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## THE ADVENTURE OF AN ARMENIAN SCHOOL FROM THE OTTOMAN TO THE REPUBLIC: SANASARIAN COLLEGE 1881-1935

(OSMANLI'DAN CUMHURİYET'E BİR ERMENİ OKULUNUN SERENCAMI:  
SANASARYAN KOLEJİ 1881-1935)

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**Abstract:** *Sanasarian College was founded in Erzurum in 1881 by Armenian businessman Mgrdich Sanasarian. The college was one of three secondary schools established by Ottoman Armenians outside Istanbul. The goal of the school was to raise Armenian children in accordance with the spirit and rules of the Armenian Apostolic Church and to educate them in general and vocational subjects.*

*Although Sanasarian College was an educational institution, it was also a strategic station where Armenian separatist movements were coordinated. In fact, one of the most important catalysts of the 1890 Erzurum rebellion was Sanasarian College. The college continued its education and training activities until 1912. In 1913, when the patriarchate seized the funds of the Sanasarian foundation, the school's income sources were cut off and after*

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*a while it was closed due to lack of allocations. The Patriarchate's efforts to revive the school in 1927 were unsuccessful, getting stuck in the judiciary.*

*The aim of this study is to resolve the uncertainties about Sanasarian College, to answer the debates about the school's assets with archival sources, and to eliminate the information pollution regarding the closure of the school. In the article, which consists of an introduction and 4 subheadings, a panoramic framework is drawn about the establishment, operation, administrative and academic situation, teaching programs, student statistics, physical, sanitary and financial situation and socio-cultural activities of Sanasarian College, and the last part focuses on the closure of the school. The method used in our study is qualitative analysis techniques based on textual analysis and text-interpretation.*

**Keywords:** *Armenian Question, Erzurum Armenians, Mgrdich Sanasarian, Sanasarian College.*

**Özet:** *Sanasaryan Koleji 1881 yılında Ermeni işadamı Mıgırdiç Sanasaryan tarafından Erzurum'da kuruldu. Kolej Osmanlı Ermenilerinin İstanbul dışında kurduğu ortaokul seviyesindeki dört okuldan biriydi. Okulun hedefi Ermeni çocuklarını Ermeni Apostolik Kilisesinin ruhuna ve kurallarına uygun olarak yetiştirmek ve onları genel ve mesleki konularda eğitmektir.*

*Sanasaryan Koleji bir eğitim kurumu olmakla birlikte aynı zamanda Ermeni ayrılıkçı hareketlerinin koordine edildiği doktriner bir merkezdi. Hatta 1890 Erzurum isyanının en önemli katalizörlerinden biri Sanasaryan Kolejiydi. Kolej 1912 yılına kadar eğitim ve öğretim faaliyetlerine devam etti. 1913 yılında patrikhanenin Sanasaryan vakfının gallsine el koymasıyla birlikte okulun gelir kaynakları kesildi ve bir süre sonra tahsisatsızlık yüzünden kapatıldı. Patrikhanenin 1927 yılında okulu yeniden ihya etme çabaları ise yargıya takıldı.*

*Bu çalışmanın amacı Sanasaryan Koleji ve Sanasaryan Vakfı hakkındaki bilgi kirliliğini gidermek, Ermenice ve Türkçe kaynakları kullanarak okulun kapatılmasıyla ilgili iddiaları nakz etmek ve Kolej'in cumhuriyet dönemindeki durumu hakkında genel bir çerçeve çizmektir. Bir giriş ve 6 başlıktan oluşan makalede Sanasaryan kolejinin kuruluşu, işleyişi, idari ve akademik durumu, ders müfredatları, öğrencilerin sayısal özellikleri, okulun fiziki, sıhhi ve mali nitelikleri ile sosyo-kültürel faaliyetleri hakkında panoramik bir*

*çerçeve çizilmiş, son bölümde ise okulun kapatılması üzerinde durulmuştur. Çalışmamızda metne bağlı analiz yöntemleri (textual analysis ve text-interperatation) kullanılmıştır.*

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** *Ermeni Meselesi, Erzurum Ermenileri, Mıgırdiç Sanasaryan, Sanasaryan Koleji.*

## Introduction

Until the 19th century, the education of Armenian children in Erzurum was limited to the activities within monasteries. The first secularistic education of the Armenians in Erzurum informally began in 1820-1825, with women teaching their children to read and write in their homes.<sup>1</sup> Formal education developed during the 1850s in line with the constitutional developments.<sup>2</sup> From 1878 onwards, a modern era began in which modern sciences were also taught in Armenian schools instead of religious teachings. On the other hand, during the second half of the 19th century, Catholic and Protestant missionaries opening new schools for Christians within Ottoman borders with the financial support they received from Europe and America lead to a significant increase in the literacy rate of the Armenians. In fact, according to Lynch, most of the Christian children in the two most elite schools opened by missionaries in Erzurum in the late 19th century belonged to the Gregorian Armenian community.<sup>3</sup> However, the missionaries' aim was not to educate Armenian children, but to influence the Armenian community through education. Thus, from the second half of the 19th century onwards, Gregorian Armenians opened dozens of Armenian schools in Erzurum, as they did throughout Türkiye, through charities such as Arzumanian, Arsharuni, Inkerutyun, and Barzir Hayots. For example, Azarian College was founded in 1860 with the efforts of Der-Azarian. In 1866, Armenian businessman Hagop Misirian demolished the Ana (Mother) College, which had been operating since 1811, and built a new 8-room school on the same site. In 1889, Misirian College was opened by Misirian. The Misirian College, which accepted both fee-paying and scholarship students, operated until 1912. However, all of these were elementary schools where only boys attended. Beginning in 1870, Erzurum Armenians also opened *inas* (girls) schools for girls. For example, the public interest in one of these, the Hripsime Girls' College, was so great that 291 students enrolled in the 1870-1871 academic year and nearly 400 in 1882. There were also local schools in the city with approximately 100 students.<sup>4</sup>

1 Ղազար Չարրզ, Հուշամատեն Բարձր Հայքի: Կարինապատում (Բերլոք: Նախաձեռնություն Հիսուսային Ամերիկայի եւ Լիբանանի Կարնոյ Հայրենակցական Միություններուն, 1957), 161.

