upon the character of political activities during earlier phases. Although research on individual aspects of the liberation movement exists, no single study deals with the course of ideological development between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries, when a revolutionary struggle became possible and necessary. Thus this introductory section grew into a study in its own right.

The discussion of the revolutionary period was separated from its antecedents for methodological reasons as well. The dynamics of change evident within the revolutionary

framework differed sharply from that of earlier phases. Before the 1880s the Armenian masses had not yet been transformed into a major factor in any strategy for social, economic, and political liberation. Understanding and interpreting the political practice of large groups (larger than elites) requires a different, somewhat more elaborate framework. As agents of social change, the political parties leading the revolution adopted the process of “rational” political discourse developed in Europe: they formulated programs, which embodied their worldview and their strategy.³ The articulation of their ideologies in more or less coherent terms provided a relationship between theory and practice, the understanding of which requires different methodological tools. In addition, because of the relative wealth of material on the latter period, if it were analyzed on the same level as the earlier periods, there would have been such an imbalance that it seemed best to postpone the study of the ideology of the Armenian revolution until a monograph could be devoted to it.

The purpose of this study is to analyze the relevance of social classes in the development of Armenian liberationist activities. While the study includes much evidence that is new or that has been ignored, the facts of the story are largely known. The premise of the study is that the conception and active pursuit of Armenian liberation underwent fundamental changes between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries. Early activists sought the overthrow of foreign rule and the establishment of an Armenian kingdom through diplomatic contacts. By the nineteenth century some Armenians were demanding reforms, and were ready to pursue their modest goals through armed rebellions.

The end of Armenian sovereignty is the starting point of this work. The disintegration of the dream of a reconstituted Armenian kingdom—the plot of the story under study—was neither a simple nor a clearly visible process. The last major Armenian dynasty in historic Armenia had collapsed when the Bagratid capital of Ani fell in 1045. Although some feudal houses, largely in the northeast of Armenia, were able to survive the Byzantine and Seljuk invasions, Armenia did not have Armenian rulers again until the twentieth century. Armenian dynastic rule in Cilicia, begun as a principality in 1080, was unable to supplant the royal tradition of historic Armenia; the last king of Cilicia was deposed and exiled in 1375 by the Mamluks.⁴

When the dust cleared after four centuries of invasions, uncertainties, and instability following the fall of the last major kingdom in historic Armenia in the eleventh century, two new

empires had become masters of the ancient homeland. With a final partition in 1639, the Ottoman Empire controlled most of Armenia, while Safavid Iran retained the easternmost sector.⁵

Sovereignty was not all that disappeared by the time the final partition took effect. Between the eleventh and sixteenth centuries Armenian society also lost its most entrenched ruling class, the landed aristocracy. For centuries, that aristocracy had sustained—if not defined—the political system in Armenia. It had given birth kings and dynasties and caused the downfall. Secure in their patrimonial lands and protected by rigid laws of primogeniture, feudal families had survived where royal dynasties could not. The aristocracy represented the model of the combined economic and political power. The disruption of the feudal order started under Arab rule and continued under the domination of Byzantium. Seljuk and other Turkic invasions completed the disintegration of the aristocratic system.⁶ Only in a few mountainous regions did remnants of the feudal order endure, but they hardly represented any power beyond the local boundaries. The breakdown of a political system that had existed for over a millennium added a new dimension to the question of political leadership. Who would define Armenian goals and problems? Who would represent Armenians? How would Armenians adjust to their new status as a subject people? What would they envision for their future,, should they reject the present?

The first answers were inspired from the past. Beginning in the sixteenth century Catholicosses of Etchmiadzin promoted the vision of a resurrected Armenian kingdom through diplomacy. Etchmiadzin, the religious and spiritual center of Armenian Christianity, and the Catholicos, the spiritual and administrative leader of the Armenian Apostolic Church, constituted then the only symbolic or actual pan-Armenian institution. By the eighteenth century it was the *meliks* (princes) of the mountainous Karabakh region in Eastern Armenia who assumed the role of articulating the dream of a return to the past in the form of a political program that involved increased local autonomy through armed rebellion against Persian rule. In Cilicia the leaders of Zeytun, the Western Armenian counterparts of the meliks, resisted Ottoman armies in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries for the more modest goals of preserving local privileges from the encroachments of the central government.

In Ottoman Armenia and Europe in the seventeenth century and in India in the eighteenth century the dream of a reconstituted Armenian state under a dynamic government also inspired the transient yet powerful Armenian merchants. The search for a secure home for developing or

endangered capital was the immediate motivation for their expression of patriotism. Their visions waned along with the world that had sustained their hopes for a revived crusade.

It was first the privileged classes and elements in Armenian society, then, including the high clergy, the remnants of the landed aristocracy and the merchants, that undertook organized initiatives toward liberation, which they defined generally as liberation of Armenian territories. As each group eventually made its peace with the power ruling over Armenia, the initiative passed to another. With every new phase in this admittedly simplified scheme came a degree of democratization both in the decision making process and in the vision of a free Armenia. With each passing phase more of the lower classes were to benefit from the proposed or implied new order, ultimately to be defined as the liberation of the people.

These new undertakings tended to increase also the role of the lower classes in the strategy of liberation. By the mid-nineteenth century the main impetus for political struggle against the status quo came from the peasantry, the craftsmen, the laborers, and the petty bourgeoisie; accordingly, the movement sustained by popular demands and expectations was destined to be more radical and less compromising than initiatives undertaken and defined by privileged groups.

Phases of this transformation represent gradual shifts in the theory and practice of liberation; these reflect not only changes in objective conditions often imposed by outside forces but also modifications in the ideological imagination of the actors in history.

To explain such patterns of change in the ideology and practice of liberation, a set of questions will be asked regarding the activities of those who labored in the name of the Armenian people: What are their motivations? How are these motivations related to their social background? What was their basis of legitimacy? What is their vision of liberated Armenia and how is that related to their strategy of liberation; more specifically, why did they cease their activities on behalf of liberation?

The demise of these programs was due sometimes to the disintegration of the class from which it had arisen, and on other occasions, to the abandonment of dreams in favor of the status quo. Initiatives changed hands not because the new groups struggled against the old, politically or ideologically challenging the assumptions or the strategy of the first, but rather because the first either lost interest in its own initiative or simply disappeared. In fact, although they succeeded each other, efforts at liberation do not constitute a continuous chain of events. To the extent that

they represent classes and institutions rather than individuals, the liberators during the period under study are like characters in one-act plays that succeed each other but are not related. It is the historian's conceptualization, not any units of ploy that brings them together. These initiatives on the part of a particular individual or group responded not to any mandate or obligation, but to a void and to an absence of opposition.

Changes in Armenian political thought were similarly disjointed. Political ideals were more often consumed by their irrelevance than by their actual success or failure. When initiatives and political programs responded to the limited concerns or the changing circumstances of transient or otherwise privileged groups, the motivation for action was not sustained enough to become institutionalized. Catholicosses got involved in daring diplomatic maneuvers only long enough to discover the pitfalls of determined political action. A lay individual such as Joseph Emin, the son of a Madras merchant in search of a plan to liberate Armenia, seems to have been unaware of the experiences of an earlier devotee of personalized diplomacy, Israel Ori, and repeated most of his mistakes. Although colonies of Armenian merchants have been a constant in Armenian history, the merchant class displayed no more than a passing involvement in these schemes for liberation.

Armenians pursuing the goal of liberation always claimed to speak and act on behalf of all Armenians. Appeals to Europe for assistance were usually prefaced by statements regarding the sufferings of the masses. Yet their vision, their normal conduct, and their conditional involvement in liberation activities betray concern for narrower, more particularized interests—interests for which the sufferings of the masses could be and often were ignored.

Once one differentiates between ideology and reality, what was not said and what was not done become as important as what was proclaimed and inscribed by the liberator. Admittedly, this can lead to conjectures difficult to document as positively as with other assertions. Nevertheless, patterns of inaction on the part of the individual group or class are often as revealing as manifest action seems to be. The distortions inherent in a methodology, which ignores such patterns, are greater than those resulting from carefully laid conjectures.

A source of difficulty in the adequate historical evaluation of early liberation activities has been the absence in Armenian political thought of a consecrated, ideal social organization. Throughout the long history of Armenian statehood, feudalism had come to be regarded as the

natural order. What little political thought survived feudalism itself failed to provide tests of legitimacy or methods of evaluation. In the absence of institutionalized debate and leadership, such a consecrated ideal could have been the focal point for discussion, however distant in time and space. It could have constituted a framework within which challenges, innovations, or reinterpretations in political thought and practice could have been absorbed; it could have provided a standard by which to measure achievements or failures. The program of the Madras group of thinkers in the eighteenth century proposing a constitutional monarchy for Armenia, for example, stands alone without consequence except for the interest of historians. The Madras program represents a radical break with the norms and views generally associated with Armenian statehood; it implies a critique of dominant Armenian political thought and practice. Yet, even as a matter of academic interest, it has failed to inspire sustained debate. As is the case with most other programs developed during this period, it is isolated and cast in terms so peculiar to itself that there is little basis for universalization.

The pattern of change in political leadership and the absence of a unifying political theory enabled early leaders and activists to evade accountability to their contemporaries and immediate followers. Even now, the actions of early liberators who claimed to speak and act on behalf of the whole nation seem less subject to scrutiny than the deeds of the more recent, revolutionary activists.

The absence of an internal criticism has allowed the external foe—the more enduring and dramatic factor in Armenian history—to dominate the analysis of Armenian political thought at the expense of the study of internal social dynamics, which, ultimately, are equally responsible for the actions, and visions of Armenians.

Section I: The Legacy From the Past

Chapter 1

Between Old and New: The Quest for a Kingdom

The establishment in the sixteenth century of Ottoman and Safavid rule over a partitioned Armenia raised once more the critical question of the integration of a native Christian population in theocratic Muslim empires. The nature of social organization sustained by the new military giants of the Near East allowed conditional economic integration and only partial social accommodation. Participation in the political apparatus was, at best, nominal for selected individuals and nonexistent for the community at large.¹

Those classes and institutions in Armenian society, which represented organized political, military, or financial power such as the high clergy, the remnants of the landed aristocracy, and the rising merchant class, looked only to their own interests. In due course the masses of peasants, craftsmen, and petty traders were left to carry almost the entire weight of economic exploitation, social discrimination, and political oppression characteristic of the new regimes.

Peasants, especially Armenian peasants, had suffered most during the long and protracted Turko-Persian wars and benefited least from conditions of peace. Once expansion stopped, their share of the harvest dwindled, and *sipahis*, the Muslim feudal landed cavalry, turned to land rent as their primary source of income.² Peasants occupied the lowest position in the priorities of public spending but were the first to suffer from inflation and the debasement of the silver content of the *akche* or minted coin in the Ottoman Empire at the end of the sixteenth century.³ Those who produced the food were the first to starve during times of scarcity and last to profit from periods of prosperity, such as occurred at the end of the seventeenth century.⁴ Attached to their land by the accumulated labor of generations, substantial segments within the peasantry lost their holdings or communally owned villages to usurers, self-serving officials, or feudal landlords.⁵

In addition to the inconveniences of regressive tax systems, peoples within the Ottoman and Safavid empires were burdened with tax-farming, with illegal and extralegal taxes, and with central governments unable or unwilling to control arbitrary rule in the provinces. In Persian Armenia during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the land and head taxes alone took as much as 40 percent of the crop.⁶ In the Ottoman Empire, a chronicler writing at the end of the

seventeenth century complained that peasants were deprived of even the minimum nutrition that serfs normally received.⁷ In fact, more and more peasants were reduced to the status of serfs tied to the land, not only by tradition, but also by provincial *kanunnames* (law codes), whose regulations mandated the return of runaway peasants.⁸

Even in the more stable Ottoman sector of Armenia, conditions were not conducive for the development of trade and manufacturing. Although the old Levantine caravan routes recovered somewhat following the treaty of 1639, the lack of security, heavy duties levied by the government, and the discovery of alternate passages to India and China had the combined effect of limiting the duration and scope of that recovery.⁹ The central authorities were either unwilling, as in the Ottoman Empire, or incapable, as in the Persian Empire, to introduce policies that would provide for the uniform development of the distant provinces such as the Armenian territories. Consequently, when international trade with Europe became an important part of the economies of these empires, a corresponding upsurge of trade in Armenia did not occur. While an entrepreneurial class did evolve in the provinces, its members soon discovered that they were unable to expand or even preserve their capital for long. Whatever capital they accumulated was soon transferred to coastal cities or European centers where investments were safer.¹⁰

Certainly, weaknesses in the economic structures caused suffering for peasants and the urban poor regardless of religion and race. Christians, however, were subjected to discriminatory taxation and to humiliating social practices. Illegal and extralegal taxes were more easily conceived and more readily rationalized when it was the Christians who were to carry the burden. Christians were also singled out for a head tax on all males. The *jizye* or *asker bedeliye* was collected in lieu of the military service, which Christians were not allowed to render because of the theocratic nature of the empires. This tax could hardly compare with the cost of a mercenary in the army. It often fluctuated for the benefit of tax collectors and became one of the most abusive and humiliating tools of Ottoman and Persian rules.¹¹

A host of laws and regulations in matters ranging from clothing to judicial procedures set Christians apart from their Muslim neighbors. Restrictive social conventions reinforced among Turks and Kurds a sense of superiority instilled by religion and religious politics. The identification through race and religion with the ruler of the land was one of the tools effectively

used in both empires, but particularly among, the Ottomans, to deter political and social integration of the lower classes when economic integration had already taken place.

Social and to some extent political integration did take place, however, between the more fortunate elements in Armenian society and their new overlords. Paradoxically, the initial steps toward the re-creation of an Armenian state were undertaken by the high clergy when, in fact, the Church was the Armenian institution most readily accepted, if not sponsored, by sultan and shah alike.

Understandably, the initial plans for the liberation of Armenia drawn by those most integrated into their overlords' society—the high clergy, the remnants of the landed aristocracy, and the merchant class—were more evocative of past glories than of future possibilities.

Clerical Diplomacy and Legends of Liberation

Starting in mid-sixteenth century, three consecutive Catholicosses of Etchmiadzin initiated missions to Europe with the purpose of urging Christian rulers to free Armenia. The first Catholicos to undertake such a mission was Stepanos Salmastetsi who, empowered by an assembly of notables held in 1547, visited Rome, Venice, and Lemberg. During this journey Salmastetsi met with Pope Julius III, Emperor Charles V, and King Sigismund II.¹² His successor, Mikael Sebastatsi, sent a similar mission to Venice in 1562 headed by the able Abgar Tokatetsi who claimed royal descent. This mission, too, had followed a secret meeting invited by Sebastatsi in his hometown of Sivas (Sebastea) in Ottoman Armenia. Although subsequently the Catholicos declined an invitation by the Venetian leaders arranged by Tokatetsi, the latter's son settled in Venice and kept contact with the court.¹³ The third mission was led by Catholicos Tadeos. His activities were limited to a visit to Lemberg in 1575.¹⁴ Thereafter, high-level clerical diplomacy seems to have abated for almost a century. Then, one of the more colorful figures to occupy the Etchmiadzin See, Hakob Jughayetsi, arranged yet another secret meeting of notable clergymen and “princes” in 1677. Thus another delegation, headed by the Catholicos, set off for Europe. But before it could reach its destination, the group disintegrated upon the death of its leader in Constantinople.

Office holders in Etchmiadzin were not the only clergymen to seek diplomatic contacts with the West. In 1575, the Catholicos of Cilicia, Khachatur Zeytuntsi, and his associates appealed

to the pope for help.¹⁵ Cilicia, a coastal region in the Northeastern corner of the Mediterranean, had come under Armenian suzerainty from the eleventh to the fourteenth centuries; its rulers generally had supported the various crusades. Khachatur Gaghatatsi, another Catholicos of Cilicia, joined the Greek and Assyrian patriarchs of Antioch in 1662, and once more in 1663, in inviting the armed assistance of the “Most Christian” Louis XIV. He is also reported to have celebrated Mass in Crete in 1667 for the success of Venetian armies, i.e., French interests, in their long war against the Ottoman Empire.¹⁶ In 1670 Catholicos Petros of Gantsasar in the historic Aghvank province appealed to the Russian court for sponsorship of Armenians.¹⁷ Over a century later, Catholicos Kirakos Ajapahian of Cilicia too was accused by Ottoman authorities of having political contacts with the Russian government.¹⁸

These manifest instances of clerical diplomacy were at least partially based on the avowed military and political interests of emerging European states. Ministers of France such as the duke of Sully and the viscount of Turenne in the seventeenth century drew detailed plans for the “crusade” against the Ottomans.¹⁹ More commonly, the pursuit of interests led European powers to regional conflicts as well as alliances and accommodations with the two Near Eastern powers. The diplomatic support which France provided to the adventurer and Dominican priest known as Father Ottoman indicates that military campaigns and diplomatic maneuvers were intended to expand the power of rulers rather than alleviate the burden of the ruled: the replacement of the Muslim sultan of the Ottoman Empire with a Christian one could have achieved that goal without altering any of the institutions or the organization of the coveted territories. The one clear change expected by Catholic Europe was that Armenians convert to Catholicism.²⁰ Nevertheless, Catholicosses and their allies persisted in their expectations that European potentates would ultimately hand Armenians their freedom from alien Muslim rule. This belief was the result of two related factors. First, the medieval, crusader mentality continued to dominate the political perceptions of Armenians. The last of the independent dynasties, the Lusignans of Cilicia, had disappeared from history panting for rescue from their western coreligionists.²¹ They left behind the delusion of divine or, at the least, papal intervention with the active propaganda subsequently generated by catholic missionaries, that delusion transformed into the legend of the “Franks.” According to this legend, fathers of the Armenian Church had long ago prophesied that “Franks” would liberate Armenians. In time, the label was applied to any Christian power that showed

interest in the Armenians. Even when the term was no longer used commonly, the legend itself remained instrumental in shaping political hopes among Armenians.²²

Second, and more important, the strategy of liberation corresponded to the perceptions of the leaders as to what was being liberated and why. As an institution the Armenian Church had come to rely on a world view which considered collective and individual moral behavior the exclusive factors in the interpretation of historical change; Muslim rule was both the cause for all the misfortunes of the Armenians and the punishment for their past sins. The Christian West had not met the same fate. It was more powerful and, therefore, was the natural and only force able to destroy Muslim power. Thus, the strategy of liberation—a clear manifestation of the ideology—relied on foreign intervention in the name of religion and had no room for the participation of the Armenian masses. The peasants and the poor were excluded from the contemplated liberation that assigned roles to power-holders and power-brokers, but not those over whom power was exercised.

This strategy for liberation was also consonant with the vision of a future Armenia where the Church was ensured a dominant position. Political power was a goal, which consumed the Church as much as did its claim for spiritual monopoly. The Armenian Church was one of the largest landholding institutions in Armenia since her conversion to Christianity in the early fourth century. The Church was very much part of the political structure even in the eighteenth century when the wealth of monasteries had diminished considerably.²³

Historically the Church had identified itself with feudal interests and occasionally had joined the *nakharars* or feudal lords in challenging royal authority. After the loss of Armenian independence, Catholicosses and bishops shared political authority with the *nakharars* until that class too disintegrated and the Church remained the sole national institution.

In fact, the position of clergy seems to have been enhanced over time by their actual or assumed blood relations with ancient nobility. The Hasan Jalalian Catholicosses of Gantsasar were members of a family that traditionally ruled parts of Karabakh in Eastern Armenia. The Ajapahians of Sis boasted their descent from the Rubenid dynasty of Cilicia; in the eighteenth century one of them used the stones of Prince Ruben's eleventh century palace to build a new cathedral in Sis as part of the first reconstruction program since the fall of the Cilician dynasty in the area.²⁴ Sixteenth and seventeenth century sources describe the Catholicosses of Aghtamar as

heirs of not only the spiritual authority of their predecessors but also of the political functions of the Ardsruni kings of Vaspurakan.²⁵ The most revealing and ambitious argument for the political prerogatives of the Church was presented by Simeon Erevantsi (d.1780), Catholicos of All Armenians in Etchmiadzin. An educated and philosophically inclined clergyman, Erevantsi argued that as Jesus Christ was the only intercessor between God and mankind, Catholicosesses of Etchmiadzin, in their role as successors to Gregory the Illuminator (himself the sole intercessor between Christ and Armenians), were to be the only mediators between Armenians and their political destiny.²⁶

It was because of this strong claim for authority that foreign rulers recognized the Church as a valuable mediator between themselves and the subject peoples. This policy was especially valid for the Ottoman and Safavid empires, where political authority was sanctioned as the manifestation of the government of the *umma* (religious community): there the Armenian Church was a ready-made machinery to co-opt the non-Muslim subjects into the state organization without compromising the Islamic character of the state and, in fact, strengthening the religious basis of political authority. Generally speaking, the Ottoman and Persian rulers granted clergymen and the Church rights and prerogatives—in many respects similar to those granted to the *ulema* and the mosque—that were otherwise denied to subjects and other institutions. These privileges included access to high officials of government; exemption of some landholdings from taxation; direction of all community educational, charitable, and cultural activities; and control of community courts dealing with religious and civil matters. Thus, to the extent that politics consists of relations between individuals and their government, the Church became a political institution and clergy the intermediaries, if not intercessors, between subjects and the state.

This renewed predominance of the Armenian Church was of dubious value for the community. On the one hand it provided a legal framework for organizing community activities; on the other hand it helped create a less dynamic, more stagnant community defined as a religious entity by alien governments, limited and limiting in its self-perception by the timeless interpretations of biblical parables, and restrained in its actions by transcendental hopes perpetuated by the clergy and the clerically minded. Nevertheless, the continued preeminence of the Church depended upon the legitimization of these claims by a military authority and their social acceptance by the peoples.

Clerical diplomacy and its underlying assumptions can best be understood in fact when the Church is seen as an institution accepted into the power structure but not yet secure or integrated. Thus, the supreme leaders of the Church had to take advantage of imperial turmoil to advance their diplomatic aims. In fact, it was during the Persian civil war in 1545-1546, when Alkhaz Mirza had taken up arms against Shah Tahmasp I, that the first two Armenian diplomatic missions to Europe were undertaken; and when Mikael Sebastatsi organized the mission of Abgar Tokatetsi, he had been forced to take refuge in Western Armenia due to internal Church upheavals.²⁷

There were also domestic reasons for Catholicosses to reach for Europe for support. The general factors that created instability during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries also encouraged intrigue and usurpation against the traditional rights and prerogatives of the mother see. The high clergy during this period behaved much like the cantankerous feudal lords of earlier centuries. The Catholicossate of Aghtamar, a nominal center near Van since the end of the Ardruni dynasty, encroached upon the rights of Etchmiadzin by extending its own jurisdiction over neighboring districts.²⁸ An equally serious conflict arose between Sis and Etchmiadzin regarding matters of prestige and power, which engulfed the patriarchates of Constantinople and Jerusalem as well.²⁹ The competitive and demoralizing spirit continued in the eighteenth century when Gantsasar and Etchmiadzin vied for the control of the newly formed Armenian communities in Russia.³⁰

Internal conflicts were most discomfiting when accompanied by the claims of rival candidates for various offices in the Church. Tadeos, the initiator of the third mission, was recognized only by a segment of the clergy as supreme head of the Church in Etchmiadzin. Even in worse position to pursue the lofty goal of liberation was Hakob Jughayetsi, the last Catholicos to initiate a major diplomatic campaign. When Jughayetsi invited the princes and notables of Eastern Armenia for a secret meeting in Etchmiadzin in 1677, he found himself in conflict with most of the other religious leaders on more than general jurisdictional matters. Already in deep political trouble because of his association with a Georgian revolt against the khan of Erevan, Jughayetsi's seat was now threatened by the rival candidacy of Eghiazar Aintaptsi who had strong backing in many communities.³¹ Added to Jughayetsi's political difficulties was the specter of financial disaster. As a result of a campaign to increase the landholdings of Etchmiadzin on credit, he was personally indebted beyond his means. He had borrowed heavily against the treasures and

properties of the Church and stood to lose them to creditors. One of these creditors, the khan of Erevan, had even imprisoned the diplomat-Catholicos briefly, until released by order of the shah.³²

While the personal fortunes of the clergy and institutional security of the Church cannot be directly linked to the national policies of the Church, it is clear that active measures to liberate Armenia were not common for the leaders of the Church; and, except for Jughayetsi's mission which disintegrated upon his death, such efforts through church channels are nonexistent after the sixteenth century.

The goals of clerical diplomacy reflected limited class and institutional interests. The ultimate aim of Church leaders was the reestablishment of a Christian independent dynasty. Beginning with the seventeenth century there are colophons that call for a return to the past as a solution to the ills of Armenian society.³³ To achieve that aim many leaders of the Church considered the possibility of conversion to Catholicism and subjection to a non-Armenian dynasty. Within the unchanging universe of clerical thought, Christian rulers of the feudal West were as close in space as seemingly pious Armenian kings were in time.

Ideologically, therefore, Catholicos-diplomats, and their associates pointed to the religion of the ruler, Islam, as the source of misgovernment. Yet their proposed solution, replacing Muslim shahs and sultans with Christian kings, would have alleviated only those hardships that emanated from religious discrimination against Christians. Although these were certainly substantial and their elimination would have improved the lot of the common Christians in important respects, a change in the religion of the ruler would hardly have brought an end to the economic and political oppression of Armenians on whose behalf; ostensibly, foreign military assistance was being sought.

In fact, the Armenian Church itself was part of the problem to the extent that it was a landowning institution integrated in the power structure.³⁴ Preceding the treaty of 1639, the monastery of Etchmiadzin was stable neither politically nor economically. The once prosperous religious center owned no more than one *tarkhan*, the land unit exempt from the *bahra* or land tax. Between 1639 and 1763 that number reached seventy-five.³⁵ In the sixteenth century Catholicosses lamented the "anxious and bitter times" brought upon Armenians by lawless elements and cruel tax collectors. In the eighteenth century Catholicosses were in a position to loan cash amounts to Armenian peasant communities that stood to lose their communal lands

because of exorbitant taxes. The creditors are known to have lent the money in return for a fifth of the harvest in perpetuity.³⁶

The chronicler, who bemoaned in numerous colophons the cruel and excessive use of force by Persian officials against Christian Armenians, did not hesitate to call upon the services of the same Persian overlords to put an end to the movement of townspeople in New Julfa who were unhappy with the abuses of churchmen in the 1640s. The leader of the disgruntled, Tumik, was subjected to a trial which rivaled the Inquisition. Tumik and his associates were preceded in the early 1600s by a “heretic” known as Mekhlu who acquired an impressive following in Artsakh, Eastern Armenia. Once, as a monastic, Mekhlu had thought it was only right to distribute the landholdings of his monastery to those peasants who tilled the land. Mekhlu’s teachings were reminiscent of the better known Paulician and Tondrakian movements in Armenian history (7-11 c.). As their predecessors had done a millennium earlier, Catholicosses and bishops invited the full weight of their foreign overlords to persecute Mekhlu and his supporters in Persia as well as in Ottoman Armenia.³⁷

There remains the apparent paradox between the few initiatives discussed above and the more consistent policy of “prudence” and expedience followed by most Church leaders, particularly after the seventeenth century. As a general rule, sources provide examples of high and low clergymen who, acting as the opinion makers of their time, informed their restless flocks that Muslim, i.e., Turkish and Persian rule, had been dominant since the beginning of time and advised Armenians to seek happiness in the next world. While claiming the leadership of the people, they advocated the separation of Armenian politics from the affairs of state. Armed with biblical parables, they preached the virtues of timidity and the transcendental rewards of fatalism. Joseph Emin relates the following conversation, real or imaginary, between himself and an Armenian peasant, who was surprised to see an armed Armenian, during Emin’s passage through Western Armenia, in a village called Jinis:

-You, Christians, what is the reason of your objecting if any of your countrymen should take a fancy to be a warrior? And why are you not free? Why have you not a sovereign of your own?

- Sir, our liberty is in the next world, our king is Jesus Christ.

- How came that about? Who told you so?

- The Holy fathers of the Church, who say, the Armenian nation has been subject to the Mahometans from the creation of the world, and must remain so till the day of resurrection; otherwise we could soon drive the Othman out of the country...³⁸

The continued reconciliation of the majority of Armenians with their subservient status stands in sharp contrast with the avowed goals of Salmastetsi and his successors.

Invasions, wars, famines, and periods of lawlessness affected monasteries and churches, villages and towns alike. If anything, religious centers were even better targets for looters since cathedrals and monasteries housed much wealth in the form of precious stones and metals. This shared vulnerability explains the sensitivity of clergy to the plight of the commoners during crises. The Church and churchmen, however, had at their disposal means, which enabled them to recover quickly; the common believer did not. Furthermore, while the persecution of clergymen would auger dreadful times for the less privileged, the opulence in which high clergymen often lived or the honors they received at the hand of foreign rulers rarely translated into an improvement in the lot of the peasant.

Nevertheless, the Armenian Church was taken to be the embodiment of the Armenian people and the welfare of its officials and of the institution was equated to the welfare of all Armenians. Such beliefs made it possible for the Catholicosses to justify their superiority and to perceive their political needs as the needs of the entire Armenian people. The reestablishment of an Armenian kingdom or, at least of Christian rule, was seen then as an ideal way of securing the Church's erstwhile status. The Church's plans for liberation, which in two of the four cases involved Eastern Armenia alone, were a last resort, pursued only when the risks were minimized by general turmoil in the land or made irrelevant since all was lost, regardless.

The continuation of the status quo became policy in the eighteenth century. Concerned with survival, used to authority, and occasionally obsessed with power, the spiritual leaders of Armenia were also cautious individuals who could not have sympathized with or assisted in the political activities of Israel Ori and Joseph Emin.³⁹ They also remained aloof during the revolt by the Karabakh princes in the first quarter of the eighteenth century. To what extent this was related to the fact that the sultan had recognized the tax-exempt status of Etchmiadzin-owned lands during the decade of Ottoman occupation of Eastern Armenia, 1728-1738, cannot be ascertained easily. Nonetheless, when Persian rule returned, the shah could think of no better way to secure the allegiance of his Armenian subjects than by increasing the landholdings of Etchmiadzin and conferring expensive gifts upon the Catholicos during a rare personal visit to the monastery.⁴⁰

Catholicosses following Jughayetsi continued to pray for foreign assistance, some louder than others, at least loud enough for the Russian court to hear. They could join the lamentation of the scribe Manuel of Garahisar, who, after decrying oppression, over taxation and devastation at the hands of the Turks “because of [our] immense sins,” was disappointed that “from nowhere is there any help coming, neither from heaven or earth, nor from anywhere else.”⁴¹ By the eighteenth century the initiative was grasped by others. The remnants of the Armenian nobility resurfaced for the last time and pursued the goal of liberation, as they understood it.

The Last Stands of the Nobility

Of the many regions of historic Armenia where a degree of autonomy had been preserved, Zeytun in the Cilician region of the Ottoman Empire and Karabakh and Siunik in Persian Armenia were the most vital. It is understandable that Catholicosses planning the establishment of a kingdom would view the meliks as their natural allies. The princes of the mountains were among those trusted by Church leaders to attend the “secret” meetings in Etchmiadzin.

To the extent that the remnants of the landed aristocracy longed for the same “glorious” days of feudalism, as did the Church, the framework within which the two operated was one. Similar to the Church, princes had their own transcendental basis of legitimacy characteristic of nobility everywhere, such as blood privileges and ancestral rights. Unlike the Church, however, the princes owed their survival to military strength, not mere political cooptation. Largely impoverished and threatened by efforts of total subjugation or centralization, the princes of the mountains differed from the princes of the Church. The dominant powers were far less benevolent toward the landed and armed aristocracy than they were toward the Church. The last scions of the nobility of sword lacked the structural unity, which the Church enjoyed; separated geographically, they also remained isolated from each other. Impervious to change and to the need for new forms of organization, the surviving noblemen had their own traditions to uphold. Yet they continued to maintain a more direct, almost a natural political link with their local communities. This link drew the princes into the struggle. They took part in the uprisings against central authority in Persia in the eighteenth century and in the Ottoman Empire in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

While the nobility’s attachment to traditions, to the land, and to their history provided a source of pride and hope to the desperate but aspiring poor, the remnants of the nakharars

themselves rarely provided a collective ideal more palpable or a strategy of liberation more viable than what was offered by the Church.⁴²

Two important developments underlie the activities of the princes or meliks in Eastern Armenia in the eighteenth century. First, lay leaders and provincial clergy began to sponsor initiatives for the liberation of Armenia. Second, Russia emerged as the power most likely to intervene in Armenia. In many respects the figure of Israel Ori foreshadows these developments.

Ori was from Karabakh, probably from a family of meliks. It appears that as a young man he accompanied his father, a member of Catholicos Hakob Jughayetsi's delegation in 1678. When the delegation disbanded, Ori continued the journey. From then until his death in 1711, he dedicated himself to the goal of freeing Eastern Armenia from Persian domination. A life full of adventures took him from court to court where he stirred the interest of kings and princes in the fate of Armenians. Ori's first major success came when the elector of the Palatinate committed himself to Ori's goals. The elector was interested in the possibilities of local support for the war that some central European states and Russia were waging against the Ottoman Empire as well as in the expansion of Catholicism. It eventually became clear, however, that the key to the success of any plan for European intervention was Russia, without whose consent and active assistance it was logistically difficult to ensure military intervention. Ori traveled to Moscow in 1703 and noted that the expansion plans of Peter the Great involved the Caucasus as well. This made Peter the most natural candidate for foreign protector. Officials of the Russian foreign ministry paid careful attention to Ori's design and enlisted him in their service.⁴³

It seems that Israel Ori learned some valuable lessons in diplomacy during his long quest for allies in Europe. Between the Palatinate and Moscow he altered his proposed strategy to free Armenians. Rather than rely solely on the crusading spirit of rulers, Ori advanced political and military arguments that stressed common interests. His plans emphasized the active participation of Armenian meliks as well as civilians in strategic positions in the projected campaign against Persian forces. Although the young diplomat had exaggerated the importance of both elements in earlier drafts of the plan, the Moscow version of Ori's work clearly manifested a realistic understanding of available resources. During a secret trip to his native Karabakh in 1699, Ori had had no difficulty securing the written and manifest commitment of meliks to his project. His efforts received no encouragement, however, from Hakob Jughayetsi's successor in Etchmiadzin.

The figure of a lone and indefatigable individual laboring for the liberation of his fatherland has fascinated historians. In his monumental study on this subject, Ashot Hovhannisian has asserted that Israel Ori's plan, as presented in Moscow, constituted the cornerstone of the salutary "Russian orientation" in Armenian politics. Beyond that, Hovhannisian has characterized Ori as a political genius who transcended the denominational conflicts plaguing Armenians, presaging the rise of modern Armenian national consciousness. Ori considered the possibility of assistance from Western Armenians and appreciated the idea of cooperating among the nationalities of the Caucasus. One does not need to accept in its entirety this superlative evaluation of Ori's personality to realize that such an involvement in the liberation movement represents important departures from earlier efforts.⁴⁴

Ori became the first full time propagandist-diplomat devoted to Armenian liberation; others before him, and for a long while after him, were involved as clergymen or merchants. This is all the more remarkable, since started as a self-appointed diplomat with no constituency. He went with the Jughayetsi mission most probably to accompany his father and not as a fully empowered delegate. He financed his subsequent travels through his own funds by dabbling in trade. Whatever support and recognition he was able to secure for his goals were given on the sole basis of his personality. It is highly unlikely that Ori's noble descent would have been sufficient to win the trust of the European nobility or even of the meliks of Karabakh. More important than Ori's specific beliefs was his self-perception as an individual capable of changing the course of events. Without totally shedding the weight of clerical influence, he brought into the liberation movement an unflinching idealism that was lacking among his predecessors and most contemporaries. He also revived the militant tradition of meliks in service of a larger cause, a tradition that would come to life one last time under the leadership of Davit Beg.⁴⁵

Between 1720 and 1728 the Armenian meliks asserted complete authority over Siunik and Karabakh. Their actions were prompted by the increasing lawlessness in the region, particularly the devastating raids upon Armenian villages within the melikdoms by the neighboring Lezgis. What began as a defense of traditional boundaries turned into a drive for increased rights of autonomy. At that time the civil war in Persia had engulfed the Caucasian region. Close cooperation with the kings of Georgia and promises of imminent Russian advances into the Persian Empire inevitably encouraged hopes of more substantial autonomy rights for local leaders

such as the meliks. The weakness of the Safavid government tempted the Ottomans to invade the Caucasus, which the latter had long coveted; and the Ottoman armies did invade the Caucasus. When the Russian military failed to respond, Armenians were forced to shoulder the burden of the region's defense alone, with only occasional aid from Persian troops. Despite a spirited resistance, the artillery-equipped Turkish armies were able to occupy most of Eastern Armenia in 1728. Persian rule returned after a decade under Nadir Shah. The meliks were able to wrest concessions from him on the degree of their autonomy. The authority to administer villages and districts formerly under the meliks' jurisdiction was reaffirmed and the right to keep armed men under their command retained. Small regiments of Armenian soldiers were used to ensure domestic tranquility and, when needed, to perform regular army duties under Persian commanders. The number of such soldiers could reach 40,000, of which the cavalry would constitute 70 percent. Meliks continued to pay tribute to the shah and to provincial governors.⁴⁶

The attitudes of the various elements in Armenian society toward the events of 1720-1728 are illustrative of the variety of interests and aims coexistent in Eastern Armenia. The Catholicosate of Echmiadzin remained aloof despite the fierce battles waged for the fortress of Erevan nearby. Equally conspicuous by their absence were the Persian-Armenian merchants, the traditional supporters of Etchmiadzin and the beneficiaries of the economic policies of the Persian court. Some Armenian merchants even negotiated secret business deals with the Ottomans while the meliks were battling Turkish armies.⁴⁷ One merchant, Karapet Ivanov, informed Armenian leaders of Russian designs and interests in the Caucasus, and urged them to continue the struggle even after Russia had signed a treaty with the Ottoman Empire in 1724, a treaty which Ivanov supported but which effectively barred Russian support to the Armenian fighters. Ivanov acted as the representative of Peter the Great and as a merchant with a strong interest in the future of trade routes. He also seems to have participated in some of the battles.⁴⁸

During the early years of the struggle in Karabakh, Catholicos Esayi Hasan Jalalian of Gantsasar was the uncontested leader of the Armenian forces. His family was one of the oldest and most powerful among the meliks; he acted more like a nakharar with high ambitions than as the head of a regional religious center. In 1722 Hasan Jalalian organized the armed units of Karabakh, negotiated an early alliance with King Vakhtang of Georgia, watched a parade of combined Georgian-Armenian regiments, and led Armenians into the battlefield. As one of the few high

clergymen supportive of Ori's plan, the Catholicos made Armenian action conditional upon the participation of Russian forces. When it became clear that these were not forthcoming, Hasan Jalalian advised all concerned to put down their arms and "not behave like peasants," though peasants they were.⁴⁹ In fact, the approximately five thousand soldiers under the regular command of the meliks were recruited almost entirely from among the peasantry; so were the additional men needed during the uprising. Peasants participated wholeheartedly because they stood to gain much: they wanted an end to Lezgi raids, which destroyed their lands; they were eager to be free of taxes due the Persian court and they dreaded the prospect of Ottoman rule.

As the mountaineers' revolt turned into general resistance against invading Ottoman armies, portions of the urban population joined the struggle. Craftsmen contributed their time and skills, manufacturing arms and ammunition from the little resources available. Youths volunteered to serve in the defense of the fortress of Erevan.⁵⁰

Much of the popular support seems to have been generated by the inspired leadership of Davit Bek, commander of the Siunik Armenians. While the meliks themselves remained in charge of their own small armies, the overall strategy was entrusted to Davit Bek. For reasons that must have been obvious to the local politicians early in the revolt, King Vakhtang had sent Davit Bek from the royal army to assume the position of commander in chief. Davit's forefathers may have been originally from Siunik. Throughout the campaign, Hasan Jalalian and Davit Bek had to contend with the unruly and self-serving actions of individual meliks who had not forgotten their feudal origins. On several occasions Davit Bek imposed severe measures, including imprisonment and the sentence of death, on meliks who abandoned the common cause to pursue their individual or family interests, or who engaged in negotiations or passed over to the enemy.⁵¹ It was probably Davit Bek's determined policies on behalf of a clearly perceived "general" interest that endeared him to the people. He imposed on the fragmented interests of meliks a coherent decision-making process. He was able to integrate the military exigencies of the campaign with a political ideal that was seen as a sharp improvement over Persian rule.⁵²

As a general rule, however, the meliks pursued the goal of preserving and possibly increasing their authority and reclaiming ancient rights as feudal landowners. They tried to emulate Muslim khans who had become "little kings" within their own territories. Foreign overlords began to encroach upon the prerogatives and lands of the meliks and brought arbitrary

rule closer to the civilian population. The peasantry sought its security in the traditional, relatively benevolent rule afforded by the meliks. Hence the institution of melikdom bore a favorable stamp for the defenseless peasants. But the meliks' prerogatives and ability to provide protection depended on the continued exercise of feudal rights over these same peasants. The identity of interests between them and the peasantry was therefore limited.

Following the death of Davit Bek in 1728, and of his close associate Mkhitar soon after, the campaign disintegrated into sporadic resistance and eventually collapsed. When Nadir finally drove the Ottoman armies out of the Caucasus with some help from the Armenians, he recognized the autonomy of the meliks along with the prerogatives of the Church. The meliks returned to their lands and to the petty squabbles that had occupied them for centuries. The weight of their own past prevented them from developing visions beyond the horizons of their fiefdoms.⁵³

In contrast to the campaigns in Eastern Armenia, the revolts in Zeytun in Ottoman Cilicia were aimed primarily against the centralizing policies of the Ottoman government. These policies, enforced by the Ottoman army, were directed especially toward the mountainous regions which by virtue of their natural defenses enjoyed a certain autonomy. The Ottoman Empire faced serious threats at the end of the eighteenth century because of the centrifugal tendencies of new Kurdish tribal formations in the eastern provinces of the empire, of the Shahabis in the Lebanon, of the Druzes in Syria, and of religious sects in Arabia; but these did not involve the type of civil war that had paralyzed the Persian state.⁵⁴

During the Ottoman conquest of Cilicia at the beginning of the sixteenth century, Turkish armies had to subdue various tribes and *derebeys* (local overlords) to establish their rule. Since the latter had long been the scourge of the local population, particularly of the inhabitants of Zeytun, the *ishkhans* or local Armenian rulers there are known to have assisted the Ottomans.⁵⁵ Ottoman armies, therefore, never invaded the district of Zeytun. In 1618, Sultan Murad IV granted autonomy to Zeytun and limited taxes that could be levied to 15,000 piasters—the sum required to satisfy the lighting need of Aya Sofia—and an equal amount to be used for the same purpose in Armenian churches. Under the traditional government of old aristocratic families, the people of Zeytun delivered their taxes themselves and for a long time remained free of any Ottoman interference.⁵⁶

This limited autonomy was challenged with increasing intensity from 1780 until the outbreak of the world war in 1914, first by the provincial governors and the pashas of Marash, and eventually by the central government. Viewing Zeytun's autonomy as outdated and threatening, the Ottoman government sent successive armies to subdue the mountaineers—but to no avail. In defense of their rights, the stubborn and resourceful mountaineers refused to pay their taxes and took up arms no less than ten times in the course of 150 years. What had begun as a defense of rights was soon transformed by general discontent into a struggle against despotism. The presence of an Ottoman garrison in the district—one of the demands insisted upon by the Porte—was seen, in effect, as an occupation force. The inhabitants of Zeytun feared that direct Ottoman rule would bring all the disadvantages of Ottoman rule without any of the benefits of centralization. Thus, privileges reminiscent of the feudal age were transformed into a vehicle of “defense of one's person and rights.”⁵⁷

The transformation of a historical privilege into a political program was facilitated by the gradual equalization of princes and commoners. Although the few leading families of the old Zeytun aristocracy continued to dominate the social and political life of the district, they were largely impoverished, more so than their counterparts in Karabakh, and none had any extensive landholdings. The limited aims of the Zeytun leadership and the total and spirited participation of its population in resisting direct Ottoman rule were a consequence of the nobility's economic decline.

