

even tried to train local people for the new industries. In the technical school they established, members of the family also served as teachers.

All in all, the Dadians were not merely industrial managers and technocrats, both badly needed in the Ottoman industrialization program, but also innovators and westernizers who introduced western technology, scientific innovations, education and mentality into Ottoman governing circles and society in general.

Just as the Diuzians and the Dadians controlled some positions, so the Balian family came to monopolize the position of Chief Imperial Architect, which had formerly belonged to the Greeks.⁹⁴ The early history of the Balian family is at present unclear. According to an Armenian source, an ancestor of the family, Bali, had entered into Sultan Mehmed III's (1596-1603) service, and married the daughter of the royal architect, who was likewise an Armenian. This Bali presumably inherited his father-in-law's office after the latter's death, and Bali's position was then given to his son. The accession and early succession to this position, however, still remain contradictory and unresolved.⁹⁵ The first fully documented Armenian to hold that office did not belong to these families but was a certain Melidon Arabian or Araboğlu, originally from Kesaria (Kayseri in Turkish, formerly Caesaria). He is reported to have been Sultan Ahmed III's (1703-1730) architect in 1722.

During this same period, a member of the then unknown Balian family, Sarkis Khalfa, was also an architect of some repute. *Khalfa*, or *kalfa* in modern Turkish, means "master builder;" the epithet was an indication of the profession of architect. In 1727 Sarkis Khalfa built a church and is mentioned as "palace architect."⁹⁶ Most probably he was Melidon's deputy whom he succeeded after the latter's death.

The family rose to prominence by the end of the eighteenth century with Krikor *Amira* Balian, appointed Imperial Architect by Abdulhamit I

⁹⁴ **Indjidjian**, *Ashkharhagrutium*, 5:131; **Torkomian**, *Eremia Tchelepii*, 1:213.

⁹⁵ **Zartarian**, *Hishatakan*, p. 160, states that Bali's son was Minas who served Sultan Ahmed III (1703-1730) and Mahmud I (1730-1754) and died in 1703 (?). The date of death is most probably misprinted and should read 1730. Torkomian, on the other hand, cites Minas as the architect of the church built in 1804, based upon the account of the contemporary chronicler. See **Torkomian**, *Eremia Tchelepii*, 1:213-214

⁹⁶ **Asadur**, *Polsoy Hayere*, p. 61.