2 Ա.Վ. Պողոսյան, “Կարինի վարժարանների Պատմությունից-1850-1900 թթ.” Լրաբեր հասարակական գիտությունների, 1(1992): 66-74.

3 Հ.Ֆ.Պ. Լինչ, Հայաստան: Ուղեորություններ եւ ուսումնասիրություններ (Կ. Պոլիս: Տպագրություն Յ. Ասատուրեան եւ որդիք, 1914), 245.

4 Հովհաննես Տեր Պետրոսեան, Կրթական Շարժումը Թրքահայոց Մեջ 1900-1600, (Գահիրե: 1983), 250; Քրիստինե Նաջարյան, “Կարինի Սանասարյան Վարժարանի Գործունեությունը 1919-1881 թթ.” Հաղորդումներ, 2(2017): 94-103; Պողոսյան, “Կարինի վարժարանների”, 67-68.

Thus, by the end of the 19th century, there were dozens of Armenian schools in Erzurum, such as Arzumanian, Hripsime, Misirian, Azarian, and Aghabalian, founded with the patronage of Armenian businessmen. In contrast to the missionary schools founded by foreigners.<sup>5</sup>

However, despite all of this, even in the late 19th century, there was no qualified secondary school for Armenian children in Anatolia. Although the Armenian businessman Mgrdich Sanasarian<sup>6</sup>, a member of the Russian Community, initially wanted to open a secondary school in Van, the birthplace of his mother, he abandoned this idea with the advice of Garabed Natania.

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5 Յուսուֆական խորհրդոյ Ազգային Կեդրոնական Վարչութեան, Վիճակացոյց Գաւառական Ազգային Վարժարանաց Թուրքիոյ (Կ. Պոլիս: Մատթէոսեան, 1901), 34; Յուսուֆական խորհրդոյ Ազգային Կեդրոնական Վարչութեան, Վիճակացոյց Գաւառական Ազգային Վարժարանաց Թուրքիոյ (Կ. Պոլիս: Մատթէոսեան, 1903), 24.

6 Mgrdich Sanasarian was born in Tbilisi in 1818. His father, Kevork Aga Heyranian, was a great merchant who became rich in 1818, first from settling in Tbilisi from Van and then settling to Paris. Since there was no school in Tbilisi, Sanasarian learned to read and write from Pastor Abamelik during his childhood. In 1824, he became one of the first students of Nersesian College. In 1835, he went to Venice to study at the university, but upon the death of his father, he returned to Tbilisi. In 1835 he enlisted in the Russian Army. In 1845, he was wounded and left the army. He was granted an honorary pension by the Russian government for his useful services in the army. Mgrdich Sanasarian settled in Petersburg in 1849. Here he became a shareholder of the Caucasian and Mercury steamship companies and after a while became their director. The ships of Sanasarian's company connected the Volga River and Caspian Sea with Russia, the Caucasus and Iran. For these achievements, he was awarded the medal of Shir u Khurshid (شیر و خورشید) by the Shah. Sanasarian founded the Erzurum Sanasarian College in 1881. In 1885, he visited Erzurum and examined the activities of the school. Sanasarian spent a large part of his personal fortune to educate poor students. He also financed many Armenian schools, particularly the Echmiadzin Keorkian Jamaran. In 1889, he fell ill and moved first to Nice and then to Paris. He died on May 19th, 1890 in Paris. Sanasarian left his entire fortune to Armenian schools and his library, albums, painting collection and printing materials to the Sanasarian College. Sanasarian's will was fulfilled by Garabed Yezian, Kevork Yevangulyants and Levon Tigranyants, a relative of Sanasarian's. The charter prepared by Yezian for Sanasarian was approved by the Patriarchate on July 16th, 1892 and entered into force. Accordingly, 10% of the inheritance was to be used to train teachers for the Sanasarian College. In addition, a reserve fund was to be established with the remainder of the money spent on the school's expenses. On the other hand, the interest of 10,925 rubles in Mariam Martiros Kazachkiyants' time deposit account at the Russian State Bank was to be transferred to the Sanasarian College. See Հովհաննէս Այվազյան, Ով Ով է Հայեր: Կենսագրական հանրագիտարան 1-2 (Երևան: Հայկական հանրագիտարան հրատարակչություն, 2005), 395-396; Քսանամեայ Տեղեկագիր Սանասարեան Վարժարանի 1901-1881 (Կ Պոլիս: Ներսէս Արամեան, 1903), 8-9, 19-23; Երվանդ Շահազիզ, “Կարապէտ Եզյան, Սկրտիչ Սանասարյան, Լևոն Տիգրանյան”, Էջմիածին: Պաշտօնական ամսագիր Ամենայն Հայոց Կաթողիկոսութեան Մայր Աթոռոյ Սրբոյ Էջմիածնի, Գ-11-12(1946): 43-44; Անուշ Թրվանց, “Սկրտիչ Սանասարեան... Մեծ Հայը”, Արեւելք, 18.01.2014; Ընդարձակ Օրացոյց Ազգային Հիվանդանոցի (Կոստանդնուպոլիս: Տպագրութիւն Տէր Մատթէոսեան, 1903), 263; “Սկրտիչ Սանասարեան”, Հանդէս ամսօրեայ: Բարոյական, ուսումնական, արուեստագիտական, Դ-7(1890), 163.