The Porte, of course, viewed any resistance in Zeytun as outright rebellion, and Armenian patriarchs of Constantinople considered it insubordination and a moral sin.⁵⁸ Only Kirakos Ajapahian, the popular Catholicos of Cilicia concerned with the rejuvenation of the Cilician kingdom, regarded the mountaineers as the worthy descendants of a once courageous people, when they fought again in 1819-1820. Ajapahian was called to Constantinople to answer charges of illegal activities in conjunction with his construction projects as well as for his suspicious ties with the Zeytun rebels. It is doubtful he had given any more than his sympathy; although cleared of the charges, he remained a suspect in the eyes of the government.⁵⁹

There is no doubt that the 1862 rebellion in Zeytun, the best known in the long series, was supported directly and indirectly by many journalists, intellectuals, and other sympathizers among Armenians elsewhere. Because of the crucial timing, the national and international press echoed

the events and exaggerated its significance.⁶⁰ A number of factors had changed between the first conflict in 1780 and the famous 1862 event: Armenian consciousness had become more political than communal; the Ottoman policy of terrorizing the population and accompanying ferocity had been institutionalized and could no longer be ascribed to individual unruliness; and the interests of imperialist states in the domestic affairs had grown more intense. For Zeytun, however, little had changed. Its conflicts began long before and continued long after international diplomacy and revolutionary ideology bothered themselves with the tiny district.

The leaders of Zeytun never conceived of their struggle as the day of reckoning for the “sick man of Europe” as some historians and writers have implied. Nor did these leaders project Zeytun as the capital of a reborn Armenian state, as some wishfully thought. Furthermore, iskhans hardly stood for the egalitarian, reformed society many of its supporters outside espoused. As in Karabakh, the outbursts of Zeytun were the last gasps of a traditionally conservative nobility whose world could not survive in the nineteenth century. Nonetheless, for the forces of social and political change that emerged in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Siunik, Karabakh, and Zeytun represented a territorial basis for the new national struggle and a living link to an Armenian tradition that was more militant and less submissive.

Chapter 2

The Transient Visions of the New Princes

The new force to emerge in Armenian society from the sixteenth through the eighteenth centuries was the aristocracy of commerce. The “princes” of trade constituted neither a homogeneous nor a unified class. Nonetheless, their role in Armenian history justifies their treatment as a single force.

Opportunities for trade with and within Europe provided the soil on which the Armenian merchant class grew. A combination of circumstances permitted enterprising Armenians to assume a significant role as intermediaries between the trading centers of the West and the Near and Far East. Moreover, adverse conditions in both sectors of Armenia further accentuated the tendency inherent in mercantilism for capital to be accumulated and reinvested outside the historic homeland, in areas well protected by governments interested in commerce. Invasions, wars, and anarchy had brought an end to urban life on the Armenian plateau. Although cities such as Erzerum and Van revived their domestic commerce and handicraft production, others could barely be distinguished from villages. The old Levantine route was revitalized but could never recover the volume of earlier trade. The military and strategic significance of the border provinces between the two empires—encompassing most of historical Armenia—tended to undermine their economies.

Eastern Armenia’s economy was dealt a terrible blow by Shah Abbas, who in 1605 forced the trading community of Julfa, along with much of the population of the plain of Ararat, to migrate to Persia. Some settled in New Julfa, a new town near the capital of Isfahan. There Armenian merchants thrived. Supported by privileges granted by the shah’s government, they organized trading companies and monopolized the silk trade of Persia.¹ Eventually they signed treaties with Russia (1667) and the British East India Company (1688), carving out lucrative monopolies in trade with India, Persia, Russia, and Europe.² Thus, the early outposts in India and Russia gradually became communities with characters of their own, reinforced by new immigrants from Eastern Armenia and Persia.³

The trade frontier in the Ottoman sector moved to western Anatolia. Capital accumulated there mainly through trade and usury. The early entrepreneurs sought the security and opportunities provided by coastal towns. Hence there was a continuous flow of capital and manpower from the provinces to Constantinople and Smyrna. Some in Constantinople further enriched themselves by financing the purchase of offices by pashas in the best tradition of tax farming. Others went into trade, organized family businesses, and even companies of trade. Like their Eastern Armenian colleagues, Western Armenian merchants established branches in European trade centers.⁴

Through their contacts with Western governments and society Armenian merchants became conduits of European culture into the Persian and Ottoman empires. Although most immediately concerned with innovations in practical fields such as accounting and geography, they also acquired first hand experience in the political and economic organization of European countries. They discovered that their religious ties with the West offered economic advantages. In return, they facilitated the spread of European trade to the Far and Near Eastern markets and the incorporation of these regions in the world market system.⁵

The political manifestation of economic interests was far more complex. At both ends of this trade, Europe and the East, Armenians were able to take advantage of opportunities only with the expressed consent of the state. Whether this state was embodied in a shah, a sultan, or the British East India Company, these merchants were at the mercy of their political overlords. In fact, there seem to have been political considerations beyond the cultural reasons for the predominance of Armenians in the mercantilist trade. Armenians, having no state of their own, could be relied upon to pay allegiance to that government which sponsored its economic activities. Lacking a social base of power, Armenian merchants had no means of their own to protect their capital or opportunities of trade. Treaties served temporary purposes and were disregarded at the will of governments. By granting privileges to Armenians, states only sought to use them as intermediaries for as long as intermediaries were necessary, with the clear presumption that such defenseless intermediaries could be discarded at will and could certainly be prevented from developing their own political goals.

Thus, at the request of French interests, the Sultan destroyed an association of Armenian and Greek merchants in the capital by imposing severe penalties on those who joined.⁶ The

association's purpose was to organize and monopolize trade to their benefit. Similarly, once the British decided to eliminate intermediaries, the English merchants used the courts of the British East India Company in India to discredit and force bankruptcy upon leading members of the Armenian merchant group in Madras and Calcutta.⁷ Consequently, the involvement of these merchants in political actions on behalf of Armenians must be understood in terms of their constant search for a social base as a counterweight to the power of protector states and of their concern for the preservation of prosperity.

The *Hojas* of the Ottoman State

References in chronicles to merchants as “princes” attest to the increasingly powerful position they held in Armenian community affairs. By the end of the seventeenth century Catholicosses in Etchmiadzin relied on the donations of these merchants to overcome financial difficulties and to increase landholdings. Merchants attended the “secret” meetings held in Etchmiadzin that led to the diplomatic initiatives of the clerics. The aristocracy of commerce was naturally the prominent component in the newly formed communities of India, Persia, and Russia. As a new class in Armenian society, merchants on occasion sought to legitimize their role of leadership by subsidizing the construction of churches and schools. They invited clergymen to tend to the spiritual and cultural needs of the flock, and in return the clergy placed its spiritual stamp of approval on a class that sought to replace the dying aristocracy. It was from this strengthened position that the dispersed Armenian merchant class embarked on its own quest for an Armenian state.⁸

Mahtesi Murat, known also as Shahmurat, was a successful merchant from Baghesh (Bitlis) in Western Armenia. In the 1660s he lived in France and, as a well-known international businessman, had easy access to the court of Louis XIV. There, on various occasions, he proposed to the Sun King the honor of liberating Armenia. The advance of Ottoman armies toward Vienna had by then created a strong interest in the French court toward Ottoman subjects. Mahtesi Murat had contacts not only with other Armenian merchants in Europe and the Ottoman Empire but also with provincial clergymen who had developed close ties with the French court. One such collaborator was Hovannes Tutunji from Van. Tutunji had used bribes and maneuvered his way into the office of patriarch of Constantinople twice, until removed by the Catholicos of

Etchmiadzin in 1677. Tutunji soon took on other important titles, including Catholicos of Akhtamar, which he used to gain access to the French court. Murat's acquaintance with Tutunji was probably from their days in the Ottoman Empire, and the two constituted an effective and knowledgeable team. Coming at the height of the Cretan war, Murat's proposals were based on the merchants' hopes that France would see in Armenia an extension of the economic and military interests for which it was supporting the Cretan war.⁹

Mahtesi Murat was a representative of the provincial Armenian merchant class known as the *hojas*. Their wealth depended on trade in silk and other raw materials. Their newly acquired power and confidence clashed with the well-established *chelebis* in the capital, primarily involved in usury, banking, and procurement and administration at the court. While the *hojas* needed an orderly administration and secure transportation in the provinces to guarantee their trade, the *chelebis* linked their fortunes to the goodwill of the sultan and to occasional favors from the Porte.¹⁰ From a divergence of interests between the two groups there evolved a political antagonism manifested in their struggle for the control of the patriarchate in Constantinople and possibly the See of Etchmiadzin as well. The conflict spread to the provinces where the *hojas* appeared ever ready to assist the common people in times of need and had even tried to alleviate their taxes.¹¹

Given the paucity of documents, interpreting these differences may remain a hazardous task. Some historians nonetheless have noted clear patterns. To Hakop Anasian, for example, the divergent attitudes of the two groups toward the question of political organization are a reflection of the conflict between these two types of merchants. The aristocracy of finance is seen to have confined its interests to intrigues in the narrow walls of the capital and clung to the patriarchate as the only weapon of survival in an insecure but opulent existence; the merchants, on the other hand, sought political security where they acquired economic protection: their admiration for the economic and political might of France was easily transformed into an invitation for its arms.¹²

The failure of the *hojas* is as much a commentary on the power of the vested interests in maintaining the status quo as on the desperateness of their predicament. A rational and organized pursuit of their interests would have required far more determination than they were willing to display and far more sacrifice than they were ready to endure. They perceived the advantages of a more orderly and less oppressive society but hardly championed the cause of the people.¹³

Mahtesi Murat and his colleagues served European trade interests but they were not indispensable. They struggled against the established leadership in the community only to replace it by their own which, admittedly, would be less oppressive and more tolerant. Nonetheless, they sought to establish a sovereign Armenian state only if that could be accomplished by the instant magic of French armies and without inviting the wrath of the sultan and his ministers or without undermining the tenuous basis of their economic position. The symbolism inherent in the crusader mentality proved to be a convenient arena where the dreams of the provincial merchants could be expressed in an idealized form without suffering the consequences of the contradictions in which they found themselves.

The Enlightened of India

The relationship between the idea of an Armenian state and the plight of estranged merchants can be more conclusively seen in the elaborate plans for a future Armenia developed by the “Madras Group” in the eighteenth century. Armenians in India were largely merchants and craftsmen who migrated from Persia and Eastern Armenia. As a result of an early presence in coastal cities and good relations with local rulers, they benefited from the increasing trade between the East and Europe. Some had amassed extraordinary wealth as others had done in Persia.¹⁴ But unlike the New Julfa merchants who remained within the bounds of traditional religiosity, those in India were quick to respond to the intellectual dimensions of western culture. Similarly, while the leaders in Persia persistently sought their security in their accommodations with the shahs, those in India were forced to explore alternative strategies.

Starting in 1773 three important treatises were published in Madras through the efforts of a cluster of merchants and others who might be considered proto-intellectuals. That year Movses Baghramian, a learned young man originally from Karabakh, published the first Armenian political pamphlet, titled *Nor Tetrak Vor Kochi Hordorak* (New Book of Exhortations).¹⁵ Baghramian’s aim was to foster the love of fatherland in the Armenian youth. He contrasted the glorious path of past Armenian heroes to the subjugation of Armenians under Ottoman and Persian rule; he invited the new generation to take the responsibility of freeing the homeland from alien domination.¹⁶

The most important aspect of Baghramian's treatise was his proposal to establish a government by senate, in fact a constitutional monarchy, in future Armenia.¹⁷ No doubt Baghramian was well informed of the intricacies of the political debate in European countries, whence he could have borrowed the idea. But exposure to an idea has never been a sufficient reason for its adoption. The author, moreover, did not lay claim to originality. He based his proposal on two arguments derived from the Armenian experience. The first was the historical reasoning. Three years before Gibbons published his famous inquiry on the fate of Rome, Baghramian analyzed the causes for the fall of the ancient and medieval Armenian kingdoms. According to Baghramian, the cause of their eventual downfall was the despotic nature of these states. He argued that to entrust the destiny of a whole people to the fallible wisdom of one man and to subject social organization to the will of the few defied logic.¹⁸ His second major argument derived from a detailed analysis of the disadvantages of the social and economic conditions prevailing in historical Armenia—conditions which explained the backwardness of the area and the lack of opportunities for development.¹⁹

A second work detailing the constitution of future Armenia was begun during the same year and published in the 1780s. The author was Shahamir Shahamirian, an erstwhile tailor in Persia who had become a wealthy jeweler in Madras.²⁰ Shahamirian's study, *Vorogayt Parats* (Snare of Glories) concurred with Baghramian's analysis of the causes of the decline of Armenian statehood.²¹ His proposed constitution was the blueprint for a republic, a mercantilist state where peasants and merchants would be freed of the obstacles of feudalism. The rule of law would replace the despotism of individuals and of the traditional classes, the nobility, and clergy.²²

The literary activities of the Madras group signal further departures from earlier notions of liberation. Shahamirian and Baghramian, the two most prominent in the group, set aside the dominant interpretation that the misfortunes of Armenia were caused somehow by the "immense sins" of the people. By wresting history from the realm of divine providence they made it subject to the laws of human behavior. Without proposing to abolish class differentiations, they brought the productive elements in society to the forefront of political consideration; and, without taking away the right of the clergy to exist, they denied that class its customary, i.e., central role in society.

Two critical changes in the ideology of liberation occurred simultaneously: the inclusion of the “youth” in the struggle for liberation and the discarding of dynastic autocracy in favor of a constitutional government. Obviously, the new generations could not be educated in the arts of “sacrificing for the fatherland” and “freeing their enslaved people” without being part of the idea of fatherland. Conversely, the new state would be no different from historical monarchies if left to the design of the traditional ruling classes. In fact, the Madras program constitutes the first comprehensive proposal among Armenians for nation-building. The draft of the constitution made room for all classes in the future state, but advised harmony among them. The placing of love of the fatherland above self-interest would achieve spiritual unity, just as the rule of law would ensure political harmony.²³

In the true spirit of their beliefs, the Madras Armenians developed a systematic correspondence with ecclesiastical authorities, the meliks, and community leaders elsewhere. Copies of the *Hordorak* were forwarded to these dignitaries, no doubt with the expectation that unity would be achieved around the proposed principles. Moreover, these leaders had to be apprised of these plans if, as Shahamirian and his associates expected, they were to play any role in the process of achieving liberation. The extant evidence does not give any indication of the reaction of meliks; but the Catholicos of Etchmiadzin, the noted Simeon Erevantsi, was so disturbed by the contents of the pamphlet that he ordered all copies burned, Baghramian ostracized, and Shahamirian’s print shop closed.²⁴ In Moscow, however, the leaders of the community translated the volume into Russian and printed two thousand copies for local distribution.²⁵

The reactions to the Madras publications were swift and determined despite the vagueness with which the authors had treated the issue of the strategy of liberation. In addition to the general notions of sacrifice, courage, education, and unity advocated as necessary for the success of the proposals, the authors intimated that the process would require the active support of the Catholicos, the armed assistance of the meliks and the youth, and the cooperation of the Georgian king, the natural ally of Armenians. Russia, too, was seen as a possible source of military assistance. But in contrast with the detailed treatment accorded other aspects of the projected state, the pamphlets lacked a systematic approach to the strategic and tactical problems of liberation. It is possible that the authors avoided a discussion of this important issue and some readers reacted

so strongly because the document reflected the real experiences and actual plans of one of the members of the group, Joseph Emin, who followed in the footsteps of Israel Ori as a lone fighter for Armenia's independence.

Emin was born in Isfahan, Persia, and grew up in Madras, India.²⁶ As a young man he rejected trade as a profession and in 1751 embarked on a British East India Company ship bound for England with the dream of acquiring an education, general and military, and dedicating himself to the liberation of his homeland and people. He was able to meet some influential personalities in England, including Edmund Burke, and managed to receive limited training and experience in the martial arts. Until 1773 Emin traveled in Europe and attempted to secure the assistance of monarchs and ministers for his goal of freeing Armenia. During five of these years Baghramian was his constant companion. Like his predecessor Ori, Emin found the most sympathetic ears in Russia's foreign ministry and the least encouragement from the Catholicos in Etchmiadzin.²⁷

But unlike Ori, Emin's vision encompassed both Persian and Ottoman Armenia. Hence he undertook a tortuous journey through Western Armenia and Cilicia, where he tried to infuse a rebellious spirit and national pride among Armenian peasants and docile townspeople. The most tangible result of the trip was his acquaintance with the abbot of St. Karapet monastery in Mush, Hovnan Vardapet. Hovnan expressed total sympathy with Emin's goals and supported him financially. More importantly, Hovnan advised Emin of the actual and potential means of arming large numbers of favorably disposed western Armenians with the purpose of organizing a rebellion against Ottoman rule if Emin could guarantee assistance from Eastern Armenia and Georgia. Although the numbers provided in this regard in Emin's autobiography might be exaggerations, they do attest to a disposition among lower classes and Hovnan's "noted" friends in the cities to fight against Ottoman rule. Hovnan himself emerges from the pages of history as a figure well liked in Mush and surrounding areas, a figure whose popularity seems to have been only enhanced by the particular dislike, which Erevantsi nurtured toward this unusual abbot. On one occasion at least, the Catholicos tried to discredit and then defrock Hovnan.²⁸

Emin perceived himself as a military leader rather than a devout supplicant.²⁹ He hoped his own example of perseverance, self-assurance, and self-sacrifice would inspire virility among those who had been taught that Christians were unfit to carry arms. Eventually, he believed, adding to the fighting units commanded by the meliks, the military capability of Armenians would reach

respectable proportions. Military assistance from non-Armenians could then supplement the Armenian forces in revolt rather than the reverse.³⁰ For the first time expectations from foreign sources were based on a more realistic assessment of mutuality of interests. In return for Georgian aid, Emin offered his services to modernize the Georgian army. Although King Heraclius of Georgia briefly employed him for that purpose, the King wavered in the implementation of the plan.³¹

Finally, Joseph Emin's broad concept of the liberation struggle permitted him to take account of various non-Armenian peoples in the Ottoman and Persian empires who were similarly affected by foreign rule. Emin and Hovnan tried to recruit the Assyrians and Yezidis in Western Armenia, the Georgians, and a number of mountain tribes in the Caucasus for a common struggle.³²

These represented substantial modifications from earlier designs. The new strategy assumed the active involvement of classes hitherto ignored and hence a transformation in their value system. It also challenged directly the established centers of authority, whose professed desire for change certainly did not entail any risks or surrender of power. Emin opposed the tyranny of pashas as much as the obscurantism of the clergy. He believed "Armenians had been robbed of their natural senses by the craft of Holy Ecclesiastics."³³ In the tradition of Western enlightenment he valued individualism. He thus integrated the two struggles for the free development of man and for the liberation of his homeland. His ideal was that of a free thinking and courageous group of individuals living in voluntary association and excelling in commerce, industry and education; the best guarantee for the survival of the group was an independent political unit run by the best representatives of society and based on respect for life, property, and labor.³⁴

For Emin, the future Armenia would be more than a mere re-creation of past glories. Identification with the nation would encompass a mutuality of interests between individual and the governing authority. These, in summary, became the guiding concepts in Emin's approach, a personal credo by which he explained, at least in part, his personal success. This credo was also reflected in the first two publications of the Madras group. But the transposition of a set of personal beliefs into the arena of political philosophy is not a simple process. First, a social program of action loses much of the idealism and coherence that a single advocate can summon by

individual logic. Second, the right circumstances must exist to make the contents of an individual program politically relevant for at least one part of society, regardless of the sources of ideas proposed. The lack of enthusiasm for or opposition to the publication of *Hordorak* in some quarters could have been predicted by the antagonism that Emin's mission elicited. In addition to the Catholicos, many Armenian merchants in Tiflis and Persia used their influence with their political protectors to sabotage Emin's negotiations and undermine his position.³⁵ Even in his own community of Madras the support was fragmented and lukewarm. A certain Bishop Hovhannes, who happened to be in Madras in 1773 to raise funds for the monastery of Jerusalem, was able to obstruct the commitments of Armenian merchants to finance Emin's plans of organizing fighting units in Armenia.³⁶ The only dignitary not to succumb to the bishop's pressures was Shahamirian. He, of course, continued to believe that God had created man free; thus he echoed Emin's accusations that the Church had distorted the meaning of religion When it promised happiness in the next life in exchange for slavery in this one. Emin had sensed the complexities of political commitment when he remarked that "if Armenian merchants had half the attachment to liberty that they have to money and to superstitions ... they would have been made free long ago."³⁷

Emin insisted that such remarks were intended only to "arouse the merchants from their innocent slumber." Shahamirian argued that the proposals from his group served the best interests of all elements in Armenian society and antagonized none. In fact, he believed conditions did exist for large-scale support for his plan.³⁸

Part of the argument was based on the natural sympathy which the successful expatriates felt for their less fortunate compatriots in historical Armenia. The memories of their own existence were too vivid to be erased totally by material achievements. The world in which they lived was enlightened enough to present a sharp contrast with the stagnant homeland; but that world was not free as yet from religious and ethnic discrimination to absorb totally those who were exposed to its laws and benefited from the privileges it granted. By the mid-eighteenth century the major objective for the merchants' search for a state of their own was the tenuous nature of these same privileges and opportunities, and the threat to the security of their capital.³⁹

In 1783 Shahamirian authored the third pamphlet of the Madras group. *Nshavak* (Guideline) addressed itself to the innocuous problem of care for the orphans and "those who died without leaving a will."⁴⁰ The booklet presents compact by-laws for the administration of

community affairs through a democratically elected council. These by-laws were, it seems, used on a regular basis during yearly meetings attended by all adult Armenians of the community.

But in reality *Nshavak* raised the fundamental issue of the future of the community. According to Shahamirian, the future of the Madras Armenians lay in Armenia. With careful details, he projected a temporary settlement in Kizlar, South Russia. The persons and capital of Armenians, he argued, would be safeguarded by special arrangements with the Russian government until the time came to move to the homeland, the ultimate haven for Armenians and their wealth.⁴¹ The underlying assumption was, of course, that India no longer provided any assurance regarding the economic wealth and security of the wealthy. The change of policy of the British East India Company clearly undermined the advantages Armenians had held. Furthermore, comparable opportunities elsewhere were nonexistent because of the rising protectionism among Western governments. The problem reached crisis proportions when the French revolutionary wars caused a drastic fall in the volume of trade. In 1795 *Azdarar* of Madras, the first Armenian newspaper, asserted that an independent Armenian state would provide the ideal investment ground for threatened Armenian capital.⁴² Although generally more traditional than the Madras group, the founder and editor of the newspaper, a priest named Harutiun Shmavonian, advocated nothing less than the mercantilist constitution drawn up by Shahamirian.

Shahamirian's concern for a detailed constitution could be seen as an idle but intellectually rewarding exercise in playing at government. It could also have been an attempt on his part to present his less idealistic colleagues with a tangible, if conjectural, picture of future Armenia as a viable alternative to the dissolution of "Armenian capital." It is not known to what extent other merchants shared the view that the days of Armenian economic power were over. There is no doubt, however, that the policies of the emerging nation-states, including England, prevented the consolidation of the wealth of Armenians as Armenian capital. Meanwhile, with the confidence of self-made men, most Armenian merchants surmised that their wealth and social position could be perpetuated if they relied on their innate abilities, followed their immediate, individual interests, and remained outside the pale of unsettling politics.

Over two decades of intensive efforts by the Madras group produced much sympathy, some vague offers for assistance, but very few firm and concrete commitments. Emin's activities had been opposed within the Armenian people by groups that were otherwise considered crucial

for the success of the envisioned struggle. Therefore, the inclusion of manifestly discordant propositions would have diminished the chances of the adoption of the aims of the Madras group as a national ideal.

Finally, Shahamirian himself was reluctant to discuss systematically issues of strategic and tactical importance. It would not be surprising if he had his own doubts regarding the feasibility of achieving Armenian independence primarily through a national movement. His intimate correspondence with leaders of the Russian Armenian community suggests that he regarded a coincidence of Russian interests with Armenian aspirations as the most expedient means to liberation.

High Diplomacy in Russia

As a Christian power expanding toward the Caucasus, Russia held an increasing attraction for Armenians looking for external assistance. Early commercial relations were easily transformed into political expectations with the encouragement of the emerging empire. For some chroniclers, the Christians of the north represented the “Franks” of pseudo-historical fame destined to free Armenians from Muslim rule. Individuals such as Ori, Ivanov, and Emin had given Russo-Armenian relations a quasi-official character. But it was with the establishment of Armenian communities in Moscow and St. Petersburg that regular channels of communication were established between the Russian government and Armenian representatives.

On the eve of the Russo-Turkish war in 1769 Movses Sarafian, a successful merchant, presented to the Russian ministry of foreign affairs a plan to liberate Armenia. The plan, calling for the seizure of Erevan as a first step, had the support of the small but important Armenian community of St. Petersburg. It proposed that a Georgian-Armenian volunteer force be organized under Russian colors and that the assistance of the meliks of Karabakh be enlisted for the campaign. The occupation of Erevan would bring the war to the Ottoman frontier, where massive support from Western Armenians could be counted upon. Once freed from Persian and Ottoman rule, most of historical Armenia would be set up, according to the plan, as a kingdom under one of the meliks. The new Armenia would be considered as part of the Russian Empire as far as its military and defense policies were concerned.⁴³

Although the government of Catherine II welcomed any assistance Armenians could provide, it showed no interest in the plan as a whole. One of the obvious drawbacks was that the occupation of Erevan would bring Persia into the war as well. The mere prospect of a confrontation between the two powers and rumors regarding Russia's designs for Armenia, however, proved enough to nurture hopes of imminent liberation. Abbot Hovnan even returned from Constantinople to his bastion of Mush to organize the arming of the population.⁴⁴ The Treaty of Kuchuk Kaynarji in 1774 that ended the first major defeat of the Ottoman Empire in the hands of the Russian armies had the effect of shelving the plan and the expectations. Not until a decade later did 'negotiations' between Armenians and Russian officials resume. The two most prominent members of the Armenian community in the Russian capital, Hovhannes Lazarian and Bishop Hovsep Arghutian, represented Armenian interests. Lazarian was the head of a family that had settled in Russia in 1747. After acquiring some wealth in trade, the Lazarians, led by Hovhannes, moved into manufacturing and mining. The family became prominent and prosperous enough to win title of nobility—one of the prerequisites for the ownership of villages whence the labor for mining could be secured.⁴⁵ Lazarian was closely associated with the energetic prelate of Russia's Armenians, Bishop Arghutian. The two carried on a voluminous correspondence with prominent Armenians elsewhere, including the Catholicos of Etchmiadzin and the Shahamirian group in Madras. It was they who were responsible for the translation and publication in Russian of *Hordorak*, referred to earlier.

In 1783 Arghutian submitted to the imperial government the draft of a treaty between Russia and Armenians. It specified the form of Russian assistance requested for the liberation of Armenia and laid out a constitution for a liberated state.⁴⁶ The Russian Foreign ministry found both the original and a second draft unacceptable.⁴⁷ Discussions on the subject ended abruptly. Ostensibly, the Russian government thought it inappropriate to sign a treaty with a people that had no king.⁴⁸ The Russians must have had other concerns, however. They had taken considerable pains, after all, to reach an understanding and should have known from the start that the whole purpose of the exercise was-to create an Armenian state. The negotiations had been prompted by General Alexander Suvorov who had led the Iranian campaign of 1780. During extensive discussions that same year, General Grigory Potemkin had asked that Joseph Emin be recalled to Russia from India, where Emin had retired in disillusionment.⁴⁹ It is possible that once acquainted

with the condition of Armenians in their homeland, the Russian ministers thought they could take for granted Armenian support for their policies. The length of negotiations, the redrafting of the first proposal and the abrupt end of negotiations suggest, however, that there were serious differences separating Armenians and the Russian positions that were not resolved to the satisfaction of Russian generals. Upon the rejection of the first draft treaty, Armenian representatives prepared a second draft. The differences between the two drafts may be a reliable indication as to what Armenians thought Russians disapproved.

The two drafts show considerable differences in matters related to the political and economic system to be developed in Armenia once it was liberated. The first draft proposed the establishment of a parliamentary republic, headed by a president and balanced by an elected Senate, with most senators being recruited from among enterprising merchants. The republic would be independent yet tied with special links with Russia as a sign of Armenia's gratitude. The republic's economy would be geared toward trade, manufacturing, and an agriculture freed from feudal constraints.⁵⁰ It is reasonable to conclude that autocratic Russia would consider a republican Armenia a revolutionary thorn on its southern flank.

The second draft made a number of compromises. It called for the establishment of a kingdom in vassalage to the Russian Empire; it was to be ruled by a member of the Russian royal family, ostensibly Potemkin himself. With sufficient evidence of noble birth, ancient Armenian aristocratic families would regain control of their ancestral lands.⁵¹ On one issue, however, there was no compromise: Armenians rejected serfdom and the "sale of peasants." To justify their adamant opposition, Lazarian and Arghutian turned to historical precedent. They informed their Russian interlocutors that Armenians had made their choice centuries ago: Muslim rule under the caliph where there was no serfdom was preferable to Byzantine Christian rule with serfdom.⁵²

The same argument can also be found in Shahamirian's *Nshavak*.⁵³ It is clear that his constitution was the major source of inspiration for the first draft of the treaty, and it is generally believed that Shahamirian was, in fact, its author.⁵⁴ Lazarian and Arghutian shared most of the assumptions underlying that document. Lazarian had concluded from his own experience in mining operations that serfdom was not the most effective way to develop industrial production. His expectations from the Russian government regarding Armenia were partially based on the commercial value that Armenia held potentially for Russia. He was highly critical of the meliks

whom he considered “useless, uneducated, and unenlightened.”⁵⁵ Similarly, he thought clergymen would be much more useful to the nation if they preached “love, unity, and wisdom” instead of “lent, and verbosity in prayers.”⁵⁶ Arghutian, in turn, complained to Shahamirian that he was unable to press any further for the idea of “rule by a senate” since there were not many people either in his circles or in Armenia who recognized the value of that form of government. The enlightened clergyman further disassociated himself from the traditional rulers of the Church by reproaching the difference of Catholicos Erevantsi and his associates toward liberation. “They only beg [the Russians] to save us,” he bemoaned, without realizing that “when by sword one saves, one takes [those saved] as servants, according to the law of the kings.”⁵⁷

The fervent calls for unity by the most enlightened among the rising Armenian commercial bourgeoisie betray the fragmented concerns of an otherwise dynamic and potentially effective force. Emerging not in the homeland but in widely dispersed centers of trade, the aristocracy of commerce was by historical origin a fragmented class. Geography, a natural obstacle, could be and was overcome as this unique instance of coordination of Armenian activities in Russia and India indicates. The causes of fragmentation, therefore, must be sought in the thoughts and actions of these men.

Geographic disunity was not, for example, counterbalanced by a unity of economic purpose, even though it could have been. The wealth accumulated by individual merchants was seldom perceived as “Armenian capital.” The original companies organized by Armenians easily succumbed to the conscious efforts of governments that had originally provided the opportunities for trade. As seen in the case of India, merchants gradually isolated themselves from any common economic endeavor, despite a degree of social and community cohesiveness evident in religious and cultural matters. Secondly, their business activities were rarely attached to the land or people of Armenia. Consequently, there were no compelling reasons for the wealthy to seek a necessarily Armenian solution to their individual predicaments or to formulate, as an Armenian economic class, a political course of action.

Across the various communities the source of accumulated capital differed sharply and, therefore, involved vested interests in irreconcilable economic and political systems. What an enlightened nobleman in manufacturing and mining could appreciate in Shahamirian’s projection of the future of Armenia would be seen by the *sarafs* (literally “money changers,” a moneyed pre-

capitalist banking class) of Constantinople as their demise. The Madras group would have found it difficult to accept the despotism practiced by the New Julfa merchants within community institutions. This is not to imply that these groups confronted each other directly on the issue of the future of Armenia but rather to bring into relief the pronounced disparities in the values of the various communities—disparities that could only have hindered the attempts of the Lazarian-Shahamirian group to universalize their own values and create the elusive “unity.”

The political risks entailed by a long and problematic struggle did not weigh equally upon all the groups. The Indian-Armenian communities formulated strategies and constitutions without fearing reprisals from local or British governors. The Russian government encouraged such schemes for the liberation of Armenia, as long as these were adjusted to Russian policies, domestic and foreign. In Persia and the Ottoman Empire merchants could lose their wealth, their privileges, and even their lives for advocating what would constitute subversion in legal terms.

Consequently, for all Armenians of wealth to unite behind the vision of a liberated Armenia would have required that practical merchants and usurers to make leaps in ideological imagination and commit deeds of political daring, two prerequisites unlikely to occur. Assuredly, most of them sympathized with the plight of their downtrodden brethren in the homeland. They would have welcomed an Armenian state, however, if it could have been achieved only by the swift action of a foreign power without jeopardizing their own security and prosperity, and if they could be guaranteed a position no less privileged than what they already had under existing conditions.

Those who did engage in activities for the liberation of Armenia were motivated largely by the necessity of changing their own predicament; some were also moved by strong sympathies for predicament of their descendents, whom they had left behind. But in the transient world of mercantilism sympathies were inadequate. The liberation efforts that resulted were bound to be sporadic, fragmented, un-enduring, and, ultimately, inconsequential.

The program to create a state was one option for the affluent elements of Armenian society that would allow them to evolve an independent policy reconciling their immediate and long range interests. It was not the only one, however, and, as far as the majority was concerned, not the best.

The merchants disengaged themselves not only from the process of creating an Armenian state but also from all political processes. This de facto acceptance of the politics of the ruler was

reinforced by the primacy of the Church as the basis of nationhood. Bishops and benedictions became for them realities more reassuring and certainly safer than the dangerous excursions into political and social antagonisms. They compensated for the evanescence of their capital by erecting ritual-laden church edifices that were to last forever; the salvation of the soul—a substitute for the salvation of Armenia—was an alternative clearly encouraged by the clergy and one that was often chosen.

In time, colonies could no longer be based solely on trade. Educational and cultural activities provided new fields where the wealthy could manifest their concern for Armenian children and youth. Where communities did survive into the nineteenth century, the bourgeoisie cultivated their educational and cultural inheritance.

From the sixteenth through the eighteenth century, various classes and groups in Armenian society undertook to create a new Armenian state. All spoke of liberating Armenia but each held a different set of assumptions regarding the strategy of liberation and the future shape of Armenia; each defined Armenia's problem differently. The social, political, and economic position occupied by each group in society determined not only the content of the idea of liberation but also how long they were willing to pursue their goals and how much they were willing to sacrifice to reach them.

Furthermore, the initiatives undertaken by the privileged classes were subject to the logic of behavior of these classes; the movement remained largely alienated from the masses, whose own articulation of discontent continued to be unacceptable to the privileged. Peasant revolts already common in the Middle Ages continued, but without the blessing of the upper classes. In the seventeenth century, for example, two popular movements in Eastern Armenia and New Julfa were crushed at the instigation of clergymen and merchants. Advocates of liberation could not find any relation between their goals and the concerns of their own peasantry and craftsmen.

The dedication and idealism that could be discerned in the actions and thoughts of individuals do not release them from the limitations imposed by their time and class; similarly, their class origins do not make their goals objectively less valuable for society as a whole.

During the two centuries under consideration, the vision of Armenia changed from a kingdom to that of a republic—certainly an intellectual achievement.

Liberation no longer signaled a return to the inanimate past; instead it implied an active participation in the present. But the ideological transition was experienced by the few alone, in scattered centers, away from the majority of the Armenian people in Armenia. If those experiences held any lessons, they were not passed on to the new generations.

In contrast, fear of authority and submission to oppression, cloaked in the aura of divine command, were still the rule in the historical homeland. Disunity in thought and deed, however, was the lot of all. It is told that upon hearing details of the French Revolution, Bishop Arghutian was appalled by the actions of the “unlawful Frenchmen” against their king and queen, against the nobility and the pope.⁵⁸ At about the same time, in a small village of Merke-Gulap near Etchmiadzin, lived a priest named Mezrakh who acquired much fame in nearby districts. During the years 1791-92 he would rob rich travelers from his mountain hideouts. Then, he would return to the villages and distribute the loot to the poor. Once his earthly task was accomplished, he would get another priest to hear his confession by the force of his sword.⁵⁹ It is doubtful that he had read the daily newspapers or Arghutian’s letters on the French Revolution.

Before the abstracted ideal of national liberation came to incorporate the individual solutions of the likes of Mezrakh, the concept of nation had to be disassociated from that of the Church and of other privileged groups and, instead, be based on the concept of people.

Russian Annexation of Eastern Armenia

The Russians moved into Eastern Armenia in 1828. The “Franks” of the north did not act, however, as the legend prescribed. They merely assumed the title, while bringing to an end visions of a reborn Armenian statehood. Russian annexation of part of Armenia did result, nonetheless, in the development of a form of political consciousness that was partially responsible for the radicalization of Armenian politics by the end of the century.⁶⁰

Russian advances into the Caucasus constituted part of the expansionist policies pursued by the tsars since the sixteenth century. Although most of Eastern or Persian Armenia did not become part of the Russian Empire until 1828, the designs of the Romanov court had raised Armenian hopes for aid from the north since the end of the seventeenth century. In an imperial decree issued in 1798, Tsar Paul I had reaffirmed earlier royal declarations of Russian protection of Armenians. By 1801, Russian suzerainty extended to eastern Georgia.⁶¹

While the military imbalance would have been sufficient to guarantee Russia's southward expansion toward Persian dominated territories, Armenian preferences for Christian rule facilitated the progress of Russian armies and provided the victorious side with an ideological justification. Earlier "negotiations" and semiofficial statements during the campaign had given reason to Armenian leaders to believe that the tsar was amenable to the idea of a reconstituted Armenian state. Armenians had provided sufficient military and logistical support to expect treatment other than "by the sword," as feared by Arghutian. Once the annexation had been effected, the Russian government named the newly acquired territory *Armianskaya oblast* or "Armenian province."⁶² But with administrative changes beginning in 1840, the 'Armenian province' designation disappeared; Eastern Armenia was subdivided and integrated into various Transcaucasian units.⁶³ Any illusions that Russia's southward move was the realization of liberation were soon dispelled as the central government took steps to control existing local institutions. In 1836, the government issued a statute known as the *Polozhenia*, which regulated the internal administration and external relations of the Catholicosate of Etchmiadzin. Although the Church continued to retain a degree of autonomy, the Russian government made it clear that the Church functioned within a specific political framework and was subject to the sovereign of the land and ultimately accountable to him.⁶⁴

Moreover, in 1846 the tsarist government recognized the hereditary rights of *beks*, *khans*, and *aghalars* over large landholdings. Armenian peasants had hoped that Russian rule would favor the peasants' rights to those lands and not prove to be beneficial to Muslim landowners, who had constituted the backbone of the Persian administration.⁶⁵

Eventually, there were even efforts on the part of the Russian administration to settle sectarian Russians in the Caucasus and Armenia. Clearly, Russia came to look upon Eastern Armenia as a colony. Thus, when industrialization started, in Eastern Armenia it took the form of exploitation, by foreign concerns, of Armenian natural resources such as copper, in return for manufactured products.⁶⁶

Despite the disappointment of Armenians in many respects, and the occasional anti-Armenian attitude of administrators, Armenians generally did not regard the Russian presence as an occupation of their land. Compared with Persian rule, the new administration provided a more bearable, although hardly equitable, tax and legal system. Russia's interest in modernization

did offer increased opportunities in education. More importantly, the enterprising elements in Armenian society found the necessary security of life and property to accumulate and invest capital safely. Hence, within a relatively brief period there evolved in the Caucasus a new Armenian middle class.⁶⁷ This commercial, financial, and increasingly industrial bourgeoisie was definitely the beneficiary of the Russian regime. That bourgeoisie flourished outside historic Armenia as well: in Tiflis, and later in Baku. Tiflis became the focus of the Eastern Armenian cultural and political renaissance.⁶⁸

The degree of social integration and economic development, which the Armenian bourgeoisie enjoyed in the Russian Empire, had a decisive effect upon the attitude of Eastern Armenians toward their political future. Eastern Armenia's incorporation in the Russian Empire was justified in cultural as well as economic terms and it was seen as the natural, hence logical, form of national existence. Also, faced with the antagonism of Georgian and Azerbaijani-Turkish nationalisms, the Armenian bourgeoisie tended to identify itself more closely with their Russian rulers as a means of securing psychological and possibly political security. The identification of that bourgeoisie with the Russian state was strengthened by the government's sustained aggressiveness toward the Ottoman Empire. As concern over their less fortunate brethren across the border grew among Eastern Armenians, in the second half of the nineteenth century the bourgeoisie adopted Russian foreign policy as its own. On the basis of these reinforcing interests, some Ottoman Armenians continued to regard Russian expansion into their provinces as an acceptable means of liberation from Ottoman rule. Therefore, the Russian government and Eastern Armenian bourgeoisie and intelligentsia—each for its own reasons and in its own way—became intricately involved in the affairs of Ottoman Armenians.

