

(1774-1789). Krikor, with his brother Senekrim, his son Garabed, and three grandsons, all architects, formed the “Armenian Ottoman dynasty of royal architects who were to be responsible for as many acres of building as Sinan had been, including the Dolmabahce, Beylerbey and Ciragan palaces.”⁹⁷ After the construction of the *Nusretiye* (“Divine Victory”) mosque in 1826, “most major buildings erected for the sovereign were the work of the Balian family or their Armenian assistants.”⁹⁸ These included not only sumptuous palaces and mosques, but also barracks, fire towers, industrial factories and the state mint.⁹⁹ Garabed *Amira* Balian, Krikor’s son, along with his brother-in-law Hovhannes *Amira* Serverian, himself a royal architect, reportedly built some 180 buildings.¹⁰⁰ Neither Garabed nor his father had studied abroad, but following the westernizing pattern his three sons, Nigoghos, Sarkis and Hagop, were sent to Paris to study at the College St. Barbe. All three studied architecture, and continuing in the family tradition, they too are credited with the construction of numerous buildings.¹⁰¹

Without attempting to evaluate the artistic contribution of this family to Ottoman architecture, in general, and to the beautification of the capital, in particular, the following quotation from an authority on the subject should be sufficient to give an idea concerning their influence: “the dynasty (Balian) introduced European fashion and a flamboyance, which has been popular ever since.”¹⁰² In addition to the construction of buildings for the state, the Balian contributed to “the European appearance of the new neighborhoods” of Istanbul.¹⁰³

In addition to the professions, Armenians were, of course, prominent in the field of commerce and indeed had always been active in the trade of the Ottoman Empire. Of the great merchants, only those connected with the

⁹⁷ **Godfrey Goodwin**, *A History of Ottoman Architecture* (Baltimore, 1971), p. 417.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 419.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 132.

¹⁰⁰ **Zartarian**, *Hishatakaran*, 2:43.

¹⁰¹ For a listing of the buildings Sarkis and Nigoghos Balian (Hagop died relatively young) constructed, see **Boghosian**, *Dadian Gerdastane*, on. 138-139.

¹⁰² **Goodwin**, *Ottoman Architecture*, p. 419. For further evaluation of their work, see also pp. 398-399 and 417-426.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, p. 425.