In 1881, in consultation with the Russian agent Yezian<sup>7</sup> and Erzurum Bishop Maghakya Ormanian, he headed to Erzurum.<sup>8</sup> The Sanasarian College was opened in Erzurum on October 1st, 1881 with the financial support of Mgrdich Sanasarian and the feasibility studies of Delpian and Madatian. The college was one of four secondary schools established by Ottoman Armenians outside Istanbul (Istanbul Berberian, Galata Gentronakan, Armash Tibrevank). The Kurkchubashian-Makarian mansion on Kadınlar Yolu Street was chosen as the school building. The goal of the college was to educate Armenian children in the spirit and rules of the Armenian Apostolic Church and to train them in general and vocational subjects. Among the first students of the college were 19 students recruited by the founding principal Madatian from Erzurum, Van, Moush, Hınıs and Kiğı.<sup>9</sup> Since Sanasarian sent successful Armenian students to Europe after graduation to work in Armenian schools, a distinguished academic staff was already in place before the school opened.<sup>10</sup>

However, the school was unable to continue its educational activities as envisioned. About a month after the opening, Delpian died of cerebral palsy, further worsening the already insufficient number of teachers. Thus, education and training activities at the school could not be carried out as planned until former students Kevork Apoulian and Sarkis Soghigian arrived in Erzurum in March 1882.<sup>11</sup>

7 Garabed Yezian: Armenian, teacher, linguist and activist. He was born in Moscow in 1834. In 1852, he graduated from the Moscow Lazarian Cemarani with a certificate of merit. Two years later, he received a master's degree from the Faculty of Oriental Languages at the University of St. Petersburg. His father was a small merchant in Moscow. In 1854, Yezian started working in the St. Petersburg provincial administration. In 1857, after graduating from the Petersburg pedagogical institute, he worked as a teacher in Tbilisi for about two years. After a while he was appointed to the department of religious affairs and sects of the interior ministry. In 1888 he was transferred to the ministry of education. Thanks to Yezian's work, many Armenian schools were opened in Tbilisi and Nakhchivan. In 1881, he persuaded one of his close friends, Mgrdich Sanasarian, and founded the Sanasarian College in Erzurum. He was instrumental in determining the school's first cadre of students, teachers and administrators. Yezian died in Petersburg on May 31st, 1905. See Սանդրո Բեխբուդյան, «Կարապետ Եզյան (1835-1905)», Էջմիածին: Պաշտոնական ամսագիր Ամենայն Հայոց Կաթողիկոսության Մայր Աթոռ Սրբոյ Էջմիածնի, ԽԴ-Դ(1987):52-57; Պետրոս Հովհաննիսյան, «Կարապետ Եզյան և Նիկողայոս Արուստիան», Էջմիածին-Պաշտոնական ամսագիր Ամենայն Հայոց Կաթողիկոսության Մայր Աթոռ Սրբոյ Էջմիածնի, ԿԸ(1829): 53-69. Այվազյան, Ով Ով է, 360.

8 Արինե Պետրոսյան, «Կարինի Սանասարյան վարժարանի պատմությունից», Karinepetrosyan Wordpress, Accessed: 05.10.2024, <https://karinepetrosyan.wordpress.com/2018/04/25/կարինի-սանասարյան-վարժարանի-պատմություն/>.

9 Պողոսյան, «Կարինի վարժարանների», 3: Քսանամեայ Տեղեկագիր, 4: Լինչ, Հայաստան, 241.

10 Չարլզ, Հուշամատեն Բարձր Հայքի, 200.

11 Քսանամեայ Տեղեկագիր, 5.

On the other hand, the building used by the Sanasarian College was not suitable for the school. In addition, shortly after the opening of the school, the number of students increased and it was realized that the capacity of the building was insufficient. Therefore, in the fall of 1882, it was decided to move the school to the diocese of Erzurum. However, when the same problem re-occurred a year later, Sanasarian went to Erzurum in 1883 to purchase a new plot of land large enough to meet the needs of the school and began construction. But, the military authorities of the time did not allow the construction near the fortress for security reasons. Consequently, it was decided to move the college to the Hripsimya Girls' College in exchange for 100 Ottoman gold coins per year.<sup>12</sup>

In the 1884-1885 academic year, when it became clear that the girls' college was also inadequate for the school, it was decided to build a new building with the support of Mgrdich Sanasarian. The building would have a kitchen and classrooms on the ground floor and principal's offices, student dormitories and an infirmary on the upper floor. In the meantime, as of the December 1887-1888 academic year, an agreement was reached between Mgrdich Sanasarian and the church council, whereby the school would be moved to the church building in exchange for 100 thousand Ottoman liras per year. After Sanasarian's death, an attempt was made to terminate the agreement on the grounds that the rent paid for the building was insufficient, but the problems were solved with the intervention of the Patriarchate. In the period 1893-1894, some changes were made to the school building by the board of trustees. For example, the dormitories and classrooms in the old building were enlarged by combining them with the adjacent rooms. The dormitories in the new building were divided by walls and turned into a museum, infirmary, pharmacy, classrooms and administrative rooms. In addition, a new workshop was built in the courtyard of the school in 1886-1887. In 1896-1897, a woodshed, paint shop and bakery oven were built in the same place.<sup>13</sup> A new kitchen and storage room were added to all these in 1901. Thus, a large area previously used as a kitchen was converted into a storage room. However, when the school building was damaged in the 1901 earthquake, a new building was built in the same place.<sup>14</sup>

12 Պողոսյան, “Կարինի վարժարանների”, 70; Պետրոսյան, “Կարինի Սանասարյան վարժարանի”.

13 Քսանամայ Տեղեկագիր, 33-35.

14 Հնգամայ Տեղեկագիր Սանասարեան Վարժարանի 1906-1901 (Կ Պօլիս: Տեր Ներսեսեան, 1908), 23.

Damage to the college in the earthquake of October 26th, 1901, brought the relocation of the school to Kharpert to the agenda.<sup>15</sup> Although the local trustees had enough money in their coffers, they complained that they could not find a suitable area in the city and opposed the relocation of the college outside the fortress, fearing that it would isolate the school and hinder transportation. Actually, the Sanasarian College being in Erzurum was not favoured by the Armenians of Erzurum either. According to Murc, wealthy Armenian families sending their children to study at the Sanasarian College was jeopardizing the sources of income of the local schools. On the other hand, Kharpert was in a more advantageous location compared to Erzurum with its clean air, cultivatable land and vast territory. Erzurum also lacked a scientific setting in which students could compete. If the school was moved to Kharpert, the students would have a productive environment and would be able to compete with the modern schools opened by the Americans and Catholic missionaries.<sup>16</sup>

Based on Article 9 of its will, the school administration wanted to move the college to another city because they could not find a suitable building in Erzurum.<sup>17</sup> In response, Apoulian, the school principal, was sent to Istanbul in 1902 to carry out the relocation work. While Apoulian was in Kharpert, the local trustees reached an agreement with the Armenian community of Erzurum and halted the school's relocation.<sup>18</sup> Thus, the Sanasarian College continued its education and training activities in Erzurum until 1913. However, over time, the school turned into a regional base for coordinating Armenian insurrectionist movements.