The diplomatic implications of Russian designs and Armenian desires for the future of the Ottoman Empire were tremendous. Western European powers viewed Russian expansion into the Caucasus and subsequent attempts to annex parts of Anatolia within the framework of their own plans and rivalries. The significance of such actions for the local population was, of course, irrelevant. Hence from the start, long before the question was squarely placed on the agenda of the Berlin Conference in 1878, Western imperialist concerns within the Ottoman Empire greatly influenced the fate of Armenians. The internationalization of the "Armenian Question" that followed the Russian annexation of Eastern Armenia added a new, complicating dimension to

Armenian politics. For all practical purposes, Russia's annexation of the Caucasus had temporarily drawn attention away from Eastern Armenia. It was not until socialist, and particularly Marxist, principles were applied to the analysis of Eastern Armenian society at the turn of the twentieth century that questions were raised with regard to the economic and political rights of Russian Armenians. The annexation as an event of international significance tended to overshadow the decisive developments within Armenian society, above all the rise of the new middle class in the Ottoman Empire. In the final analysis, these internal developments played as crucial a role in the shaping of the awakening of the new political and national awareness among Armenians in the mid-nineteenth century as more commonly considered external political factors.

Section II: The Failure of Liberal Reformism

Nineteenth century Armenian political thought was conditioned by two developments. The first was the penetration of Western economic, political, and military interests into Armenia. In the Eastern sector this was accomplished through the annexation of the region to the Russian Empire. For Western Armenians, it was the indirect yet pervasive presence in the Ottoman Empire of European powers. The second development was the gradual worsening of the socioeconomic conditions in the Eastern provinces of the Ottoman Empire, Western Armenia.

Armenians in general continued to feel civilizational affinities with the West. In the second half of the century, the Armenian perception of the Europe of Christian kings was supplanted by the West of the Enlightenment, and the cultural renaissance on both sides of the border was deeply affected by Europe. But the stronger the bond with Europe on the cultural level, the deeper was to be the moral condemnation later of the same West by Armenians for not having acted according to Armenian perceptions or on the basis of self-proclaimed values. Between these two extreme attitudes toward the West were many levels on which Armenians related to Europe. It was, ultimately, Western rational discourse that conditioned the articulation of Armenian political concerns,

The Russian expansion into the Caucasus constitutes the end of an era and the beginning of another. The creation of an *Armianskaya oblast*, or Armenian province, in Eastern Armenia raised hopes for the formation of an Armenian political entity. These hopes were shattered when administrative changes beginning in 1840 broke the province apart and the term “Armenian” was no longer used as an official designation of the geographic unit. If traces of the crusader mentality survived, it was hardly because anyone considered Eastern Armenia’s incorporation into the Russian Empire as the consummation of the old dream.

Nonetheless, there were enough substantial changes from Persian to Russian rule for Armenians to have perceived their new status as a significant improvement. It was close the end of the century before Russian rule was challenged by any organized Armenian group. In the meantime, social and economic discontent was articulated easily through groups and ideologies, which were empire-wide and did not have strictly Armenian contexts.

The Russian Armenian bourgeoisie was almost totally integrated into the economic structure of Russia, even if it tended to center in Tiflis and later Baku. The new middle class

considered the regime enlightened enough to allow for the development of educational, manufacturing, mining, and banking; it was content to play the role of mediator between Russian, i.e., more westernizing values, and the Armenian or more traditional and stagnant ones. It generally confined its Armenianism to a cultural identification or religious affiliation. Manifestations for a deeper patriotism or concern for the future of Armenians were easily framed in the context of Russian imperialist designs over Eastern Armenian provinces.. This perceived harmony between Armenian and Russian interests was also projected into social relations within the Armenian community. Challenged from without by its incorporation into yet another, more dynamic empire, Armenians could also not avoid social stratification.

Until the turn of the century, when the position of the bourgeoisie was challenged from within by the workers' movement and from without by the reaction of Georgian and Azerbaijani-Turkish nationalisms, the Caucasian Armenian bourgeoisie developed no political program for the Russian Armenian population as such, even when Russian policy turned manifestly anti-Armenian on occasion.

The Ottoman Armenian middle class that evolved in the nineteenth century largely in Constantinople and major coastal cities played a social and cultural role at least as important as its counterpart in Eastern Armenia. As in the East, this new class undertook the task of adopting and introducing into Armenian society European modes of thought and values. Moreover, both the Eastern and Western middle classes lacked the ideological, and in most cases the historical, link with the dream of a restored Armenian kingdom. Rather than the recovery of the past glory, the quest within the largely liberal groups was for the possibility of participating in the new world being created in the West.

The Armenian middle classes were concerned with basic issues such as the causes for the backwardness of Armenians and the means by which reforms to bring about enlightenment could be wrested from the state. The liberal agenda for reforms was inspired by western ideology and practice; the values it sought to apply were thought to encompass all Armenian aspirations. It was also perceived as a cultural rather than political program. But a number of factors forced Armenians to realize the political implications of the liberal agenda—that in fact what appeared to be a cultural issue could not be tackled without political change—while other factors added political dimensions to what could have been in fact cultural in nature.

First, continuing failures to bring about minor changes led a few of the intellectuals and reformers to relate basic causes of backwardness directly to the Ottoman system and policies. Second, the Ottoman Empire lacked an active and politically motivated middle class from among the dominant, Turkish element whose interests could have reinforced those of Armenians; thus the most influential arena of Turkish contact with the west was the military, where the Ottoman state was clearly at a disadvantage. European imperialism made Western ways suspect in the eyes of a threatened Ottoman elite. Although the state benefited from technological advances, particularly in the military, a gap emerged between Armenian and Turkish perceptions of what constituted the common interest. Third, a number of principles, adopted by the liberal intelligentsia in Constantinople as abstract values with limited and harmless application, were invested with social and economic content—hence political dynamism—by provincial Armenians who were suffering the burden of increased oppression and exploitation.

It is true that it was government sponsored reforms beginning in the 1830s, the *Tanzimat*, that encouraged Armenians to hope for improvements and also misled them to believe that reforms were a universal concern, acceptable to the state and, therefore, they were non-political, non-subversive. But it was pressure from the downtrodden masses that gave their ideological formulations substance and their once timid presentations sufficient forcefulness for the liberal program to reach its logical conclusion, the democratization of the millet structure in 1860 and the diplomatic appeal at the Congress of Berlin in 1878.

The liberal intelligentsia willingly embarked upon this mission and brought an unwitting middle class into the political arena. The political arena for the Armenians in the Ottoman Empire was limited, however, to the patriarchate in Constantinople and the *millet* or community system that sustained it.

The second phase of the development of Armenian liberation ideology consists, therefore, of the unsuccessful attempt by the middle class to find a framework within which the needs of the lower classes and Ottoman state policies could be harmonized.

The highlight of that attempt was the experiment of the provincials to turn the millet structure into a genuine tool for political reform. A timid urban middle class would reject this type of provincial radicalism and prefer to find refuge in Western protectionism. This, too, explains the failure of liberalism and, ultimately, the failure of the liberal path toward liberation.

Reform in the *Millet*

The Millet as a Political Institution

The analysis of the role of the *millet* (community) system in the Ottoman Empire is of crucial importance for the understanding of relations between the state and its subjects. The millet system created a legal framework within which non-Muslims could live in a state that proclaimed itself an Islamic community.

Some scholars have regarded the millet system as proof of the administrative genius of Ottoman Turks who found in it creative solution problems inherent in a multi-religious empire. Some writers have ascribed to the system a number of positive attributes, although social transformations and changes in the system itself were bound to effect the function of the millet over the centuries.¹

While the millet allowed non-Muslim religious groups to preserve nonpolitical traditions and a degree of cultural autonomy, it also institutionalized discrimination on a massive scale. It distorted the perception of oppressive conditions in the Ottoman Empire by projecting them as religious and, ultimately, national conflicts. The system was a successful innovation to the extent that, on the one hand, Armenian and other non-Muslim communities considered the preservation of religious-cultural traditions and peculiarities their ultimate goal and, on the other hand, the Turkish Ottoman elite hoped to prevent a common political consciousness among its subjects. Yet, to the extent that subjects, Armenian or otherwise, cannot be reduced to mere ethno-religious entities and are bound to have thoughts on their social, economic and political status, the millet system must be seen as a distortion, an institutionalized form of alienation from power and from the state that represents it.

The erection of the legal structure of the Armenian millet is believed to have been started in the fifteenth century, when Mehmet II purportedly installed an Armenian bishop as patriarch in Constantinople. Officially recognized as head of the Armenians in the Ottoman Empire, the patriarch was expected to regulate the internal religious affairs of the Armenian millet. On a more practical and important level, however, the new office served to streamline relations between the

Armenian colony of Constantinople and the Ottoman government, eventually ensuring that this colony of merchants and craftsmen would assume the leadership of the whole Armenian population in the Empire. Beginning very early in its history, the Patriarchate also assisted the government in the collection of some taxes from Armenians.²

Essentially then, the millet and the patriarchate heading it were Ottoman institutions. The bishops and subordinate clergymen who managed the offices of the patriarchate wielded supreme administrative and political authority within the Church, above the Catholicosses of Sis and Akhtamar who stood higher in the ecclesiastical hierarchy. The location of the patriarchate in the capital became an obstacle to the development of good relations between the assigned leadership and the Armenian people when the Armenian plateau, where most Armenians lived, became part of the Ottoman Empire in the sixteenth century. Given the difficulties of communication and transportation, it was practically impossible to run community affairs efficiently, or for the Ottoman government to visualize the state of affairs in the provinces, which it largely neglected.

The millet was not meant to be and never was an institution representative of the Armenian people. Behind the facade of religious autonomy and cultural self-management, the millet system excluded the masses from any real participation in political affairs while sustaining the impression of Armenian access to power. For most of its history, the Patriarchate was unrepresentative of Armenians in two ways. First, the patriarch and his associates were neither elected by the larger community nor accountable to it. Second, the millet leadership was empowered to represent Armenians at the discretion of the Sublime Porte. If the Porte characterized the subject of a *takrir* (petition) as religious-cultural, then the matter could be taken under consideration; if political in nature, the matter would be declared outside the jurisdiction of the patriarchate. Thus the sultan appreciated, in fact expected, expressions of gratitude for his august and benevolent rule on a regular basis; such manifestations, normally seen as signs of courtesy, were used by the Porte for political purposes when needed. Reports expressing discontent with government policies were received with displeasure, and petitions that related to Armenians as subjects of the state rather than as members of a community could be and often were ignored on the grounds that the millet was a religious institution.³

Thus the institution that has been characterized as providing Armenians representation and access to power became, in fact, an instrument of alienation. Moreover, as religion was an

essential tool of political manipulation within the larger Ottoman society as well, this alienation was construed to be a natural one, i.e., within the bounds of the general norms of society and consistent with the ideological basis of the legitimacy of the state.

The Amira Class and Its Ideology

Any advantage that proximity to the center of power could have offered to Armenians was neutralized by the control, which the self-serving *amira* class established over the Patriarchate through the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The amira class was composed largely of the *sarafs*, high-level Armenian bureaucrats, and a few other influential individuals or families.⁴ Their domination of the patriarchate is characterized by the corrupt, fraudulent, and disruptive practices through which wealthy financiers sought or bought the intervention of eager officials of the Porte in order to install themselves or their own candidates in lucrative public offices, including that of patriarch.⁵ More importantly, perhaps, the outlook of the amira class reflected the concerns of an elite that was relatively successful but ultimately insecure. The financial and often physical well being of such a group was dependent on the success of Ottoman officials whose careers or projects they financed. The amira class shunned “political” involvement or visibility.⁶ The amiras accepted the Ottoman definition of Armenians as a religious community; this acceptance, which betrays at least a strong ideological bias, was construed as a nonpolitical attitude and, consequently, not subject to any judgment by political standards. Their control of the millet also insured that their position would be accepted as the policy of the community itself, and later by others as well.⁷

The amira class did not leave documents of major ideological import. It came to power without having to challenge any group or class; it did not need to justify its power. The class as an economic unit disintegrated during the first half of the nineteenth century. This came as a consequence of changes in Ottoman fiscal policies which allowed the invasion of Western financial institutions to supplant local money supplies with increasingly large bank loans.⁸

While the amira class lost its position in Ottoman economic life without much of a struggle, it fought ardently to keep control of Armenian institutions and to continue defining Armenian concerns. The amira class was challenged in the 1840s by the *esnaf* (craftsmen) of Constantinople for control of Armenian schools. Each wanted to use school for the transmission of its own values: the *esnaf* wanted their children to study subjects relevant to a changing world,

while the amira preferred to stay with learning more characteristic of a vanishing culture. But ultimately the major challenge came from a new middle class and liberal intelligentsia. It was during these battles that representatives of the amira conservative mentality articulated their views.⁹

For those who championed the cause of the amira class “there was no solution outside the Armenian [Apostolic] Church.”¹⁰ The best known among the conservative publicists argued:

It has been discussed, and it is undeniable that our people do not have, politically speaking, a national (institution)...but we do have an alternative through which our people will survive. The governments ruling over us have been protectors of this (alternative) institution and nucleus of union; to preserve our ethnic identity we do not need a political one. This link is the unity of religion through which all Armenians are related regardless of their place of residence or of the state of which they are subjects.¹¹

By defining the problem as one of survival of ethnic identity, it became possible to formulate a politics that consisted of the denial of a political future. Political leadership, reduced in form and content, was assigned willingly to the clergy, not because there was no political institution but because there was no need for one.

The nonpolitical, at least accommodating attitude, of the amiras was supported by much of the culture that was spread by the erudite members of the Armenian catholic Mkhitarist monasteries in Venice and Vienna. The Mkhitarists were instrumental in bringing about an Armenian cultural renaissance through publications on history, religion, culture, and literature. They introduced a large number of European concepts and practices. Inspired by European romanticism, they attempted, above all, to give Armenian identity roots in the past.¹²

The Mkhitarists did not share the religion-bound self-image projected by the amiras, although the Mkhitarists were religious, in this case Catholic, congregations. Yet the Mkhitarist view of Armenia and its culture and history had a wholesomeness and harmony which Armenian society lacked. This discrepancy was particularly evident among Armenians in the Ottoman Empire, where most Mkhitarists were recruited and most of the congregation's efforts were concentrated. The Mkhitarists were conscious of the cultural backwardness of Armenians and strove to educate and enlighten them, but they were careful not to transform cultural views into political trends. The Europeanization of the Armenian self-image was not necessarily a prelude to the adoption of the European pattern of radical-conservative antagonism in politics, a pattern that

would have legitimized a radical position and thus threatened the *status-quo*. There was no dynamic progress in Armenian history, as re-created by the Mkhitarists. It was a history built around heroes and villains that celebrated isolated individuals and events as the embodiment of a glorious yet tragic past.

In 1861 the Mkhitarists issued in booklet form an article first published in 1849 when Europe was in turmoil and a few Armenian young men seemed to find meaning in revolutions.¹³ The major portion of the booklet is a eulogy of some of the great figures of ancient history, both from Western and Armenian traditions. After ascribing the greatness of past heroes to their “patriotism,” the author warns against the “abuses” of patriotism then rampant in European capitals. The essay ends with a special plea to Armenians not to sympathize with these abuses or their perpetrators. To insure against such a possibility, the author provides a definition to what patriotism means or should mean for Armenians of different classes. For Armenians who have wealth and power, “true patriotism” consists in helping the less fortunate, in steadfastly respecting the law, by donating funds for the construction of public institutions, and by remembering that wealth does not release one from the duties and obligations of “good citizenship.” Those who have neither money nor power

must respect the above mentioned [rich] Armenians and honor them as interpreters and executors of the law, as the lieutenants of God. [The lower classes] must have faith in them and must not nurture doubts without good reason. If they note any shortcomings in the upper class, they should not consider them unjust and evil or demean their names in the presence of others. Rather, to the best of their ability, they should cover up for the others’ shortcomings and should praise them publicly. Even if they cannot honor the person, they should honor their rank and position, so that the respect for the rule of the law is not diminished and law and order are not eroded. Those with average or no means should not be jealous of the rich and should not attempt to imitate the rich in everything the rich do. They should also not expect that the rich give all of their wealth to other causes.¹⁴

If patriotism for the majority should consist of the preservation of social harmony and national subservience for the benefit of the upper classes and the Ottoman state, it is difficult to understand the author’s glorification of Armenian historical or mythical figures such as Hayk, Aram, Tigran, and Vardan who distinguished themselves by rejecting foreign rule and subjugation to the will of others. It is possible that the author expected harmony and subservience despite these heroes. Perhaps he thought identification with the past was a sufficient source of pride and that emulation was not necessary. Heroic figures and tragic events of the past were introduced as if to

indicate the end of a cycle; but they did not amount to history—a history in which one could participate. Heroes came into Armenian consciousness abstracted from their historical reality; acts of heroism, self-sacrifice, and courage were manifestations of spiritual values rather than tactical means to resolve a political crisis. Thus, historical figures could be emulated by Armenian youngsters if they merely accomplished what they were expected to by their mentors on patriotism. One need not struggle against the oppressor to exhibit self-sacrifice and patriotism.

The conservative elements realized the need to discuss politically potent issues and concepts; but their discussion focused on issues, which the youth would have raised anyway. The conservatives were also sure to interpret the information provided. In the absence of a political agenda, patriotism consisted in preserving the status quo, But by the middle of the century the *status quo* was already unacceptable to a rising Armenian middle class, which soon challenged the established order.

Middle Class Liberalism

By the middle of the nineteenth century the Ottoman Empire was brought within the sphere of the world market system, under the domination of Europe. Trade between the Ottoman Empire and the West increased tremendously, although the import of manufactured goods by far exceeded the export from traditional industries such as dried fruits and rugs.¹⁵ Armenians, along with other largely non-Muslim groups, made up the merchant class that carried on this trade.¹⁶ Gradually, in addition to the comprador bourgeoisie, the new middle class included professionals, such as doctors and lawyers, literate such as writers, teachers, and editors, and small manufacturers. These groups had little to do with the economic basis of the sarafs or with tax-farming. The merchants also differed sharply in their origins from the Armenian bourgeoisie in the Russian Empire. More importantly, the new middle class lacked the integration, which the sarafs and Eastern Armenian bourgeoisie enjoyed within their respective state apparatus. The economic interests of this class placed them outside the political structure, not just in opposition to it. Geographically, too, the new middle class had peculiarities; brigandage tended to limit major transactions to coastal cities, while the lack of government encouragement further confined substantial trade to existing agreements with the West.

In important respects the new middle class lacked the social legitimacy which the amira had enjoyed and which the Russian Armenian bourgeoisie could take for granted. Political power, which could have guaranteed if not promoted class interests, was not to be gained in the Ottoman Empire and, aside from a few timid attempts under the *Tanzimat*, the middle class made no effort to create a power base. The economic activity of the merchants did not even have any organic relationship with the Ottoman elite and was thus deeply alienated from the organs of the state.¹⁷

To make up for that alienation, the middle class developed greater reliance on the West. Merchants sought their individual economic security in the acquisition of the citizenship of Western countries. The new entrepreneurs also sought to establish social legitimacy by taking charge of the millet and through the sponsorship of a cultural renaissance inspired, of course, by Europe.¹⁸

What is often regarded as the achievement of the Armenian middle class—its press and schools, its dedication to progress and enlightenment—also brought its demise, since the congenial environment in cultural affairs did not have parallels in politics. Liberalism, whether cultural or political, led to closer identification with the West. In the absence of an Ottoman government amenable to policies favoring local commercial interests or defending them, the Armenian middle class looked upon Western governments as a surrogate protector of economic interests and reforms. The middle class and other advocates of liberalism showed great courage in fighting the disintegrating but stubborn conservative “party” on the issues of the Armenian Constitution and reforms for the provincial Armenians. But the logical act of extending the concepts of reforms to the political sphere was a step, which the Ottoman state could not accept. Tying the fate of such reforms directly with Europe—the same Europe where its trade and ideology had originated—was the logical conclusion of beliefs which the middle class could not escape and which the Ottoman state could not ultimately tolerate. Nonetheless, the Armenian middle class, and the generation of intellectuals it helped generate, assumed the role of cultural mediators between European values and the larger communities in the Ottoman Empire. Whether one assesses the influence of European based Mkhitarist congregations as institutions or of Western educated youth, the relationship between the Armenian awakening and European culture is undeniable.¹⁹

The cultural-ideological relationship between Armenians and Europe, while sustained by the unequal economic and political footings, was also a dynamic relationship, because of the challenge that the West presented to Armenians. The Armenian awakening was predicated on the answers to some basic questions raised by that challenge: Why did such a difference emerge between Asian and European societies? What is the substance of that difference? These seemed rhetorical questions that were designed to provide support or legitimacy for the basic goal of “progress” and “enlightenment,” to be achieved through education, science, learning, industry, and trade. The follow-up questions were: How can Armenians close the gap between the two societies? And in what political framework can they hope to do so? The ultimate question was: Was the act of catching up a political act and therefore potentially subversive for the state or a cultural/economic one and therefore neutral?

That Armenians perceived the difference to be between Europeans and Armenians rather than Europeans and Ottomans was only partially due to the mentality imposed by the millet system. Backwardness was certainly seen as a characteristic of Ottoman society and non-European peoples as a whole, a fact readily conceded by Armenian writers. Yet, in seeking the roots of “our backwardness,” seldom did they consider the socioeconomic factor common to all peoples. The forward looking Armenian intellectual compared current Armenian culture with ancient and medieval Armenian culture and civilization when Armenian arts, science, and literature, while being distinct, were integral parts of a universal system, that of the advanced world of the era.²⁰ Thus, in developing its agenda, the liberal elements reached toward European as well as ancient Armenian models and did not merely aim at an imitation of Western values.

Another consideration which helped delimit Armenian-European relations was that enlightenment and progress, the two qualities of the new civilization, were the ideals created by the Christian peoples of a Christian continent. Affinity in religion and culture could thus be projected into an ideology from which Turks and other non-Christians were naturally excluded, without any need for rational justification.

Thus, the concept of nation was important in defining the Western challenge and the response to it. But this was neither the nation to which the devotees of restoration referred, nor the nation that was to evolve later.

Although the elements compared were civilizational achievements of the past, such achievements were devoid of a political context. Certainly, the concept of nation involved here was more than a gathering of coreligionists. The past was there to inspire, to remind the Armenians that they were once able to deal with Europeans on an equal footing, and, therefore, they could expect the same in the future. The existence of a glorious past was defined first by its heritage that gave Armenians the right to recover its dignity. As early as 1846 the newspaper *Hayastan* in Constantinople gave a clear indication of this direction of thought:

Wake up, Armenian nation, from your death-inviting slumber of ignorance; remember your past glory, mourn your present state of wretchedness and heed the example of other enlightened nations: take care of your schools, cultivate the Armenian language, learn other useful languages and liberal sciences [professions] ... only then can you reach the goal of happiness.²¹

Liberalism introduced a dynamic concept of the nation—as opposed to the religious definition, which held sway in conservatism—and was, therefore, a secularizing one.²² Yet enlightenment, the ultimate course of individual and social happiness, was perceived to be attainable within the , since it was essentially a matter of culture and civilization. One of the chief architects of the national awakening, Servichen, placed a process of change strictly within the confines of the millet structure in the opening statement of the first elected National Assembly in 1863:

Our duty is not only to protect our religion bequeathed to us by our ancestors but also to use all means for the single purpose of developing the national spirit: a spirit which is the lone factor in enlivening the nation and which we try to reconcile first with the spirit and the course of our times and second with national obligations toward our benevolent government by rejecting foreign intervention.²³

Nahapet Rusinian, poet, publicist, and physician even considered banning the word “political” from the Armenian language to insure the proper interpretation of national goals.²⁴ The best nation, argued one writer following the Zeytun rebellion in 1863, is one that respects the authority of the state, and the best defense of peoples’ liberties is obedience to the laws of the land.²⁵ The cultural definition of a national awakening was one shared by most liberals and believers in education and learning. The adolescent enthusiasm of students of the Nupar-Shahnazarian school in Constantinople espoused literature, the most expressive mode of culture, as the ultimate

solution: “The fatherland does not need heroes, it needs geniuses; it does not need soldiers of arms but soldiers of light ... we will produce Mmes Staels and Lamartines”.²⁶

Education and literacy became overriding concerns. The National Constitution insisted on free education for all Armenian youth.²⁷ Societies were also established to educate the migrant workers, *pantukhts*, in Constantinople. These workers, in turn, were expected to go back to their villages and spread literacy there. Literacy was the answer to poverty. The *Baregortsakan* (Benevolent) Society of the capital took the more practical step of setting up a model farm in Cilicia through which its members were to educate the local farmers in the scientific method of farming.²⁸

Most were concerned though with the goal of bringing education, progress, and enlightenment to Constantinople. The liberal creed of Armenians there was an overwhelmingly urban one. During a debate on the unequal distribution of deputies in the National (Armenian) Assembly, the liberal *Masis* newspaper, founded and edited by the French educated Garabed Utujian, defended the preeminence of the capital:

“Constantinople must have priority since, firstly, it is the capital of the state; secondly, it is the center of the national [Armenian] administration. The Patriarch is there, the progressive and educated elements of the nation are there. In one word, the great strength of the nation is there.”²⁹

Within this framework, the urban masses are the only subjects who need to be educated and enlightened in order to give substance to the idea of enlightenment; the nation, as understood by Constantinople Armenians, could have existed and prospered in and by itself in the capital. The strength of the nation, predicated upon the unity of goals such as progress and enlightenment, could endure when the hierarchy laid out above was recognized and fulfilled, that is, when each class accepted its own function in society. According to *Masis*, the upper class had the responsibility of caring for the rest of society; the middle class was to submit to and cooperate with the former, and the lower class was to accept, presumably, what was given and be thankful.³⁰ Unity would ultimately be achieved when “moral” and “financial’ virtues were spread.³¹

For the majority of Armenians in the large urban centers, the capital city constituted “the strength of the nation,” whereas historical Armenia was a foreign place, an outpost of the empire. The literate of Constantinople spent much time discussing administrative details, resolving conflicts related to churches, charities, and schools. They called it the *azgayin* (national) business.

Mkrtich Khrimian, the unconventional bishop who was elected patriarch for a brief period and made the pantukhts and the provincial masses the focus of his attention, was labeled the *hayastantsi*, or “one from Armenia.” *Hayastan* (Armenia) was thus reduced to a locale like so many others.³² The label also intimated a provincialism unbecoming an urban intellectual or bourgeois. This distinction seemed natural even to Grigor Otian, a liberal reformer of great importance both in Ottoman and Armenian contexts. In an 1856 letter to Khrimian, whom he admired for his cultural mission in Armenia itself, Otian stated: “Nations, like individuals, die and pass opportunities on to others.”³³ Otian’s faint hope for a Lazarus-style resurrection did not detract from the value he ascribed to biological functions. The birth-death cycle reconciled the conflict between past and present, between historical consciousness and contemporary political impotence.

The reduction of Armenia to a mere geographic entity enabled the enlightened to regard Constantinople as a proper location for the rebirth of the nation, and thus define the nation according to their own realities. In addition, the program of progress and enlightenment proposed by the literate and middle class of the capital acquired its legitimacy from the access and exposure to European cities and cultures, and from the conviction of the enlightened that such a program had universal value.

The Challenge of the Middle Class

The struggle of the liberal class against the amiras and their defenders was characterized by most writers of the period as the conflict between the enlightened and the obscurantist or between the new and the old. The cultural renaissance was the achievement of the enlightened and the ill new. The conflict occupied Armenians in the capital during the three middle decades of the century. It pervaded every aspect of community life.³⁴

The liberals fought most ardently for the use of modern Armenian in publications, the press, and the schools. Modern Armenian was a better means by which to spread literacy and knowledge, they argued. For the old guard, the demise of *grabar*, or classical Armenian, was tantamount to the disintegration of the community and of its heritage. Equally important were the differences in the views of the antagonists on the proper subjects for study. The conservatives

stressed religious studies, while the middle class insisted on the necessity of knowing geography, mathematics, world history, and physics.³⁵

Although success in the modernization of culture was essential for the development of a social and ideological environment congenial to the middle class, the larger goals of the group could be promoted only through the institutionalization of the new values. Thus the middle class also sought to control the only institution within its reach, the millet.

Long before the middle class challenged the amira class for leadership of the community, the esnafs or artisans in Constantinople had questioned the right of the wealthy to control Armenian institutions. Starting in 1820 there was evidence of a growing conflict between the amiras and various esnaf groups.³⁶ Although the immediate cause of the confrontation was disagreement on the parochial schools, the challenge of the artisans implied a critique of all authorities. During an incident in 1841, the demonstrating esnafs protested to the Porte against the Ottoman government's support of the amiras. Two years and many imprisonments later, the esnafs won the right to hold fourteen of the thirty seats in the newly-created National Assembly, charged with the management of the patriarchate.³⁷

Yet the esnafs were unable to use their success to acquire a permanent voice in the shaping the community's future. The amiras and their conservative allies in the clergy were able to outmaneuver a group of artisans who lacked the intellectual and political tools to transform a single cause into a larger movement, or a sense of injustice into a political program.

The middle class of the 1850s was more willing and able to supplant the stagnant and decadent leadership of the amiras. It undertook a systematic struggle against the authoritarian, clerically dominated institution of the patriarchate. The battle for a "constitution" for the millet, unleashed during the benevolent period of the Ottoman *Tanzimat* (Reforms), sought successfully to secularize and democratize the government of the millet. A final draft of the National Constitution approved by the sultan in 1863 incorporated democratic principles which required the election of the patriarch and the National Assembly and the control of the assembly by secular deputies. The document granted rights to the collective and to its individual members; it also endorsed the principle of the mutuality of responsibilities between the community and individual members. The liberals of the capital could now boast of a social and quasi-political victory.³⁸

The Constitution Tested

For the middle class in Constantinople, the constitution provided a mechanism for the control and rational organization of millet institutions such as schools, churches, monasteries, and hospitals. Secular control over institutions that affected all Armenians, and not just clergymen, seemed natural and in line with the spirit of the times. For liberal Armenians, the constitution was the logical extension of the cultural renaissance, a means to consolidate the gains achieved in a minor social revolution. Yet the established amira class fought ardently against any democratization of the millet structure. It charged that the constitution was an attempt to create a state within a state, a step which was contrary to accepted policies and practices.³⁹

The conservatives were certainly correct in fearing the consequences of high sounding principles, particularly when the constitutional forces received strong support from Armenians in the provinces. In fact, it was the pressure from the provinces, in the form of documented reports of injustices and abuses, visits to the capital representative delegations of dignitaries, and urgent pleas for relief that provided the impetus for liberals to pursue the goal of millet reforms with courage and determination.

The debate on the future structure of the millet provided the only avenue open for political expression. Provincial Armenians participated fully in the formulation of the reforms, and to the body that emerged from the constitutional struggle—the National Assembly—they attached their hopes.

It must have been the euphoria of victory, or the untimely belief in rhetoric, that led a majority of the National Assembly to elect the popular and populist bishop Mkrtych Khrimian, the most eloquent defender of provincial Armenians as patriarch in 1869.⁴⁰ Khrimian accepted the position reluctantly. Once in Constantinople, he was determined to use the National Constitution as a means of general reform, to alleviate the sufferings of those who called him “Hayrik” (Father).⁴¹ To achieve his purpose he initiated a systematic investigation of the most blatant and widespread abuses in provincial governments, areas of open discrimination within the system as a whole, and acts of unpunished violation of rights and property. By making the Armenian masses his prime concern, he brought the realities of provincial life to an Armenian community that had become complacent in its relative prosperity and security. Khrimian forced the Assembly to face the issues he considered most important.⁴²

The result was the report of 1871. It detailed laws, regulations, and practices, which were not only essentially discriminatory, but were also leading provincial Armenians toward economic ruin, social deprivation, and inhuman existence. The report made recommendations, which, if accepted and acted upon by the Porte, would alleviate the situation. It recommended an end to obvious inequality in taxation and justice, and to religious intolerance. Furthermore, rather than denying the authority of the central government, the report asked the Porte to strengthen its position in the provincial government in order to guarantee that local officials followed directives sent to them from Constantinople.⁴³

The Assembly was divided regarding the issue of submission of the report to the government. Some thought it would invite the Porte to question the loyalty of Armenian leaders, and hence affect their privileges and position in the capital.⁴⁴ At the end, a milder version was presented. After a long wait, when Khrimian had already resigned and when no action had been taken by the government, some members of the National Assembly argued that the time had come to see a change of policy. During August and September of 1876, a few pressed as hard as they could. During an interpolation of the then Patriarch Nerses Varjapetian, a deputy asked if “new and effective” means had been adopted to help the deteriorating situation of the Armenian peasantry, if there was no alternative to repeating the cycle of presentation at the Porte, promises of investigations, and loss of interest in the matter.⁴⁵ The examination had begun despite the attempt of some to end the discussion before the government intervened against the “troublemakers.”⁴⁶ “Did the government confiscate the weapons of the Kurds or give weapons to Armenians?” asked Stepan Papazian, a former chairman of the Assembly, who seems to have concluded that the Balkan solution might work for Armenians as well.⁴⁷ Papazian also argued that far from being isolated incidents, the conditions created in the provinces were the result of a deliberate policy.⁴⁸ The National Assembly voted to publish the report of 1871. The report was ignored by the government and forgotten by the Assembly.

During his four year tenure Khrimian had also sought, without success, a revision of the National Constitution to give provincial Armenians representation in the Assembly proportional to their numbers. The constitution had ensured absolute majority control by the Armenians of Constantinople. Khrimian realized that without proportional representation the cause of the provinces would be lost since, he argued, the capital bourgeoisie acted only in the interest of its

own security and perception of Ottoman institutions.⁴⁹ He also fought for the creation of a second civil or political (*kaghakakan*) council to deal specifically with provincial issues. The existing “political” council provided by the constitution was composed of local elements, who understood “political” as referring to non-clerical issues such as schools and orphanages, and who refused to tackle actual political matters.

Khrimian resigned in 1873. He had managed to make many enemies.⁵⁰ He was accused of arbitrary rule, hence of opposing the constitution.⁵¹ His critics also charged that Khrimian spent too much money on the pantukhts and neglected the prestige of the Church. He had closed down the prison of the patriarchate, where opponents and troublemakers could be jailed by order of a patriarch or the Assembly. He had also refused to use the state police to secure compliance by Armenians to millet decisions. In addition, Khrimian’s detractors also accused him of diminishing the power of Constantinople in favor of the provinces. Finally, he was criticized for taking up the cause of the poor and oppressed at the expense of others. He spoke so much of the conditions and problems of the provinces, remarked a concerned opponent, that he “endangered the nation.”⁵²

Khrimian’s brief tenure of office became a test of Armenian liberalism among the middle class. The limitations of that liberalism were clearly exposed by its timid and reluctant approach to the question of reforms. By acquiring the privilege of playing democracy in the capital, the Armenian intelligentsia and middle class of Constantinople took upon themselves the task of absorbing the shocks of social discontent in the poverty-ridden towns and villages of Western Armenia.

The failure to achieve any concrete progress in the area of reforms for the masses was the more fundamental cause for Khrimian’s resignation. The expectation that the millet structure, however democratically constituted, would alleviate the plight of the provincials under the leadership of their champion was a subversion of the system’s original purpose. The temporary enthusiasm of the Assembly in pursuing Khrimian’s cause had stretched the ambiguous benefits of the millet to the limits. The constitution of the community spoke eloquently of the rights and responsibilities between the Armenian collective and the individual; but it disregarded the more essential relationship between the millet and the Ottoman state, except to assert that “in particular circumstances [the patriarch] is the medium of the execution of the orders of the Ottoman Government.”⁵³ The responsibility of the patriarch or the Assembly to represent the interests of the

Armenians, especially their rights and problems as a collective, were not inherent in the document, but dependent on the goodwill or predominant political mood of the Porte.

The National Constitution did not provide for the protection of the political, human, economic, or civil rights of the Armenians. It prescribed some checks on abuses to the extent that these emanated from the office of the patriarch. It sought to control the excess of capricious and authoritarian rule by the class ruling over the millet. For a brief period it brought to power patriarchs, such as Khrimian and Nerses Varjapetian, who were perceived as being opposed to tyranny and concerned with the status of the “people.”⁵⁴ While it is true that Ottoman officials and the sultan occasionally acceded to requests from Armenian leaders for redress of grievances in individual cases, such concessions were the prerogative of the paternalistic ruler. Such favors did not imply any recognition of the right of the millet Assembly or patriarch to act as advocates of collective Armenian rights, even though both Khrimian and Varjapetian tried to maximize that potential.⁵⁵ But in general the leadership of the millet was particularly hesitant and vulnerable when it was using a religious institution to further collective social and economic goals; the more so, since these goals would necessarily undermine the class structure upon which the state rested, and the religious argument by which it justified that structure.

Reform Outside the *Millet*

The failure of the *millet* system to provide relief led Armenians to conclude that there could be little reform in their status as Ottoman subjects without reform of the foundations and structures upon which Ottoman institutions rested. Some Armenians had recognized this fact in the early stages of the struggle for a community institution; for most provincial Armenian leaders and Constantinople liberals, it was sufficient that the National Constitution was nurtured by the spirit of the *Tanzimat* or reforms pronounced by the Ottoman government itself in 1839 and 1856. After Khrimian's tenure as patriarch, more understood the importance of an institution to resist the state that had created it. For the segment within the middle class that did not give up following the frustration of the experiment with the millet, general reforms within the empire became the focus of hopes and expectations.

The Tests of Ottomanism

The relationship between specific reforms sponsored by Armenians and the more general Tanzimat is as complex as it is revealing. The liberalism of the Tanzimat made it possible to secularize and democratize the government of the community. The articulation, and ultimate failure, of those principles within the context of the millet made Armenians staunch supporters of the movement toward constitutional order in the empire. Throughout the nineteenth century Armenian individuals became trusted advisors to reform-minded Turkish leaders. This was particularly true in the case of the Young Ottomans. The Young Ottomans were an unofficial party of Turkish officials and administrators who favored the renewal of the Ottoman system through internal reforms and especially through the establishment of a constitution for the empire. Their efforts culminated in the promulgation of a constitution in 1876, the elections for a parliament, and the appointment of Midhat Pasha, the main author of the constitution, as grand vizir.

While in earlier instances individual relationships had a minimal relevance for the community at large, the efforts of Grigor Otian on behalf of empire-wide reforms as an advisor to Midhat Pasha represented a crucial transition in the attitudes between the two groups. Otian was

the president of the National Assembly during Khrimian's tenure as patriarch and one of his strongest supporters. He encouraged the Assembly to draft its report of 1871 and invited it to submit specific recommendations on improving conditions in the provinces. Otian believed that the Porte would welcome the document and act upon it.¹

The Midhat-Otian connection could not have been achieved without the integrative perspective, which had taken hold between both peoples, a perspective known as Ottomanism. Both groups, the Young Ottomans among the Turks and the Otian-Khirmian-led group among Armenians, accepted the existing state as a given, as a starting point. The reform-minded Turkish leaders recognized that the survival and prosperity of the state depended, among other factors, on the allegiance of its subjects and subject groups and on the legitimacy of the government in the eyes of these subjects. Many among them also believed that allegiance would be fostered only by changing the essence of the state-subject relationship and by transcending the ideological tenets of an autocratic sultanate. For the Young Ottomans, these changes could be implemented without necessarily destroying the religious fiber of society, or dislodging Islam or the Turks from their special position in the empire.² Similarly, Otian's view that the state would welcome specific proposals for reform and Khirmian's willingness to accept the position of patriarch were based on their belief that there could be no conflict between Armenianism with a strong cultural awareness and Ottomanism as a political framework. Therefore reforms proposed for Armenians were considered only specific manifestations of the larger needs of all Ottoman subjects; such reforms had immediate relevance to Armenians because of the urgency with which they viewed their situation and the readiness with which they pressed for changes.³

In the 1860s and 1870s the search for political solutions to the problems faced by Armenians took place within this context. The elation of the Armenian public upon the announcement of the Tanzimat measures, and more particularly of the 1876 constitution, were cogent examples. Armenians wanted a good government, one that would respond to the needs of its subjects, through responsible officials faithful to the principles of the Tanzimat. The failure of provincial officials to accept and promote equality and justice was seen as the main cause for the Armenian crisis. Bishop Garegin Srvantsiants, a student of Khrimian and a clergyman who spent his life working in and for the provinces, believed that much could be changed for the better if the appointment of good governors for the provinces was encouraged and if such examples were given

attention and public support in order to invite emulation by others with the necessary sanctions by the Porte.⁴

A most critical, and certainly the most symbolically important, issue raised by Ottomanism was the question of the exclusion of Christian subjects from conscription into the army. Beyond the excessive abuses in the name of the *askariye-bedeli* (military tax on males in lieu of conscription), the question entailed the fundamental problem of equality between subjects and, beyond that, the nature of the state. Theoretically, the function of the state in Islam was the defense of the faith and the faithful, a function that could be performed by Muslims alone. In 1856, when equality of citizens regardless of religion was accepted by the state in principle, the patriarch had refused to allow the conscription of Armenians.⁵ In 1871, however, during the debate on the recommendations to the Porte, the principle of military service by Armenians was accepted by the National Assembly. It was advocated most strongly by the provincial representatives and the liberals of the capital. Conservative elements, which enjoyed all the advantages of a privileged minority in the capital without carrying any of the burdens of the oppressed majority in the provinces, opposed the idea. The change such a step would bring about in the Armenian image caused them great concern. Basing their argument on the biblical injunction against killing, the conservatives argued against the trend toward the weakening of religion as a basis of social differentiation.⁶ Ultimately, the recommendation was not included in the final draft, on the grounds that Armenians should be provided concrete examples of reforms in the provinces before they could begin to sacrifice their lives for the state.

The last level at which the relationship between the Armenian and Ottoman constitutional experiences must be understood is in terms of the whole range of issues raised by the military, political, and economic challenges of the West. It is generally known that most Turkish and Armenian reformers were educated in European, mainly French, institutions and were inspired in their intellectual and political outlooks by western traditions.⁷ Furthermore, in return for their support of the territorial integrity of the empire, Western powers brought pressure on the Ottoman state to carry out the reforms.⁸

Western political thought, however, could provide only the necessary terminology for the articulation of problems; it could provide neither simple prescriptions nor the institutions within which these problems could be solved. The concept of reforms and its importance in the evolution

of Armeno-Turkish relations must be seen, therefore, through the internal dynamics of societies adopting foreign terminologies and institutions and adapting to them. In this respect the spirit of Ottomanism provided an alternative to the deadlock in which a well-developed Armenian millet found itself. The parliament of 1876, elected after the promulgation of the constitution that same year, provided a forum for the expression of empire-wide concerns. There, Muslim deputies addressed themselves to issues, which were crucial to Armenians, too, even though the Turks did not mention specifically Armenian grievances. Demands for a just and efficient tax system, safeguards of private property, guarantees against arbitrary rule, and elimination of a stagnant and corrupt bureaucracy—themes in the National Assembly report of 1871--were expounded also in the Ottoman parliament that convened between March 1877 and February 1878.⁹ After the frustrations resulting from the Tanzimat experiment and inaction following the National Assembly reports, Armenians had committed themselves to the Ottoman Constitution and expected relief from the parliament.

