

Europe and the United States.⁹¹ These young intellectuals espoused the cause of written Regulations (“*kanonagrutiun*” in Armenian), for the administration of the *millet*. Together with the *esnafs*, they were able to bring the matter before the National Assembly, convened on 30 June 1855. This assembly elected a *sahmanadrakan handsnajoghov* (“constitutional committee”) whose sole task was the formulation of an *Azgayin Kanonagrutiun* (“National Regulation”). The committee enjoyed the total cooperation and strong support of the new *logothete*, Krikor Margosian, who had replaced Hagop Grdjigian. In the Supreme Civil Council Garabed *Amira* Balian, one of the two *amiras* on the council (the other being Hovhannes *Amira* Dadian) led the opposition to the draft presented by the committee, which he considered too liberal. In the Spiritual Council, *Patueli* Derovents, who served as the secretary of this council, similarly opposed the acceptance of this draft of the Regulations. Garabed *Amira* had now assumed the leadership of *amira* opposition, and apparently wielded such great power that the acceptance of the draft was “construed as an attempt at emancipation from the dominance of Garabed *Amira* and his conservative followers.”⁹² In his letter, a member of the Education Committee, K. Bardizban, informed his brother that Garabed *Amira* Balian now had his man Ali *Bey* in power and that “nobody can oppose or contradict him.”⁹³

At this juncture two new developments precipitated the course of events: first, the promulgation by Sultan Abdül-Mecid of the *Hatt-i Hümayun* on 18 February 1856, an unexpected support for the constitutionalists; the second was the resignation of Patriarch Hagopos, a popular figure who favored the liberals. These two events accelerated the resolution of the conflict by intensifying it. On 18 November 1856 a National Assembly was convened; since the Patriarch had already resigned, Küçük Said *Bey* presided at the meeting in order to preserve order.⁹⁴ The assembly reelected the

⁹¹ For a detailed analysis see **James Etmekjian**, *The French Influence on the Western Armenian Renaissance, 1843-1915* (New York, 1964); Gorun Shrikian, “Armenians under the Ottoman Empire and the American Mission’s influence on Their Intellectual and Social Renaissance” (Ph.D. dissertation, Concordia Seminary in Exile, 1977); **Dwight**, *Christianity*.

⁹² **Artinian**, “Historical Development,” p. 78.

⁹³ **Torkomian**, “Rusinian” (May 1902), p. 142.

⁹⁴ In such instances the *azgapet* (“chief of the nation”) *amira* would run the meeting; now, however, such a procedure was not acceptable to the *esnafs* as well as the clergy.