The aim of this study is to eliminate the information pollution about the Sanasarian College and the Sanasarian Foundation and to refute the claims regarding the closure of the school by using Armenian and Turkish sources. The article, which consists of an introduction and 6 chapters, draws a panoramic framework regarding the establishment, functioning, administrative and academic status, course curricula, numerical qualities of the students, physical, sanitary and financial features of the school, and socio-cultural activities of the Sanasarian College, and the last chapter focuses on the closure of the school. In this study, textual analysis and text-interperation methods were used.

15 *Cumhurbaşkanlığı Osmanlı Arşivi*, MV, 49-48, H. 14.04.1307. The Presidential Ottoman Archive will be referred to as COA from here on.

16 “Բիզանդիոն”-ի № 1626-ում Տպուած է Հետեւեալը Սանասարեան Դպրոցի Տեղափոխման Մասին”. Մուրճ, 2(1902):235-236.

17 “Սանասարեան վարժարանի փոխադրութիւնը Խարքերդ”, Լուսալ Գրական Հանդէս, 2(1902):257.

18 Հնգամեայ Տեղեկագիր, 24-26.



### **The Administrative and Academic State of the Sanasarian College**

From 1881 to 1890, the Sanasarian College was under the direct supervision of Mgrdich Sanasarian. During this period, Sanasarian's advisor Yezian, as an experienced educator, played a decisive role in the school's administrative and financial affairs, as well as in the organization of educational and training activities.<sup>19</sup> In 1882, the administration of the school was assigned to a special council consisting of Maghakya Ormanian, Kevork Apoulian, Hovsep Madatian and Sarkis Soghigian. Apoulian was responsible for the bureaucratic affairs of the school. He shaped the relations between the board of trustees and the school, handled the paperwork, and managed the expenses. Soghigian was in charge of the school's internal affairs. He was also responsible for communication between the school and the parents. The third principal, Madatian, was in charge of external affairs, the workshop and the museum.<sup>20</sup>

After the death of Mgrdich Sanasarian, all the authority of the school was assigned to Yezian. Yezian transformed the school administration into a quadruple mechanism with the statute he prepared in 1892. Accordingly, the administration of the Sanasarian College was left to the Istanbul trusteeship headed by Patriarch Ormanian. Gabriel Noradungian was appointed vice-president of the trusteeship and Gulbenkian was appointed accountancy. The Istanbul trusteeship was in charge of managing the school's assets and finding new resources. After the Istanbul trusteeship, the most authorized body of the school was the local trusteeship in Erzurum. The chairman of the local trusteeship was Zaven Der Yeghiayan, the representative of Erzurum, the vice-chairman was Daniel Harachian, and the treasurer was Garabed Azarian. At the bottom of this hierarchy were the school administration and the board of teachers.<sup>21</sup>

In 1908 - after the proclamation of the Second Constitutional Era - Yeghishe Turian was appointed head of the Istanbul trusteeship. However, following Turian's resignation, Izmirlian was elected as the head. When Izmirlian resigned in 1909, he was replaced first by Hovhannes Arsharuni, and then again by Turian. In the same period, the board of trustees of Erzurum was restructured due to the death, resignation or incapacity of some of its members. Meanwhile, during the 1907-1908 academic year, some members had to

19 Նաջարյան, «Կարինի Սանասարյան Վարժարանի», 100.

20 Քսանաճաշ Տեղեկագիր, 6, 13.

21 Նաջարյան, «Կարինի Սանասարյան Վարժարանի», 101; Քսանաճաշ Տեղեկագիր, 11-12; Հնգամյա Տեղեկագիր, 3.

resign due to conflicts between the local trustees and the board of teachers. In the same year, elections were held again, and for the first time in the form of a referendum. Between 1906 and 1910, the local trusteeship held 134 sessions to find solutions to hundreds of problems. It provided a modern framework to the school's programs and regulations. However, in 1906, a radical change was made in the school administration and the tripartite administration was abandoned. The management of the school was then handed over to Krikor Zakarian. However, upon Zakarian's death in 1907, Apoulian was reappointed as the school principal.<sup>22</sup> All these changes continued uninterruptedly until the school was closed.

The school had 73 teachers, although the number of teachers varied from time to time. We have already mentioned that Apoulian, Madatian and Soghigian were in charge of the school's administration. The principals also taught classes related to their specialties. For example, Apoulian taught history, geography, German, gymnastics, violin; Madatian taught history of nature, German, physics, chemistry, geometry, technical drawing, health and gymnastics; Soghigian taught religion, church history, French, German, music, piano, calligraphy and Armenian. Krikor Zakarian, who directed the college for the last 4 semesters, taught Ottoman law and political economy; Nishan Kalfaian taught agriculture, French, French-Turkish translation, Ottoman Turkish and natural history; Asdvadzadur Hachaderian taught Armenian, church history and Armenian speaking.<sup>23</sup>

Amongst the head teachers, T. H. Froyian taught religious and church history; G. Umigian taught mathematics, algebra, geometry, trigonometry, accounting; Harutyun Kasbarian taught natural history, health, drawing, physics and geography; K. Mgrdichian taught history and Armenian; Dr. Suren Uzunian taught health and natural history; I. Istria taught French; M. Hortumdjan taught Ottoman Turkish and French; Aram Hagobian, J. Krestey, Edmon Kiyarmo, A. Laperpis, Jan Talizm, R. Vikureo, J. Rino, J. Bons taught French; N. Madatian taught physics and chemistry; H. Baghdasarian taught Armenian and church history; Hosrov Babaian taught natural history, Ottoman Turkish, Ottoman calligraphy, Turkish dialogue; N. Totvayian taught Ottoman Turkish, Armenian and French; H. Gurgen taught Armenian; Krikor Goyinyan taught

22 Քառամեայ Տեղեկագիր Սանսարեան Վարժարան 1910-1906 (Դալաթիա: Շանթ, 1911), 3, 7-12.