In fact, the Ottoman Constitution created a level of interaction between the state and subject, which circumvented the millet. If it did not neutralize religion as a principle of power, at least it strove to transcend its worst ramifications. This was reinforced by the process of election of deputies to the parliament; although this was not based altogether on a direct representation system, it did bypass the National Assembly.¹⁰ This *de facto* weakening of the role of the millet does not seem to have concerned Armenians much. For them the rights to equality and justice secured within a governmental system and inherent in an Ottoman constitution were definitely more promising than the highest principles inserted in the isolated millet constitution granted by an autocratic regime. The constitution of 1876, Armenians believed, had created a basis of support and an avenue of implementation for reforms in the general population. Reforms could be pursued more freely and effectively when they were no longer defined as a Christian or Armenian issue.¹¹

Still, overcoming the institutional and ideological limitations of the millet concept did not signal a sudden emergence of a new and pervasive identification with the ruling power and state. The ethno religious frame of identification had been dominant too long and had too much relevance in people's daily lives to be erased quickly. Since Armenians perceived their problems to be largely the result of religious and ethnic inequality, it was only natural that, on the one hand, they would think as an ethno religious group while, on the other hand, they would seek to abolish

the legal and institutional barriers to the improvement of their lot. The transfer of their hopes and expectations from the millet to Ottoman institutions was possible, furthermore, because the ethno-religious identity did not entail a self-generated political program. In other words, Armenianism still connoted first and foremost membership in a religious community rather than a political entity; the basis of that identity was extra-territorial, except for the limits of the Ottoman Empire and the residence of the majority of Armenians viewed as a demographic factor. Some, like the aforementioned critic of Khrimian, would continue to apply the term “nation” primarily to the privileged Armenian minority of Constantinople that enjoyed the trust of the Porte. The unrelenting pressure from the communities in the provinces had forced the liberal elements in the capital to view the majority of Armenians as a legitimate subject of concern. Yet, the majority did not question the right and responsibility of the millet leadership to conduct the affairs of the nation, to speak and act on their behalf. For the majority of Armenians, steeped in centuries-long servility, the question of alternatives did not yet arise. Only changes within the existing arrangement or changes, which were pursued by leaders, recognized as legitimate by the sultan and the Porte fell within their purview.

Crucial for the understanding of subsequent developments is the second aspect of relations with the West. This was characterized by a distinction between the threat to the empire’s territorial integrity and sovereignty represented by European powers, and the challenge which Ottoman society faced by the presence of the economically and technologically more advanced, and politically more cohesive, states in nearby Europe. This distinction is essential because of the importance of reforms advocated as a result of domestic pressures on the state. It is necessary to make the distinction, moreover, since there is a tendency among historians to view political developments within the empire essentially as a reaction to threats from the West. Hence, Armenian demands for reform and participation in the political process are seen as by-products of western diplomatic maneuvers, relevant only for a discussion of western claims for protection of Christian minorities or of Western imperialism.

Turkish and non-Turkish reformers attempted to meet the problems raised by Western economic penetration and addressed themselves to the need for the transformation of a disintegrating society and feudal-militaristic state.¹² The various reformers often pointed to the same problems; even many of their solutions were identical. All agreed, for example, on a policy

of economic protectionism for home manufactured goods against rising imports of Western industrially manufactured products.¹³ Moreover, while all recognized the alarming rise of brigandage in Anatolia—a phenomenon to which Armenians particularly fell victim—most Young Ottomans blamed it on the policies of the Porte. According to them, centralization diminished the power of local rulers who had traditionally kept law and order.¹⁴ Armenians tended to agree with a Muslim deputy who insisted that the Porte should exercise more direct and effective control over the provinces.¹⁵ In their view, local overlords could not be trusted with the task of implementing the concepts of justice and equality enunciated in Constantinople.

These reforms were pursued by an emerging and insecure middle class. More than the abstract notions of democracy, the new bourgeoisie in the capital and other cities sought greater participation in the decision making process of the government and greater attention to security of life and property, both of which would lead to more productive social relations. As stated by one historian, ‘From a functional viewpoint (the constitution] appeared as a rational measure designed to achieve essentially the integrative roles performed by parliaments in the West ... The search for a viable balance between the central authority and local power was a pressing problem born not of political idealism but of recognition of middle class power.’¹⁶ It is well known that non-Muslims comprised the largest segment of that middle class. Not surprisingly, then, the most urgent calls for guarantees of freedom for enterprise during the parliamentary debates in 1877-1878 came from the non-Muslim deputies.¹⁷

As the debate on the formation of the Ottoman middle class is still continuing, it is difficult to discuss the political implications of this economic reality with much certainty.¹⁸ One might suggest, however, that a constitutional government committed to the development of bourgeois relations would have further advanced the economic position of the non-Muslim middle class and secured political power for non-Turkish groups. Furthermore, a vital and assertive Turkish middle class espousing the same goals could have bridged the gap between the Turkish dominated political power and Christian dominated sectors in the economy. The impressive record of the Ottoman parliament in terms of inter-religious understanding and cooperation can be partially explained by the presence of a nascent group with this perspective.¹⁹

The possibility of coalescence was hindered, however, by the fact that most Turkish reformers were bureaucrats or intellectuals. Until 1869, government schools of higher education

trained only bureaucrats, an element usually not interested in fundamental changes.²⁰ In addition to the absence of a Turkish middle class, the Ottoman Empire lacked the institutional and legal framework for the successful implementation of general reforms. Thus a vicious circle sapped even the more concrete proposals of their value and vigor. Land reform projects, for example, failed to abolish tax-farming, to improve the equity and efficiency of taxation, and to dislodge the power of the *a'yan*, or landed aristocracy. While measures against forced labor and scaling down of debts were somewhat more successful, peasants continued to be burdened far more heavily than their urban counterparts.²¹ Even in these areas, Armenians benefited less from improvements than the Turkish peasantry.

But the failure of the Tanzimat, and ultimately of the constitutional experiment, should be traced to what the majority of Young Ottomans considered their prime concern and what generally prompted their criticism of existing institutions and policies: the inability of the Ottoman state to respond adequately to the Western military challenge and the domestic pressure for reform. The empire was no longer capable of defending itself and was losing territory rapidly; ultimately it was also unwilling to resist the tendency toward repression and to accommodate the need for democratic and secular reforms.

Much of the loss of territory was to former subject peoples, who were assisted by foreign powers. Most of the reformers were men of goodwill who had been able to discover elements of toleration and liberalism in their Ottomanism. But they also identified with the state. The loss of territory was seen as a personal affront. Turkish bureaucrats tended to react to foreign intervention rather than act upon the causes for domestic discontent, which often provided the mechanism for that intervention.²² The reformers began to move, albeit reluctantly, from the perspective of an elite to the simpler view promoted by the Porte and Sultan Abdul Hamid II that reforms particularly those to improve the status of Christians, were only internal manifestations of the military threat represented by imperialist Europe.²³ Paranoia, a dimension of psychological weakness, was institutionalized in the policies of the state; it legitimized rejection of reforms and served to perpetuate autocracy and rationalized state terrorism.²⁴

The essential difference between Armenian and Turkish reformers lay in the source of the social support each sought out. For most of the Turkish reformers changes were to be introduced from above and thrust upon the people. To achieve that goal, it was only necessary to either

assume a position of responsibility in government or convince those in power to follow their advice. The reforms that resulted lacked the support of the public and tended to modernize the machinery of government; more importantly, these changes strengthened the police powers of the state used against substantial reformers. Reforms advocated by Armenians, in contrast, were aimed at strengthening the state through political and social changes. Although couched in Western terminology and tailored by the urban middle class, the reforms advocated by the Armenian leadership had been generated by and had the support of the peasantry, craftsmen, and petty bourgeoisie in the provinces. Hardly in favor of weakening the power of the state, Armenian reformers believed that the power of the state should be used for the protection of rights and property and be counterbalanced by the rights of the people.²⁵

The value that the constitutional experience represented for Armenians was quite different from what it meant for the Turkish elite. Armenian reformers went into the third quarter of the nineteenth century free of the burden of defending existing institutions and of the duty of guaranteeing its survival at any cost. Conversely, the majority of Armenians were carrying a disproportionately larger weight of the burden for the support of the state and the ruling classes. The voice of that majority was heard within the millet for the first time after the Armenian Constitution of 1863. The frustration at the impotence of the millet, even a reformed millet, was easily brushed aside at the prospects of an Ottoman constitutional government. The first meaningful participation in Ottoman decision making constituted the end of a half century search for a mechanism in government which would respond to their needs both as Armenians and as exploited classes. Armenians, obviously, were not the only oppressed group in the Ottoman state. Economic exploitation and political repression cut across religious and ethnic lines. But the open discrimination against, and victimization of, provincial Armenians who lacked religious or ethnic identification with the ruler had made it easier for them to break through the psychological barrier to open opposition to oppression. Religion, the ideological tool of the state, was transformed into a frame of reference invested with political, i.e. reformist, meaning.

The prorogation of parliament and suspension of the constitution by Sultan Abdul Hamid II in 1878 was perceived by Armenians as a rejection of all that had been achieved. Furthermore, the re-imposition of autocratic rule highlighted disparity between Turkish and Armenian reformers. Commenting on the loyalty of all Turkish classes toward the state, political scientist

Şerif Mardin has pointed out that the Young Ottomans did not consider it fair to engage in revolt: ‘It is difficult to separate the point where traditional ideas with regard to the preservation of the state merge with the patriotism that was one of the major tenets of the Young Ottomans.’²⁶

Historian Kemal Karpat in effect regards Ottomanism as a major source for Turkish nationalism: “The Muslim-Turkish intellectuals... seized upon Ottomanism as a nationalist ideology of their own and defined its content according to their own cultural-social background and interpretation of history.” But he defines Ottomanism as ‘the idea of equal citizenship’ and characterizes it as a “mere legal device through which the government wanted to supersede the ethnic and religious loyalties of the various minority groups.” He adds: “This attempt toward integration failed as far as most of the Christian subjects were concerned for the idea lacked the emotional appeal of their own brand of nationalism.”²⁷ Following the same argument, historian Roderic Davison claims that the Christian subjects rejected Ottomanism. The author also posits a causal relationship between the attitudes of subject minorities and the rise of Turkish nationalism. This belief reflects the views of many Western historians as well as the assumptions underlying Ottoman policies following the demise of the constitution in 1878.²⁸

It is difficult to ascertain whether Davison meant to include Armenians among the Christians who ostensibly rejected Ottomanism. Notwithstanding the terminology used then and now, Armenians, as other groups, lived in a specific historical milieu rather than an abstracted religious context such as Christendom.²⁹ These conditions differed from group to group and within groups. Greeks, for example, a largely urban group, had the most developed sense of nationalism and identified it clearly with an independent Greece. Assyrians, on the other hand, were largely a mountainous people and lived a patriarchal life under the spiritual and communal leadership of their bishop—hardly a life conducive to the development of nationalism. Armenia itself was a divided land and had not enjoyed independence for centuries. Its population was scattered even within the Ottoman Empire, although the majority continued to live in historical Western Armenia. In the Eastern provinces the peasantry constituted the absolute majority of that people. Furthermore, except in some areas, demographic changes throughout the centuries had diluted the proportion of Armenians within the total population. The lands of historic Armenia were now inhabited by a mixture of peoples, including Turks and Kurds, in addition to the indigenous Armenians. Thus, by social stratification and geographic distribution, Armenians represented a

larger spectrum of groups than other minorities. Culturally and economically, they comprised some of the most progressive elements as well as some of the most traditional and backward subgroups.

Throughout the many decades when state sponsored reforms were expected to improve the lot of the downtrodden, the Tanzimat remained a promise for those who needed reforms most. In 1868 community leaders from the province of Mush sent word to the Patriarchate in Constantinople that Armenians there were enjoying the benefits of neither the Tanzimat nor other reform measures and that the situation should not be measured by life in the capital.³⁰ By 1875, according to one source, the number of Armenians contemplating conversion to Islam to escape further depravity and humiliation was reaching alarming proportions.³¹ Many peasant communities not wishing to follow that route petitioned the sultan to indicate where in the Ottoman Empire they might resettle in order to escape their unbearable fate.³² Ottomanism, however, was largely an urban phenomenon, an intellectualized, if not abstracted, solution to concrete problems. For the urban Armenian middle class, though, it was an ideal solution, since it enabled them to espouse liberal principles on a scale that did not force them to oppose the state. Even in Constantinople, however, Turks too would have to transcend their ethno religious allegiances if the idea of Ottomanism was to supplant existing allegiances permanently. Most importantly, even if Ottomanism could be reduced to the “idea of equal citizenship,” for Armenians that idea embodied visions of a better life; it encompassed a whole range of specific actions aimed at eradicating the political, economic and social inequalities and thus establish Armenians as citizens rather than subjects. Ultimately, even among the most radical, allegiance to the Ottoman state was a *quid pro-quo* for a “mere legal device” which for the most part remained a promise unfulfilled.

When Sultan Abdul Hamid II suspended the constitution in 1878, even the pretense of a promise disappeared. And with the constitution also disappeared the chances for Armenian liberalism. Yet the Russo-Turkish war that had allowed the sultan to abrogate the constitution also opened for the established community leadership a third avenue of reform, this time sponsored from abroad.

Reforms Rescued by Europe

Wars provide convenient dates for breaking up the seemingly unchanging surface of history. But wars are also justifiable tools of periodization since they tend to accelerate and accentuate changes occurring under that surface. In victory, the triumphant party finds the vindication of its ideology and rule. In defeat, the vanquished witnesses the maturation of tensions and contradictions underlying the social order it had imposed.

Successive sultans in the nineteenth century accepted or promoted change after defeat on the battlefield or under the threat of a war, which would have ended in defeat. This pattern held for military as well as political reforms. Given the tenuous condition of the Ottoman state, for example, Midhat Pasha and his fellow liberals had been able to manipulate the throne. When in 1875 the Ottoman state was no longer able to fulfill its financial obligations toward Europe and Western interests were planning the complete control of its budget, the liberals extracted from the sultan a constitution for the empire. In the absence of other support, the threat of further intervention or defeat had been one weapon that Turkish reformers, vizirs, and bureaucrats had used to advance their own cause and ideology. Thus, the distinction between foreign and domestic politics was blurred even more. In their temporarily successful struggle to postpone the disintegration of the old empire from internal decay and foreign intervention, the sultans themselves played one weakness against the other. To perpetuate their rule, the caretakers of Ottoman sovereignty did not hesitate to bargain away economic and territorial prerogatives of the state. Sovereignty had become an issue for Ottoman leaders before the Russo-Turkish war of 1877-78 exposed, once more, the vulnerability of that sovereignty, and long before Armenian leaders took the search for sponsors of their reforms beyond the formal structure of that sovereignty.³³

Throughout the unfolding of the Eastern Question, Armenians followed a policy of consolidating the indirect gains achieved on behalf of the Christian peoples, rather than initiating actions that could bring foreign powers to their assistance. Armenians watched Balkan peoples gradually shed Ottoman rule, beginning with the Greeks in 1830, assisted by Europe and later Russia. The arrangement for Lebanon in 1860, which acquired autonomy under a Christian governor and the protection of France, was real and close enough for some to hope for a similar solution for Zeytun in 1862. But Armenians in general lacked the ideology, the means, and for

those in the capital, the motivation to pursue such a course of action. The leaders of the millet clung to their belief that a government that allowed them to worship and amass wealth, distributed medals of honor and dubbed them the ‘loyal millet’ could not be too evil and should not be caused any embarrassment.³⁴

The Russian threat to the territorial integrity of the Ottoman Empire had provided a major impetus to Turkish elements as well as Western European powers to push for reforms in the empire. Both foreign conquest and domestic reform undermined the possibility of an Armenian state, although the two entailed opposite processes. But the causal relationship between the two suggested the Armenian strategy of using them simultaneously.

Here the attitude of Western Armenians toward Russia becomes important since the latter pursued an imperialist policy toward the Ottoman Empire far less subtle than that of France and England; also, Eastern Armenia—now Russian Armenia—was a natural basis of comparison for western Armenians. The Armenian Constitution and later the Ottoman Constitution had created an atmosphere for western Armenians which even some in the Russian sector envied. In the battle of allegiances, Ottoman Armenian leaders were quick to point out the contrast between the Russification policy of the tsar in Eastern Armenia and the cultural and religious autonomy which they enjoyed in Western Armenia.³⁵

Consequently, the assertions of loyalty which the patriarch, the National Assembly, and Armenian deputies of the parliament repeatedly made at the outbreak of hostilities were more than hollow assurances. In the capital Armenians needed reforms, and believed the Ottoman constitution was their best guarantee to achieve those reforms; they had no need of Russia’s intervention on their behalf.³⁶

In the provinces conditions were different and so were attitudes toward Russia. Russia had a positive image for many who lived close to the Russian border, unaffected by the moves of liberals in the capital, too pressed to worry about the high politics of state. Peasants did not care about the abstract formulations of cultural issues as much as about *beks* and *pashas* who robbed them of their crops, chieftains who robbed them of their wives and daughters, usurers who robbed them of their lands. The provincial bourgeoisie and craftsmen did not owe an intellectual debt to the West; they had developed a modest commerce despite economic handicaps and a problematic Ottoman provincial administration. For them, the Russian government at least provided

opportunities for economic development. In 1872, a group of merchants from Van had asked the Russian government to send a consul to their city. A Russian consul's presence, they had hoped, would guarantee "the safety of trade routes and protection of the religion, lives and goods (possessions) of the down-trodden Christian people of Vaspurakan."³⁷ The sympathy which large numbers of provincial Armenians had for Russia was not a consequence of any abstract love for Russia or the policies it pursued but of the total alienation they felt from the Ottoman government. This sympathy was solidified at the outbreak of the war of 1877-1878. The government lost all credibility, and in the eyes of the provincial people, any claim to their allegiance when the sultan unleashed irregular Kurdish forces on the Armenian people in the name of mobilization.³⁸

The Armenian missions to San Stefano and Berlin, following the defeat of the Ottoman armies in 1878, sought to use the threat of large-scale Russian annexation to secure reforms for the Armenian provinces.

The leaders of the Christian millets were involved in the international maneuvers from the beginning of the war. The Porte had allowed millet leaders to visit the British ambassador to assure him of the dedication and loyalty of their flocks to the Ottoman state and to disclaim Russian charges of mistreatment of Christians. Patriarch Varjapetian, who had been recently decorated by the sultan, performed this duty and caused much furor.³⁹ During his visit with the British ambassador, it seems that Varjapetian either did not discuss Armenian grievances, as the British Blue Book implied, or the ambassador chose to disregard any comments Varjapetian might have made beyond the expressions of loyalty, as Varjapetian insinuated later. The political council of the National Assembly probably had this interview in mind when it questioned Varjapetian on the heightened state of insecurity in the provinces. The patriarch assured the council that the Blue Book misrepresented his position:

You know what the policy of our nation is: I have stated many times since I became patriarch that our nation is an inseparable part of the Ottoman state and that our well-being is in its progress of reform; the only complaint that our people have is in regard to the outrages committed against the provincial Armenians. Against this even our government is fighting ... How is it possible to state that there is no lawlessness or oppression in Turkey when even the ministry and his majesty the Sultan confess to the existence of abuses and to the necessity of eliminating them? ... Finally, our nation is loyal to the state but at the same time is critical of the abuses and hopeful of their abatement.⁴⁰

The Ottoman armies were defeated and Russia appeared as the sole master of the Ottoman state. Varjapetian became immersed in international diplomacy. He went to San Stefano to press for reforms in Western Armenia and pressed his case with the victorious Russians. He succeeded temporarily. Article 16 of the Treaty of San Stefano made the withdrawal of Russian armies from the Eastern provinces or Western Armenia contingent upon the realization of Armenian reforms. The sultan used the dissatisfaction of England and France with Russian advances to have the San Stefano Treaty renegotiated. To achieve his goal, the sultan signed the Cyprus Convention; in return for British support for renegotiation, the sultan accepted British control of Cyprus.⁴¹ The British entry into the scene as a counterbalancing force against the Russians created doubts on the wisdom of the policy to rely solely on the Russians. Varjapetian urged the National Assembly to adjourn until the situation cleared. The Assembly did so reluctantly, but not before giving Varjapetian a vote of confidence that would allow him to take whatever measures he deemed appropriate to defend the interests of the community.⁴²

It became necessary to take the case to all European governments. Varjapetian sent a delegation to Western capitals and eventually to Berlin, where the last of the European Concert congresses was to convene in the summer of 1878 for the purpose of renegotiating the Treaty of San Stefano. The delegation was headed by Khrimian; its purpose was to ensure the survival of at least the reform provisions in the new treaty. The proposal the Armenian delegation circulated—they were not allowed to participate in the conference—called for the granting of administrative autonomy to the Western Armenian provinces.⁴³ The Congress of Berlin convened to minimize the losses of the Ottoman Empire and the effects of the Russian victory. Armenian reforms were considered in the latter category. Hence a new provision, Article 61, of the Treaty of Berlin provided for general reforms in the Eastern Ottoman provinces. With the agreement for immediate withdrawal of Russian armies from all conquered territories, except the district of Kars and a few minor areas, the implementation of reforms was left to the sultan. The only requirement from the signatories of the treaty was that the Porte report periodically to the Western powers on the steps taken in that direction.⁴⁴

The Significance of Article 61

The Congress of Berlin and Article 61 of the Treaty of Berlin are engulfed in confusion and controversy regarding the meaning, effects, and lessons of the experience. Some of the confusion is a consequence of the nature of great power rivalries. While the military battle was won by Russia, the latter was hardly the victor in the struggle. In the wider context, the Ottoman Empire waged a proxy war for the western camp led by Great Britain. Hence, the internationalization of the issue of reforms is a mere extension of the already active forces into an even more formidable arena in which Armenians had still less influence. The birth of the Armenian Question, as an issue, which would occasionally invite the attention of Western powers, did not alter the relative position of the main groups and ideas that regulated the course of the reform movement itself. In fact, the return to Hamidian despotism, the changes in Russian foreign policy, and the end of concert diplomacy—changes which cannot be ascribed to Article 61--were far more consequential for the fate of Armenians than the addition of another aspect of the essentially European problem known as the Eastern Question.

For the Sultan, who had dismissed the parliament, the provision for reforms was the kind of intervention in Ottoman affairs, which could not be tolerated, as opposed to the concession of Cyprus, for example, which could be rationalized by one's priorities. For the European powers, the Armenian Question as embodied in Article 61 could be used alternately as a face-saving device and a lever for further intervention, or they could ignore it altogether with impunity.

More complex and varied were the interpretations given to Article 61 by Armenians. For a political cause that produced few universally accepted heroes and even fewer successes, the temptation to simplify is great. Diplomatic maneuvering had become a symbol of political success, of sheer stupidity, or of hollow promises. Some Armenians saw in Article 61 the excuse, which the Ottoman government was seeking to massacre them; others found in it the legitimation of their demands and the international recognition of their plight.⁴⁵ Varjapetian thought the article adopted at the Congress of Berlin might prove to be more beneficial than that formulated in San Stefano. One deputy, however, thought the patriarch and his representatives had been duped by the Sultan to rely on the British for support of their proposals rather than the Russians. According to this interpretation, Armenians lost Russian support because reforms became a British project; and, as such, the issue was settled to the advantage of the Porte.⁴⁶

Most Armenians had mixed feelings. Euphoria and disappointment alternated as events failed to clarify the significance of this attempt at international diplomacy. Periods of inaction and European silence on the matter brought depression and pessimism, while with the slightest sign of Western interest turned the skeptics into believers in Article 61.

One group of leaders headed by Patriarch Varjapetian and Bishop Maghakia Ormanian considered Article 61 an important step in the long-standing effort to bring about the realization of the liberal dream. Varjapetian stated that considering this was the first attempt at high diplomacy, Armenians did not fare too badly.⁴⁷ It is possible that Varjapetian opted for this qualified yet positive evaluation of the Armenian efforts in order to counter criticism of his policies. Given the diplomatic victory, which the Treaty of Berlin gave the sultan, a number of notables charged that the patriarch had endangered the community by his association with the Russians. The critique of the notables served to distance themselves from that policy: they charged that the patriarch had acted without consulting the Assembly and its political council and that his actions had not been in the best interest of the nation.⁴⁸ Varjapetian, however, considered the sultan's refusal to accept his resignation as an adequate response to that charge.⁴⁹

For Varjapetian, enlightenment and progress were the main goals of any Armenian political action. Varjapetian assured his people that he was optimistic regarding the future of the Armenians, even though the Congress of Berlin did not provide for an autonomous Armenia. The international concern for Armenia, as expressed in Article 61, assured a rush toward the exploitation of the natural resources of the land, he thought. Varjapetian was convinced British capital would invade the region soon. The immediate task of the nation was to ensure that Armenian capital from coastal cities and Europe gained ownership and control of resources in Armenia and brought progress and enlightenment, and therefore, a better life. The nation was invited to send to Ottoman Armenia its best teachers and preachers, its best industrialists and doctors, and its financiers. Most of all, capital and culture, both Western commodities, were to be Armenianized to achieve what diplomacy and begging could not.⁵⁰

This was the pinnacle of the bourgeois program of nation-building in western Armenian political thought. The guarantee of its success was based, according to its advocates, on the sense of unity, which the program would inspire. In the absence of an adequate strategy, unity became the panacea for the problems of an institutional structure condemned by its own impotence.

It was Bishop Ormanian who devoted much time to the problem of unity. Ormanian was one of the most active, educated, bright, and ambitious clergymen in modern Armenian history. He was originally educated as a Catholic priest; later he rejoined the Armenian Apostolic Church and became one of its luminaries. In a public lecture delivered less than a year after the Congress of Berlin on the subject of “Unity of Armenians,” the future patriarch suggested that denominational differences could not be obliterated since these were matters of conscience, but that tolerance could bring about practical unity. And since the National Constitution was never specified as a document applicable exclusively to Apostolic Armenians, it could easily be regarded by Catholic and Protestant Armenian communities as the basis for a national administrative structure.⁵¹

Ormanian also argued that the dispersion of Armenians within the Ottoman Empire was the result of a historical process; tax structures and profits had led many Armenians to live in different parts of the empire; yet Armenia could be construed to be a historical location, while the Armenian program could include any location where Armenians had a substantial presence. The other major division among Armenians that of subjection to different states, was not very relevant. First, argued Ormanian, nothing could be done about it and, second, because all three empires that had jurisdiction over Armenian territories—the Russian, Ottoman, and Persian—allowed the existence of the Armenian people and recognized its Church.⁵² “It is time to go beyond the abstract-intellectual content of the terms Armenianism and Armenian unity and give them a real, sensible, practical, basic, administrative, and local meaning,’ argued Ormanian.⁵³

In the same lecture Ormanian urged provincial Armenians to take the initiative in their own hands and not expect everything from the sultan. The basis of the initiative would be the desire for reform. This desire should be instilled among all Armenians: “If a person is inspired by the issue of reforms, then he would not consider it unworthy of him to labor [in Armenia), he would not consider it worthless to do commerce there and help the arts flourish, or be a landlord and landowner there.”⁵⁴

Ormanian developed his ideas further in a lecture delivered in 1880 on the responsibilities of the youth. He urged provincial Armenians and particularly the young to learn reading as well as other technical skills. But it was necessary that Armenians do the teaching since, if Europeans did it, they would also be the ones to benefit: “Those who know how to establish their interests in that

land, I can assure, that the land will know how to reward its benefactors. Blessed are those who will be the first to undertake that task, since not only will they have given content to patriotism and be praised for it, but also because they will reap the profit of their endeavors and labor.”⁵⁵ Thus, financial and spiritual rewards were offered as bait to an Armenian bourgeoisie which, ostensibly in competition against European and especially British capital for Ottoman Armenian markets and resources, would have an objective incentive to develop the infrastructure necessary for the creation of an enlightened Armenian society.

Varjapetian’s reconciliation with the Porte and the transfer of the basis of his optimism from diplomacy to capital and culture were not justified by subsequent events. And Ormanian’s “politics of the possible,” as he characterized his own approach, turned out to be even less practical.⁵⁶ History does not record an influx of Armenian capital or manpower to the provinces. Armenian capital remained in the coastal cities. A partially comprador bourgeoisie, particularly one closely tied to British commerce, was hardly independent enough to launch a program of nation-building.⁵⁷ The capital accumulated by individual Armenians failed to produce a capital that would labor for the Armenian collective. A program based on education and capital might have been useful as a long-range solution to the problems of illiteracy and backwardness but were hardly sufficient when most merchants could trace their roots, immediate and distant, to those very provinces whence they or their forefathers had escaped.

The argument about economic development remained standard policy long after it had been proven ineffective, and long after it had become devoid of the conviction of their earlier proponents. In 1880 Armenian representatives from Mush visited the patriarch in Constantinople to express their exasperation with the conditions, which had failed to improve over the years. After a warning against militant or revolutionary activities, the patriarch sermonized that the proper path was “to develop and dominate economically.”⁵⁸

The traditional leadership, strongly supported by the conservative elements, concluded that it had been too hasty in mourning the death of the sultanate and had gone too far in the name of liberalism and reforms in the provinces. Although the National Assembly expressed full confidence in the wisdom of the diplomacy carried by Varjapetian and forced a dissenting deputy to resign, its members also felt they had run out of acceptable alternatives. For over four decades they had shifted their energies and beliefs from reforms in the court to reforms in the millet, and

finally to reforms in the empire, all the while attempting to retain a defensible position from the Ottoman viewpoint. The deputies of the National Assembly had registered modest gains but failed in the long run. In a final surge of vigor they formulated the demands for a territorially-limited set of reforms and along the way passed the burden on to “civilized Europe”...certainly an adversary more worthy of the sultan. After 1878 they recoiled to their earlier policy of caution, passivity and deference to the narrower limits of the millet system. The capital community could make its peace with the state. it accepted without objection the order from the Porte to the patriarchate and the National Assembly not to meddle in affairs which were outside its jurisdiction: the millet leadership could present takrirs (petitions) regarding churches and monasteries, but not political matters.⁵⁹ The Assembly expressed its intention to remain within prescribed limits by requesting that Ottoman censors stop the publication of the Constantinople newspaper *Meghu*, The maverick newspaper editors had dared criticize the National Assembly for its inaction regarding the status of Armenians in the provinces.⁶⁰

Varjapetian sensed that the Assembly’s chance to act effectively was gone, although he had risked so much to achieve the contrary goal by raising the issue of Armenian reforms to the level of international diplomacy. The last in the long line of clergymen-diplomats in Armenian history, Varjapetian had used all the goodwill and credibility he had in order to align on the side of Armenians the only powers that could pressure the Porte to act favorably. He had defended his actions and policies strenuously; he also took full responsibility for them. Varjapetian thought he had the best combination of circumstances to succeed: the trust of the sultan, the support of the leadership, and the people in support of a good cause. As time went on and the Porte successfully disregarded Western protests regarding the non-implementation of Article 61, Varjapetian resigned. The sultan refused to accept the resignation, thus checkmating the millet. Its most courageous patriarch was in power but was powerless to help the people.

The Liberal Impasse

The Sermon on the Sword

Bishop Mkrtych Khrimian, head of the Armenian delegation to the conference of Berlin, returned from Europe a disappointed man. From his pulpit he taught the Armenian people the hard lessons he had learned at the hands of the European diplomats. Khrimian expounded a simple message: that the European powers had not delivered the Armenians from their sufferings because Armenians had gone to Berlin as a band of supplicants with pleas inscribed on paper rather than as a people who had earned its salvation through sacrifice. In the most famous of his sermons delivered in Constantinople and elsewhere upon his return from Berlin in late 1878, he used the metaphor of the “iron ladle” to sound a call to arms: Armenians could not be served from the “dish of liberty” because they had with them just a petition, made of paper; the other small peoples, such as Serbians and Bulgars, had “iron ladles.” “There is no room for supplications or petitions when matters are decided by guns,” Khrimian argued.¹

Coming from the man they all called *Hayrik* (father), the sermon’s message and metaphor captivated the imagination of the masses. Historians and writers in general have seen in the sermon not only a diagnosis of the Armenian predicament, but also a prescription that produced the Armenian revolution.

There are still many unanswered questions regarding Khrimian’s sermon on the necessity to take up arms. Why had earlier calls, including several by Khrimian himself, gone unnoticed and largely unheeded? And why, once they were heeded, did Khrimian remain aloof from the revolutionary groups and parties that initiated guerrilla war against the Ottoman regime? If he himself was not ready for armed opposition, why did he abandon diplomacy, when Article 61 of the Treaty of Berlin, however ineffective, served as a potent rallying point and diplomatic weapon in the hands of other Armenians, including revolutionaries?

Other issues raised by his sermon remain obscure as well. Who, for example, was supposed to take up arms? Was Khrimian calling for a popular rebellion, organized revolutionary struggle, or individual self-defense? Was he calling for the adoption of violent methods as a tactic

or strategy? What were the implications of an armed Armenian struggle for Western Europe or the Ottoman Empire? While some answers can be attempted, it is important to note that the ambiguities and conflicts within Khrimian's message transcended the immediate circumstances and would characterize the development of the revolutionary phase of the liberation movement as well.

Some of the answers can be found in the contradictions in Khrimian's own life. This international representative and inspirer of masses lacked any formal education and knew no European languages. What he had learned of Western thought had been through Armenian translations. He was steeped in the Bible, sacred texts, and Armenian historians of the ancient and medieval periods. His wisdom was derived from the internalization of his people's experience through biblical rather than political categories.²

Throughout his career, beginning as the founder and editor of the original journal *Ardsvi Vaspurakan* in 1858 in Van, and long before he came to be known as Hayrik, Khrimian made occasional references to the need for Armenians to arm themselves. In 1861 he thought the spirit of the times invited peoples to make revolutions.³ Later, as patriarch, he advised impoverished peasants who had flocked in Constantinople to return to their provinces with arms and protect their families and whatever lands they still possessed instead of wasting their lives in the most demeaning jobs in the capital.⁴ But he refused to support any of the organized revolutionary activities or groups.⁵ The Hnchakians, who came closest to receiving support from him, also accused him of spending the party money they trusted him on *pantukhts* (migrant workers); Khrimian, on the other hand, spent his own meager resources to assist imprisoned Hnchakians on an individual basis.⁶

Khrimian has confused his biographers by his personality as well. For example, he could hold no grudge against a Kurd who was hired to assassinate him, although he had identified the nomadic Kurds as the major source of troubles of the poor.⁷ As chairman of the relief committee organized to assist the famine-stricken Armenians in the provinces following the 1877-78 war, he did not discriminate between starving Armenians, Kurds, and Turks, an attitude that irritated some benefactors.⁸

Another source of confusion are the metaphors and images he used to relay important messages and concepts. While his style projects a sense of pride in his humble origins and an

identification with the common people, Khrimian's language is not one that can be transposed into the arena of political analysis without distorting the truth underlying the message.

For Khrimian, conflicts in society were manifestations of the basic conflict between good and evil. His vision of society as articulated in his *Papik ev tornik* (Grandfather and Grandson) was one of an idyllic agrarian community where a hierarchical social order would be justified by tradition and tempered by mutual responsibilities between the group, the family, and the individual, and where happiness was the performance of the role assigned to the individual by God, nature, and tradition.⁹

His sermons and writings focused on the concepts of progress, education, freedom, self-consciousness, and human dignity. For Khrimian these terms were interchangeable; they all led to the "salvation" of his people. He saw himself as patriarch and prophet. His uttering did not have to be rational, coherent, nor comprehensive; their meaning and unity were rooted in simple moral principles.¹⁰

Khrimian could describe with unending patience and in great detail the feelings, thoughts, and above all sufferings of his flock of peasants while simultaneously indulging in descriptions of their ultimate happiness in an ideal society. The people appreciated his understanding, but mostly his care and love; his biblical language and parables not only articulated their troubles but also gave them the ultimate legitimacy, that of the Bible. His love of his people and his love for Christ, as well as his patriotism and desire for progress, existed in a world that for him was in itself coherent.

That coherence was shattered when good and evil ceased to be abstract concepts and took life in individuals and institutions. Khrimian was unable to explain the birth of evil.¹¹ Political realities ultimately created a conflict between patriotism and Christianity. Patriotism dictated armed opposition when diplomacy failed, but his religion proscribed the use of violence. His "two loves," as he dubbed patriotism and Christianity, were not easily reconciled.¹² In Khrimian's sermon the conflict was resolved with the individualization of the issue. Each man would decide for himself to take up arms and defend his honor, family, and property. It was hardly a call for a mass resistance or organized revolution. Just as his identification with his fellow men recognized no intermediaries—as patriarch he was never comfortable governing through the Assembly—his invitation for self-defense was also a matter of conscience. Organizations would merely impinge

upon the mystical relationship he had with the people he represented.¹³ More than a decade later Khrimian referred to the confusion surrounding his sermon by disclaiming responsibility for any of the Hnchakian inspired activities. Rather than explain what he meant, Khrimian stated what he did not mean by his metaphor:

I know that I am accused often and my name is mentioned repeatedly in connection with that sermon... Khrimian is still convinced that no nation can make its voice heard without force. But Khrimian did not say that it is possible to have the Armenian people rise up and free itself from oppression “with a couple of *shishkhane*, *chakhmakhli* or *surmeli* guns”; he did not say that it will be possible to bring the Ottoman Empire to its knees or with a couple of demonstrations have the bastard European diplomacy side with the Armenian people.¹⁴

At best, Khrimian’s message remained vague, as he did not say what he did mean.

Other leaders were hardly more explicit.¹⁵ men such as Otian were impressed by the actions of Balkan peoples and made oblique remarks on the use of force. Founded on questionable parallels between the Armenian and Balkan peoples, these messages never matured from evocative into political statements. Comparison with the Balkans was a pretext for masked criticism of Armenian liberalism. These were hardly prescriptive analysis or political programs.

After delivering his sermons in churches packed with the faithful across the country, Khrimian returned to his native van, away from the centers of power and controversy. As part of a general crackdown on potential troublemakers, in 1885 he was asked by the Ottoman authorities to leave Van and return to Constantinople. While in the capital, he participated in a celebration that included longwinded toasts to the important personalities in the empire. When the final toast was made to Khrimian himself, the crowd, watching the event behind the iron fence, cheered for Khrimian. Khrimian found enough courage to make a toast to the people, “a word inscribed in my heart from the “beginning.” Had it not been for the people, “rulers would have no one to rule over and everyone else would have no food to eat.”¹⁶ Khrimian was exiled at once to Jerusalem. He accepted the decision with much grace, fearful that the government might retaliate by taking away the little freedom Armenians still had.

For Khrimian the Conference of Berlin was a nightmare. During his exile in Jerusalem or thereafter Khrimian rarely dwelt on his experience in Berlin or the significance of Article 61. Khrimian still believed that the Ottoman system provided the political framework best suited to

the Armenian situation¹⁷ and that Armenians should seek equality and justice within its structures rather than within an independent state.¹⁸

As the years passed, many others, among them his admirers, questioned the wisdom of having sent an Armenian delegation to Berlin and the fitness of having selected Khrimian as delegation leader. Khrimian doubted neither decision.¹⁹ Political or diplomatic intricacies were of no consequence for a man who made a crusade out of the cause of the people and who believed in the universal language of tears as a means to communicate with Western diplomats before leaving for Berlin.

Khrimian, as well as his students and associates, had been able to find in religious texts the legitimation of their discontent. The government had sought in religion the apoliticization of the masses; Khrimian discovered in it the articulation of a political crises. As a consequence of its religious origin, Western Armenian political thought often slipped into moralism. And while moralism clarified the categories of good and evil in political life, it failed to provide the intellectual mechanism by which the will to live in dignity could be translated into alternative strategies and institutions. Armenians were left thus with the sole satisfaction of self-righteousness, and much self-pity.

That Khrimian's sermon should have had such mixed significance to his discontented contemporaries is an indication of the vacillation in their minds between autonomy and independence, force and diplomacy, revolt and self-defense. Khrimian was a much needed symbol for the transformation from discontentment into revolution, but the cause of this transformation must be sought elsewhere.

The Politics of Culture

Following the Congress of Berlin, the problems in the eastern provinces haunted urban Armenians. Although Patriarch Nerses Varjabetian, Bishop Malachia Ormanian, and other optimists were unable to inspire capitalists, industrialists, and merchants to exploit, enrich, and otherwise enlighten Western Armenia, their exhortations were partially responsible for the founding of a number of educational and cultural societies organized for the purpose of financing new schools and providing teachers for their provincial brethren. Societies such as *Araratian* and

Dprotsasirats were in many respects similar to the educational groups of the 1840s and 1860s, which were aimed at Armenians in Constantinople.²⁰

The new societies, which eventually merged to form the influential *Miatsial Enkerutiun* (united society), differed from earlier groups in two ways.²¹ First, in the 1880s, at a time when the government was more sensitive to Armenian politicization, more of a political commitment was needed even to talk of Armenia and Armenians. Second, the new societies were aiming their efforts specifically toward the provincial masses. These societies constituted practically the only urban elements to take to heart the much discussed slogan “*Depi Hayastan*” or (toward Armenia).²² This increased the potential for radicalization of the movement once it reached the “backward” provinces. To say the least, the character of the movement differed from what its promoters had advocated; Mkrtych Portukalian and Martiros Sareyan, the two most prominent teachers who left Constantinople and taught in Van and Mush respectively, epitomized the urban intellectual, critical of the corruption and superficiality in the city and the hypocrisy, moral decay, and snobbery of its inhabitants. Portukalian and Sareyan idealized the provincial Armenian and the village, as had Russian intellectuals in the “to the people” movement.²³ Yet their dedication was not to the agricultural form of production. Their ideals remained quite urbane, and their message was still cultural; at least they believed so. The two wanted to bring “light and progress” to the deprived provinces through education, which was seen as the essential basis for development in society.

Although it collected taxes for that purpose, the Ottoman state had failed to provide for a system of primary education. That responsibility was assumed by the community in the early nineteenth century, and the Armenian National Constitution of 1863 had made primary education a right for all Armenian children. But very little had been achieved by 1878. The development of such schools in the provinces required assistance from the National Assembly in Constantinople, and provincial assemblies had not received such assistance.²⁴

The new teachers believed that in order to undertake this giant task, they needed to motivate the people; and to achieve that, people needed to believe in the future, to have self-respect, and to build self-confidence. These could be realized if Armenians were reminded of their heritage, their long history of associations with universal values and progressive countries, and their own participation in the creation of early cultures. The achievements of the past and

pride in them could be thus harnessed to mount a major drive toward literacy and enlightenment, necessary tools to fight poverty and backwardness.²⁵

Raising national consciousness became a precondition for raising the standard of living. The proponents of this course of action had come to identify cultural, technological, and literary success through the national units of Europe; the most progressive societies, the ones that conceived and practiced enlightenment and progress, characterized themselves as national units and ascribed their successes to their national genius. Ultimately, within the context of a transposed liberalism, the ideals of national equality and justice were seen simply as another dimension of the essential goal of social progress. Cultural awakening was necessary to motivate Armenians to raise their standard of living and to show them to be worthy of being called a nation.

