

Once the school was opened, however, old rivalries and conflicts emerged, and soon became so serious that they divided the *amira* class into two camps: the *sarrafs* and their partisans, who formed the much larger bloc, and the technocrats or professionals which included the Balian, the Dadians, Serverian and their adherents. The division was clearly drawn along professional lines, and involved much more than curricular issues.

The split was not devoid of political overtones and principles. The *sarrafs* represented the more conservative and traditionalist segment of the class, while the technocrats, at least at this juncture, demonstrated some “liberal” tendencies. The antagonisms which emerged in the course of the conflict over the *Djemaran* quickly grew to involve issues not directly related to education. Ultimately, the struggle was waged for control of the Patriarchate and, indirectly, for the right to lead the Armenian *millet*. Personal and group jealousies within the *amira* ruling class found in the *Djemaran* affair a convenient battleground, a testing-place for their strength. For example, the conservative *sarrafs-amiras*, who had begun by supporting the school,⁶⁵ convinced the representative of the Jerusalem Patriarchate in Istanbul to stop payment of the annual subsidy; this threw the college into financial difficulties, and the technocrat-*amiras* failed to come to its rescue.⁶⁶ Thus the whole weight of the financial burden of the institution was thrown on the shoulders of the *esnafs*. The Patriarch tried to induce the *amiras* to help, but to no avail. Then the Patriarch, who was a fervent supporter of the college and hoped to set a good example, donated 6,000 *kuruş* as tuition for two students. Only the *esnafs* responded. On 6 April 1841, they formed an association with over 300 members, all artisans and small merchants, called *Miakam Enkerutiun* (“United Association”), to collect donations to support the school.⁶⁷ But these and other measures, such as a tax of five *kuruş* on travel documents, were not sufficient to sustain the institution, which was

⁶⁵ The *sarrafs-amiras* strongly resented the fact that the *Djemaran* was established through the initiative of the technocrat-*amiras*, specifically the two imperial architects Garabed *Amira* Balian and Hovhannes *Amira* Serverian. In their eyes the college was a showpiece hurting their pride as a group.

⁶⁶ Ormanian, *Azgapatum*, 3:3723.

⁶⁷ A. Sarukhan, *Haykakan Khndirn ev Azgayin Sahmanadrutiune Tiurkiayum, 1860-1910* [The Armenian Question and the National Constitution in Turkey, 1860-1910] (Tiflis, 1912), pp. 6-7.