23 Սանսարեան Վարժարան Ուսումնական Տեղեկագիր 1892-1891 Եւ 1893-1892 Տարիներու Եւ Տնտեսական Տեղեկագիր 1893-1892 (Կ Պօլիս: Ներսէս Արամեան, 1894), 8; Քառամեայ Տեղեկագիր, 25.

music, violin, choir, calligraphy and geography; Vahan Kuyumdjian taught Modern Armenian, national and general history; Serovbe Noradungian taught history, Ottoman Turkish and Ottoman calligraphy; L. Basbanian taught French and French calligraphy; Antranig Esayan taught science, geology, calligraphy and technical drawing; Manvel Dedeian taught Armenian; Garabed Der-Rapayelian taught Ottoman Turkish and translation; G. Djerdjian taught natural history, science, physics, chemistry, geography and French; Yeghishe Babaian taught chemistry; Sarkis Manugian taught Classical Armenian; and S. Aghabalian taught mathematics, physics, chemistry, gymnastics, natural history, German, geography, handicrafts and technical drawing.<sup>24</sup>

There were also Turks in the academic staff of the school. For example, Hafız Ali Efendi taught Ottoman Turkish, Mustafa Niyazi Efendi taught Ottoman Turkish and Ottoman calligraphy, Mehmet Şükrü Efendi taught Ottoman history, Ömer Efendi taught Ottoman calligraphy, and İsmail Efendi taught Ottoman Turkish, law and Ottoman history. The school's marching band was also led by Captain Ahmet Efendi.<sup>25</sup>

Among the academic staff of the school, there were also assistant teachers who attended classes as trainees. These were prospective teachers who were appointed as assistant teachers for a period of 2 years after passing a series of exams conducted by the Education Council. Assistant teachers could only be appointed as permanent teachers if they passed a new exam after 2 years of internship.<sup>26</sup> Most of these teachers were students who had graduated from the Sanasarian College. Among the assistant teachers, Tigran Burutian taught Ottoman Turkish and math; Aram Mousheghian taught math, gymnastics, drawing; Levon Karakashian taught modern Armenian, geography, national and general history, calligraphy, natural history; Mgrdich Barsamian taught drawing; Vahan Srvandzdyants taught national history.<sup>27</sup>

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24 Քսանամեայ Տեղեկագիր, 37-38; Հնգամեայ Տեղեկագիր, 27-28; “Սանասարեան վարժարան”, Մուրճ; Քաղաքական, հասարակական, գրական ամսագիր, 3(1902):207; “Սանասարեան վարժարան”, Լուսմայ գրական հանդես, 4(1904):243.

25 Քառամեայ Տեղեկագիր, 18-19; Քսանամեայ Տեղեկագիր, 37-38.

26 Ընդարձակ Օրացոյց Ազգային Հիվանդանոցի (Կոստանդնուպոլիս: Տպագրութիին Տեր Մինասեան, 1900), 204

27 Սանասարեան Վարժարան Ուսումնական Տեղեկագիր, 9-10; Հնգամեայ Տեղեկագիր, 27-28; Քսանամեայ Տեղեկագիր, 38; Քառամեայ Տեղեկագիր, 26.

### The School's Regulations, Program and Working Order Regulations

The Sanasarian College was governed in accordance with the bylaws dated 1892. According to the bylaws, which consisted of 3 main headings and 60 articles, the Sanasarian College was established to educate Armenian children in accordance with the spirit and rules of the Apostolic Armenian Church and to develop them professionally-technically (Article 2). The school offered two types of curricula: general and vocational education. The general education classes taught national and religious values, while the vocational classes trained craftsmen and apprentices for the domestic market (Article 4).<sup>28</sup> All expenses of the school were cleared with Mgrdich Sanasarian's inheritance (Article 5). The school's bonds were held in European state banks, while the estate deeds and receipts for the immovables were kept in the trusteeship's safe (Article 6). The school's financial resources included interest income, student fees, donations and income from the sale of art products (Article 8). According to the bylaws, 10% of Sanasarian's legacy was used to send successful students to European universities for expertise, as deemed appropriate by the school administration (Article 10). Sanasarian scholarship recipients were required to be fatherless and motherless orphans. Moreover, after graduation, these students were obliged to work at Sanasarian or any other Armenian school determined by the school administration (Article 11). The Sanasarian College admitted both *leyli* (boarding hostel) and *nehari* (daytime) students. Although the college was fee-paying, scholarships were also offered to poor students, provided that they were a part of the Armenian Apostolic Church (Article 12). The language of instruction was Armenian (Article 13). Depending on the state of the school's budget, the Sanasarian College could open new schools in Armenian-populated areas or invest in the development of Armenian schools (Article 14). According to the will, the assets of the school were under the control of the trustees (Article 16).<sup>29</sup> In addition, the trustees were authorized to dispose of the school's real estate and assets. According to Sanasarian's will, the final decision-maker regarding the school was Garabed Yezian (Article 18).<sup>30</sup>

The administrative bodies of the school were regulated in paragraph b of the bylaw. Accordingly, the Sanasarian College was administered by a quadripartite mechanism consisting of the Istanbul trusteeship, the local trusteeship, the

28 Կանոնադրութիւն Սանասարեան Վարժարանի (Կ. Պոլիս: Ներսէս Արամեան, 1892), 1.

29 Կանոնադրութիւն, 2.