Portukalian, Sareyan and others less known were not naive enough to believe their approach was devoid of political content or implication. Nor were they altogether innocent of visions of political grandeur for their people. But the equation between suffering and backwardness as a cultural problem remained the basis of their commitment; after all, they were too aware of the limits of their potential and continued to function within the framework of the millet structure. Finally, when they started their educational activities in the provinces, they became convinced that they were less of a threat to the state than high clergymen such as Varjapetian in Constantinople, who had openly negotiated with the enemy and advocated autonomy for Western Armenia while still enjoying the confidence of the Ottoman government.

The liberal belief in the perfectibility of man had also led them to postulate that there could be no serious objection to enlightenment even on the part of an unenlightened government. As progress and education were the ultimate goal, the conflicting relationships between culture and politics did not have to be and were not resolved in the minds of Potukalian and Sareyan.²⁶

But the Ottoman government and Armenian provincial masses did not have the same liberal credo as the nexus of their worldview. Each for its own reasons perceived the goals of enlightenment and progress essentially as political. These two elements were closer to defining the character of Armeno-Turkish relations than the liberal element, since the ultimate result of the changes sought would be a change in the relationship between conqueror and conquered, between ruler and subject, i.e., between central government and provincial masses. This relationship led the

provincial Armenians first to politicize culture and then to radicalize that politics; and it led the Ottoman government to institute organized repression.

The Politicization of Culture

The ethnic identity of Armenians in the provinces was rooted in historical territoriality. The resident of Van did not need to labor at cultural edifices or intellectual definitions in order to assert a link between himself and history. Dead heroes and living legends served to integrate the physical environment of mountains, valleys, and rivers into the cultural environment that included ancient fortresses and medieval monasteries. The debt the peasant owed to the land of Armenia was neither culturally inspired nor politically negotiable: it was and had been for his forefathers throughout centuries the source of his livelihood.²⁷

This identity was not, therefore, in and by itself an acceptance or rejection of Ottoman rule; the territorial link was neither a threat to nor a confirmation of Ottoman territorial integrity. It was the most simple relationship between man and nature and evolved from the basic activity of labor consecrated by time.

The politics of the rural people was simple although not necessarily simplistic. It hinged around land, water, harvest, and taxation; as elsewhere, the goal of the peasantry was to create an environment where the preservation of traditional norms was possible and desirable for each successive generation, and where change was manageable. All else was judged by those standards. Distant figures and events in national or international politics were reduced to legend and thus made comprehensible. Legends included words uttered by kings and foreign potentates that were transposed into local dialects and measured against accepted wisdom. Local wisdom was ready, though, to amplify and analyze the significance of events, which had relevance to their own affairs.

Whether there to oppress or to assist, the outsider had to adjust to the world of the peasant and, to some extent, become a part of it. Culture there had meaning only if understood in its widest sense; therefore, it was neither too far nor too alienated from the sense of politics.

Thus the religious-ethnic definition of the Armenian imposed by the Ottoman system and glorified in the capital had not really pervaded the depth of consciousness of the Armenians in the provinces. To be sure, the millet and the mental structures that surrounded it were still the

framework within which the formal aspects of life were regulated and through which the Armenian adjusted to and explained the daily policies and routine practices of the ruling group. But in the provinces, especially in those areas with the least amount of formal cultural development, political-economic oppression meant cultural oppression. The corollary was also true. Cultural enlightenment was understood as, and objectively required, political change; cultural pride was not dissociated from political self-respect.

The middle class and associated clergy continued to believe that culture, economy, and politics were distinct activities in life as alien to each other as their professions often were from the course of Ottoman policies and developments. The provincial Armenian, more dependent on domestic laws, practices, and conditions, could not afford such delusions. The patriotism of the Armenian peasant and town dweller, who often lived near rural life, consisted of simple attachment to a land invested with historical and spiritual significance; patriotism was a natural part of his identity. That patriotism was also different from its corresponding feeling in the capital. There, it was reduced to being active in any of the community institutions such as the church, the school, or the glorified group called the National Assembly that presided over these institutions. The *azgasirutium* (love of nation) in Constantinople was a substitute for the *hayrenasirutium* (love of fatherland) of the provinces.²⁸

That sense of patriotism was injured before and after the war. Fires of suspicious origin burned down the Armenian sector of markets in a number of cities, including Van in 1876.²⁹ Land grabbing was becoming a common occurrence in the Diarbekir and Van provinces.³⁰ But it was the war itself that most devastated the economy and fuelled the patriotism of provincial Armenians. Ottoman armies passed through Armenian provinces as if the latter were being conquered anew: crops were destroyed, civilians were treated cruelly, and extraordinarily harsh demands for provisions turned requisitions policy into official, organized looting. Western Armenians were filled more with the outrage against the Turkish soldiers than with the celebrated sympathies toward the Russian armies. It was as if Armenians, as Christians, were being punished for the sins of the Balkan or Slavic Christians. It was to these people that Portukalian, Sareyan, and the others went to speak of enlightenment and progress, of national pride and achievement. It should have been no surprise that as soon as Western pressure decreased, the Porte, under the leadership of the sultan, adopted a policy of systematic repression.

Sultan Abdul Hamid II lacked the commitment of some of his predecessors to social and political reforms. He perceived his role primarily as the embattled dynast of a once powerful empire threatened by foreign encroachments; the millions of subjects of different religious and ethnic backgrounds whose welfare depended on his policies were significant only in relation to the higher and narrower goal of the survival of the state and preservation of the *status quo*,³¹ He was open to modernization in those areas which strengthened the army and the power of the state.

Abdul Hamid II shunned internal reforms through the use of a number of ideological tools: the representation of the state as the embodiment of the caliphate and therefore beyond social and political accountability; the representation of the empire as victim of Christian imperialism at the expense of its character as victimizer of its subjects; the cooptation of Turkish bureaucrats and intellectuals critical of his rule within the state apparatus, which resulted in the isolation of the non-Turks and the Christians from the similarly, though not equally, oppressed Turkish elements, thus ascribing discontent to “Christian” or external causes; and the association of Armenians with the troublesome Bulgarian people.³²

The view of Ottoman society, where the non-Turkish and non-muslim subjects acquire significance only as a threat to the state and hindrance to the state’s more transcendental aspirations, was certainly not unique in Abdul Hamid. Even the sultans who favored reforms under the Tanzimat did not project equality of religious and ethnic groups under the law. But other sultans at least recognized the inherent legitimacy of some of the complaints of Christian subjects and tried to emulate in their toleration and magnanimity the rulers of the golden, more secure days of the Ottoman sultanate. There was at least a tacit acceptance of the notion that the state might benefit from a more satisfied populace.

Abdul Hamid II systematically transformed the evils that preyed on powerless subjects in a corrupt society into regular tools of repression. Having weathered the near calamity of the Russo-Turkish war of 1877-78 with relatively little territorial loss, the sultan made a choice to deal with internal discontent by suppressing its symptoms and debilitating whatever power of expression remained available to the discontented.

The Sultan abrogated the Ottoman Constitution after the war started and did not call parliament back until forced to do so in 1908.³³ He introduced administrative redistricting in the provinces to dilute the statistics reflecting the concentration of Armenians in the eastern

provinces.³⁴ The government encouraged the nomadic Kurds to prey on Armenian villages, a policy of aggression which, even without government support, constituted the deepest source of immediate discontent for rural Armenians; normal life was constantly disrupted by largely unpunished brigandage, looting, kidnappings, rape, and murders.³⁵ Armenian life in the provinces was further disrupted by the government's policy of resettlement in the Armenia plateau of Muslim refugees. Circassians and other Turkic groups emigrating from Russian occupied or newly severed districts of the empire were moved into the eastern provinces largely at the expense of the Armenian peasants. Grabbing the land of the Armenian became as common as the kidnapping of women and children.³⁶ There were even incidents of peasants turned into serfs or slaves on their own former lands.³⁷

Inefficiency and corruption within the bureaucracy, once an evil to be halted, were now encouraged to further inequality and to deprive Armenians and Christians of the minimum protection of the law once afforded by government courts. Increased taxation, now collected in scarce cash in distant villages, forced many peasants into debt peonage, loss of property, and emigration.³⁸ The state did not need new laws: to create a state of terror and to sap the will to struggle it just sought the unequal application of just laws and zealous application of unjust ones.

Almost too conscious of the extent of the disruptions of their own policies, the Porte and its officials saw revolution and rebellion in every Armenian action in the provinces. There was no private or individual act that did not acquire an exaggerated political significance imposed upon it. Any incident of self-defense by an Armenian was regarded as an act of rebellion; every Armenian became suspect.³⁹ New laws and administrative regulations were needed to combat cultural nationalism and those promoting it. The Porte forbade the use words it considered subversive, such as "*Hayastan*" (Armenia) in print⁴⁰ or the printing, sale or ownership of pictures of King Leon V—very popular since he was the last of the Cilician, indeed Armenian, kings—to be reproduced, circulated, or owned.⁴¹ By 1886 a number of schools were closed in the provinces by the government; many teachers such as Portukalian and Sareyan and prelates such as Khrimian were exiled from their provincial centers of activity.⁴² Finally, the patriarchate was informed by the Porte that the Ottoman government would no longer accept from the patriarch or National Assembly any *takrirs* (petitions) that related to non-religious matters.⁴³

Ultimately, the efforts of the government backfired. Trying to prevent the politicization of culture by its complete suppression and to check radical discontent by politicizing of historical names and figures created heroes and martyrs out of ordinary people. Words uttered at great risk suddenly acquired magical power. For the new heroes, the act of being imprisoned, exiled, or punished by a hated government became more important and ingratiating than the original infraction of the law.

Eventually these incidents acquired a historical significance, but in the 1880s they were still individual cases, which no one could synthesize or interpret as the beginning of a revolution. At that time all that was clear was that the situation in the Armenian provinces was rapidly deteriorating and that the community was threatened on many fronts. In a long and bitter piece of correspondence Bishop Garegin Srvantstians, who had once purportedly dissuaded his compatriots from converting to Russian orthodoxy to secure protection, noted:

Although it is the compatriots in Akn who do not let me leave, the state of national affairs Constantinople and confused situation on the roads also are considerations in my decision to stay here a while longer. Let conferences, plenipotentiaries 66ers (sic, reference to those supporting Article 16 in the Treaty of San Stefano and 6lers [those supporting the article on Armenian reforms as found in the subsequent Treaty of Berlin] give and take, let writers and editors beat their drums without coming to their senses, without recognizing the ones who are actually pulling the strings and watching them fight, and without realizing who is in fact benefiting from the noise we are making. We see the paths of the foreigners and follow them, although our purpose is to reach our fatherland. The path of the foreigner leads to the city of the foreigner; yet we get there, we get tied down there, and then we tell our nation that that is the path to the fatherland. Even more amazing are those who knew the foreigner well and used to point out its snares to the nation warning us to run away; those same are sitting today in the meeting halls [of the foreigner] as agents from within and from without. There is no need to write their names; the ones who were close to you, you know well, the ones at a distance you called them glory-seekers. How many have we seen of the devoted who turned devotees of profit and glory; self-denying and patriotic ones who in the name of the Armenian question sought personal benefit and glory; those who secured their cuts from the funds collected for the starving only to declare themselves benefactors; those who funded schools for the benefit of their relatives and, having robbed the nation through fund raising, closed down the schools leaving to the nation only the blame for their own acts and the deficit of their spending. They planted a Catholicos in Sis and now are the throat of the nation; they assign the glory of Zion to the Patriarch but the debt to the nation; the prelates they have assigned to the largest sees, the nuncios and directives they have forwarded have resulted in parishes and districts that are unattended and in people subject to oppression; a number Armenians are rotting in prison, others are trampled upon by bandits; these [Armenians] are denied protection since speaking on their behalf and supplication are being left unanswered by the bareknam [the one who takes good care; adjective used for the Sultan]. Fallen materially and exhausted spiritually, times such as this I do not believe Armenians have had to endure. The wheel of 61 turns in many directions and some of the children are running behind it, falling in ditch after ditch. The wheel is turning North (usual form of reference to the Russian Empire). Finally the Catholicos, too, has decided to act [but] the commotion on that subject is meaningless. The murderous and roaming tribes from Russia are filling the Armenian provinces on his side; Armenians, cut off from the land and from the hope for land, are forced out ...⁴⁴

The letter was written in November 1883 to editor novelist Mateos Mamurian in Izmir. Beyond hopelessness the letter points to a relationship between corruption in community institutions and inadequacy at the diplomatic level; most importantly, it constitutes a summary of the criticism directed towards the liberal program of the Armenian middle class from the perspective of provincial Armenians and a few urban radicals.

The Critique of the Liberal Program

There had been a time when Srvantstians had hope for the future. In 1861 he had declared patriotism “the real root of all good” and defined “good” as the welfare of the community. Then he believed that common good could be achieved by people caring for each other: the rich helping the poor, the healthy caring for the sick, the older assisting the younger, and the fortunate looking after the unfortunate. At the time he merely pointed out what he thought were misconceptions that should be corrected:

I feel sorrier for those who, although educated, hold the foolish opinion that one’s fatherland is where he was born ... They say, “Here is our fatherland, where we acquired wealth, where we have properties and inheritances. I must work for this place, I must labor for the education of my children and for the progress of the city. We owe it to ourselves that our children grow up happy. Thank God we have our churches and masses, beautiful scenery, spots of entertainment, and the means to have a good time. And we feel secure. This is our fatherland, the comfort that we seek.”⁴⁵

It gradually became clear that conflicting interests rather than harmony dominated the Armenian community. By the 1860s, for example, the contrast between urban and rural life had become a major theme in Armenian journalism. At the height of the debate over the ratification of the National Constitution, Khrimian’s monthly journal in Van published an imaginary dialogue between a city dweller and a peasant. While the article highlighted the importance each group had for the economy and the general welfare of society, the purpose of the dialogue was to present the case for a larger share of seats in the National Assembly for provincial Armenians. To the scorn and haughtiness shown by the urban dweller, the peasant charged, “Your laws are like traps in which the poor and the weak peasants are caught. You suck our blood like spiders through bribery, restrictive measures, prohibitions, and other forms of injustice.”⁴⁶ In this portrayal, the city was the home of money seeking hypocrites who professed but did not live by the liberal creed; of

power hungry clerics; of journalists who were more impressed and moved by the parliamentary rhetoric of Gladstone than the utter poverty and wretchedness of most Armenians surrounding them; of middle class parvenus who spoke loudly of philanthropy but spent most of their money on dresses and who believed to have saved the nation by having organized more dances.⁴⁷ Mateos Mamurian, the Izmir-based journalist and author who was once chairman of the National Assembly's executive committee, concluded that nothing could be expected from Constantinople, since leaders there were too busy fighting each other and informing on each other to the government.⁴⁸ Even then Khrimian had conceded that "Constantinople must be the focus of the Armenian political power since it is the seat of the sultan," although he invited Armenians there to make Western Armenia the focus of their attention.⁴⁹

In 1862 Srvantstians could only be more than cynical about the leadership of the millet writing on the practice of torture, he asked:

Does the government have the right to torture? Of course not. But who is objecting, who is knocking at the government's door? Where are the intermediaries, where are the modern leaders, the leaders of the nation? Thank God we have them, but they are being cautious.⁵⁰

By 1881 the challenge to the right of Constantinople to lead Armenians had reached serious proportions. Arsen Tokhmakhian, a student who toured the provinces and published his thoughts, reasoned:

The Western intelligentsia is in Constantinople. They are fine people, writers and rhetoricians. But they are living in an imaginary world. They are solely concerned with the Patriarchate and the National Assembly. They declare each other great and they dub each other geniuses. But what have they done to deserve those adjectives?⁵¹

The criticism of Constantinople and its culture also led to a further distinction between "hayrenasirutiu" (love of fatherland) and "azgasirutiu" (love of nation). While the first advanced the people as the dominant and dynamic force, the latter focused on the concept of nation as an abstract and timeless entity. Quite early in his career Srvantstians and others had pointed out that culture, however enlightened, cannot supplant the collective of individuals in defining Armenian concerns and identity; thus "true patriotism" required a change in focus:

Our fatherland is where our history, our heroes, and our saints are. It is the people there that make our fatherland real with their sufferings. It is they who need and are worthy of assistance. Had it not been for the *Hayastantsi* [the provincials living in Armenia], Armenia would have turned by now to a thing of the imagination.⁵²

The conditions in the provinces foisted upon the people a program of social-economic change as a political necessity rather than cultural luxury. A “people,” when inspired by patriotism, accepts as premise the presence of conflicting interests within the nation, and seeks to understand its ramifications. History had one significance for the liberal “azgaser”s and another for their critics, the “Patriots.” The urban middle class needed history to legitimize the right for a distinct culture. In the provinces history was assigned the task of motivating the masses to transcend their socioeconomic condition. History had to explain not only backwardness but also the obstacles to progress. It was Khrimian again who looked for the legitimation of change in the past, which for him began with the Bible. The Bible allowed him to be critical of all existing political authority. Through his student, Srvantstians, he asserted: “God did not create the enlightened soul so that it is kept in the dark, and he did not condemn any nation to slavery. Let us become like Adam [in the Bible].”⁵³ Another of Khrimian’s students proclaimed; “Only national history gives life to dead souls.”⁵⁴ The student presented a long list of Armenian heroes from Hayk to Tigran, and expected this knowledge to have a liberating effect on all Armenians.

Khrimian himself used history effectively to recreate the dilemma of the nation. In an imaginary conversation between a “Glory-seeker” and a “patriot,” Khrimian presented the quintessential Armenian political issue while discussing the fifth century Armenian revolt against the Persian Empire:

Glory-seeker:

Was it not the patriotic Vardan who got into something above his head and caused the death of thousands of young men?

Patriot:

For the welfare of my people I am willing to sacrifice everything. If Armenia had not been covered with the blood of young men, the Armenian people would not have blossomed now.⁵⁵

By elevating the welfare of the people above all other considerations, Khrimian characterized the shift in Armenian political thought from an abstract nationalism to concrete populism, although he

was not to be the one to articulate the populist program. Khrimian and the provincial intelligentsia of the 1860s and 70s were unable to shed their original belief in goodwill and benevolence inspired by an unadulterated Christianity. Others were more willing to project the existing conflicts and divisiveness into the past and learn new lessons. Arsen Tokhmakhian argued that a cohesive, undifferentiated, and idealized history which failed to link the desperate present with the distant, glorified past, a history that could not account for continuity as well as decline, was an obstacle to a clear vision of the future:

Ancient Armenians have never lived, never ruled as one nation, as children of one fatherland. They were divided into many tribes which eroded each others' strength in incessant struggles ... The turning point at which one can speak of an all-national idea came when the nakharar [feudal lord in ancient and medieval Armenia] and dynastic houses were eradicated from within, leaving behind the sorry consequences that are still with us ...⁵⁶

Tokhmakhian too wanted to glorify Armenians but had a different group in mind:

What has kept our nation going is the working class, not religion. It is the nation that has kept religion, and suffered because of it. While the Church was unable to keep the old colonies [communities established mainly in Eastern Europe after the fall of dynasties], the peasant was able to preserve the nation

...

I beg you to turn your attention to and study all aspects of the life of the peasants who constitute the root of nationhood; [I beg you] to know him and the world in which he lives, which is called fatherland.⁵⁷

Mateos Mamourian rejected the notion that history had, by some biological law, reduced Armenians to a mere cultural entity. He argued that “a people resembles those rivers which, while in the plain, occasionally run a quiet course, even disappear, running unseen in underground passages; then they suddenly burst out from the mountains and bring down with them stone and rock.”⁵⁸ In 1879 Mamourian urged Armenians “to leave glory, throne, and literature; let us examine our present situation, let us see what we are worth today and what we can do.”⁵⁹

Examination of the present forced the critics to reexamine the Armenian Church, which not only took credit for past glories and national survival but also claimed the authority to administer and bring enlightenment to Armenians.

The Armenian Apostolic Church had come under intense pressure with the rise of Catholic and Protestant missionaries who capitalized on its many weaknesses. Although the Church tried a number of measures to stem the tide of conversions, the mother Church realized that reform from within was necessary if it wanted to retain its credibility. Khrimian and Srvantstians were among the first to criticize the ignorance, backwardness, and stagnation of the Apostolic Armenian clergy. Khrimian asserted that his own efforts to bring enlightenment were hampered by clergy who could not even deliver a moving sermon. He also noted a tendency among the clergy to conduct their affairs without any consultation with superiors and often for their own personal profit.⁶⁰ Yet, both reformers considered education and enlightenment as the clergy's ongoing task. Srvantstians considered that the enlighteners of the day had not as yet found their *Trdat* or patron king, a role, which should have been assumed by the merchants and the middle class in general. Khrimian could not see what the new *Trdat* could do without swords.⁶¹

Although Khrimian did believe in democratization of the millet, the provincial clergy was not necessarily populist in its approach to organization. In 1872, Srvantsians wrote to Khrimian that he had just ended a meeting with the community in van and Mush to explain the benefits and intricacies of the National Constitution. He found his audience, particularly the peasants, to be "irritated . . . extremely excited . . . and behaving like communards."⁶²

Others were not so sure the Church should continue to play any role in the community. Writing in the journal edited by Khrimian, Hakob Melik-Hakobian, the soon-to-be famous novelist Raffi, agreed that after the fall of the Armenian kingdoms the Church had failed in its mission because of the negligence, vanity, laziness, and subservience of clergymen.⁶³ Mamurian accused them of having transformed Armenians into "living martyrs."⁶⁴

The radical urban intelligentsia distanced itself from the liberal program in concrete ways quite early. In 1861, long before the Porte had instituted censorship on Armenian publications, a committee of the National Assembly formulated a press code and forced, in the name of the state, Armenian editors to submit to it. Harutiun Svajian, the editor of *Meghu*, refused to sign a consent form. His license for the publication was consequently suspended. The censorship committee included well known constitutionalists such as Grigor Otian, Servichen, Grigor Aghaton, and Nerses Varjapetian.⁶⁵

There were also clearly two differing views with regard to a new rebellion in Zeytun, in 1878. The radicals continued to sympathize with the Armenian rebels, who had joined forces with the Kozan oğlu Turks to resist the government's efforts toward centralization. As patriarch, Varjapetian became instrumental in convincing the Zeytunites to separate their forces from the Turkish rebels. Both Turkish and Armenian fighters were eventually defeated.⁶⁶

Mamurian had been critical of attempts to link accommodation with the state with the search for assistance from abroad. Even before the experience of Berlin, he wrote: "To hope that a foreign nation will work the miracle performed by Jesus is ... delusion ... The first liberator of a meek and enslaved people is the people itself, its toil, internal strength, education, unity, and unwavering will."⁶⁷

However, the radical intelligentsia, whether urban or provincial, failed to propose a program of its own. Critics of the liberal program either made haphazard suggestions for an alternative strategy or turned bitter and criticized the Armenians. In 1879 Mamurian began publishing his first novel, *Sev leran marde* (The Man from the Black Mountain). The novel, whose serialized publication was stopped by the Ottoman censors, ostensibly depicted the hopes and disappointments of Eastern Armenians during and following the 1827-1828 Russo-Persian War, which ended with the incorporation of Eastern Armenia in the Russian Empire. The unpublished part, which was burned by the author's son for fear of persecution, related to the rise of a guerrilla leader on the Turkish-Persian border and his struggle for the freedom of his people. The volume as a whole would have suggested a combination of guerrilla tactics and diplomatic pressure as a new strategy.⁶⁸ An associate of Sravantsiants touring the provinces wondered if it was possible to join forces with the Kurds to achieve the same goal.⁶⁹ These calls for arms were made in private letters and did not amount to a strategy, much like the earlier, lonely, and unheeded call of Gabriel Noratunkian to "form a committee of foreign relations to secure the independence of Armenia."⁷⁰

More common was the attitude of Eghishe Ayzavian, a clergyman associated with Khrimian and Sravantsiants, who turned his pen against the Armenian people for having accepted its fate:

When the Armenian settled in Constantinople sees that the cemetery of his dead is endangered, he is moved immediately and all Armenians unit as one and make every effort to defend their rights. Why is that same Armenian not moved the same way when it is the cemeteries of the living that are endangered ... in the fatherland itself?

And is not Armenia now a cemetery of the living?

But the nation of Armenians ... is used to slavery ... Its thoughtless fear has reached such proportions that it is unwilling to express any sign of discomfort over its wretched state ... Once it placed all its expectations on the Constitution ... now all of its expectations are centered on the schools ... But do we lack freedom because we did not have schools until now? And is it in the schools that the Armenian will learn to break the sword of the bloodthirsty Kurd? ... Perhaps the Armenian is a civilized, constructive, dynamic, enlightened, and constitution-loving nation. But can he assert without shame that the life of the nation is secure? ... Did not Armenians, the pariahs of the Ottoman Empire, enjoy the fruits of their loyalty (to the state)? Its churches were desecrated, its virgins violated; old and young, man and woman all fell equally to the blows of the sword ... Homes are left without furniture and money, storages were emptied of their contents, barns of theirs. What remains is a monumental famine to complete the aforementioned disasters. Let Armenians continue their indifference toward the suffering of their blood brethren and await for the British or Northerner [Russian] to come to them. How can one expect pity from others when he does not pity himself?⁷¹

The story of Karapet Shahnazarian, a provincial priest who moved to Constantinople, illustrates the inability of the radical group to find a coherent program once the critique was made. When Shahnazarian reached the capital, he was acclaimed for his scholarship; his ability to argue fine points of theology was admired even by the conservative circle led by Chamurian-Terovents, who considered the young priest a liberal. In his first political writings as a journalist, Shahnazarian argued that since the Armenian people were lacking in culture and civilization, the Church should become the spearhead for a national effort toward progress and enlightenment. The role he assigned the Church was coherent with his general view of society. Shahnazarian was critical of revolutionary upheavals in Europe, which he contrasted to the peace that reigned in the Ottoman Empire, a peace that would insure progress. “Our flag will be to preach obedience to the just laws and faithful subjection to the justice-loving kings and princes, just as St. Paul did to the Christians in his time,” he sermonized in 1863.⁷² By 1864, he was publishing articles that described conditions in the provinces and criticized leaders of the Armenian community in the capital. “It is unthinkable,” he argued, “that the present [Armenian] constitution would work and benefit the people in a state which has no constitution of its own and which rests on absolute power.”⁷³ He also started understanding the reasons why “oppressed nations want to get rid of despots to secure their existence.”⁷⁴ Shahnazarian lived the rest of his life in Europe.

Many agreed with Ayvazian that “Tomorrow perhaps we shall disappear for good...” Only a few agreed “to protect the nation by whatever means necessary: by moral suasion, by bloodletting

or by revolution. But the fatherland must be saved.”⁷⁵ And even fewer knew a path that would bring Armenians closer to that goal.

Throughout the Tanzimat and constitutional eras the political imagination of the religious and lay leaders of the Armenian community did not transcend the limits inherent in the millet system. The Armenian people, as a general rule, shared with that leadership the assumptions upon which the millet-state relationship had been erected. But the support of the lower classes and provincial middle class could no longer be taken for granted by the beginning of the 1880s. That support began to erode with the failure of the reformers to deliver their promises. The crisis of the millet was the crisis of the Ottoman state at its weakest link. The failure of reforms signaled the failure of urban liberal middle class and intelligentsia.

Section III: Alternative Paths

The development of Armenian political thought entered a new phase when the lower classes assumed a larger role in the definition and pursuit of collective goals beginning in the 1880s.. Prior to the foundation of groups that took these tasks upon themselves, peasants and artisans appeared in history mainly as plaintiffs; they relied on higher authorities to present their grievances and to decide upon the best means to accomplish reform. Now they made a bid, timid at first, to participate in history.

The new phase evolved with the gradual liberation from the *millet* mentality and ended with the rise of the *fedayees* (guerrilla fighters) in Western Armenia and of a socialist radical intelligentsia in Eastern Armenia. The formation of political parties, beginning in 1887 with the Hinchakian Revolutionary Party, was the logical conclusion of the search for alternative frameworks of thought and action. The liberal program had run its course, diluted by the interests of European imperialism and liberalism, while the middle class was running out of alternatives to preserve a precarious political balance. Those with the least to lose discovered new tactical and strategic opportunities when forced to think outside the complacency bred by the *status quo*,

This phase was also marked by a quickening of the pace in the evolution of Armenian political thought. Only fifteen years were to elapse between the first, almost childish attempt at negating the basis of the millet society—the declaration by a group in Van in 1872 that they were willing to join the Russian Orthodox Church to escape persecution—and the publication of the “Marxist” program of the Hinchakians, where religion as the basis of political institutions and as the vehicle for the pursuit of happiness was rejected *a priori*. And even though the strategic factors determining the course of Armenian liberation did not ultimately change, Armenian political thought did evolve along a more autonomous path and began to play a significant part in determining the course of action. The theoretical articulation of political concerns, the attempt to place the Armenian experience in a historical and worldwide perspective and the generalization of the particular experience were the means by which Armenians in this period started perceiving themselves as participants in history capable of affecting their own destiny.

Even before the era of the revolutionary organizations when ideologies were articulated in ostensibly coherent and scientific party programs, a dynamic relationship evolved between

political thought and political action. This changed radically what they and future generations came to see as Armenian politics.

The democratization of politics in Western Armenia meant its radicalization as well. The gradual liberation from the millet mentality and the frustration of the modest efforts on the part of the middle class opened the door for the involvement of the Eastern Armenian revolutionary socialists in Western Armenian activities. The Easterners adopted the Western Armenian cause as theirs. Eventually that relationship also gave rise to one of the more enduring paradoxes in recent Armenian history: the development of a program of nation-building by the socialist oriented intelligentsia rather than by the bourgeois middle class. This paradox, which also exists in many contemporary liberation movements, tends to confuse modern scholars in their understanding of Armenian aspirations. It is the paradox of groups whose history has been defined by foreign domination as well as oppression from within.

The Democratization of Politics

Voluntary Associations

Voluntary associations of individuals with common concerns began to appear among Western Armenians in the middle of the nineteenth century. The early associations, largely in Constantinople, were organized to help the poor or teach the illiterate. In the 1860s, societies such as the “Antznver” (devoted) and “Baregortsakan” (benevolent) in the capital sought to teach the pantukhts (migrant workers) reading skills, and the Cilician Armenians agriculture.¹ Probably the earliest manifestation of the ideology of exporting enlightenment, the “Baregortsutiun Arevelian” (Eastern benevolence) sought to educate Kurds in the eastern provinces. A few, such as the “Hamazgyats” (all-national), founded in 1848, and “Polsi Baregortsakan” (benevolent union of Constantinople) remained largely cultural while harboring vague political interests.²

Although not directly associated with the Church or patriarchate, the leaders of these groups were members of the middle and upper classes, often from the ranks of the liberal intelligentsia. Even if merely teachers and editors, they were still known to the community and state. Their activities were trusted, therefore, within the spirit of imperial benevolence and pre-modern authoritarianism, until proven otherwise. The societies performed the function of allowing the newly rising middle class to participate in the liberal spirit of the political process. They did not seek to become mass organizations.³

The most daring of these extra communal forms of association were the freemason lodges established in Constantinople and Smyrna, the most important being the “Ser” (love) Lodge in the capital. The birth of these lodges represented an instance of conscious adoption of the concepts of Western liberalism. Here a secularized and democratized urban intelligentsia sought to overcome the dissensions and intolerance between denominational groups through the sheer strength of rationalism and the profession of progress as a common goal. These disciples of freethinking strove to introduce a new quality into Armenian intellectual and social life by creating a forum where important issues of the period could be debated in an essentially traditional and conservative environment. The lodges provided, for a time, a meeting ground with Turkish liberal intellectuals as well. Eventually, the difference seemed too difficult to overcome since the

implications of liberalism differed for Armenians and Turks. It is possible that the “Ser” Lodge, or a number of its prominent members, acted as a conduit between the rebels of Zeytun in 1862 and the outside world. These lodges soon lost their vitality, though, and after initial enthusiasm waned they turned into social clubs.⁴

In the 1870s new forms of associations appeared in the provinces. Here political concerns had little or no disguise. These groups were at first informal and sought to install a pride in and knowledge of the Armenian past—a form of natural patriotism—often through reading and discussion groups. A decade later such groups were replaced by formal associations that sought the “salvation” of Armenia.

Little is known about these early associations. A document from 1875 incidentally mentions the existence of a *lsaran*, (a place of listening) associated with the Armenian prelate of Erzerum. According to the document, weekly lectures were attended by over 150 people. Organized by a society whose name is omitted, the lectures were disapproved of by the prelate.⁵ It is known that in Erzerum at the time there were two societies named after the military and spiritual leaders of a fifth-century Armenian resistance against Persian cultural, religious, and political imperialism, “Vardanank” and “Ghevondiank.” Similar groups existed also in Van. There, they gathered regularly to read patriotic literature. Both poetry and historical writings were enacted in theatrical renditions as speeches by students who had only recently been exposed to them.⁶

The dearth of documents regarding these groups is explained by their informal nature. Equally important is the fact that the founders and members were younger students and craftsmen, who did not consider written documents their main form of communication or even an essential one. It is the totality of these small encounters that, once placed in perspective, represents a qualitative change in Armenian life.

Outside the Millet: Miutiun i Prkutiun and Pashtpan Hayreniats

A few documents have survived about a group that was formalized under the name of “Miutiun i Prkutiun” (union for salvation) in 1872 in Van. It was an ephemeral association of clergymen, merchants, and craftsmen who petitioned the Russians for protection against governmental outrages. These Armenians threatened the state and the Armenian establishment that they would adopt Russian orthodoxy since the Armenian Church was unable to defend their

interests. The Miutiun i Prkutiun was not a formal organization. It seems to have had no structure, nor did it function for any length of time.⁷

The members of this society were willing to use religion as a tool for the promotion of a higher ideal: that of a free and dignified life. The main document authored by this group expresses the fear that community life will disintegrate with no hope for a better future. The authors listed continued and systematic violations of life, honor, property, and basic rights as proof of their fears. Their unwillingness to continue to endure such an existence was coupled with a revulsion against their acceptance of a disgraceful fate for so long: “We must either die and not see this horrible situation, or revive in the heart of the fatherland. What are we waiting for? We have no life but are afraid to die; our properties and earnings do not belong to us.”⁸ Two nearby villages echoed with similar letters of support:

We are ready to spill our blood and give our life with you in the path of any hope [for a future ; if it is necessary to become Russians [convert to the Russian Orthodox faith], let it be so; if it is necessary to migrate, let us do so; if we must die let us die; but let us find salvation. This is our plea to you and to God. And we pledge not to part from each other except by death.⁹

Despite their disenchantment with the Church, the forty-seven authors were still bound to Armenian Christianity by tradition and social obligation. Their list of grievances against the state began with a call for an end to the desecration of Armenian churches and the violation of rights of clergymen. It concluded with a pledge for the “salvation” of Armenia in the spirit of the fifth-century martyrs of Armenian Christianity.¹⁰ The term “salvation” itself, which would remain part of the subsequent revolutionary terminology, was obviously of Christian inspiration. Yet the authors were willing to break away from tradition. The document promoted Russian Orthodoxy over the established Armenian Church. The invitation to join in the oath was issued to “sensible” Armenians only, a qualification which would certainly have excluded many professing the same religion. Above all, these documents imply a definition for salvation that is different from the one associated with the second coming of Christ. It was a salvation, which, if attained, might mean the negation of the Armenian Church.

The documents were vague in the strategy they proposed; yet they were comprehensive in their vagueness. The primary purpose of the group was the manifestation of discontent and anger, while the multiplicity of avenues under consideration showed their willingness to seek

alternatives. The continued, if diminished, presence of the millet mentality was necessary for the justification of one's transgressions against oneself as well as against others. It provided a natural, immediate legitimacy for a temperament which, if put into action, was politically illegitimate, psychologically disturbing, and socially unknown to an essentially conservative group resentful of being forced in unholy directions. Ultimate legitimacy was sought by the authors in a New Testament statement which was placed at the top of the document: "And whosoever doth not bear his cross and come after me cannot be my disciple" (Luke, 14:27) and "But he that denieth me before men shall be denied before the angels of God" (Luke, 12:29).¹¹ In order to remain Christians with a clear conscience, they were ready to deny the Armenian component of the Church or its basic non-violent creed. Subsequent groups did not torture their consciences or theology to justify patriotism.

Erzerum and Van constituted the two most important urban centers in the provinces. In these cities, national consciousness was not only strong but also secure. The Ottoman policy of repression there produced a more organized resistance than anticipated by the authorities, and brought about the institutionalization of discontent, first in small groups and increasingly on a massive scale.

The first Armenian organization with mass membership was *Pashtpan Hayreniats* (Defense of the Fatherland), founded in Erzerum in 1881. The group was formed by a coalition of two patriotic societies, the Vardanank and Ghevondiank.¹² The Pashtpan Hayreniats did not have a long life. It was discovered by police in 1882; its leaders were jailed, and the group was disbanded. The fear of confiscation of incriminating evidence also led free members to burn all written evidence regarding the organization. Circumstantial evidence indicates, nonetheless, that before it disbanded up to 5000 Armenians may have joined this society, whose aim was to organize Armenian self-defense. The membership included small shop owners, skilled and unskilled craftsmen, peasants, and secondary school students.¹³ Its most noted member, and probably its founder, was Khachatur Kereksian, an otherwise unknown young tailor with a sixth grade education.¹⁴

The organization was divided into groups of ten. Each member knew no other member than those in his group. New members were given political education and military training. Political education seems to have been limited to speeches on the status of Armenians and

readings of patriotic literature; military training involved athletic drills and, occasionally, target practice. Nonetheless, the group had a conscious birth and a systematic growth.¹⁵

At the same time in Van, a group of young people with similar backgrounds organized a society known as the *Sev Khach* (black cross).¹⁶ The society is best remembered for a parade in 1882 celebrating the nineteenth anniversary of the ratification of the National Constitution, which in the provinces continued to symbolize reforms.¹⁷ The event appears in memoirs as a poor man's limitation of medieval Armenian processions. Clergy, members of various guilds, students, and members of the society dressed as soldiers and shouldering wooden arms participated in the celebration following a requiem for founders of the Armenian Constitution. The parade marched through the streets toward the Monastery of Varag, where festivities were held. The celebration ended with "long live" chants in front of the residences of Khrimian Hayrik and the acting Russian vice-consul in Van, Konstantin Kamsarakan, an officer of Armenian origin supportive of Armenian patriotic groups.¹⁸

None of these groups had the articulated ideology or official organ, which the public came to expect from subsequent organizations. Their goals consisted of self-defense and the "liberation" or "salvation" of Armenia.¹⁹ During this initial phase, when even uttering such words was a novelty, people were not concerned with definitions; everyone thought everyone knew what these terms meant. Rather than a clear vision of the future, these constituted a rejection of the present; and even when some tactical steps were implied or expressed, in none of these cases can a strategy be discerned.

Both organizations vacillated with regard to publicity, unable to decide between the need for secrecy, on the one hand, and the desire to spread their beliefs and exteriorize their new identity, on the other hand. The Pashtpan Hayreniats remained secret for over a year; even its discovery by the Turkish police did not reveal the extent of the membership. The *Sev Khach* society considered any revelation of information about the group by any member a crime punishable by death. Yet, despite warnings to the contrary by community leaders such as Khrimian and Ormanian, Pashtpan Hayreniats printed membership cards.²⁰ *Sev Khach* organized the parade in the streets of Van. The display of one's adherence to the new societies became a necessary part of the function of the new societies. The membership card or the participation in a

parade became the avenues by which the young rejected the identity imposed by the state and the millet.

These organizations introduced a qualifier next to the word “Armenian.” The “true patriotism” of earlier decades now found its echo in the members of these groups, who were the “sensible,” “genuine,” “honorable” Armenians, different from just any Armenian. The qualifier, together with the secrecy, gave membership in these groups an aura of mystery. That aura also needed to be expressed, however, to give self-definition a socially objective function. In addition, “discipline,” “organization,” and “unity” were key concepts and goals of these early groups. This should seem paradoxical since the millet system provided both organization and unity@ These calls were assertions, of course, that alternative forms of identification and solidarity were needed. The appeals of unity were an invitation to unite behind an idea other than the millet. In effect, the consequence of the proposed unity would be to disunify the community, since not everyone opposed the millet or its goals.²¹

A more immediate reason for the insistence on secrecy and discipline was the real danger of treason, infiltration, and spying. The acceptance of political assassination is rooted in these groups’ principle of inflicting the death penalty on those who denounced the secret societies to the authorities or spied on the groups. Long before the *narodnik* (populist) inspired Eastern Armenian intellectuals exerted any influence in Western Armenia, Armenian organizations had accepted the principle of political assassination. The Sev Khach seems to have acquired its name from the practice of marking with a black cross the name of any such traitor, thus condemning him.²²

The Erzerum society was formed at a time when the Ottoman government was so paranoid about an imminent Armenian revolution that it sent its own agent provocateur as a tax collector who, acting as an Armenian interested in founding a revolutionary group, was to expose the dangerous groups or individuals to the authorities.²³

The motivations of such Armenians—monetary gain, fear of reprisal, association with the powerful, or simply the hope of being favorably looked upon during pogroms—were seen as signs of degradation of the Armenian character under Ottoman rule. Thus, both cooperation with the state and the retribution for it were part of the Ottoman Armenian mentality for decades, when conservatives could have their opponents silenced by denouncing them as atheists, revolutionaries, rebels, and anarchists.²⁴

Assassinations of Turkish officials whose anti-Armenianism resulted in excessive lawlessness and harm were also a tactic used in Western Armenia.²⁵ The “terror,” as political assassination was called, was expected to spread fear among remaining functionaries. The Pashttan Hayreniats used threats of political assassination for the purpose of raising funds for the activities from wealthy but reluctant Armenians.²⁶ It is not clear to what degree the group practiced this policy, but its founders considered the wealthy as enemies of their movement, because the wealthy, more on moralistic than political or economic grounds, refused to supply funds to these groups. It is also known that during the much publicized trials of the leaders of the Pashtpan Hayreniats, it was the Armenian wealthy who came forward to provide the most damaging evidence against the accused.²⁷

Ferment in Van: Proto Parties

It was not often that class antagonisms in Armenian society, particularly in the provinces, manifested themselves. The founding of groups outside the millet and the adoption of violence were indirect or incidental expressions of the consciousness of differing interests within Armenian society. The conflict between the supporters of enlightenment or conservatism was also tied to the economic and political interests perceived by each class.