30 Կանոնադրութիւն, 3; Գ. Շահլամեան, «Քանի մը Թելադրութիւններ», Ազատամարտ, 26 August-8 September 1911.

school principal and the board of teachers. The Istanbul trusteeship was in charge of the school. The head of the six-member trusteeship was the Armenian Patriarch of Istanbul.<sup>31</sup> When the Patriarch's office was vacant, the Patriarch's deputy presided over the committee, and in his absence, the meetings were held by the chairman elected by the trusteeship (Article 20). The duties of the trusteeship were to protect and manage the school's assets, to seek new resources to improve the school's financial means, to supervise the local trusteeship, to examine annual reports, to advocate the school's interests before the law<sup>32</sup>, to audit accounts, to find solutions to contentious problems, and to prepare detailed reports on the school's income and expenditure items and the educational and health status of the students (Article 22). The Istanbul trusteeship also had the authority to appoint the school principal. However, in the appointment of the principal, students who graduated from Sanasarian and were sent to Europe and teachers working at the school were preferred. The Istanbul trusteeship could dismiss the principal with the approval of at least five members (Article 23).<sup>33</sup>

The local trusteeship was chaired by the local bishop and consisted of the school principal, two members elected by the board of teachers, members elected by the citizens of the Armenian Church of the city, and one member elected from among the graduates of the school. In addition, school administrators Kevork Apoulian, Hovsep Madatian, Sarkis Soghigian, teachers who had served for 25 years at Sanasarian, and philanthropists who donated at least one thousand liras to the school were accepted as regular members of the school for as long as they lived.<sup>34</sup> The duties of the local trusteeship were to increase the school's revenues, manage the immovable properties, calculate revenues and expenses, determine tuition fees, determine teachers' salaries, discuss the situation of students who did not pay fees, determine the students to be sent on scholarships or to Europe, procure school vehicles, prepare instructions to be implemented in the school, and determine the principles regarding the protection and use of the school budget. According to the bylaw, the local trusteeship had to meet at least once a month at the invitation of the chairman (Article 33).<sup>35</sup>

After the local trusteeship, the most authorized body of the school was the school principal. The school principal was responsible for the proper execution

31 Հիմնական Կանոնադրություն Սանասարեան Վարժարանի (Կ. Պոլիս: Օննիկ Բարսեղեան եւ Որդի, 1910), 3-4.

32 Կանոնադրություն, 4.

33 Կանոնադրություն, 4-5.

34 Հիմնական Կանոնադրություն, 6-7.

35 Կանոնադրություն, 7-8.

of school rules, the evaluation of teaching and learning activities and the work of teachers and students, the maintaining of discipline and the development of material and spiritual aspects (Articles 44-45). As the natural chairman of the teachers' council, the principal could convene the teachers' council or, in extraordinary circumstances, convene extraordinary sessions upon the written request of three members (Article 46). The selection of teachers was also among the duties of the principal (Article 47) (Կանոնադրութիւն, 1892, p. 8). Preparation of curricula, arranging student and teacher leaves, conducting practices and procedures related to the admission of students to the school, and preparing annual reports were under the responsibility of the school principal (Articles 49-53).<sup>36</sup>

The teachers' council was chaired by the school principal and consisted of members selected from the language and general culture teachers of the senior classes (Articles 54-55). The teachers' council had to gather at least three times a year. However, the number of meetings could be arranged to three times a month at the discretion of the school principal (Article 56). Decisions of the board were taken by majority vote, and in the case of equal votes, the principal's vote was decisive (Article 57). The board of teachers had to determine educational materials and textbooks, prepare curricula<sup>37</sup>, carry out student admission and transfer procedures, regulate the details of school fees, determine the conditions of use of the school library and museum, prepare reports on the success of students, prepare diplomas, and determine students to be sent to Europe to be proposed to the board of trustees (Articles 55-56).<sup>38</sup>

## Program

The Sanasarian College was founded in the 1881-1882 academic year as a 9-year high school. Students who enrolled in the college would receive a high school diploma after three years of primary school education, followed by six more years of schooling.<sup>39</sup> However, this practice was changed in 1891 and students who enrolled in the school were required to be primary school graduates or at least have basic skills such as reading and writing. Thus, education, which was initially 9 years long, was limited to 7 years. Students

36 Հիմնական Կանոնադրութիւն, 11-12.

37 Կանոնադրութիւն, 11.

38 Կանոնադրութիւն, 12.

39 Մանուէլ Միրախորեան, Նկարագրական Ուղեվորություն Ի Հայաբնակ Գավառս Արեւելեան Տաճկաստանի Ի. (Կ. Պոլիս: Սարըեան, 1884), 148; Չարբղ, Հուշամատեն Բարձր Հայքի, 201.

who graduated from the school could directly enroll in the universities of their choice without taking any exams.<sup>40</sup>

In the 1899-1900 academic year, with the approval of the Directorate of Education in Erzurum, the Sanasarian College was granted the status of a junior highschool and a secondary school.<sup>41</sup>

The curriculum of the school was modeled after German secondary schools (*Realschule*). The Sanasarian College, which was initially a basic high school, was later transformed into a multi-program high school with the establishment of furniture, iron and bookbinding workshops. The aim of the school was not only to provide students with vocational training, but also to turn them into citizens who were responsive to social issues. For this reason, the school offered a wide range of programs ranging from foreign languages to sciences, from mathematics to piano, violin and handicrafts.<sup>42</sup> In the basic education department, students were taught twenty different subjects: Religion (history of religions, Christian doctrine and history, history of the Armenian Church), history, geography (political, economic and physical geography), science (biology, botany, mineralogy, geology, physics and chemistry)<sup>43</sup>, Armenian (classical and modern Armenian), Ottoman Turkish, French, English, German, mathematics (arithmetic, geometry, trigonometry, accounting), calligraphy, technical drawing, painting, music, piano, violin, gymnastics and ice skating. The basic education courses were re-organized in 1906 by the inspector Krikor Zakarian with some additions and removals. Thus, subjects such as health, science and economics, which had previously been taught as passages within other subjects, were now made separate subjects in their own right.<sup>44</sup>

Approximately two years after the official opening of the school in 1883, a small workshop was established to teach students carpentry skills such as bookbinding, chiseling, woodworking and smoothing. Initially conducted as a hobby for basic education students, the workshops were transformed into professional vocational courses in 1886. In 1886, Hagop Boghosian set up the ironworking department. In the same year, the bookbinding department<sup>45</sup>, and in 1887, the furniture department was opened. By 1901-1902, there were 4 different branches in the vocational department: furniture, ironworking,

40 Պողոսյան, “Կարինի վարժարանների”, 12-13.