That developments within the ideology of liberation were directly linked to class antagonisms became most apparent in Van in the 1870s and 1880s. Van was a city with its own traditions and personality. To the extent that conditions allowed, it continued to remain a center of local and international trade, traditional guilds and craftsmanship. In the nineteenth century it was the major urban center in southeast Armenia, the focal point of all political, economic, educational, and administrative activity for a wide geographic area, certainly for the whole province of Van, of which it had long been the major city. If trade and productivity gave it economic primacy, its long history—from the Urartuan kingdom to the kingdom of the Ardrunis and the moribund Catholicossate of Akhtamar—assured it a historical sense.

The social composition of its population was complex. There were large landowners who owned patrimonial lands in the rural areas but lived in the city and were known as *ishkhans* (princes), *aghas*, or little *amiras*. There also was a class of small landowners. There were international merchants who traded in Persia and Russia. Local traders peddled to Kurds in the

mountains. There were usurers and enterprising farmers. Clearly identifiable were also the shopkeepers and guildsmen.²⁸

Vanetsis (inhabitants of Van) living far to the east of the Ottoman capital prided themselves in their keen interest in education and enlightenment. In the 1850s and 1860s Khrimian had started a seminary in nearby Varag.²⁹ A printing house there had produced a journal that was popular and effective.³⁰ Vanetsis had welcomed teachers from the capital and opened their own schools, including at least one that was privately owned and well respected.³¹ Vanetsis were quick to adopt the liberalism of Constantinople and cherished the National Constitution. In the words of one writer, Vanetsi liberals constituted the grandchildren of the French revolution; the honor of the first offspring, or children, of the revolution had already been bestowed upon the capital liberals.³²

As in other urban centers, tradition and Ottoman administrative practices had encouraged the ishkhans to consolidate their power over the prelacy and the development of community life in general. This position was enhanced through the social, economic, and administrative ties they had with Ottoman officials. Also, parallel to developments in the capital, craftsmen, shopkeepers, and enlightened members of the lower class resented their powerlessness in community life. Authority was monopolized by a privileged group which “...constituted the only middlemen between our people and the government. It was through them that our humble people could expect a response to their protests and requests—of course at great cost.”³³

The vague antagonisms and undefined resentments found everywhere evolved into clearly defined ideologies of opposition when the city was polarized through the personality and activities of Poghos Melikian, a celibate priest who began his famous (or infamous) career as the appointed *locum tenens* of Van and later as its prelate, with the rank of bishop.

Memoirs and local studies of the Van community have discussed at some length and with some detail the moral failures of this man, whose cruelty and other excesses seem to have shocked even those supporters who knew better than to expect saintly behavior from clergymen. But the personal abhorrence that most Armenians felt toward him acted only as the catalyst in this situation.³⁴

The two opposing camps involved much of the community. On one side were the Poghosians: the vardapet or reverend himself, the ishkhans and the lesser aghas, and a variety of conservative elements. Opposing them were the Apoghosians or anti-Poghosians: some

merchants, students, most of the literate and poorer classes. The Poghosians had political superiority not only because their leader was the *locum tenens* of the prelacy but also because he enjoyed the tacit support of the millet leadership in the capital and the manifest support of Ottoman provincial government and the Ottoman governmental apparatus. The sides were known as *kusaktsutiuns*, the term, which was eventually used to describe political parties.³⁵

Poghos was an authoritarian clergyman who supported law and order, dispensed summary and often cruel justice, and who disregarded the Armenian provincial assembly, traditions and constitutional procedures. He did not hesitate to use beatings and other torture on members of his flock, including women and children, to obtain total obedience to his arbitrary rule.³⁶

Such incidents could hardly be regarded as manifestations of a deranged personality. Poghos and his associates worked systematically against the implementation of reformist ideas within community institutions, progressive curricula in the schools, and secularization of the millet.³⁷ Following reports to the state given by the vardapet himself, the Poghosians were able to engineer the exile of Mkrtych Portukalian and the closing of the normal school Portukalian had founded.³⁸ Poghos was suspected of having been the cause for the exile of Khrimian, too.³⁹ This direct cooperation between the Armenian prelate and Ottoman administration became more frequent after an incident which was regarded as revolutionary and frightening.

This occurred in 1883 when the trial of the leaders of the Pashtpan Hayreniats in Erzerum had attracted local and international attention. The Ottoman government had magnified the event, interpreting it as proof of an imminent Armenian revolution. Western officials and journalists, who had not yet totally forgotten the promises of the Treaty of Berlin, allowed themselves to deduce that an imminent revolution might be indicative of a deterioration dangerous to Western interests. The Porte reacted by changing its characterization and downplaying the significance of the society.⁴⁰ The Porte expected, nonetheless, that Armenians elsewhere address letters of gratitude to the Sultan for his benevolent rule. The governor of Van turned to the ishkhans, who obliged by signing such a letter and circulating it in the marketplace to gather signatures from shopkeepers and craftsmen as well. The popular anger against the ishkhans was such that Khrimian, then temporarily the prelate, called the princes to the prelacy to chide them for their behavior. The crowd that had gathered outside broke into the hall and gave a trashing to the thirteen ishkhans in the presence of an irritated Khrimian, who was unable to control the crowd.⁴¹

One of the iskhans eventually died of his wounds. Although Khrimian was able to minimize the incident in the eyes of the officials, he eventually resigned.⁴²

Throughout the reign of Poghos Vardapet, Armenians individually and collectively sent letters to the capital describing his abuses and immoralities, demanding that he be removed from office and be called to account for his behavior in the capital. One group charged that the ongoing destruction of the Armenian community and economic life in Vaspurakan was the doing of “this cruel and unconscionable man who is supposedly the servant of Christ and the father of the people,” rather than the result of the activities of the unruly and despotic Kurdish chieftains.⁴³

The Poghosian-Apoghosian conflict within the Armenian community showed that a struggle for civil and political rights and against despotism and inequality entailed antagonism not only against the Ottoman state but also against all economically and politically privileged groups, including Armenian ones. The conflict also had repercussions throughout the millet since many were communities headed by individuals such as Poghosian who, enamored with power, found much room to occupy while a regime no longer acceptable resorted to force and repression. This realization heavily influenced subsequent developments, particularly the birth of Portukalian’s paper *Armenia*, and the formation of the Armenakans in Van.

The convergence of interests between the government and some Armenian elements constituted a critical dimension of the rise of a kind of national consciousness which was based less on the perception of conflicts as Armenian vs. non-Armenian or Christian vs. muslim.

Mkrtich Portukalian and the Final Dilemma

Mkrtich Portukalian was a pivotal figure in the transition from a middle class liberalism concerned primarily with parliamentary games within the National Assembly to the armed defense of the interests of the peasantry, as well as the transition from small, self-defense groups to the larger political revolutionary parties.⁴⁴ A teacher in Constantinople, he was one of the few who heeded the exhortations of Varjapetian and others to reach out to the suffering Armenians of Armenia. In a sense, Portukalian represented the logical conclusion of trends defined by Khrimian. Like Khrimian, he had a personal knowledge of and sympathy for the deprived elements in Armenian society, strove for the legitimation of issues raised by their oppression and depravity, and searched for a means to implement reforms aimed at ending that situation. But he also

represented the inability to accept the futility of that search within limits prescribed by the state. Portukalian remained indecisive throughout his life; he talked of the need for a revolution yet refused to undertake any action on its behalf.

At a time when no other avenues seemed to be opening, however, Portukalian did come forth with a new message. His message and his reputation as the leader of a new movement and a bold thinker spread through *Armenia*, a weekly he founded and edited in Marseilles in 1885 soon after his exile from the Ottoman Empire.⁴⁵

Portukalian established two societies following his exile to Marseilles: the “Hay Hayrenasereri Miutiun” (union of Armenian patriots) and the “Hay Manukneru Miutiun” (union of Armenian children).⁴⁶ He also published a series of pamphlets, kept correspondence with a number of political and intellectual leaders, and sustained contact with his former students in Van and with university students in Europe. He traveled, occasionally within Europe and once to the United States.⁴⁷

The Hay Hayrenasereri Miutiun was his first attempt at heading an organization. The group was meant to function more as a committee of correspondence rather than as a party. He was its director general. *Armenia* was recognized as the official organ of the organization. The Hayrenasereri Miutiun had a life of a few years and disbanded due to lack of support.⁴⁸

The Manukneru Miutiun was aimed at providing education to gifted students from the Armenian provinces, a kind of investment in the future. During its brief existence it managed to send one student to Europe. This group, too, folded due to lack of support. It also appears that the sole beneficiary of the program eventually married a French woman and remained in France, thus causing much pain and disappointment to Portukalian.⁴⁹

Portukalian’s own writings included poetry, articles in *Armenia*—eventually published in separate volumes—and the *Vardapetaran Hayastani azatgrutian* (Catechism for the Liberation of Armenia). He also translated into Armenian stories inspired from the Greek and Bulgarian emancipatory movements.⁵⁰ His writings were aimed at inspiring Armenians. Yet Portukalian lacked a concise program for the future that might reflect the spirit, which he otherwise advocated, and his position shifted on some of the basic questions facing the Armenian people.

When Portukalian undertook the publication of *Armenia*, he asserted that his aim was to promote reform for Western Armenia, an aim reiterated in the manifesto of the Hayrenasereri

Miutian.⁵¹ But in the *Vardapetaran*, his avowed goal was total independence for Armenia.⁵² The strategy he advocated also changed many times during his career. He emphasized diplomatic intervention when events forced Western powers to consider such action; when disappointment set in, he criticized that alternative as harmful. He occasionally presented a general, immediate, and spontaneous uprising as the only means of liberation; on other occasions, he believed that there would have to be a long period of educational, political, and organizational preparation before any armed conflict could become useful.⁵³

Portukalian's attitude toward the sultan fluctuated as well. Soon after he began the publication of *Armenia*, the Porte forbade its entry into Ottoman territory. Portukalian was shocked. He argued that he sought nothing more than the welfare of the empire by proposing reforms to alleviate the plight of his people, a plight about which the good Sultan had been kept ignorant by his evil advisors.⁵⁴ Nor could he understand why the Russian government prohibited the entry and reading of *Armenia* in the Russian Empire. His journal was hardly anti-tsar or anti-Russian, argued Portukalian, and had no disputes with that country; on the contrary, he pointed out in his editorial, he was criticizing the Ottoman government, Russia's traditional enemy.⁵⁵

Portukalian's lack of consistency pervaded his understanding of the concept of nation as well. A nation, for him, was the context that gave people their legitimacy in the world. The survival of a nation as an independent unit or its subjugation to foreign rule and oppression depended on some political and economic factors. According to Portukalian, the Armenian nation had lost its independence because Armenians failed to distribute property to all Armenians, providing them sufficient reason to rise to its defense. This condemnation of the feudal system did not stop him, however, from idealizing Armenian nobility as part of his lessons of patriotism. In fact, kings and dynasties seemed to pervade his sense of pride in the past.⁵⁶ One of the major activities he undertook during his long stay in Marseilles was an attempt to develop a new tradition: an annual pilgrimage to the tomb of the last dynast of the Cilician kingdom, Levon V, who was buried in France.⁵⁷

Portukalian's writings are full of references to reform—local or comprehensive—revolution, rebellion, popular uprising, education and unity, each at one point or another appearing as the cornerstone of his strategy of liberation.

Portukalian did sustain, nonetheless, strong convictions that remained with him throughout his life. Some of these related to the structure of the Armenian community. He believed in the constitutional reforms advocated by Khrimian, which would have given provincial Armenians a more effective representation within national institutions. He believed in the need to prepare a more enlightened and educated clergy, in the promotion of a national industrial and commercial bourgeoisie, and in giving that bourgeoisie a role of leadership in the community.⁵⁸ Thus his vision related as much to internal Armenian issues as to the community's relations with the government. In this spirit, he used the pages of *Armenia* to provide Armenian merchants reliable information on commercial transactions, to expose the activities of Poghos Vardapet, and to critique Ottoman policies. These were issues that had matured during his formative years—his early battles for enlightenment and internal reform in Van and Constantinople.

Portukalian was forced to formulate a coherent view of the national movement as debate intensified in *Armenia* and he came under pressure by younger students to do something. The issue came to a head in 1887. A group of young intellectuals severed their relations with Portukalian when he refused to move beyond words and assume responsibility for a revolutionary organization. They founded the “Hnchakian Union,” the first political party and revolutionary organization.⁵⁹ It became obvious to Portukalian that the sincerity of one's beliefs was not a substitute for clear thought and a concrete program. He knew he had to crystallize his views.

In a letter to a future revolutionary activist, and through an article to which he had awarded first prize for “patriotic thoughts,” Portukalian stated that the only course of action was guerrilla warfare in the Armenian mountains, supported by the population in general and by trained forces from outside. This had become the only path left since, he argued, slow progress through education had become an impossibility, the idea of setting up a large insurrectionary organization within the provinces was an “unreal” goal, diplomatic intervention was futile, and secret societies, when formed outside the fatherland, would be useless. According to Portukalian, guerrilla warfare had been the historical means by which Armenians had warded off enemies. Guerrilla warfare was also preferable to terrorism, since the latter struck at individuals only and left the system intact. He dismissed the question of Armenia's future regime, an issue raised by the Hnchakians, as a matter that would be discussed later. He also argued that the implementation of such a strategy required a few good men, and money; and should men be found, money could be raised easily.

Portukalian realized the dangers involved in an armed conflict and the possibility of massacres. Yet, he stated, Armenians should not be afraid to die for their own cause, as the death toll from organized pogroms could not be any higher than the death rate under the current, ostensibly secure state; in addition, he believed European diplomacy would intervene when Ottoman policies were fully exposed.⁶⁰

Portukalian was not inclined toward theoretical discussions. For him the Armenian problem was as simple as it appeared. Armenians were being robbed, killed, exploited, and denied progress by Turks and Kurds. Reforms were necessary to rescue them from their plight. To achieve reforms it was necessary for Armenians to join hands. To make fine distinctions between Armenians on the basis of social and economic stratification would be a disservice to the cause. Those dedicated to the cause should consider class antagonisms irrelevant to the task on hand. Only those who did not wish to see Armenia free should be considered the enemy.

Yet Portukalian was critical of a large number of individuals and groups that were similarly dedicated to the same cause. He condemned harshly Mihran Sivasly, an Egyptian-born contributor to *Armenia* and an activist whom he had helped achieve some recognition. Portukalian labeled Sivasly's periodical *Hayastan* (Armenia) "anti-revolutionary" since it rejected armed struggle *a priori*. Sivasly believed that diplomacy, particularly British sympathies for Armenians, could resolve the whole issue.⁶¹ Portukalian was also critical of Hnchakians for having adopted extreme positions on economic and political issues; he believed the radicalism of the Hnchakians was an attempt to justify their separate existence.⁶² The founders of the party were also former contributors to *Armenia*, young students whose interests and concerns in the national cause had been encouraged by him.⁶³ Portukalian dissociated himself from all parties, even the Armenakans in Van, who generally accepted *Armenia*'s stance. He said that he had neither established a political party nor did he intend to do so.⁶⁴ He did, however, have close political and personal ties with the founder of the Armenakans, Mkrtich Avetisian. Avetisian had been his student in Van and was to edit *Armenia* during Portukalian's brief absence from Marseilles.

Unity around the idea of serving the Armenian cause seemed to elude him constantly. Against the cautious urbanites he argued as one who had dedicated himself to reform and enlightenment. In his arguments against the rising radical groups he underscored his personal knowledge of Western Armenia and his personal sacrifices on its behalf. He tended to see his

detractors as individuals who either did not know the Armenian people or did not have its best interests at heart. At times it seems that Portukalian regarded himself as the only person capable of understanding the Armenian people and knowing how to serve its best interests.

Portukalian's value and contribution must be sought not in his theoretical contributions but the scope of his activities and the depth of his commitment at a crucial time. By founding and editing the first newspaper dedicated primarily to the presentation of the case of a subjugated and suffering people, he legitimized that cause as only the written word could do. He began a systematic presentation of the first debate on a strategy of liberation by allowing, during the first years at least, the exposition of various views, thus helping others to define their positions. He was one of the few in Western Armenia to relate the Armenian social structure to the larger issue of development and hence liberation.

Portukalian was instrumental in propagating the thesis that historical changes must be preceded by changes in the psychological and cultural values of those subjected to oppression. He pointed out and systematically criticized the many areas in individual and collective behavior which, as a result of centuries of Ottoman domination, perpetuated the sullen acceptance of a degenerated existence. In his editorials and articles, Portukalian strove toward the development of a new Armenian identity. He criticized "Armenian sins" and extolled "Armenian virtues" in his *Vardapetaran* (catechism for the liberation of Armenia), a booklet written in the format of questions and answers, and reissued several times.⁶⁵

The sins listed in this pamphlet included the migration of Armenians from their ancestral lands to become laborers elsewhere, the denigration of the Armenian name by engaging in fraudulent actions, profit-oriented "Patriotism," and betrayal of other Armenians.⁶⁶ He severely criticized the habitual use of proverbs and maxims which perpetuate a lowly self-image among Armenians. Among the ones mentioned were "Haye take Vardanin, Turke take Vardanin" (freely translated, Armenians are fair game for Turks and for other Armenians); "Eli hayutiun arer" (You did something Armenian again),"Hastn u parak mek gin, vay e parak manoghin" (It will all end up the same anyway, woe to the one who thinks deeply); "Vor tegh hay, ayn tegh vay" (Where there is an Armenian, there is suffering).⁶⁷

After criticizing the self-denigration of the language, Portukalian offered his own alternative of what an Armenian should feel and think. The good Armenian is one whose sole

religion is the liberation of Armenia from foreign rule and whose only prayer is “Oh Merciful God, help me liberate Armenia.”⁶⁸ Armenian virtues included giving one’s possessions and blood to the cause of liberation, doing one’s best to convince all to go to Armenia, and assisting all those who were laboring for the liberation of Armenia.⁶⁹ Thus the “sincere” Armenian was the one who strove for and assisted in the task of liberation. All others were useless Armenians and useless human beings.⁷⁰

By pointing out the unconscious elements that had permeated the Armenian psyche, Portukalian made it possible to deal with obstacles to the transformation of the Armenian. By elevating the task of liberation of the homeland to the level of a religion—one that even for this devout man would temporarily replace and permanently change the accepted notion of religion—he provided Armenians with a frame of identification that was against and outside the mold imposed by the millet system. He asserted:

“Political and religious principles justify revolt against the government, in fact it is a holy duty... The souls of those who die in battle go to heaven; they become martyrs and their names are commemorated forever by the Holy Church.”⁷¹

Portukalian opened the pages of his newspaper to others who described the effect of Ottoman rule on the Armenian personality and mentality. Thus, Avetis Nazarbek, a Russian-Armenian activist who later helped found the Hnchakian party, discussed the child-rearing and educational system in Armenian society. The article concluded: “Education at home and at school has destroyed within us our strength, our self-confidence, and our initiative to speak and act freely according to our beliefs.” The title of the article was, characteristically, “Inch enk ev inch piti linenk” (What we are and what we shall be).⁷²

Even farming, the occupation of the majority of Armenians, came under criticism because of the implications it had within the existing social relations and the impact it had on the Armenian. A writer from Van pointed out that the involvement of the Armenians in agriculture was regarded by the non-Armenian ruling groups as a symptom of cowardice and of continued acceptance of one’s lower status. In addition, economic relations and the laws of the land ensured the continued economic oppression of Armenians and placed them in a position where mere survival was their sole concern.⁷³

Once the vicious circle was identified in all its dimensions, the status of the *rayah* (chattel) presented the subject with an existential conflict. To continue accepted behavior would only perpetuate the system and, under the circumstances, tighten the chains of oppression—an unacceptable certainty. On the one hand, the promise of reform within the Ottoman and millet systems, even though unfulfilled, had legitimized Armenian grievances and raised expectations of a better life; on the other hand, the largely rudimentary education supplied in the provinces by pioneers like Portukalian and Sareyan had provided the new generation with an alternative image of the Armenian which included organized Armenian armies under ancient Armenian kings and the heroics of Vardan and his associates. The Armenian could now find in his own history a personalized model for taking matters into his own hands. He could find legitimacy within an alternative self-image, one that included the possibility of breaking the vicious circle through his own efforts.

That the conflict was lived on the most basic, individual level can be seen from a number of articles published in *Armenia* and, subsequently, elsewhere. One writer, working in Manchester, asked the basic question in the title of his article “What Makes You a Man?” The answer was a clear statement: “We need a revolution to be able to say ‘freedom’ [to make you a man].”⁷⁴ Yet another contributor from Van thought that the “issue was honor.” Man without honor was dead. “If we want to live we must defend our honor . . . There is nothing left but revolution.”⁷⁵

Portukalian did not wish to lead a revolution nor was he ready to accept one. He is not less important for that. What he lacked in organizational ability he substituted with an essential conviction of the righteousness of the cause he had espoused early in his life; what he lacked in ideological clarity he made up for with perseverance, and with an unsettling perspective. In addition, his perspective was wide enough to have played a crucial role in the rise of the Armenakans in Van and to have provided the immediate cause for the founding of the Hnchakians in Europe.

The Armenakans

The Armenakan organization occupies the same transitional position among revolutionary parties as Portukalian does among revolutionary leaders. The founding of that group marks the formalization of trends hesitantly expressed in the earlier groups: rejection of the millet

mechanism, intense patriotism, and propagation of a “salvation” mentality among the people. The inability of the Armenakans to provide leadership in matters of ideology and strategy explains the subsequent rise of the radical revolutionary parties and their domination of political thought and action until World war of 1914.

Students and supporters of Mkrtych Portukalian expressed their distress over his exile from Van and demonstrated their dedication to his ideals by continuing to meet in groups, first informally and then formally. Portukalian’s *Armenia* provided this group with a concrete focus of group identification as well as an organ where their general concerns could be expressed.

The founder and leader of the organization was Mkrtych Terlemezian, also known as Avetisian. Mkrtych Avetisian was a student, associate, and supporter of Portukalian. The Terlemezians were a family in Van who were to become even more famous during the revolutionary period. Mkrtych’s father had been one of the more prominent anti-Poghosian leaders and their residence had been a center of formal and informal gatherings of Van in their long struggle against the Poghos and his associates.⁷⁶ In more respects than one, the Armenakans, who also met at the Terlemezian residence, constituted the continuation of the Apoghosian camp in a struggle now extended beyond the boundaries of local institutions. It was as if the progressive elements in Van finally identified the real source of evil and decided on a campaign that included the government as well.

In this sense, the Armenakans represent the first organized attempt by a political group to influence the development of community activities. The Armenakans continued their opposition to Eramian, a respected but extremely conservative educator, who had founded a private school in Van and had a great impact on generations of students.⁷⁷ Following the 1894-1896 massacres, the organization helped some small businessmen to rebuild the schools which were destroyed during Turkish bombardment of the city.⁷⁸ In neighboring Persia, where the Armenakans established a center and purchased guns and ammunition, they were also involved in the activities of the prelacy. It is said that Avetisian was instrumental in repurchasing from a Persian *agha* an Armenian village in order to free the peasants from feudal taxes.⁷⁹

When the Armenakans finally devised a program in 1894, however, two basic activities dominated the document: self-defense and preparation for salvation. The creation of the conditions necessary for Armenians “to live as human beings” was the primary goal of the organization and

self-determination was the mechanism by which this would be accomplished.⁸⁰ Both as an immediate need and as part of a long range strategy, self-defense became the focus of Armenakan activities. Armenakans actively promoted the teaching of the military arts among their ranks and founded the means to acquire guns and ammunition from Persia. They were the first to start an effective self-defense policy, which had been the minimum reaction agreed upon by populist leaders such as Khrimian and Portukalian and the early groups. Thus, during the 1894-1896 massacres when Ottoman troops surrounded the city, the Armenakans constituted the core and the absolute majority of those who set up the defense of the city. Over 200 Armenakan fighters took part in the first major urban resistance against regular Ottoman armies. Most of them were captured and killed following their departure from the city.⁸¹

The Armenakans set up an elaborate organizational system before they had worked out a program. The means of achieving their goals were the promotion of internal strength through the union of patriotic groups who shared their ideas. This union, according to the program, was to be responsible to a central authority which would organize and direct all activities and devise policies and tactics.⁸²

Strategy itself was not discussed in detail. The Armenakans, it seems, did not see the need for it. Only in response to the competition or challenge from other parties in Van did they spell out how they intended to reach their goals. First, Armenians had to prepare themselves. Preparations included steps toward cultural and civilizational awakening, education, exposure to examples of noble Armenian characters, the military arts, and raising of funds. These lengthy preparations were necessary if Armenian forces were to be deployed in a general uprising. That general uprising would be ordered when—"external circumstances—the position of foreign powers and neighboring tribes—were considered conducive to such a move."⁸³ The strategy of linking the future of Armenian liberation to European diplomacy was an extension of what was then considered natural wisdom among most politically oriented Armenians. In concrete terms, it meant that the Armenians wanted to see another Congress of Berlin. But this time Armenians would fight and thus would deserve freedom. For the Armenakans, to live under oppression was to understand it. And the intensity of their rejection of that oppression became tantamount to the foundations of strategy. For Western Armenian political thought, the will to oppose the state did not as yet entail a coherent, rational, or at least rationalized strategy.

In fact, to the extent that the Armenakans were compelled to express a worldview in their program, they emphasized what they would not do as much as what they would do. They rejected explicitly any forced militarization of Armenian communities, partial and weak exhibitions of Armenian military or political capabilities, and untimely claims of successes. These were tactics which the Armenakans thought Hnchaks used to the detriment of the Armenian people. The Armenakans opposed the Hnchak call for revolutionary propaganda among the other peoples of the Ottoman Empire, mainly the Turks and Kurds.⁸⁴ If the latter had problems, the Armenakans argued, these were substantially different from those of the Armenians. For the Armenians, enlightenment and civilization were essential aspects of a revolutionary movement. There was no reason for the less educated and less developed Turks and Kurds to share Armenian goals. They argued also that any effort to enlighten the others would slow down and complicate the Armenian movement. This analysis of the Western Armenian political realities corresponded not only to the general views held by Portukalian and expounded in *Armenia* but also to the stance of most provincial Armenian intellectuals. The Armenian urban public generally shared the assumptions underlying the Armenakan worldview. Nurtured by a national history and defined as a national problem, the politics of the Armenakans excluded any possibility of a struggle that focused on specific social and economic demands; it could only aim at a vaguely defined self-determination.

This worldview implied, furthermore, that the Armenakans would be unable to include the Armenian peasantry and rural town population in their struggle. Neither the ideology nor the strategy allowed the Armenian peasantry, the largest and the most oppressed group, to take part in the liberation movement. The Armenakans were, of course, conscious of the status of the peasantry. But they viewed the rural population as subjects of inquiry and a justification for their goals rather than as an element that could participate in setting goals, making decisions or changing history.

The Armenakans' program did provide for a central authority that was to govern increasing numbers of districts under its jurisdiction. There were regional councils established in addition to the central council in Van, although attempts to bring under its banner a number of villages and rural areas were minimal.⁸⁵ Yet no records of regional or rural activities have been discovered, and Van remained the only center of activity: the organizational centralization decreed in the program expressed, in fact, a basic sentiment that regarded education as a necessary prerequisite for

legitimate leadership. Those who regarded themselves as the grandchildren of the French Revolution remained committed to ideals developed within an urban environment, for an urban society. Peasants, Armenian or otherwise, were not educated or progress-conscious. Their conversion to a revolutionary cause does not seem to have been a prize sought after by the Armenakans, although their liberation, and education, were integral elements in the future envisioned by the Armenakans. Despite their dedication to national liberation and their concern for unity, the Armenakans were ideologically isolated not only from the non-Armenians but also from the larger masses of the Armenian peasantry. Thus it was inevitable that the fall of the city of Van and the virtual decapitation of the local-leadership should also signal the end of the Armenakan organization for all practical purposes.

The organization had given many examples of heroic acts, opened the route to Persia, and provided the first collective act of self-defense in an urban setting. But its ideology remained self-limiting, rigid, and therefore unable to expand beyond the boundaries of Van. There was no room in the ideology to analyze failure and reorient strategy. Long-term and peaceful preparation as the main activity of a party seemed to have questionable practicality given the effectiveness of repressive and debilitating Ottoman policies. The arsenal of ideas had no alternatives as far as the Armenakan organization was concerned. After the loss of its leadership and fighting force, the party continued to exist only in name. Some of the survivors joined the two other parties, the Hnchakian Miutiun (Hnchakian union, founded in 1887, soon after called the Hnchakian Heghapokhakan Kusaktsutiun or Hnchakian revolutionary party) and the Hay Heghapokhakaneri Dashnaktsutiun (Federation of Armenian Revolutionaries, founded in 1890, renamed Hay Heghapokhakan Dashnaktsutiun or Armenian revolutionary Federation); others went on to become respectable merchants.⁸⁶

Social Bandits

The founding of societies, secret or otherwise, was primarily an urban phenomenon. In city communities that had a variety of classes and ethnic groups, the tendency was for the rebel to create a new social group with which to identify. In rural Armenia, where village structures precluded substantial differences in outlook, rebellious behavior was expressed mainly through the rise of social banditry. The first incident involving social banditry is recorded during the famine

that followed the war of 1877-1878.⁸⁷ The most prominent among early bandits was a certain Avo, who acquired fame as the partner of a Kurdish bandit in Vaspurakan. The two seemed to have worked well together and had great respect for each other. Soon after the war, however, the Kurdish bandit brutally murdered an Armenian priest in ritualistic manner, including insults to the priest's religion. Avo took his revenge with the murder of a *mollah*. He served a ten-year prison term in Van. There he met Armenakan prisoners. Their conversations produced some of the first *fedayees*. Avo escaped from jail and joined an organized fighting unit.⁸⁸

In Taron, Arabo and Mkho were two well-known bandits who acted independently, each heading his own group. Known as *khachakhs*, they specialized in the robbery of rich caravans and the purchase of weapons with the loot. Also, both-groups retaliated against cruel officials in villages and expanded support for their activities among villagers. They eventually became soldiers for the revolution. In addition, the two trained and inspired a generation of *fedayees*.⁸⁹

Whether consciously or not, the Ottoman government reacted immediately and severely against these primitive rebels. Interestingly enough, when such acts were seen as mere incidents of brigandage and looting, acts about which Armenians had always complained, the government professed incapacity and did nothing. But when the victims were carefully selected Turkish or Kurdish officials and the pattern of activities by bandits indicated an attempt to obtain something other than loot and life, the government called upon the army, organized large scale expeditions, and increased repressive means to capture the bandits.

Even more than in the case of the urban groups, the social bandits lacked a clear ideology, and their actions did not amount to a strategy. Occasionally, though, a link was created and mountain rebels were able to place their actions within a larger context. One of the early activists in the district of Mush-Taron, Margar Varjapet, inspired a number of future fighters through a simple message: the Serbs and the Bulgars had their freedom after much bloodshed and were now able to rebuild their land. Did Armenians have to be so honor less as to allow their women and brides to be taken with impunity "while we watch from behind the walls."⁹⁰ Margar did not need to bridge the logical gap between the insult toward one's honor and the larger goal of a brighter future. The peasants could do that. Social banditry remained "a cry for vengeance on the rich and the oppressors, a vague dream of some curb upon them, a righting of individual wrongs."⁹¹ It was, however, an ineffective course in itself and had to look to the urban centers for organizational,

logistical, and ideological leadership and cooperation if it were to have a chance of bringing radical change.

The Armenakans and Western Armenian radicals in general were unable or unwilling to appreciate the potential of the social environment, which produced and sustained such heroes. The political ideology and context, which nurtured Eastern Armenian radicals, were more conducive to the appreciation of the larger significance and potential of these proto-revolutionaries. In time the two would meet and produce the Armenian revolutionary movement.

Conclusion

Almost three centuries passed from the time the high clergy developed plans to liberate Armenia to the moment when students and craftsmen, peasants and lay preachers decided that they should do something about their own liberation. It was a radical change, which within the context of world developments was not exceptional nor exceptionally successful. Yet occurring within an old community void of its own autonomous decision-making process for a long time, it was a significant return to a wider social and political consciousness that would lead to a break in its isolation and marginalization.

This change could not have occurred without the deterioration of conditions in the Ottoman Empire and especially in its Armenian provinces, the increasingly violent Ottoman policy of repression against its own subjects, the liberal recognition of some rights as basic and legitimate for all human beings, the rise of individual and collective identities that made Armenians feel part of a dynamic humanity and therefore no longer accepting of the status quo, and the belief held by an active and militant minority that change is possible.

One of the important factors that characterizes the various phases in the development of liberation ideology and strategy is the degree to which liberators were associated with existing institutions and especially the degree to which these institutions had vested interests in the larger socio-political structures. In other words, to what extent were they free to imagine new power relations and equations? Without such visions, it is doubtful that an emancipatory movement could have evolved.

Yet freedom from past compromises and commitments was not sufficient for groups to challenge the status quo successfully. The Armenakans, the last of the non-revolutionary groups to challenge the power of the state, were quite impressive in Van but failed to take root elsewhere. The Armenakan organization was not capable of expanding into other areas of historic Armenia, and was unable to answer the questions implied by Khrimian's message or to transcend its strategic limitations, even though it was the most formidable of the indigenous groups.

The Armenakans were brave men, for whom the ability to fight and die meant personal liberation. The organization had a major impact on the course of the movement during the 1894-1896 massacres in Armenia, when Van became a major focus because of its resistance to

Turkish regular and irregular forces; that resistance was due to the Armenakans. The upstarts, the Hnchakians and the Dashnaktsutiun, were compelled to join the Armenakans, at the time the largest group, in a common defensive plan. The massacre of nearly 200 Armenakan fighters following the conclusion of hostilities put an end, for all practical purposes, to the possibility that a long-term strategy might have evolved under the capable leadership of Avetisian. Avetisian was one of the victims. Portukalian was devastated; he also could not offer a new analysis or strategy.

Even though the defense of Van stands as their moment of glory—and tragedy—the Armenakans had lost the battle of the popular imagination long before 1896. It was the Hnchakian program, with its clear and comprehensive treatment of the Armenian question that ushered in the revolutionary phase of the Armenian liberation movement, beginning in 1887.

The Armenian movement became a revolutionary movement only partly because it accepted the use of arms for self-defense, as a legitimate weapon in the struggle against prevailing conditions, and against the Ottoman regime that sustained those conditions. Equally important is the significance of the Hnchakian and subsequently Dashnaktsutiun programs for the structure, power relations and values of Armenian society. Their programs challenged the worldview and status quo of the only surviving national institution, the church.

The trend toward secularization and democratization in community relations was one of the critical developments, which produced a new leadership with new claims to power and legitimacy. One of the differences between the old leaders and the new was the willingness of new leaders to see the relevance of social stratification within Armenian society for the formulation of liberation strategy. Before new strategic possibilities could be imagined, new factors had to be developed, factors, which would bring a change in the power equation. The change of the leadership from the clergy and the wealthy classes to intellectuals, students, and guerrilla fighters from lower middle class and peasant backgrounds was a revolutionary phenomenon in itself. Furthermore, adopting a popular movement as the major strategy for liberation, and evaluating events by their impact on the social, economic, and political well being of the larger population instead of on the privileged classes, was an act of revolution as well.

These changes in leadership and strategy constitute as much an Armenian dynamics as we will encounter in recent and modern Armenian history. The new leaders were certainly affected by the larger developments and were influenced by the ideologies, which colored their perceptions.

Still, the coming together of social bandits and intellectuals, of the peasantry and the lower middle classes, of Western and Eastern Armenians, and their support of revolutionary and vaguely socialistic goals essentially constitute an indigenous move. The movement acquired a different dynamics with the articulation of goals and programs within objective, real, and imminent conditions and dreams as perceived by those most affected by the conditions in the Ottoman Empire.

For this development to occur and for Armenians to endorse the movement, no outside intervention or inspiration was needed. While Ottoman and earlier Safavid policies had created an Armenian problem both domestically and internationally, the sporadic, whimsical, and occasionally compromised leadership from various classes and categories of Armenians had objectified the problem without finding a solution.

The revolutionary parties created a new reality not so much by fighting against the Church and capital as by developing a new arena of activity. The new game was based on the willingness of some to die and others to kill without state sanctions, on a willingness to become a factor in Ottoman and European politics, by developing an international leadership and power base and finally by defining Armenians as a nation rather than as a religio-cultural community. Ultimately, within the constant challenge to abstracted ideologies presented by historical realities, the revolutionary parties discovered that the nation also functioned as a class, thus giving rise to what seems to be the first national liberation ideology as opposed to strictly defined independence or social revolutions.

The new reality was also based on the ability of the revolutionaries to overcome prejudices and fears within the community. In this respect, it was propelled by universal ideologies and imagined possibilities of common interests with non-Armenian groups and peoples.

Of course revolutionary parties developed their own myths and heroes, their own hagiography and rationalizations, and eventually, their own vested interests in their institutions or others supported by them; in these endeavors, their pattern of behavior was tragically close to the ones they sought to replace. Nonetheless, the change they instituted toward a political and socioeconomic definition of the Armenian people was radical enough to have made a difference for some time to come.

Notes to Introduction

¹ Louise Nalbandian, *The Armenian Revolutionary Movement* (Los Angeles and Berkeley, 1967), is among the well-known works dealing with the revolutionary period of Armenian history where such an attitude is dominant. Christopher Walker, *Armenia: Survival of a Nation* (London and New York, 1981) and Anahide Ter Minassian (see note 2) are more sensitive to the relevance of internal factors and social stratification for the ideology and strategy of liberation.

² Anahide Ter Minassian, *La question Arménienne* (Roquevaire, France, 1983). This volume includes the original text of *Nationalism and Socialism in the Armenian Revolutionary Movement* (Cambridge, Mass., 1984).

³ See, for example, Gerard J. Libaridian, "Revolution and Liberation in the 1892 and 1907 Programs of the Dashnaksutiun," in *Transcaucasia: Nationalism and Social Change*, ed. Ronald G. Suny (Ann Arbor, 1983), pp. 185-196; Gerard J. Libaridian, "The Socialist Review *Handes* and Its Role in the Development of Armenian Political Thought," unpublished paper presented at the Middle East Studies Association annual meeting, Los Angeles, 1976; "A Perspective on the Armenian Liberation Movement," unpublished paper presented at a University of Michigan conference on "New Perspectives on Modern Armenian History," Ann Arbor, 1978.

⁴ For the disintegration of the last kingdom in historic Armenia, see Aram Ter Ghevondian, *Arabakan khalifayutiunere Bagratuniats Hayastanum* [Arab Caliphates in Bagratid Armenia] (Erevan, 1965); Hakob Manandian, *Knnakan tesutiun hai zhoghovrdi patmutian* [Critical Study of the History of the Armenian People.], vol. II, pt. 2 (Erevan, 1960); and Leo, *Erkeri zhoghovadsu* [Collected works], vol. II (Erevan, 1967), pp. 481-712. For the Cilician kingdom, see W.H. Rudt-Collenberg, *The Rupenids, Hethumids, and Lusignans* (Paris, 1963) and Avedis K. Sanjian, *The Armenian Communities in Syria and the Ottoman Dominion* (Cambridge, Mass., 1965), pp. 1-30.

⁵ The 1639 international boundary dividing historic Armenia has remained virtually unchanged, as it currently divides the Republic of Turkey and the USSR.

⁶ For feudalism, see Manandian, *Knnakan tesutiun*, vol. II, pt.1 (Erevan, 1957).

Notes to Chapter 1

¹ Socioeconomic conditions for Armenians under Safavid rule in Iran are discussed by Vagharshak Diloyan, “Arevlyan Hayastan” [Eastern Armenia], in Tsatur B. Aghayan et al., eds. *Hay zhoghgyrdi patmutiun* [History of the Armenian People], vol. V (Erevan, 1974), 13-60, cited hereafter as *HZhP*; see also, George A. Bournoutian, *Eastern Armenia in the Last Decades of Persian Rule, 1807-1828* (Malibu, Cal., 1982). Conditions in Western Armenia under Ottoman rule are discussed in *HZhP*, vol. V, by Hayk M. Ghazarian, “Arevmtian Hayastan” [Western Armenia], 61-112; and his *Arevmtahayeri sotsial-intesakan katsutiune 1800-1870 tt.* [The Socioeconomic Condition of Western Armenians During 1800-1870] (Erevan, 1967); Suren Markosian, *Arevmtahayutian vijake xixt verjerin* [The Situation of Western Armenians at the End of the Nineteenth Century] (Erevan, 1968); Sarkis Atamian, *The Armenian Community* (New York, 1955), 43-63; and Manvel G. Zulalian, *Arevmtahayastane XVI-XVII tt* [Western Armenia During the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries] (Erevan, 1980), 176-336.

² Ghazarian, *Arevmtahayeri katsutiune*, 78-129; see also Charles Issawi, *The Economic History of Turkey 1800-1914* (Chicago and London, 1980), 353. In addition to illegal levies, extra income was secured by outright expropriations and increases in land rent. The *timar* system of land ownership—large tracts of land and the peasantry living in it transferred to feudal lords for specific services rendered the state—was not abolished in the Ottoman Empire until 1831. Even then, the *ayan* or large landowners continued to own and exploit extensive holdings.

³ Inflationary pressures were partially due to the increase in the supply of precious metals on the European markets. Meanwhile, usury also acquired widespread character in rural areas as a result of the inability of peasants to pay taxes and deal with inflated prices. On the importance of the *akçe*, see Ömer Lütfi Barkan, “The Price Revolution of the Sixteenth Century: A Turning Point in the Economic History of the Near East,” *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 6 (January, 1975): 9, cited hereafter as *IJMES*.

⁴ Issawi, *Economic History of Turkey*, 223. See also Manvel G. Zulalian, *Jalalineri sharzhume ev hay zhoghovrdi vijake osmanian kaysrutian mej* [The Jalali movement and the situation of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire] (Erevan, 1966), 27.

⁵ It is estimated that the peasantry constituted 80 to 90 percent of the total Armenian population of historic Armenia; Kh.H. Avdalbekian, *Hoghayin hartse Arevelian Hayastanum (1801-1917)* [The Agrarian Question in Eastern Armenia (1801-1917)] (Erevan, 1959), 23; Leo, *Erkeri zhoghovadsu* [Collected works], vol. II (Erevan, 1967), 173-192; Ashot Hovhannisian, *Drvagner hai azatagrakan mtki patmutian* [Episodes from the History of Armenian Liberation Thought], vol. II, (Erevan, 1959), 394-395. For the particular problems of the Armenian peasantry, see Ghazarian, *Arevmtahayeri katsutiune*, 268-341; Leo, *Turkahay heghapokhutian gaghaparabanutiune* [The Ideology of the Turkish-Armenian Revolution], vol. I, (Paris, 1934), 39-40; Diloyan, *Arevelian-Hayastan*, 18-31, 46-55; Rafik Hovhannisian, *Arevmtahay azgayin azatagrakan sharzhumnere ev Karini “Pashtpan Hayreniats” kazmakerputiune* [Western Armenian National-Liberation Movements and the “Pashtpan Hayreniats” organization of Karin] (Erevan, 1965), 20; Zulalian, *Jalalineri sharzhume*, 90-104. On Ottoman peasantry in general see also Reşat Aktan, “The Burden of Taxation on the Peasants” in *The Economic History of the Middle East, 1800-1914*, ed. Charles Issawi (1966; reprint, Chicago, 1980), 107-113.

⁶ Tadeos Avdalbekian, *Hayagitakan hetazotutiunner* [Armenological Studies] (Erevan, 1969), 416-417, 423-426.

⁷ H. Zortian, “Kutinahay zhamanakagrutiun,” *Handes Amsorya*, 67 (no. 4-6, 1952): 242; Issawi, *Economic History of Turkey*, 216, 220, 223.

⁸ Ashot Hovhannisian, *Drvagner*, vol. II, 394-395. See also, Ömer Lütfi Barkan, *XV ve XVI asirlarda Osmanli Imperatorlügündü zirai ekonominin hukuki ve mali esaslari. C.I. Kanunlar* [The Legal and Financial Foundations of the Agricultural Economy of the Ottoman Empire During the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries. Vol. I. The Laws] (Istanbul, 1945).

⁹ Charles Issawi, “The Decline of Middle Eastern Trade,” in *Islam and the Trade of Asia* ed. D. S. Richards (Oxford, 1970), 245-266.

¹⁰ Arshak Alpoyachian, *Patmutiun hay gaghtakanutian: Hayeru tsrvume ashkharhi zanzan masere* [History of Armenian Emigration: The Dispersion of Armenians in Different Parts of the World], vol. III, (Cairo, 1961), es 62-110; Ashot G. Abrahamian, *Hamarot urvagids hay gaghtavayreri patmutian* [Brief Outline of the History of Armenian Colonies], vol. I, (Erevan, 1964), 362-418. See also [Arakel] Sarukhan, *Holandian ev hayere* [Holland and the Armenians] (Vienna, 1926); Mushegh Arkepiskopos [Seropian], *Manchesteri haygaghute* [The Armenian Community of Manchester] (Boston, 1911); H. G. M[armrian], *Masnakan patmutiun hay medsatunneru 1400en 1900* [Partial History of Wealthy Armenians from 1400 to 1900] (Constantinople, 1910); V. G. Zardarian, *Hishatakaran hay erevelineru* [Memoria for Prominent Armenians] (Constantinople, 1910).

- ¹¹ Stanford Shaw, "The Nineteenth Century Ottoman Reforms and Revenue System," *IJMES* 6 (October 1975): 430-432. According to Shaw, the millet leaders were deprived of that role at the request of the people in 1887, when the government became responsible for all tax collection. Shaw's evaluation of the tax burden is more positive than is generally accepted, at least from the point of view of the peasantry and provincial subjects.
- ¹² Leo, *Hayotz patmutiun* [History of the Armenians], vol. III, (Erevan, 1946), 187-191; Zulalian, *Arevmtian Hayastane XVIen XVIII darrerun*, 344-348; Ashot Hovhannisian, *Drvagner*, vol. II, 27-33; Nalbandian, *The Armenian Revolutionary Movement* (Los Angeles, Berkeley, 1967), 19.
- ¹³ Zulalian, *Arevmtian Hayastane XVIen XVIII darrerun*, 345-353; Ashot Hovhannisian, *Drvagner*, vol. II, 39-44; Nalbandian, *Revolutionary Movement*, 19.
- ¹⁴ Ashot Hovhannisian, *Drvagner*, vol. II, 46.
- ¹⁵ Ibid; Zulalian, *Arevmtian Hayastane xvi-en xviii darrerun*, 353.
- ¹⁶ Hakob Anasian, *XVII dari azatagrakan sharzhumner arevmtyan Hayastanum* [The Liberation Movements in Western Armenia During the Seventeenth Century] (Erevan, 1961), 97-99, 129.
- ¹⁷ V. Parsamian, "Hay rusakan haraberutiuneri patmutiun" [History of Armeno-Russian Relations], *HSSR akademiayi teghekgagir* no. 2 (1952): 82.
- ¹⁸ Babken Katoghikos Kuleserian, *Patmutiun katoghikosats kilikio* [History of the Catholicosses of Cilicia] (Antelias, Lebanon, 1939), 546-551.
- ¹⁹ See, for example, T. G. Djuvara, *Cent projets de partage de la Turquie, 1281-1914* (Paris, 1914).
- ²⁰ Anasian, *XVII dari azatagrakan*. 115-130.
- ²¹ Ashot Hovhannisian's *Drvagner hay azatagrakan mtki patmutian* [Episodes from the History of Armenian Liberation Thought], vol. I (Erevan, 1957) is an in depth study of the origins and history of this legend.
- ²² L. Drapeyron, "Un projet français de conquête de l'empire ottoman au XVe et XVIIIe siècles," *Revue-des deux mondes*, November 1, 1876, 122-147.
- ²³ Zulalian, *Jalalineri sharzhume*, 81-86. Levon Chormisian's *Hayastaniqys ekeghetsi* [The Church of Armenia] (Beirut, 1966) constitutes an incisive yet ultimately sympathetic analysis of the various dimensions of the historic role of this important and ancient institution in Armenian life; see especially 5-102. See also Maghakia Ormanian, *The Church of Armenia* (London, 1912) and his monumental work *Azgapatum* [The Story of the Nation], 3 vols. (Constantinople and Jerusalem, 1912-1927).
- ²⁴ Haykaz Poghosian, *Zeytuni patmutiune, 1409-1921* [The History of Zeytun, 1409-1921] (Erevan, 1969), 126. See also Kuleserian, *Patmutiun katoghikosats*, 543-545.
- ²⁵ Anasian, *Azatagrakan sharzhumner*, 221-222.
- ²⁶ Simeon Katoghikos Erevantsi, *Jambr* [Tribune] (Vagharshapat, Eastern Armenia, 1873). Erevantsi's reactionary views and policies are discussed by G. H. Grigorian, *Hay hasarakakan kaghakakan mtki patmutiunits* [From the History of Armenian Progressive Social and Political Thought] (Erevan, 1957), 153-155. Erevantsi claimed to have noble birth; he died in 1780; see Gut Aghaniants, *Divan hayots patmutian* [Register of Armenian History], vol. III, (Tiflis, 1894), xlvi; hereafter cited as *DHP*.
- ²⁷ The Armenian Church has both benefited and suffered from this position in history. Its political role has helped it survive but has also diluted its spiritual strength and identity.
- ²⁸ Ashot Hovhannisian, *Drvagner*, vol. II, 51.
- ²⁹ Avedis Sanjian's *The Armenian Communities in Syria Under Ottoman Dominion* (Cambridge, Mass., 1965) is a most detailed study of the establishment, history, and conflicts of Armenian religious centers, particularly the patriarchates of Istanbul and Jerusalem and the Catholicossate of Cilicia; 95-273. See also Kevork B. Bardakjian, "The Rise of the Armenian Patriarchate of Constantinople," B. Braude and B. Lewis, eds., *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire: The Functioning of a Pluralistic Society*, vol. I, (New York, 1982), 89-100.
- ³⁰ Vagharshak Diloyan, *Lazarianneri hasarakakan-kaghakakan gordsuneutiunits* [From the Social-Political Activities of the Lazarians] (Erevan, 1966), 139-140.
- ³¹ Ashot Hovhannisian, *Drvagner*, vol. II, 148-162; Ormanian, *Azgapatum*, vol. II, 2505-3618.
- ³² Ashot Hovhannisian, "Hayastani kaghakakan vijake sefian Irani ev osmanian Turkiayi tirapetutian tak" [The Political Situation in Armenia Under Safavid Iran and Ottoman Turkey.], Aghayan, *HZhP* vol. 4 (Erevan 1972), 126.
- ³³ Anasian, *Azatagrakan sharzhumner*, 39-41, 221 *passim*.
- ³⁴ As late as in 1873, the conservative newspaper *Meghu Hayastani* (no. 1, 1873) of Tiflis voiced its opposition to the Russian government's project of land reform by offering a revealing parallel: "A monastery without real estate is unheard of among us, as a church without parishioners."

- ³⁵ T. Avdالبekian, *Hayagitakan hetazotutiunner*, 419.
- ³⁶ *Ibid*, 423-426. T. Avdالبekian also points out that one of the origins of the *mulk*, equal to one tenth of the land rent, was the decision of a village community to contribute to a monastery or other religious institution, possibly under pressure from clergymen (430-432). On Jughayetsi's real estate dealings see also Ormanian, *Azgapatum*, vol. II, 2509-2512; and S. Poghosian, *Ekeghatsakan hoghatirutiuene Erevani khanutiunum XVII-XVIIIItt* [Church Landownership in the Khanate of Erevan During the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries] (Erevan, 1956).
- ³⁷ Ashot Hovhannisian, "Hayastani kaghakakan vijake," 117-119.
- ³⁸ Joseph Emin, *Life and Adventures of Joseph Emin, 1726-1809*, vol. I (Calcutta, 1918), 107, 141-143.
- ³⁹ *Ibid*, vol. II (Calcutta, 1918), 322; Ashot Hovhannisian, "Hayastani kaghakakan vijake," 130-131.
- ⁴⁰ Ashot Hovhannisian, "Hayastani kaghakakan vijake," 178.
- ⁴¹ *Mayr tsutsak hayeren dzeragrats matenadaranin Mekhitarants i Venetik* [Main Catalog of Armenian Manuscripts in the Mekhitarist Library in Venice], vol. I (Venice, 1914), 321.
- ⁴² F. Poghosian, "Khamsayi Melikneri iravunkneri ev partakanutiunneri masin" [On the Rights and Responsibilities of the Five Melikdoms], *Banber hayastani arkhivneri*, 1966, no. 1: 197-208.
- ⁴³ Ashot Hovhannisian, *Drvagner*, vol., 7-223; Ascot Johhannisian [Ashot Hovhannisian], "Israel Ory und die Armenische Betreungsidee" (Ph.D. Thesis, Munich, 1913); Nalbandian, *op. cit.*, 21-22; Srbouhi Essefian, "The Mission of Israel Ori for the Liberation of Armenia," *Recent Studies in Modern Armenian History* (Cambridge, Mass. 1972), 1-10; Artashes Abeghian, "Israel Ori est Grunskii ev Hanveyi" [Israel Ori According to Grunsky and Hannwayl], *Hairenik amsagir* 14 (November 1936): 51-64.
- ⁴⁴ Ashot Hovhannisian, *Drvagner*, vol. II, 385-386, 579, 615.
- ⁴⁵ Tsatur B. Aghayan, "Hay giughatsiutian vijake Rusastani mianalu nakhoriakin" [The Status of the Armenian Peasantry on the Eve of the Union with Russia], in *Niuter Hayastani giughatentesutian ev giughatsiutian patmutian* [Materials on the History of Agriculture and Peasantry of Armenia], vol. I, Suren T. Eremian, et al., eds. (Erevan, 1964), 179, 185-187; Ashot Hovhannisian, "Hayastani kaghakakan vijake," 149-178. See also A. G. Martoyan, "Ditoghutiunner Davit Beki apstambutian patmutian shurje" [Remarks About the History of the Davit Bek's Revolt] *Patma-Banasirakan Handes*, 16(no. 3, 1973): 179-193; and Ashot Hovhannisian, "Davit Beki glkavorads Ghapani apstambutiune" (The Ghapan Revolt led by Davit Bek), *Banber Erevani Hamalsarani* 4, no.1 (1970): 96.
- ⁴⁶ Ashot Hovhannisian, "Hayastani kaghakakan vijake," 151.
- ⁴⁷ *Ibid*, 174, 182.
- ⁴⁸ *Ibid*, 155, 166, 169.
- ⁴⁹ *Ibid*, 159.
- ⁵⁰ *Ibid*, 168.
- ⁵¹ *Ibid*, 165-166.
- ⁵² Davit Bek's vision of a larger, proto-national interest explains the support he received from a variety of sources, including Armenians who emigrated to eastern Europe early in the millennium; see V. Parsamian, *Lehehayeri masnaksutiune Davit Beki apstambutiane* [The Participation of Polish-Armenians in Davit Bek's Revolt] (Erevan, 1962), 62 *passim*.
- ⁵³ The major source on Davit Beg and his efforts is *Entir patmutiun Davit Bekin* [The Select History of Davit Bek] (Vagharshapat, 1871), no author. Raffi studied the history of the meliks of Karabakh in *Khamsayi melikutiunner* [The Five melikdoms] (Tiflis, 1883).
- ⁵⁴ For Armenian areas, see Hayk M. Ghazarian, "Arevelian Hayastan," 70-75; for the Arab provinces, see Philip K. Hitti, *History of the Arabs from the Earliest Times to the Present* (London, 1967), 709-744.
- ⁵⁵ Andrew G. Gould, "Lords or Bandits? The Derebeys of Cilicia," *IJMES* 7 (October 1976): 485, 494-495.
- ⁵⁶ H. Poghosian, *Zeytuni patmutiune*, 105-116.
- ⁵⁷ A nineteenth century historian of the early revolts of Zeytun described the actions of the mountaineers in the following terms: "They, loving revolt and their self-governing community, and remembering their royal freedom of the past ... trusted their inborn strength and henceforth did not give the king their usual tazes." Cited in A. Berberian, *Patmutiun hayots* (Constantinople, 1871), 98. The justification of their actions in the early decades of the nineteenth century had changed. One of the colorful figures in the history of Zeytun, Deli Keshish or Mad Priest, gave the following explanation when called to the capital to account for the unruly behavior of Armenians in Zeytun:
- We are not rebels, rather courageous defenders of the just right and privileges granted us by Sultan Murad; these privileges they now want to wrest from us with force of arms. For that reason we are obligated to use the sword ourselves. Had we not done this, Zeytun would have been wiped out of

the face of the earth totally by now. Is defending one's person and rights rebellion? (H. Poghosian, *Zeytuni patmuliune*, 138).

⁵⁸ The patriarch is supposed to have remarked: "It is not appropriate for Christians to carry arms and raise the sword against the king who is the lieutenant of God" (H. Poghosian, *Zeytuni patmutiune*, 137).

⁵⁹ Kuleserian, *Patmutiun katoqhikosats*, 546-551.

⁶⁰ Vardges Aharonian, "Azgayin sharzhumneru dare" [The century of national movements] *Hairenik amsagir* 32 (October 1954): 67-71.

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¹ I. P. Yarutiwm Ter Hovhaneanc [Harutiun Ter Hovhianiants], “The Armenians, 1850s,” in *The Economic History of Iran 1800-1914*, ed. Charles Issawi (Chicago, 1971), 57-58. This article is an excerpted translation from the author’s *Patmutiun Nor Jughayu vor haspahan* [History of New Julfa at Isfahan], 2 vols. (New Julfa, 1880-1881).

² Arpi Hamalian, *The Armenians: Intermediaries for the European Trading-Companies*, University of Manitoba Anthropology Papers, no.14 (Winnipeg, 1976); H. Kurdian, “Niuter hay vajarakanutian patmutian hamar (Hum metaksi vajarakanutiane ev hayers)” [Materials for the History of Armenian Trade (Raw Silk Trade and the Armenians)], *Hairenik amsagir* 22 (November-December 1944): 92-100; 23 (January-February 1945): 75-86; 23 (March-April 1945): 69-78; Issawi, *Economic History of Iran*, 92.

³ V. A. Bayburtian, “Nor Jughayi gaghtochakhe,” in *Hay zhoghovrdi patmtliun* [History of the Armenian People] eds. Tsatur Aghayan et al, vol. IV (Erevan, 1972), 324-358 *passim*, hereafter cited as *HZhP*. See also M. S. Seth, *Armenians in India: From the Earliest Times to the Present Day* (Calcutta, 1937).

⁴ Aghayan, *HZhP*, vol. IV, 297-299. Charles Issawi, *Economic History of the Middle East, 1800-1914* (1966; reprint Chicago, 1975), 31-32; Hagop Barsoumian, “The Dual Role of the Armenian *Amira* Class within the Ottoman Government and the Armenian *Millet* (1750-1850),” B. Braude and B. Lewis *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire. The Functioning of a Pluralistic Society*, vol. I (New York, 1982), 171-184. See also, Eremia Chelebi Kiumurjian, *Stambolo patmutiun*, [History of Constantinople] 3 vols., (Vienna, 1913-1939); H. Berberian, *Niuter K. Polso patmutian hamar* [Materials for the History of Constantinople] (Vienna, 1965); H. M[rprian], *Hin orer u ayd oreru medsatunnere. 1550-1780* [Old Days and the Wealthy Armenians of those Days. 1550-1780] (Venice, 1901); *Turakhayots vaiarakanutian ev vajarakank* [Turkish-Armenian Trade and merchants] (Constantinople, 1908); H. Ghukas Terteriants, *Gitutiun vajarakanutian* [Science of Trade] (Vienna, 1848).

⁵ Philip D. Curtin, *Cross-Cultural Trade in World History* (London, 1984), 179-206.

⁶ “Etat du commerce du Levant en 1784, d’après les registres de la chambre de commerce de Marseille,” in *Oeuvres de C. F. Volney*, vol. III (Paris, 1825), 321-340; cited in Issawi, *The Economic History of the Middle East*, 31-32.

⁷ Ashot Abrahamian, *Hamarot urvagids hay gaghtojakhneru* [Brief Outline of the History of Armenian Colonies], vol. I (Erevan, 1964), 457-462; Arshak Alpoyajian, *Hay gaghutneru patmutiun* [History of Armenian Colonies], vol. III (Cairo, 1961), 312.

⁸ Leo [Arakel Papakhanian], *Khojayakan kapitale ev nra kaghakakan ev hasarakakan dere hayeri mej* [The Hoja Capital and its Political and Social Role Among Armenians] (Erevan, 1934) constitutes the first major attempt to delineate the role of this important class. Hakob Anasian, *XVII dari azatagrakan sharzhumnere arevmtian Hayastanum* [The Liberation Movement in Western Armenia in the Eighteenth Century] (Erevan, 1961) studies the concerns and aspirations of the hoja class in the context of other liberation activities.

⁹ Anasian, *Azatagrakan sharzhumnere*, 171-195.

¹⁰ Barsoumian, *Dual Role*, 171.

¹¹ Anasian argues that the rivalry between Eghiazar Aintaptsi and Hakob Jughayetsi was part of the *Hoja-Chelebi* or progressive-conservative conflict (75) and that this was further related to the Bourbon vs. Hapsburg polarity (*Azatagrakan shrazhumnere*, 241-272).

¹² See, for example, Hoja Murad’s letter to Louis XIV, January 1672, in Anasian, *ibid*, 296-298.

¹³ *Ibid*, 220-222; Barsoumian, *Dual Role*, 178-181.

¹⁴ See notes 2, 3 and 6. The inability or unwillingness of successive classes of wealthy Armenians to transform their individual wealth into “Armenian capital” is one of the major problems in modern Armenian history, which must still be explored and assessed.

¹⁵ Movses Baghramian, *Nor tetrak vor kochi hordorak* (Madras, 1773). See also Leo, *Erkeri zhoghovadsu* [Collected Works.], vol. III, pt. 2, 311-320, hereafter cited as *EZh*

¹⁶ Baghramian, *Hordorak*, p. 25.

¹⁷ *Ibid*, 158-159.

¹⁸ *Ibid*.

¹⁹ *Ibid*, 118-120.

²⁰ Shahamir Shahamirian, *Girk anvaniel vorogayt parats* [Book Called Snare of Glory] (Madras, 1788-1789). The publication date on the cover the book is 1773. It is now believed that that date indicates the beginning of the writing of the text rather than the date of printing. The publication date accepted here is that given by Ashot Hovhannisian. Also, the first edition of the volume indicates Hakob, the son of Shahamir, to be the author. There is no doubt that Shahamir was the actual writer. See also Leo, *EZh*, 312-314.

- ²¹ Shahamirian, *Vorogqyt parats*, 33-38; Leo, *EZh*, 341.
- ²² Shahamirian, *Vorogqyt parats*, 141-160.
- ²³ *Ibid*, 19-20.
- ²⁴ Gut Aghaniants, ed., *Divan hay zhoghovrdi patmutian* [Registry of Armenian History], vol. VIII (Tiflis, 1908), 577-780, hereafter cited as *DHP*.
- ²⁵ Ashot Hovhannisian, "Hayastani kaghakakan vijake sefian Irani ev osmanian Turkiayi tirapetutian tak" [The Political situation of Armenia Under the control of Safavid Iran and Ottoman Turkey] in Aghayan, *HZhP*. vol. IV, 209.
- ²⁶ Joseph Emin, *Life and-Adventures of Joseph Emin, 1726-1809*, 2 vols. (Calcutta, 1918). Also, Ashot Hovhannisian, *HovEep Smin* (in Russian) (Erevan, 1945); Aghayan, *HZhP*. vol. IV, 200-206; Louise Nalbandian, *The Armenian Revolutionary Movement* (Los Angeles and Berkeley, 1967), 23-24; Leo, *Ezh*. 282-310; Garnik Giuzalian, "Hovsep Emini Taparumner" [The Travels of Joseph Emin], *Hairenik amsagir* 26 (December 1948): 89-97; "Vrats Herakl tagavore ev hayots Simeon Katoghikose Emini kaghakakan dsragirneru handep" [The Attitudes of the Georgian King Heraclius and Catholicos Simeon Regarding Emin's Political Plans], *Hairenik amsagir* 26 (November 1948): 71-80.
- ²⁷ Emin, *Life*, vol. I, 141-143, 197-198.
- ²⁸ Garnik Giuzalian, "Hovsep Emin ev Hovnan Vardapet," [Hovsep Emin and Hovnan Vardapet] *Hairenik amsagir* 26 (October 1948): 53, and his "Hovsep Emin ev Hovnan Vardapet 1768i rus-trkakan paterazmin ev heto" [Joseph Emin and Hovnan Vardapet During and After the 1768 Russo-Turkish War], *Hairenik amsagir* 27 (March 1949): 66-75.
- ²⁹ Giuzalian, "Hovsep Emin ev Hovnan Vardapet," 53.
- ³⁰ Giuzalian, "Hovsep Emin ev Hovnan Vardapet 1768in," 70-72.
- ³¹ Giuzalian, "Hovsep Emin ev Hovnan Vardapet," 53.
- ³² Giuzalian, "Hovsep Emin ev Hovnan Vardapet 1768in," 70-72.
- ³³ Emin, *Life*, vol. II, 495.
- ³⁴ Emin is a true child of the enlightenment; his work is permeated by assertions of the importance of the individual and his ability to make the right decision once he is allowed to develop his rational faculties and is left free to chose. His vision of an Armenia as the embodiment of such a universal and contemporary ideal is one of the important factors, which explains the dedication of a lifetime to such a vision; late nineteenth century revolutionaries would see in socialism the same mediating role.
- ³⁵ Giuzalian, "Hovsep Emin ev Hovnan Vardapet 1768in," 71.
- ³⁶ Emin, *Life*, vol. I, 197-198.
- ³⁷ Leo, *EZh*, 319-320.
- ³⁸ *Ibid*.
- ³⁹ Seth thinks the 1688 treaty between Armenian merchants and the British East India Company was the beginning of the end of Armenian economic power in India (*Armenians in India*, 233-277). He argues that the essential weakness of Armenian merchants was the absence of an Armenian state (*Ibid*, 229-228).
- ⁴⁰ Shahamir Shahamirian, *Tetrak vor kochi nshavak vasn karavarelo inches srpots ev arants ktak nenchetsetlots* [Book that is Called Guideline on the Management of the Properties of the Sacred and of those Dead Without a Will] (Madras, 1783).
- ⁴¹ *Ibid*, 57.
- ⁴² G.H. Grigorian, *Hay arajvor hasarkakan kaghakakan paitmutiunits* [On the History of Armenian Progressive Social and Political thought] (Erevan, 1957), 29. In this first, remarkable journalistic debate in Armenian history, the *Azdarar* provided the following advice to Armenian merchants:
- You are wasting what your fathers accumulated with much pain. Times are already unfavorable and not as profitable. People nowadays are not the same as before, and those places, which enriched you before, have not preserved their old attributes. Instead of profit, they are now giving you losses and it appears the same will be true in the future ... Gather together, hasten to help yourselves, think of a solution to spare your grandchildren sorrow. Bring your treasures together and depart immediately to Armenia, because that is your home and it is only yours, hence it deserves to be your resting place.

Following some practical proposals to improve education and agriculture as essential factors of strength, the concerned journalist continues:

Appoint from amongst yourselves administrators, collect taxes on all goods, bring craftsmen of all trades from distant countries in order to produce everything in place ... Make your clothing from the cloth of your own country and let the harvest of your land be your food. (*Azdarar*, 1795, 70-78)

⁴³ Hovhannisian, "Hayastani kaghakakan vijake," 216-217.

⁴⁴ *Ibid*, p. 217.

⁴⁵ Vagharshak Diloyan, *Lazarianneri hasarakakan-kaghakakan gordsuneutiunits* [On the Social-Political Activities of the Lazarians.] (Erevan, 1966), 61.

⁴⁶ Aghaniants, *DHP*. vol. IX (Tiflis, 1911), 23-24.

⁴⁷ *Ibid*, vol. IV (Tiflis, 1899), 731-738; Leo, *Hayots patmutiun*, vol. III (Erevan, 1946), p. 825; Tadeos Avdalbekian, *Hayagitakan hetazotutunner* [Armenological Studies] (Erevan, 1969), 215-225; and A. Mnatsakanian, "18rt darum grvads hay-rusakan dashnagrayin erku nakhagdseri gnahatman hartsi shurj" [On the Question of the Evaluation of two Treaty Drafts Between the Russians and the Armenians in the Eighteenth Century], *Banber Matenadarani* no.4 (1958): 139-160.

⁴⁸ Mnatsakanian, "hay-rusakan dashnagrayin," 148-150; also, Diloyan, *Lazarianneri gordsuneutiunits*, 175-176; Leo, *EZh*, p. 21.

⁴⁹ Diloyan, *Lazarianneri gordsuneutiunits*, 159.

⁵⁰ Mnatsakanian, "Hay-rusakan dashnagrayin," 148-154.

⁵¹ *Ibid*, 156.

⁵² *Ibid*, 150.

⁵³ Shahamirian, *Nshavak*, 57.

⁵⁴ V. R. Grigorian, "Hay rusakn dashnagri nakhagdsere," in Aghayan, *HZhP*, vol. IV, 224-225.

⁵⁵ Diloyan, *Lazarianneri gordsuneutiunits*, 160.

⁵⁶ *Ibid*, 170.

⁵⁷ Mnatsakanian "Hay-rusakan dashnagrayin," 151.

⁵⁸ *Ibid*, 150

⁵⁹ Avdalbekian, *op. cit.*, 212-214.

⁶⁰ In view of the subsequent sovietization of the Republic of Armenia in December 1920, Russia's annexation of Eastern Armenia in 1827-1878 also has raised political and ideological questions. Soviet Armenian historiography spent much time during the early period dealing with the problem of pre-Soviet Armenian relations with Russia. See, for example, Ashot Hovhannisian, *Hay ev rus oriendatsiayi dsagman hartse* [The Question of Origins of the Russian Orientation of Armenians] (Etchmiadzin, 1921); Abgar R. Hovhannisian, *Rusastane ev hay azataqrakan sharzhuma 18rd daru 80akan tvakannerin* [Russia and the Armenian Liberation Movement During the 80s of the Eighteenth Century] (Erevan, 1947); Leo, *EZh*, 173-192; Shmavon R. Harutiunian, *Patmagitutiun zargatsume sovetakan Hayastanum* [The Evolution of Historiography in Soviet Armenia] (Erevan, 1967), 232-256.

⁶¹ Zaven T. Grigorian, *Hay ev rus zhoghovurdneri daravor barekamutiune* [The Age-Old Friendship of the Russian and Armenian Peoples] (Erevan, 1960), 181-182.

⁶² Z. T. Grigorian, "Arevelyan Hayastani azatagrame parskakan ldsits," *HZhP*, vol. V, 144-157, 168-175.

⁶³ V. A. Diloyan and V. H. Rshtuni, "Arevelyan Hayastane Rusastani kazmum," 204-210.

⁶⁴ *Ibid*, 211-225; Z. D. Grigorian, *Arevelian hayastani azatagrame*, 369-410.

⁶⁵ Diloyan and Rshtuni, "Arevelyan hayastane," 226-243; Raffi [Hakob Melik Hakobian], *Khamsayi melikutiunner* [The Five Melikdoms] (Tiflis, 1883), 212; Vartan Gregorian, "The Impact of Russia on the Armenians and Armenia," in *Russia and-Asia*, Wayne S. Vucinich, ed., (Stanford, 1972), 167-218; George A. Bournoutian, "The Ethnic Composition and the Socio-Economic Condition of Eastern Armenia in the First Half of the Nineteenth Century," in Ronald G. Suny, ed., *Transcaucasia: Nationalism and Social Change* (Ann Arbor, Michigan, 1983), 85-86; and Kh. H. Avdalbekian, *Hoghayin hartse arevelian Hzyastanum(1801-1917tt)* [The Agrarian Question in Eastern Armenia (1801 to 1917)] (Erevan, [1959]), 31-32, 54-69.

⁶⁶ Diloyan and Rshtuni, "Tntesakan kyanki zargatsume," in Aghayan, *HZhP*, vol. V, 263-267.

⁶⁷ *Ibid*, 267-272.

⁶⁸ See Davit Ananun, *Rusahayeri hasarakakan zargatsume* [The Social Development of the Russian-Armenians], vols. I (Erevan, 1916) and II (Etchmiadzin, 1922); also Leon Megrian, "Tiflis during the First Russian Revolution, 1905-1907," (Ph.D. thesis, UC Berkeley, 1968).

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¹ See, for example, Roderic Davison, "Turkish Attitudes Concerning Christian-Muslim Equality in the Nineteenth Century," *American Historical Review* 59 (October 1954): 844-846; H.A.R. Gibb and Harold Bowen, *Islamic Society and the West* vol. I, pt. 2, (London and New York, 1951), 207-263; Stanford J. Shaw and Ezel K. Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey*, 2 vols. (London, New York, Melbourne, 1971 and 1977), vol. I, 151-153, and vol. II, 125-127, 200-202.

² Hagop Barsoumian, "The Dual Role of the Armenian *Amira* Class within the Ottoman Government and the Armenian Millet (1750-1850)," in *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire. The Functioning of a Pluralistic Society*, eds. Benjamin Braude and Bernard Lewis, vol. I (New York, 1982), 172-173; Avedis K. Sanjian, *The Armenian Communities in Syria under Ottoman Domination* (Cambridge, 1965), 32; Sarkis Atamian, *The Armenian Community* (New York, 1955), 20-25; Hayk M. Ghazarian, *Arevmiahayeri sotsial-tntesakan katsutiune 1800-1870tt* [The Socioeconomic Condition of Western Armenians from 1800-1870] (Erevan, 1967), 377-378; Mikayel Varandian, *Haykakan sharzhman nakhapatmutiun* [Prehistory of the Armenian Movement], vol. I (Geneva, 1912), 7-42, cited hereafter as *HShN*.

³ [Azgayin Patriarkaran], *Atenagrutiunk azgaiyin Zhoghovo* [Minutes of the National Assembly] (Constantinople, 1870-1914), January 3, 1884, cited hereafter as *AAZh*; Barsoumian, "Dual Role," 178-179.

⁴ Barsoumian, "Dual Role," 172-175.

⁵ Haik M. Ghazarian, "Arevmtahayeri sotsial-tntesakan ev kaghakakan vijake 1830-1860akan tvakannerin" [The Socioeconomic and Political Condition of Western Armenians During the 1830s to 1860s], *Hay zhoghovrdi patmutiun* [History of the Armenian people], Tsatur B. Aghayan et al., eds. vol. V (Erevan, 1974), 316-319, cited hereafter as *HZhP*; Ghazarian, *Arevmtahayeri katsuliune* 378; Atamian, *Armenian Community*, 29-30.

⁶ Barsoumian, "Dual Role," 176; H. G. M[rmrian], *Masnakan patmutiun hay medsatunneru* [Partial History of Wealthy Armenians] (Constantinople, 1910), 118; H. H. Chakmakian, *Endardzak patmutiun hayots* [Extensive History of the Armenians] (Boston, 1917), 556.

⁷ Louise Nalbandian, *The Armenian Revolutionary Movement* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1967), 43-45; Varandian, *HShN*. vol. II (Geneva, 1913), 73-94.

⁸ Charles Issawi, *The Economic History of the Middle East, 1800-1914* (1966; reprint, Chicago, 1975), 10-11; Barsoumian, "Dual Role," 174.

⁹ H. G. M[rmrian], *Turkahayots vajarananutium ev vajarakanank* [Commerce and Merchants Among Western Armenians] (Constantinople, 1908), 47-53; Ghazarian, "Arevmtahayeri vijake," 331-335; Ashot Hovhannisian, *Nalpantiane ev nra zhamanake* [Mikayel Nalpantian and his Times], vol. I (Erevan, 1955), 353.

¹⁰ Garnik Giuzalian, *Hay kaghakakan mtki zargatsume ev H.H. Dashnaksutiune* [The Development of Armenian Political thought and the (A)rm(enian) R(evolutionary) Federation] (Paris, 1927), 42. In Eastern Armenia, the conservative writer Sedrak Manandian expressed the same view its Western Armenian counterpart would: "Why should we cover it up? We are all fanatic *lusavorchakans* [members of the national, Apostolic Church]; we consider Armenianism and the credo of the Illuminator as one, since that is our national peculiarity"; Giuzalian, *Hav kaghakakan mitke*, 87. See also Varandian, *HShN*, vol. I, 287-291.

¹¹ H. Chamurjian-Teroiyents in *Erevak* (Constantinople), no. 109, 1861.

¹² Leo, *Erkeri zhoghovadsu* [Collected Works], vol. III, pt.2 (Erevan, 1967), 496-522, hereafter cited as *EZh*. On the literary and cultural legacy of the Mekhitarists, see also H. B. Sargsian, *Erkharuramia grakan gordsuneutiun ev nshanavor gordsichner Mekhitarian miabanutian* [Two Hundred Years of Literary Activities and Prominent Personalities of the Mekhitarist Brotherhood] (Venice, 1905); Minas Tololyan, *Dar me grakanutiun* [A Century of Literature] (Boston, 1977), 35-47.

¹³ H., *Khosk vasn hayrenasitutian* [Treatise on Patriotism] (Vienna, 1862).

¹⁴ *Ibid*, 23-24; H. Minas Nurikhan, *Patmutiun zhamanakakits* (Contemporary history), vol. II (Venice, 1915), 1-15. Father Ghevond Alishan, the most famous of the Mekhitarist scholars, was insistent on the revival of the Armenian past; but for him ruins of ancient Armenia and the realization that Armenians continue to exist and feel pride for a glorious past through them was the closest he got to bringing Armenians back into the fold history (*Hushikk hayreniats hayots* [Reminders on the Fatherland of the Armenians] (Venice, 1869-1879; reprint of excerpts, Venice, 1946), 17. In other publications, the Mekhitarists criticized Balkan and Italian national movements and particularly democratic tendencies in any political movement; Haik M. Ghazarian, "Arevmtahay hasarakakan hosanknere," *HZhP*, vol. V, 428.

¹⁵ Charles Issawi, ed., *The Economic History of Turkey, 1800-1914* (Chicago, 1971), 92, 95; Charles Issawi, ed., *The*

Economic History of Turkey, 1800-1914 (Chicago, 1980), 74-79.

¹⁶ A. J. Sussnitzki, "Ethnic Division of Labor," in Issawi, *Economic History of the Middle East*, 114-125; Shaw and Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire*, vol. II, 242 and 244; Issawi, *The Economic History of Turkey*, 61-67.

¹⁷ Issawi, *Economic History of Turkey*, 54-56.

¹⁸ *Ibid*, 54-62.

¹⁹ Nalbandian, *Revolutionary Movement*, 32-34; Almast Zakarian and Garry Hovhannisian, eds. *Azatagirakan gaghaparnner hay hrparakakhosutian mej, (1820-1920)* [Freedom-Loving ideas in Armenian Journalism, 1820-1920] (Erevan, 1982), 51-227; See also James Etmekjian, *The French-Influence on the Western Armenian Renaissance, 1843-1915* (New York, 1964).

²⁰ G. Kh. Stepanian, "Lusavorutiun, gitutiun, mamul" [Enlightenment, Science, Press], Aghayan, *HZhP*, vol. V, 586-589; Zakarian and Hovhannisian, *op. cit.* 1-247; see also, Artashes B. Karinian, *Aknarkner hay parberakan mamuli patmutian* [Essays on the History of Armenian Periodical Press], vol. II (Erevan, 1960).

²¹ *Hayastan*, (Constantinople), July 27, 1846; see also V. Ghukasian, "Arevmtahay lusavorichnere ev Hevastan terte"[The Western Armenian Enlighteners and the Newspaper *Hayastan*] *Banber Erevani hamalsarani* 3, no. 2 (1969): 214-224. The concept of national development as a prerequisite for progress is also discussed by Giuzalian, *Hay kaghakakan mitke*, 59.

²² Kevork Bardakjian, "Hagop Baronian's Political and Social Satire" (Ph.D. thesis, St. Anthony's College, Oxford, 1978), 147-156.

²³ Varandian, *HShN*, vol. II, 6.

²⁴ *Ibid*, p. 66.

²⁵ Dj. Aramian, *Zeytuntsik ev lusavorchakan hayk* [The People of Zeytun and Apostolic Armenians] (Constantinople, 1867), 7.

²⁶ Varandian, *HShN*. vol. II, 261.

²⁷ Sanjian, *Armenian Communities*, 40-41.

²⁸ Ghazarian, "Arevmtahay hasarakakan hosankners," 432-433.

²⁹ *Masis*, July 5, 1861.

³⁰ *Ibid*, Dec. 31, 1859.

³¹ *Ibid*.

³² Khrimian Hayrik complained that Armenians of Constantinople knew more about Europe than about Armenia; Sarukhan, *Haykakan khntirn ev azgayin sahmanadrutiune* [The Armenian Question and the National Constitution] (Tiflis, 1912), 61. In a geography textbook published in Vienna in 1850, Agheksandr Vardapet Baljian has scant reference on Armenia as a geographic unit: *Ashkharahagrutiun ev hrahank* [Geography and Exercises], 123-134.

³³ Otian to Khrimian, November 20, 1856, in Giut Aghanian, ed., *Divan hayots patmutian* [Registry of Armenian History] vol. XIII (Tiflis, 1915), 51-54, hereafter cited as *DHP*.

³⁴ Nalbandian, *Revolutionary Movement*, 45-52.

³⁵ Ghazarian, "Arevmtahay hasarakakan hosanknere," 426-436.

³⁶ See, for example, Stepan P. P. Papazians, *Dasagirk azgayin patmutian* [Textbook of National (Armenian) History] (Constantinople, 1866), 206-209. Papazian seems to suggest also that the saraf resented any financial contributions from the lower classes to Armenian institutions as an insult to their ego and wealth.

³⁷ Nalbandian, *Revolutionary Movement*, PP- 43-45; Varandian, *HShN*, vol. I, 229-250.

³⁸ [Azagayin patriarkaran], *Azyayin sahmanadrutiun, 1867-1873* [National (Armenian) Constitution, 1867-1873] (Constantinople[?], n.d.); the book presents the Armenian and Turkish (in Armenian characters) texts of the Constitution. An English translation of the Constitution can be found in H. F. B Lynch, *Armenia, Travels and Studies*, vol. II, *The Turkish Provinces* (1901; reprint, Beirut, 1967), 445-467. See also Nalbandian, *Revolutionary Movements*, 46-48; Sanjian, *Armenian Communities*, 37-45; Aramian, *Armenian Community*, 29-42. The claim of the middle class to a position of leadership based on its rising economic power and on its relations with Europe was manifest early and clearly in the cultural activities they sponsored. In a manual of trade published in 1848 by the Mekhitarists of Vienna, the following statement can be found:

In all states one cannot find a nation so active and so widely knowledgeable as the Armenians; that is why so many of them enter government service and why they control most industries and manufacturing in Constantinople. Recently they devoted themselves even more to trade; and being in as nice a place and convenient trade location as Constantinople, they are in contact with all the major cities of Europe: London, Paris, Marseille, Vienna, Odessa. In addition, they have founded

among themselves a variety of companies, which are weapons to promote both trade and the nation. It is this active trade that keeps the nation and produces wealthy individuals. Clearly, events in 1828 and before caused many among our people to be impoverished. But that was something temporary. We must rejoice at least in the fact that everyone realizes by now, that the only way the nation can be preserved and can progress is when, in these conditions of dispersion, we continue backing and supporting each other.

Father Ghukas Terteriants, *Gitutiun vajarakanutian* [Science of Trade] (Vienna, 1848), 184-185.

³⁹ Ghazarian, "Arevmtahay hasarakakan hosankner," 426-430.

⁴⁰ *AAZh*, September 4, 1869, 404.

⁴¹ In his opening speech, Khrimian remarked: "For me the interests of the state and the nation are the same" (*AAZh*, November 12, 1869, 414).

⁴² *Ibid.* December 9, 1869, 417; 23 January, 1870, 434; 25 October, 1870, 127-128, 130; Varandian, *HShN*, vol. II, 48-49.

⁴³ *AAZH*, 8 October, 1871, 468-483; Varandian, *HShN*. vol. II, 50-63. For a detailed presentation of this report, see Lillian Etmekjian, "The Armenian National Assembly of Turkey and Reform," *Armenian Review* 29 (Spring 1976): 38-42.

⁴⁴ *AAZh*, 29 October, 1871, 510-511.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 27 August, 1876, 153-155, and September 10, 1876, 179-181; Etmekjian, "The Armenian National Assembly," 42-43.

⁴⁶ *AAZh*, June 4, 1876, 118.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, September 10, 1876, 179-181.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, September 17, 1876, 245.

⁴⁹ Khrimian seems also to have felt socially uncomfortable with the well-to-do urban class.

⁵⁰ Patriarch Khrimian gave his resignation speech on August 3, 1873; for the text of the speech see *AAZh*, 889-899, also reproduced in Khrimian Hayrik: *Amboghjakan erker* [Complete Works] (New York, 1929), Appendix B, 11-13) The Porte seems to have accepted the resignation gladly (*AAZh*, November 16, 1873, 955) following the commotion created by a public petition signed by large numbers of community members objecting to the tactics used by the political council. According to the petition, the council "weakened the nation ... incited the people against the Patriarch, and abused the Constitution" (*AAZh*, August 24, 1873, 914).