41 Նաջարյան, “Կարինի Սանասարյան Վարժարանի”, 97; Քսանամեայ Տեղեկագիր, 6.

42 Նաջարյան, “Կարինի Սանասարյան Վարժարանի”, 98.

43 Քսանամեայ Տեղեկագիր, 29.

44 Ընդարձակ Օրացոյց 1900, 214; Քսանամեայ Տեղեկագիր, 31; Հնգամեայ Տեղեկագիր, 22.

45 Քսանամեայ Տեղեկագիր, 47.



bookbinding and chemistry.<sup>46</sup> In these years, students were either directly enrolled in vocational courses or they followed vocational courses at the same time while continuing their basic education. In 1895, when it became clear that vocational courses were not enough, a new program was prepared. Accordingly, it was decided that talented students would devote most of their time to vocational courses after studying a limited number of subjects in basic education classes. However, when the desired results could not be obtained from the limited workshops attended voluntarily by the students, the programs of the vocational department were revised in 1900.<sup>47</sup> With the new program, each of the vocational branches were changed into separate departments. The education period was reduced to 4 years. In addition, who can benefit from the workshops was re-arranged. Accordingly, students were divided into three groups: day scholarship students who worked in the atelier, basic education students who voluntarily attended vocational classes for one hour a day to learn art, and students who attended one class of basic education and devoted all their time to vocational studies. On the other hand, the number of weekly vocational courses was increased and general culture courses were limited to religion, church history, classical and modern Armenian, Ottoman Turkish, mathematics, science, technical drawing, calligraphy and music.<sup>48</sup>

In 1899, the arrival of Simon Aghabalian and Kevork Djerdjian in Erzurum gave a new impetus to vocational education. Upon his return from Europe, Aghabalian was appointed assistant director in charge of the workshops.<sup>49</sup> In 1901, the academic staff of the department seemed almost complete. According to the records, Kevork Karnagarian, Hagop Boghosian, Hagop Stepanian, Hagop Semerjian taught in the blacksmithing department, while Arshak Harahanian, Sukias Seylanian, Aram Vahanian and Aram Mousheghian taught in the furniture department.<sup>50</sup>

In 1903, the admission requirements for vocational departments were revised. Accordingly, students who wished to enroll in vocational departments had to be between the ages of 14-18 and complete primary school.<sup>51</sup> After 1906, students admitted to the vocational department were expected to be healthy, moral and committed to the church. In the same year, the department's fee

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46 Հնգամեայ Տեղեկագիր, 38.

47 Քսանամեայ Տեղեկագիր, 16.

48 Քսանամեայ Տեղեկագիր, 49.

49 Քսանամեայ Տեղեկագիր, 52.

50 Հնգամեայ Տեղեկագիր, 39; Քսանամեայ Տեղեկագիր, 51.

51 Քսանամեայ Տեղեկագիր, 50.



schedule was also changed. According to the 1906 fee schedule, boarding students who wished to enroll in the vocational department were charged 3 Ottoman gold coins, while daytime students were charged 12 Ottoman gold coins.<sup>52</sup>

In the school's furniture department, all kinds of household items could be produced, and in the ironwork workshops, everything from printing press machines to candlesticks could be manufactured. For example, in the 1887-1888 academic year, a coach was produced in the school workshops with the cooperation of teachers and students. In the 1888-1891 period, a special car was produced and presented to the service of Erzurum Governor Sami Pasha. Soap and candles were also produced in the school's chemistry workshop.<sup>53</sup>

The number of students in the ironworking department decreased over time due to parents' concerns for the future, and it was finally closed in 1902-1903. This was due to the fact that local production was too expensive to compete with European products. In addition, none of the students with money preferred the vocational department.<sup>54</sup> The chemistry department, which was established afterwards, was shut down due to the lack of branch teachers.<sup>55</sup>

According to the records, a total of 16 students graduated from the vocational department of the school between 1886-1901. 10 of the graduates were carpenters and 2 were blacksmiths. The remaining 4 students attended basic education classes along with vocational courses and graduated from two departments at the same time.<sup>56</sup>

Although the workshops were closed for a short time in 1906-1907 upon the decision of the school administration, they were re-opened the same year upon the application of Simon Aghabalian. During this period, radical adjustments were made to the workshop programs. For example, one of these was the transfer of the workshop to the furniture craftsmen in exchange for a guarantee and the transfer of the workshop revenues to the craftsmen instructors.<sup>57</sup>

On November 2nd, 1909, the School Administration established a pedagogy department to meet the need for teachers in connection with the increase of

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52 Քառամեայ Տեղեկագիր, 57.

53 Հնգամեայ Տեղեկագիր, 40; Քսանամեայ Տեղեկագիր, 53.

54 Քսանամեայ Տեղեկագիր, 52.

55 Հնգամեայ Տեղեկագիր, 38-39.

56 Քսանամեայ Տեղեկագիր, 53.

57 Քառամեայ Տեղեկագիր, 56.

Armenian schools and appointed Soghigian as its director. Thus, the school administration began to use its own resources to meet the need for teachers.<sup>58</sup>

The pedagogy department offered two hours each week of basic pedagogy, psychology, methodology, and one hour each of history of pedagogy, moral philosophy, political economy, debate, and school health.<sup>59</sup> Methodology and general pedagogy were taught by Khachadurian, history of pedagogy by Apoulian, and psychology by Soghigian. Minassian taught basic pedagogy, Babaian taught political economy, Uzunian taught debate and school health, and Manugian taught moral philosophy.<sup>60</sup>

According to the bylaw, students enrolling in the pedagogy department had to be at least 18 years old, graduated from junior high school, and prove with a doctor's report that they did not have any health problems. Applicant students were required to submit a diploma, birth and baptismal certificates, and, if applicable, a certificate of good conduct from the institution where they had previously worked. Candidates who did not graduate from the junior high school were required to pass the school's exam in order to enroll. Pedagogy students could also attend classes to practice with the approval of the education council. Students accepted to the department were not charged any fee. In pedagogy exams, students were given at least three different exams: written, oral and practical.<sup>61</sup>