⁵¹ The charges of anti-constitutional behavior were leveled against Khrimian when he based some of his actions on the "spirit rather than the letter of the Constitution." The patriarch's resignation speech included the response to the charge: "The pages of the Constitution are even more fragile than the pedals of a rose; if you handle them rudely, they will fall apart ... I want to embrace the Constitution, but I do not want to press it so hard as to kill it." Khrimian's resignation embarrassed the political council, which resigned as well.

⁵² Hayk Ajemian, *Hayots Hayrik* [Father of Armenians] (Tiflis, 1929), 452.

⁵³ *Azgayin sahmanadrutiun*, 9.

⁵⁴ Hmayak Nshkian, *Arajin kaydser: Ej me Karno zartonen* [First Sparks: A Page from the Renaissance of Karin (Erzerum)] 1 (Boston, 1930), 69.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 143-144.

Notes to Chapter 4

¹ Lillian Etmekjian, "Armenian Cultural and Political Contributions to Reform in Turkey," *Armenian Review* 29 (Summer 1976): 176-182.

² See Şerif Mardin, *The Genesis of Young Ottoman Thought* (Princeton, 1962), especially 78, 197, 247-250.

³ Etmekjian, "Armenian Contributions," 171-191.

⁴ Giut Aghanian, *Divan hay zhoghovrdi patmulian* [Registry of the History of the Armenian People], vol. XIII (Tiflis, 1915), 226, 232, hereafter cited as *DHP*.

⁵ Lillian Etmekjian, "The Armenian National Assembly of Turkey and Reform," *Armenian Review* 29 (Spring 1976): 42.

⁶ *Ibid*, 42-44; *Atenagrutiunk Azgayin Zhoghovo* [Minutes of the National Assembly], October 22-November 3, 1871, 497-515, hereafter cited as *AAZh*.

⁷ Şerif Mardin, "Ideology and Religion in the Turkish Revolution," *IJMES* 2 (April 1971): 197-211. Although this article deals mainly with the Nationalist phase of Turkish history, it has important references to this period as well; its critique certainly applies to the whole pattern of Turkish reformist movements.

⁸ See, for example, Albert Vandal, *Les Arméniens et la réforme de la Turquie* (Paris, 1897).

⁹ Kemal H. Karpat, "The Transformation of the Ottoman State," *IJMES* 3 (June 1972): 268-269.

¹⁰ Bernard Lewis, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey* (London, 1961), 73-126. See also Roderic Davison, *Reform in the Ottoman Empire, 1856-1876* (Princeton, 1963).

¹¹ Robert Devereux, *The First Ottoman Constitutional Period* (Baltimore, 1963), 216-226.

¹² See Niyazi Berkes, *The Development of Secularism in Turkey* (Montreal, 1964), especially 335-337, 423-427.

¹³ Mardin, *Genesis*, 167-168; Hayk M. Ghazarian, *Arevmtahayeri sotsial-tntesakan katsutiune 1800-1870tt* [The Socioeconomic Condition of Western Armenians, 1800-1870] (Erevan, 1967), 565.

¹⁴ Mardin, *Genesis*, 166.

¹⁵ *Ibid*, 280-281.

¹⁶ Karpat, "Transformation of Ottoman State," 267-268.

¹⁷ *Ibid*, 269.

¹⁸ Karpat, "Transformation of Ottoman State," 243-281. See also H. S. Korkhmazian and G. Injikian, "Osmanian kaysrutian burzhuzian" [The Bourgeoisie of the Ottoman Empire], *Patma-Banasirakan handes* 14, no. 2 (1972): 251-253; and G. Injikian, "Osmanian kaysrutian mej kapitalistakan haraberutiunneri zargatsman mi kani hartseri masin" [On a Few Questions Relating to the Development of Capitalist Relations in the Ottoman Empire], *Patma-Banasirakan handes* 13, no.4 (1971): 107-120.

¹⁹ Devereux, *First Constitutional Period*, 217.

²⁰ Karpat, "Transformation of Ottoman State," 256.

²¹ Charles Issawi, ed., *The Economic History of the Middle East, 1800-1914* (1966: reprint, Chicago, 1975), 19, 71-78.

²² Mardin, *Ideology and Religion*, 199; Metin Teper, "Political Modernization as Reflected in Bureaucratic Change: The Turkish Bureaucracy and its 'Historical Bureaucratic Empire' Tradition," *IJMES* 7 (October 1976): 507-521.

²³ One of the manifestations of the prevailing Ottoman view of reform and its benefits is the inability of Armenians to reach any positions of responsibility within the empire despite the decades of reform. Except for a few individuals who had risen within the bureaucracy and who had little to do with the community, and despite the principles of equality enunciated in many edicts, Armenians were able to get low level and marginal positions only; see Mesrob K. Krikorian, *Armenians in the Service of the Ottoman Empire, 1860-1908* (London, 1977), especially 102-110.

²⁴ Robert Melson, "A Theoretical Inquiry into the Armenian Massacres of 1894-1896," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 24 (July 1982): 481-509; Robert Melson, "Provocation or Nationalism: A Critical Inquiry into the Armenian Genocide of 1915," in *The Armenian Genocide in Perspective*, Richard G. Hovannisian, ed., (New Brunswick, New Jersey, 1986), 61-84.

²⁵ Mardin, *Genesis*, 266-267.

²⁶ *Ibid*, 398.

²⁷ Karpat, "Transformation of Ottoman State," 261.

²⁸ Davison, *Reform in the Ottoman Empire*, 844-864.

²⁹ Christians rarely constituted a homogeneous group in the parliament. Armenians and Greeks, for example, disagreed and presented opposite views on such crucial issues as the ratio of representation of the two groups in parliament, the representational ratio of non-Muslims on municipal councils, and the military conscription of Christians. See Devereux, *First Constitutional Period*, 133-135, 218-219, 222-224.

- ³⁰ Aghanians, *DHP*, vol. XIII, 143-144.
- ³¹ *Ibid*, 285-288. Mardin, "Ideology and Revolution," 197-211.
- ³² Aghanians, *DHP*, 285-288.
- ³³ Arthur Beylerian, "L'imperialisme et le mouvement national Arménien," *Relations Internationales*, 1973, no. 3: 19-54; A. O. Sarkissian, *History of the Armenian Question to 1885* (Urbana, Ill., 1938); G. H. Cloud, "The Armenian Question, 1878-1894" (M.A. thesis, Stanford University, 1923); and Richard G. Hovannisian, *Armenia On the Road to Independence* (Los Angeles and Berkeley, 1967), 26-27. See also William L. Langer, *The Diplomacy of Imperialism* (New York, 1956), 145-166, 195-211, 321-354. Based on scanty evidence, a highly selective and suspicious pool of knowledge, and an imperialist bias, Langer denies the Armenian movement any internal dynamics and legitimacy.
- ³⁴ *AzH*, April 4, 1883, 341.
- ³⁵ Mikael Varandian, *Haykakan sharzhman nakhapqtmuliu* [Prehistory of the Armenian movement], vol. II (Geneva, 1913), 128-129, hereafter cited as *HShN*.
- ³⁶ Devereux, *First Constitutional Period*, 245; Gabriel Lazian, *Hayastan ev hay date (Vaverager)* [Armenia and the Armenian Cause (Documents)] (Cairo, 1946), 58.
- ³⁷ Aghanian, *DHP*, vol. XIII, 273-278. It is interesting to note, for example, that during the fiscal year 1872-1873, the expenditures of the imperial household exceeded the combined budget for public works, education, and health and commerce (Issawi, *Economic History of the Middle East*, 11.)
- ³⁸ Lazian, *Vaveragre*, 59-62.
- ³⁹ *AzH*, June 2, 1878, 8.
- ⁴⁰ *Ibid*, August 12, 1877; Lazian, *Vaverager*, 61.
- ⁴¹ Jon Kirakosian, *Burzhuan divanagitutiune ev Hayastane XIX dari 70akan tt* [Bourgeois Diplomacy and Armenia During the 70s of the Nineteenth Century] (Erevan, 1978), 92-195.
- ⁴² *AzH*, June 2 1878, 11.
- ⁴³ Kirakosian, *op. cit.* 196-255.
- ⁴⁴ *Ibid*, 256-299.
- ⁴⁵ Varandian, *HShN*, vol. II, 145-164.
- ⁴⁶ Kirakosian, *Burzhuan divanagitutiune*, 300-353.
- ⁴⁷ *AzH*, October 6, 1878, 160-188.
- ⁴⁸ *Ibid*, 162.
- ⁴⁹ *Ibid*, 181.
- ⁵⁰ *Ibid*, 187.
- ⁵¹ The lecture was printed in booklet under the title *Miutium hayutian* [Unity of Armenians] (Constantinople, 1879). It was delivered in Scutari, for the Krtasirats miutium (Education society).
- ⁵² *Ibid*, 24-38.
- ⁵³ *Ibid*, p. 1.
- ⁵⁴ *Ibid*, 39-42.
- ⁵⁵ The lecture was delivered in Constantinople on February 24 and published the same year as *Hay eritasardutian* [To the Armenian Youth] (Constantinople, 1880), 39.
- ⁵⁶ *Ibid*, 26. Ormanian's full statement read: "Do not look upon me as a revolutionary when I speak of remedies, because I am arguing the possible, not the implausible."
- ⁵⁷ The appeals made by Varjapetian and Ormanian to bring together Armenian capital and the dispossessed of the provinces were the most coherent and developed but not the first or the last. A number of articles appeared over a period of time in newspapers promoting the idea. See, for example, X. Shahnazarian in *Erkragund* (Manchester), no.14, 1864, in Artashes B. Karinian, *Aknarkner hay parberakan mamuli patmutian* [Essays on the Periodical Armenian Press], vol. II (Erevan, 1956), 583-587. In 1872 a little known author, G. M. Shirinian, published a pamphlet entitled *Aghkatutiun ev ir darmannere I giughoreis* [Poverty and its Remedies in the Villages] (Constantinople), with the same basic idea but with a little more realistic tone.
- ⁵⁸ Dsatur B. Aghayan, *Hay zhoghovrdi azatagrakan paykari patmutiunits* [From the History of the Liberation Struggle of the Armenian People] (Erevan, 1976), 104-105.
- ⁵⁹ Rafik Hovhannisian, *Arevmtahay azgayin-azatagrakan sharzhumnere ev Karini "Pashtpan Hayreniats" kazmakerputiune* [The Western Armenian Liberation Movements and the "Pashtpan hayreniats" (Defenders of the Fatherland) Organization of Karin] (Erevan, 1965), 205. The instruction was given in 1880. Reporting that the Porte

would no longer accept *takrirs* on the social, economic, or political problems of provincial Armenians, Hakob Paronian wrote: “I suggest that a letter be forwarded to Kurds to inform them that henceforth they should spare our property, our lives, and our honor and violate only our religion.” See *Ampoghjakan gordser* [Complete Works], vol. IV (Erevan, 1965), 447-448.

⁶⁰ Rouben Berberian, “Hay masonnere ev ‘Ser’ otiake Polso mej” [Armenian Free-masons and the “Ser” Lodge in Constantinople], *Hairenik amsagir* 15 (May 1937): 125.

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- ¹ Hayk Ajemian, *Hayots Hayrik* (Tiflis, 1929), 511-513; Gabriel Lazian, *Hayastan ev hay date (Vaverager)* [Armenia and the Armenian Cause (documents)] (Cairo, 1946), 98-99.
- ² Garnik Guzaljian, *Khrimiin Hayrik* (Beirut, 1954), 5-87, especially 12-13; Hmayak Nshkian reports an incident during which such a call was heeded in *Arajin kaydser: Ej me Karno zartonken* [First Sparks: A Page from the Renaissance of Karin] (Boston, 1930), 26-27.
- ³ Mkrtych Khrimian, *Amboghjakan erker* [Complete Works] (New York, 1929), 275.
- ⁴ Guzaljian, *Khrimian Hayrik*, p. 202; Hmayak Nshkian, *Arajin Kaydser*, 83.
- ⁵ Artak Darbinian, *Hay azatagrakan sharzhman oreren* [From the Days of the Armenian Liberation Movement] (Paris, 1947), 104-105.
- ⁶ Ajemian, *Hayots Hayrik*, 596.
- ⁷ Guzaljian, *Khrimian Hayrik*, 34-35.
- ⁸ *Ibid*, 58; (Hamavaspurakan Hayrenaktsakan Miutiun), *Amtnayn hayots hayrik* [Father of all Armenians] (Boston, 1957), 12.
- ⁹ Khrimian Hayrik, *Papik ev Tornik* (Etchmiadzin, 1894). See also *Erker*, 637-776.
- ¹⁰ Khrimian even used the term in his sermons: “Educate your children and believe that your salvation is in your children. Do not ever let this impression fade in your memories. I tell you this in the prophetic spirit: The Armenian people will finally join the ranks of the enlightened.” See Ajemian, *Hayots Hayrik*, 576.
- ¹¹ Guzaljian, *Khrimian Hayrik*, 151.
- ¹² Ajemian, *Hayots Hayrik*, 661.
- ¹³ *Ibid*, 594.
- ¹⁴ Darbinian, *Hay azatagrakan*, 104-105.
- ¹⁵ Stepan Papazian, once president of the National Assembly and an associate of Khrimian, came close to endorsing the use of arms: “The government says it has no time for reforms in Asian Turkey. The government is preoccupied with reforms in European Turkey because there [the people] are using arms. We are not.” See Mikayel Varandian, *Haykakan sharzhman nakhapatmutiun* (Geneva, 1913), vol. II, 258, hereafter cited as *HShN*.
- ¹⁶ Ajemian, *Hayots Hayrik*, 577.
- ¹⁷ *Ibid*, 576.
- ¹⁸ *Ibid*, p. 594.
- ¹⁹ Simon Vratsian, for example, considered Khrimian “a revolutionary in the widest and noblest sense of the word,” but the wrong man to head a diplomatic mission; see his *Kianki ughinerov* [Along the Paths of Life], vol. II (Beirut, 1960), 112. Vratsian became a leading political figure in Armenian history in the 1910s; he was the last prime minister of the independent Republic of Armenia, in 1920.
- ²⁰ Rafik P. Hovhannisian, *Arevmtahay azatagrakan sharzhumnere ev Karno “Pashtpan Hayreniats” kazmakerputiune* [The Western Armenian Liberation Movements and the “Pashtpan Hayreniats” (Defender of the fatherland) Organization of Karin] (Erevan, 1965), 88-89.
- ²¹ Hovhannisian, *Arevmtahay sharzhumnere*, 213-214.
- ²² Varandian, *HShN*, 68-270.
- ²³ Garnik Guzaljian, *Hay kaghakakan mtki zargatsume ev H.H. Dishnaktsutiune* [The Development of Armenian Political Thought and the A(rmenian) R(evolutionary) Federation] (Paris, 1927), 67, 70; Abraham Giulkhandanian, “Heghapokhakan sharzhman skizbe Taroni mej” [The Beginning of the Revolutionary Movement in Taron], *Hairenik amsagir* 18 (November 1939): 109.
- ²⁴ *Ardsvi Vaspurakan* 7, no. 1(1862): 161-177.
- ²⁵ Ruben [Ter Minasian], *Hay heghapokhakani me hishatakner* [The Memoirs of an Armenian Revolutionary], second edition, vol. III (Beirut, 1974), 43-44; Gabriel Lazian, *Demker hav azatagrakan sharzhumen* [Personalities - from the Armenian Liberation Movement] (Cairo, 1949), 1-12; Varandian, *HShN*, 262-273; Mkrtych Portukalian, “Constantnupolis ev Hayastan” [Constantinople and Armenia], *Armenia*, Dec. 1900-July 1902 (serialized).
- ²⁶ *Armenia*, Sept. 16, 1885.
- ²⁷ H. F. B. Lynch, *Armenia: Travels and Studies*, vol. II (London, 1901), 476; Ghevond Alishan presents the following scenario:

When one walks days on within the boundaries of the fatherland, and sees on the mountains and the hills old fortresses and castles sometimes semi-ruined, old and huge palaces, busy streets and bridges, bright or moss covered arches, graves that have aged like those buried in them, but at the

same time [one sees] new and open buildings, factories, schools, halls and parks that keep up with the times and are useful and profitable, political and military squares, etc., etc., and when he can say that all these are the works of his forefathers who spoke the same language, and centuries have gone by, then how one's heart expands, rises and rests in one's chest. With what legitimate pride he can say these constitute my fatherland, my people have lived here since time immemorial and have resided under these roofs; these constitute our patrimony, which have been governed with our own laws and administration within its own boundaries, between other nations and continents.

Hushikk hayreniats hayots [Reminders of the Fatherland of Armenians] (Venice 1845), 13.

²⁸ This explains, at least in part, the unusually enthusiastic reception accorded the adoption of a National Constitution in 1863 in the provinces. Armenians of Constantinople knew what they were getting; the provincials do not seem to have made the distinctions between millet and state—distinctions necessary to avoid disappointment. Hovhannisian, *Arevmtahay sharzhumnere*, 220; Ajemian, *Hayots Hayrik*, 556; Artak Darbinian, *Hay azatagrakan*, 118.

²⁹ M. G. Nersisian, *Hay zhoghovrdi azatagrakan paykare trkakan brnatirution dem, 1850-1870* [The Liberation Struggle of the Armenian People Against Turkish Domination, 1850-1870] (Erevan, 1955), 174.

³⁰ *Teghekagir gavarakan harstaharutians* [Report on the Persecutions in the Provinces] (Constantinople, 1876), 28-36.

³¹ For a different definition of reform, see Stanford J. Shaw, "The Aims and Achievements of the Nineteenth Century Ottoman Reformers," in *Beginnings of Modernization in the Middle East: The Nineteenth Century*, eds. W. R. Polk and Richard L. Chambers. (Chicago, 1968), 23-29.

³² Tsatur B. Aghayan, *Hay zhoghovrdi azatagrakan paykari patmuliunits* [From the History of the Liberation Movement of the Armenian People] (Erevan, 1976), 93-95.

³³ The abrogation of the Ottoman Constitution was linked to the start of hostilities against Russia leading to the 1877-78 Russo-Turkish war.

³⁴ Richard G. Hovannisian, *Armenia On the Road to Independence* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1967), 34.

³⁵ Among other actions, the government suspended the work of a commission designated to investigate charges of Kurdish lawlessness and victimization of Armenians; Hovhannisian, *Arevmtahav sharzhumnere*, p. 208.

³⁶ *Ibid*, 207.

³⁷ Hovhannisian, "Azgayin jnshumnern u haladsanknere ev aztagrakan sharzhumnere 70-akan tvakannerin" [National Repression and Persecutions and Liberation Movements in the 1870s], in Dsatur B. Aghayan, et al., eds. *Hay zhoghovrdi paitmutiun*, vol. VI (Erevan, 1981), 126-127, hereafter cited as *HZHP*; Suren Markosian, *Arevmtahayutian viiake XIX tveri verjerin* [The Situation of Western Armenians at the End of the Nineteenth Century] (Erevan, 1968), 69-153.

³⁸ Markosian, *Arevmtahayutian viiake*, 95-153.

³⁹ Hovhannisian, *Arevmtahay sharzhumnere*, 200-210.

⁴⁰ Hovhannisian, "Azgayin jnshumnern," 126-127.

⁴¹ *Ibid*, p. 137; Hovhannisian, *Arevmtahay sharzhumnere*, p. 205. The ban of pictures also applied to Vardan Mamikonian, a fifth-century Armenian hero, and gradually to others. This led Paronian to write: "The Porte, in its infinite political wisdom, is convinced that these pictures are responsible for the rise of the Armenian Question;" Hakob Paronian, *Erker*. vol. IV, 460.

⁴² Ajemian, *Hayots hayrik*, 572.

⁴³ Hovhannisian, *Arevmtahay sharzhumnere*, 205.

⁴⁴ Srvantsiants to Mamurian, Nov.1, 1883 in Giut Aghaniants, *Divan hay zhoghovrdi patmutian* [Register of the History of the Armenian People], vol. XIII (Tiflis, 1915), 451-454, hereafter cited as *DHP*.

⁴⁵ Garegin Srvantsiants, "Hayrenasirution ev hayrenik" [Patriotism and Fatherland], *Ardsvi Vaspurakan* 6, no. 3 (1861): 92.

⁴⁶ *Ardsvi Vaspurakan* 7, no. 10 (1862): 289-308.

⁴⁷ Hovhannisian, *Arevmtahay sharzhumnere*, 208.

⁴⁸ Ruben Berberian, "Hay masonnere ev 'Ser' otiake Polso mej," *Hairenik amsagir*, 15(March 1937):80-81. Raffi thought the National Constitution was a weapon in the hands of the Ottoman government to distract Armenians from their real problems. See *Erkeri zhoghovadsu* [Collected Works], vol. IX (Erevan, 1958), 263.

⁴⁹ *Ardsvi Vaspurakan* 4, no. 1(1859): 1-3.

⁵⁰ Srvantsiants, *Ardsvi Vaspurakan*, 7-8, no. 3(1862-63): 79.

- ⁵¹ Arsen Tokhmakhian, *Hayreniki pahanjnere ev hay giughatsin* [The Needs of the Fatherland and the Armenian Peasant] (Tiflis, 1881), 7. Tokhmakhian, an interesting and insightful personality during this early phase of the Armenian movement, was born in Van and was teaching in Eastern Armenia when he undertook his trip. In 1880 he is known to have joined the “Central Committee” of Erevan, a group of Armenian revolutionaries that did not exist for long; in 1881 he joined the “Hayrenaserneri miutiun” and was eventually killed in Derik, a monastery in Northern Iran used by Armenian revolutionaries. Before his murder he was ordained a priest. See “Arsen Tokhmakhian,” in *Vem*, 4(no. 4, 1936):95-99; Abraham Giulkhandanian, “Heghapokhakan sharzhume Vani mej” [The Revolutionary Movement in Van] *Hairenik amsagir* 17 (February 1939): 116-122; and Tadeos Avdalbekin, *Arsen Tokhmakhian* (Erevan, 1926).
- ⁵² Srvantsiants, “Hayrenasirutun,” 93-94.
- ⁵³ *Ardsvi Vaspurakan* 7, no. 1(1862).
- ⁵⁴ *Ibid.*
- ⁵⁵ *Ibid* 7, no.10 (1862): 289-308.
- ⁵⁶ Arsen Tokhmakhian, *Masis lerneri haravayin storotner* [The Southern Slopes of the Masis Mountains], book 1 (Tiflis, 1882), 21-23.
- ⁵⁷ Tokhmakhian, *Hayreniki pahanjnere*, 60-61.
- ⁵⁸ Mateos Mamurian, *Haykakan namakani* [Letters on Armenia] (Izmir, 1872), 206.
- ⁵⁹ Mateos Mamurian, *Sev leran marde* [Man of the Black Mountain] (Izmir, 1879), 187.
- ⁶⁰ Khrimian to Srvantsiants, January 25, 1867 in *DHP*, vol. XIII, 75-78.
- ⁶¹ *Ardsvi Vaspurakan* 3, no. 7(1858): 191-192.
- ⁶² Srvantsiants to Khrimian, February 2, 1872 in *DHP*, vol. XIII, 214 and 217.
- ⁶³ *Ardsvi Vaspurakin* 3, no. 7 (1858): 188-191.
- ⁶⁴ Mamurian, *Sev leran marde*, 60.
- ⁶⁵ Ghazarian, *Arevmtahayeri vijake*, 560.
- ⁶⁶ *Mshak*, (Tiflis), 1878, nos. 152 and 206.
- ⁶⁷ *Arevelian Mamul* (Izmir).
- ⁶⁸ Varduhi Kalantar-Nalbandian, “Mateos Mamurian vorpes kaghakakan grogh,” *Hairenik amsagir* 5 (February 1927): 130-139.
- ⁶⁹ Noratunkian to Srvantsiants, 20 August 1880, *DHP*, vol. XIII, 344-348.
- ⁷⁰ The proposal was made by a young attorney named Gabriel Noratunkian, who later assumed important functions in the Ottoman Foreign Ministry and peace negotiations following the First World War, seems to have been prompted by a suggestion from the Polish Prince Chartorsky to organize Western Armenian military operations against Russia to divert the latter’s forces from the Polish front; see *DHP*, vol. XIII, 56-57. The purpose of the proposed committee, according to Noratunkian, would be to avoid “playing a role in the forthcoming drama.”
- ⁷¹ *Puni* (Constantinople), April 29, 1878.
- ⁷² *Erkragund*, no. 1, 1863 in Artashes B. Karinian, *Aknarkner hay parberakan mamuli patmutian* [Essays on the History of Armenian Periodical Press], vol. II (Erevan, 1956), 537.
- ⁷³ *Erkragund*, no. 19, 1864, in Karinian, *Aknarkner*, 579-580.
- ⁷⁴ *Ibid.*
- ⁷⁵ *Puni* (Constantinople), April 29, 1878.

Notes to Chapter 6

¹ Mikayel Varandian, *Haykakan sharzhman nakhapalmutiun*, vol. II (Geneva, 1913), 264-269, hereafter cited as *HShN*.

² Mkrtich Portukalian, “Konstantnupolis ev Hayastan” [Constantinople and Armenia], *Armenia*, December 1900 to July 1902 (serialized); Louise Nalbandian, *The Armenian Revolutionary Movement* (Los Angeles and Berkeley, 1967), 48-52.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ Ruben Berberian, “Hay masonnere ev ‘Ser otiake Polso mej,” *Hairenik amsagir* 15 (March 1937): 74-86, 15 (April 1937): 124-134, 15 (May 1937): 122-134, 15 (June 1937): 128-133, 15 (July 1937): 114-120; A. Fenerjian, “Azat vormnadrutuine hayots mej,” *Hairenik amsagir* 32 (October 1954): 90-100, 32 (December 1954): 92-101; A. Fenerjian, “Hay azat vormnadranken otiakner Turkio mej,” *Hairenik amsagir* 33 (February 1955): 79-85, 33 (April 1955): 100-102, 33 (June 1955): 90-96, 33 (July 1955): 95-102, 33 (September 1955): 94-101, 33 (December 1955): 75-82, 34 (January 1956): 98-102.

⁵ Tumayants to Srvantstians, October 1875/76 in Giut Aghaniants, *Divan hay zhoghovrdi patmutian* [Register of the History of the Armenians], vol. XIII (Tiflis, 1915), 288, hereafter cited as *DHP*.

⁶ Abraham Giulkhandanian, “Heghapokhakan sharzhume Vani mej” [The Revolutionary Movement in Van], *Hairenik amsagir* 17 (February 1939): 116-123, 17 (March 1939): 140-145, 17 (April 1939): 149-155, 17 (June 1939): 140-144, 17 (June 1939): 129-133; Abraham Giulkhandanian, “Heghapokhakan sharzhume Karini mej” [The Revolutionary Movement in Karin], *Hairenik amsagir* 17 (July 1939): 122-132, 17 (August 1939): 54-63; Abraham Giulkhandanian, “Heghapokhakan sharzhman skizbe Taroni mej,” [The Beginnings of the Revolutionary Movement in Taron], *Hairenik amsagir* 17 (October 1939): 96-102, 18 (November 1939): 104-118; Abraham Giulkhandanian, “Gaghaparakan ev heghapokhakan sharzhumnere K. Polso shrjanin mej” [The Ideological and Revolutionary Movements in the Region of Constantinople], *Hairenik amsagir* 18 (December 1939): 140-149, 18 (January 1940): 136-147; Abraham Giulkhandanian, “Gaghaparakan ev heghapokhakan sharzhumnere usanoghakan shrjanum” [Ideological and Revolutionary Movements in Student Circles], *Hairenik amsagir* 18 (September 1940): 60-72, 18 (October 1940): 123-131; [Vasurakani hayrenaktsakan miutiun], *Vasurakan* (Venice, 1930), 188-191; Srvantstians to Khrimian Hayrik, March 2, 1972 in Aghaniants, *DHP*, vol. XIII, 231.

⁷ Armenians of Van to Russian Viceroy, May 9, 1872, in Aghaniants, *DHP*, vol. XIII, 273-275; Hakob H. Kaloyan and Nshan A. Shirvanian to the Russian Viceroy, June 8, 1872, *Ibid*, 276-278. See also Nalbandian, *Revolutionary Movement*, 80-83.

⁸ Appeal of residents of the village Anggh to “Miutiun i prkutiun” society, in Aghaniants, *DHP*, vol. XIII, 269-270.

⁹ *Ibid*, 272.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ *Ibid.* Giulkhandanian, “Heghapokhakan sharzhume Karini mej,” *Hairenik amsagir* 17 (July 1939): 122-131, 17 (August 1939): 54-62; Hmayak Nshkian, *Arajin kavdzer: Ej me Karno zartonken* [First Sparks: A Page from the Renaissance in Karin] (Boston, 1930), 68, 112.

¹² Rafik Hovhannisian, *Arevmtaha azatagrakan sharzhumnere ev Karini “PashtpanHayreniats” kazmakerputiun* [Western Armenian Liberation Movements and the “Pashtpan Hayreniats” (Defender of the fatherland) organization] (Erevan, 1965), 284-286; Simon Vratsian, “Karno Erkragordsakan Enkerutiune” [The Agricultural Society of Karin (Erzerum)], *Hairenik amsagir* 22 (1943): 121-127. [Arakel] Sarukhan, “The Agricultural Society: The First Popular Movement in Western Armenia” *Armenian Review* 25 (Summer 1982): 152-164, first published as “Arajin zhoghovrdakan sharzhume Tajkakan Hayastanum,” in *Gords* no. 3, part 2(1917): 1-13.

¹³ Hovhannisian, *Arevmtahay sharzhumnere*, 308; see also Nalbandian, *Revolutionary Movement*, 85-89.

¹⁴ Hovhannisian, *Arevmtahay sharzhumnere*, 286-287.

¹⁵ *Ibid*, 86-88. The impact of the group on Armenian youth was tremendous and can be measured by the song which was created then and which became very popular as anti-government guerrilla activities increased, “Dzayn me hnchets Erzerumi hayots lernerer” or “A voice reverberated from the Armenian mountains of Erzerum”; see Nshkian, *Arajin Kaydser*, 146.

¹⁶ Hovhannisian, “Azgayin azatagrakan sharzhumnere 1870-1880akan tvakannerin” [The National-Liberation Movements During the 1870s and 1880s], in Tsatur B. Aghayan et al., eds., *Hay zhoghovrdi.patmulium* [History of the Armenian People], vol. VI (Erevan, 1981), 140-142, hereafter cited as *HZhP*.

¹⁷ Harutiun Jankiulian, *Hishatakner haykakan jgnazhamen* [Memoirs from the Armenian Crisis], vol. I (Constantinople, 1913), 89.

- ¹⁸ Hayk Ajemian, *Hayots Hayrik* (Tiflis, 1929), 556-557. See also Nalbandian, *Revolutionary Movement*, 83-84.
- ¹⁹ Nshkian, *Arajin Kaydser*, 115-117.
- ²⁰ Ultimately these cards caused the discovery of the group by the police.
- ²¹ Gerard J. Libaridian, "The Changing Self-Image in the Ottoman Empire: *Rayahs* and Revolutionaries," in *The Armenian Image in History and Literature*, ed. Richard G. Hovhannisian, (Malibu, 1981), 166-167.
- ²² Ajemian, *Hayots Hayrik*, 556-557; Hovhannisian, *Arevmtahay sharzhumnere*, 308-309; Varandian, *HShN*, 73-94, especially 784-85.
- ²³ Hovhannisian, *Arevmtahay sharzhumnere*, 285-286.
- ²⁴ Varandian, *HShN*, 75-87 *passim*. See also Mikayel Nalpantiants, *Entir Erker* [Selected Works] (Erevan, 1953), 369-370.
- ²⁵ Artak Darbinian, *Hayazatagrakan sharzhman oreren* [From the Days of the Armenian Liberation Movement] (Paris, 1947), 20, 27.
- ²⁶ Hovhannisian, *Arevmtahay sharzhumnere*, 312-314; Karo Sasuni, *Patmutiun Taroni ashkharhi* [History of the Region of Taron] (Beirut, 1957), 552.
- ²⁷ Hovhannisian, *Arevmtahay sharzhumnere*, 313-314.
- ²⁸ Koms (Vahan Papazian), *Im hushere* [My memoirs], vol. I (Boston, 1950), p. 233; Raffi, *Tadikahayk* [Turkish Armenians] (Tiflis, 1913), 82.
- ²⁹ *Vaspurakan*, 196.
- ³⁰ *Ibid.*
- ³¹ *Ibid.*, 197-198. The school was founded and directed by Hambardzum Eramian, whose memoirs are published as *Hushardzan*, 2 vols. (Alexandria, 1929).
- ³² Koms, *Im hushere*, 130.
- ³³ Mikayel Varandian, "Raffi," *Hairenik amsagir* 7 (May 1929): 80.
- ³⁴ Ajemian, *Hayots Hayrik*, 357-363; Nalbandian, *Revolutionary Movement*, 93 and n. 13, 202-203; Hovhannisian, *arevmtahay sharzhumnere*, 219-221; Nalpantiants, *Erker*, 371-372; Koms, *Im hushere*, 231-233; *Vaspurakan*, 191-192.
- ³⁵ Poghos vardapet is not alone in this category of clergymen who combined traditional authority with the more concrete power of the state or local chieftains, although he probably was the most colorful and cruel. Khrimian faced a similar character while primate of Taron (Garnik Giuzalian, *Khrimian Hayrik: Gaghaparneri ashkharhe* [Khrimian Hayrik: The World of his Ideas] (Beirut, 1954, 45-46). Nshkian (100) mentions the Erzerum primate, a certain Bishop Harutiune, as belonging to the same category. See also Mushegh arkepiskopos [Seropian], *manchesteri hay gaghute* [The Armenian Community of Manchester] (Boston, 1911), 59-60.
- ³⁶ Hambardzum Eramian, *Hushardzan*, vol. II, 32-35, 80-83; Darbinian, *Hay azatagrakan*, 114-116.
- ³⁷ Hayk Ajemian, *Hayots Hayrik*, 369-371; Darbinian, *Hay azatagrakan*, 115.
- ³⁸ Aghaniants, *DHP*, vol. XIII, 444. Poghos accused Khrimian in public statements of causing all the social unrest in the capital, in Van, Erzerum, and even Tiflis. The vardapet later denied that he had caused any harm to Khrimian and claimed to have worked with him. (Sermon by Poghos, reported in *Armenia*, June 2, 1886).
- ³⁹ *Armenia*, June 21 1886.
- ⁴⁰ Hovhannisian, *Arevmtahay sharzhumnere*, 319.
- ⁴¹ Khrimian's method of control was to beat the young men with a stick, to keep them away from the ishkhan. This he was unable to do. One young man, still in action while receiving Khrimian's blows, is supposed to have remarked joyfully, "Go ahead, dear Hayrik, hit us; as long as we can hit them; these guys have burned us" (Ajemian, *Hayots Hayrik*, 563).
- ⁴² *Ibid.*, 561.
- ⁴³ Residents of Van to National Central Executive, undated, in Aghaniants, *DHP*, vol. XIII, 495-497.
- ⁴⁴ Gabriel Lazian, *Demker hay azatagrakan sharzhumen* [Personalities from the Armenian Liberation Movement] (Cairo, 1949), 1-12; Garnik Giuzalian, *Patmakan khndirner* [Historical issues] (Beirut, 1937), 118-158; Gabriel Lazian, "M. Portukalian," *Vem* no.4 (1936): 1-29; Nalbandian, *Revolutionary Movement*, 90-95; Varandian, *HShN*, 262-273. See also *Armeniayi Husharar* [Anthology of Armenia] (Marseilles, 1890).
- ⁴⁵ "Haytarutiun Armeniayi" [Announcement for Armenia], June 18, 1885.
- ⁴⁶ *Kanonagir Hayrenaserneri Miutian* [By-Laws of the Union of Patriots] (Marseilles, 1889).
- ⁴⁷ See Varandian, *HShN*, 267-273; Mikayel Natanian, "M. Portukaliani krtakan ev hasarakakan gordsuneutiune Vani mej" [The Public and Educational Activities of M. Portukalian in Van], *Vaspurakan* 187-194.

⁴⁸ The Miutiun was founded in 1889 and dissolved in 1893. In the June 3, 1893 issue of *Armenia*, Portukalian announced that after four years, the Miutiun was going nowhere. Only 380-Armenians had joined; many among those contributed irregularly. “Our most difficult task,” said Portukalian, “turned out to be the introduction among Armenians of the habit of regular, continuous and disciplined work.”

⁴⁹ The Union was proposed in October, 1886 (*Armenia*, October 27, 1886.) Ruben Khan-Azat, “Hay heghapokhakani husherits” [From the Memoirs of an Revolutionary], *Hairenik amsagir* 5 (June 1927): 70.

⁵⁰ See Portukalian, *Armeniayi Husharar*,

⁵¹ *Haytararutiun Armeniayi*, 2-4. The goal of Hayrenaserner Miutiun, as presented in the by-laws or *Kanonagir*, was to produce unity and organization among Armenians (7); these would produce a base of power; and the power thus created would serve the “big task” (articulated variously as “salvation” or “freedom”) or be used when the occasion arose.

⁵² *Vardapeetaran Hayastani azatagrutian* [Catechism for the Liberation of Armenia] (Marseilles, 1889), 19. At the end of the text there is an addition, which is purported to be an extract from the by-laws of the Hayrenaserner Miutiun (27-28). According to this statement, the purpose of the Miutiun is reforms in Ottoman Armenia. This extract is not found, however, in the actual *Kanonagir* referred to above.

⁵³ Portukalian was consistent in arguing that Armenians were not and could not be tools in the hands of any power; the idea of British or European intervention remained attractive nonetheless; he also knew Russian interest to be more plausible.

⁵⁴ *Armenia*, January 25, 1888.

⁵⁵ *Ibid*, February 24, 1886.

⁵⁶ *Ibid*, October 10, 1885.

⁵⁷ *Ibid*, April 24, 1886.

⁵⁸ *Haytararutiun Armeniayi*, 1; *Armenia*, September 26, 1885, and throughout.

⁵⁹ Arsen Kitur, *Patmutiun S. D. Hnchakian kusaksutian, 1887-1962* (History of the S(ocial) D(emocratic) Hnchakian Party], vol. I (Beirut, 1962), 25-29; Nalbandian, *Revolutionary Movement*, 104-131.

⁶⁰ Portukalian to Hovnanian, December 9, 1988, Archives of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation (Boston), file no. 1981; *Armenia*, December 22, 1888.

⁶¹ *Armenia*, November 24, 1888; *Le Haiasdan*, November 1, 1888.

⁶² Portukalian first welcomed the *Hnchak*, since it accepted the idea of revolution (*Armenia*, December 24, 1887); he soon became very critical of the group, however, and remained so throughout his life (*Armenia*, April 3, 1889).

⁶³ *Ibid*.

⁶⁴ *Armenia*, May 26, 1897 and December 29, 1908. Portukalian stated: “There was no Armenakan party, there had never been one, nor do we want one”; there have been sympathizers; he went on, but not a party. During the 1895 self defense of Van, he explained, Mkrtich Avetisian and his men had joined the other parties; with Portukalian’s permission Avetisian had used the name Armenakan temporarily—for lack of any other name; Portukalian had agreed to the temporary solution but asked to defer a final decision until the program of the group was sent to him; that program arrived very late. He also complained that a man by the name of Beozikian was using the name Armenakan as well for another group. Portukalian had asked him to stop the practice.

⁶⁵ *Vardapeetaran hayastani azatagrutian* (Second edition, Marseilles, 1891). The booklet was published under the auspices of the short-lived Armenian Patriotic Union. The identity of the author or authors is not known with any certainty; it is clear that Portukalian edited it for publication.

⁶⁶ *Vardapetaran*, 10-11.

⁶⁷ *Ibid*, 11. Ruben Berberian mentions yet another usage: *Hay anel* (to make or turn into an Armenian), which at the time meant to enslave; see *Hay masonnere*, 80.

⁶⁸ *Vardapetaran*, 19, 11-12.

⁶⁹ *Ibid*, 9-10.

⁷⁰ *Ibid*, 6.

⁷¹ *Ibid*, 23.

⁷² *Armenia*, August 28, 1886. The article is signed Lerents, one of Nazarbek’s pseudonyms.

⁷³ Koriun, “Hayer ev Kurter” [Armenians and Kurds], *Armenia*, October 16, 1886.

⁷⁴ Varand-Zadeh, “Inchov es mard” [What Makes You a Man], *Armenia*, March 20, 1886.

⁷⁵ Ned, “Heghapokhutuiun” [Revolution], *Armenia*, June 19, 1889.

⁷⁶ Nalbandian, *Revolutionary Movement*, 96, 100-101; Darbinian, *Hay azatagrakan*, 42-46, 19, 123; M[inas]

A[vetisian], *Turkiayi hayere ev irents dratsinere* [Armenians of Turkey and their Neighbors] (Marseilles, 1890).

⁷⁷ Darbinian, *Hay azatagrakan*, 140-145.

⁷⁸ *Ibid*, 129.

⁷⁹ Darbinian, *Hay azatagrakan*, 17-78, 140-141; *Husher Armenak Ekariani* [Memoirs of Armenak Ekarian], L. Ajemian, ed. (Cairo, 1947), 53-54, 59, 136.

⁸⁰ Darbinian, *Hay azatagrakan*, 125-128; Ekarian, *Husher*, 81-84. The Armenakan program presents a serious problem. Neither source specifies the date when it was written; Darbinian has inserted the date 1894 at the bottom of the text of the program in his memoirs. Both sources, using almost the same language, state that there were only seven or eight copies of the program for purposes of secrecy. Portukalian's claims regarding the Armenakans (note 64 above) add to the existing confusion; in some ways, they might also explain it. If one gives the word "party" an interpretation narrower than does Louise Nalbandian (n. 35, 204), the Armenakans do not seem to qualify as a party.

⁸¹ Nalbandian, *Revolutionary Movement*, 101-103.

⁸² Ekarian, *Husher*, 82-84; Darbinian *Hay azatagrakan*, 127-128.

⁸³ Darbinian, *Hay azatagrakan*, 126.

⁸⁴ *Ibid*.

⁸⁵ *Ibid*, 127-128.

⁸⁶ Ekarian, *Husher*, 38, 56, 62; Koms, *Im hushere*, 15-20, 117, 137, 246-248.

⁸⁷ Varandian, *HShN*, 174-175.

⁸⁸ Ekarian, *Husher*, 13-14.

⁸⁹ Giulkhandanian, "Heghapokhakan sharzhume Taroni mej," 118.

⁹⁰ *Ibid*.

⁹¹ Eric J. Hobsbawm, *Primitive Rebels* (London, 1969), 5.

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