As of 1909-1910, there were a total of 71 students in the Pedagogy Department. Of these, 26 were enrolled and the others were attending classes externally.<sup>62</sup> Similarly to other departments, successful students of the pedagogy department were given Sanasarian scholarships for specialization. In 1906, Aram Vahanian, Hagob Melkonian, Kevork Djerdjian, Simon Aghabalian and Levon Basbanian from the pedagogy department were sent to Europe for specialization. Hosrov Babaian was sent to Istanbul to specialize in Turkish lessons, and after graduating from the literature department of *Darü'l-fünun* (Ottoman University), he returned to Erzurum on September 12th, 1909 to teach Turkish. In 1906, Aram Hagobian was sent to Paris and graduated first from Ecole Normale Primaire and then from St. Cloud Ecole Normale Superieure. Sargis Manugian studied literature at the universities of Petersburg, Berlin and Leipzig before returning to the Sanasarian College to teach Classical

58 Չարլզ, Հուշամատեն Բարձր Հայքի, 204-205, 207.

59 Քառամեայ Տեղեկագիր, 50.

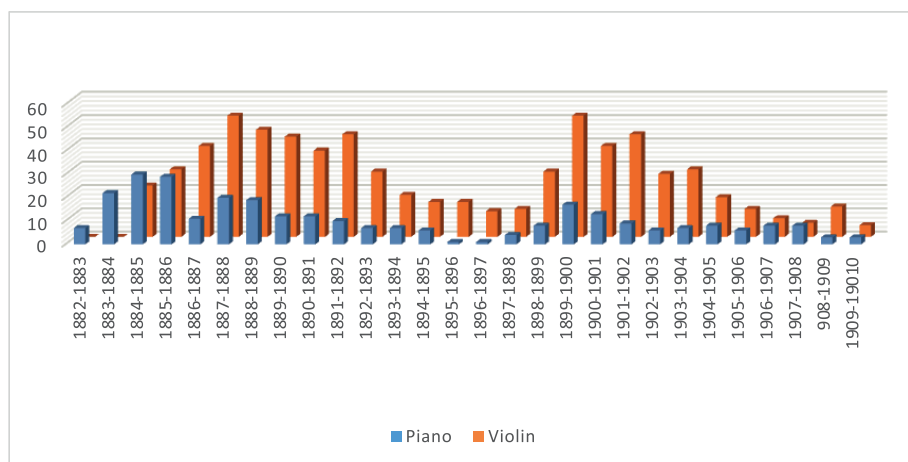
60 Քառամեայ Տեղեկագիր, 53.

61 Քառամեայ Տեղեկագիր, 52.

62 Քառամեայ Տեղեկագիր, 54.

Armenian. Manvel Dedeian from Yozgat, like Manugian, graduated from the University of Vienna and began teaching Armenian at the Sanasarian College. The school administration sent Sarkis Hachaderian, Sanasar Soghigian, Vahan Habeshian, Hagob Culhagian and Sarkis Shishmanian to Italy for the same purpose.<sup>63</sup>

As of the 1882-1883 academic year, piano lessons were also being taught at the Sanasarian College. Violin lessons were later added to these.<sup>64</sup> Also, from 1890 onwards, student choirs were organized by the singer Armenak Shahmuration.<sup>65</sup> In 1902-1903, the school band was established under the direction of Captain Ahmet Efendi.<sup>66</sup>



Students Taking Piano and Violin Lessons

On the other hand, according to Armenologist Henry Blosse Lynch, most of the college's textbooks were in German.<sup>67</sup> However, teachers could also make use of books published in other languages depending on the course's subject matter. German textbooks were translated into Armenian and used by the teachers.

<sup>63</sup> Քառամեայ Տեղեկագիր, 55.

<sup>64</sup> Քսանամեայ Տեղեկագիր, 31.

<sup>65</sup> Ս.Ս. Օոցիկեան, Արեւմտահայ Աշխարհ. (Նիւ Եորք: Ա. Յ. Լէյլեկեան, 1947), 299; Պողոսյան, "Կարինի վարժարանների", 73.

<sup>66</sup> Հնգամեայ Տեղեկագիր, 22.

<sup>67</sup> Լինչ, Հայաստան, 243.

Within a few years, the Sanasarian College had achieved an unprecedented reputation among Armenian schools. This was even reflected in the reports of Mr. Mehmet Tevfik, the director of education in Erzurum. According to the director of education, the students of the school were as successful as the senior students of the *Mekteb-i Sultani* in arithmetic classes. The students had learned Turkish to the point of being able to spell it, and they had made remarkable progress (*fevkalade terakki*) in music. The school's iron workshops were very good, *and the general education of the students was at the level of noble morality (pertev-edeb)* (Emphases made by me)<sup>68</sup>. In fact, according to him, there was no other institution in Erzurum worthy of the title of high school (*idadi*) except Sanasarian.<sup>69</sup>

However, Armenologist Lynch disagreed with the director of education and criticized the college, admitting that it had many shortcomings. For example, according to Lynch, students were not utilizing their talents properly. They could not even do a simple task like  $x+y$  X  $x-y$ , which Lynch asked them to do. Moreover, although the school principals had studied at universities in Germany, they were not sufficiently specialized in their fields. On the other hand, it was inconceivable that students changed classes based on time instead of merit. Lynch also felt that gymnastics classes were not taken seriously enough.<sup>70</sup>

### Working Order

The Sanasarian College was a full boarding school that started at 05:00 in the morning and continued until 21:30 in the evening. Accordingly, students would wake up at 05:00 in the summer and 6:00 in the winter, and within half an hour, wash themselves, comb their hair, get dressed and would go to morning prayer. Immediately after the prayer, spiritual education classes were held. After having breakfast consisting of bread, cheese, butter and tea, the students would rest for a while and then go to class.<sup>71</sup>

Classes at the Sanasarian College started at 07:00 in the summer and lasted until 11:00, and from 08:00 to 12:00 in the winter. A class was 45 minutes long and breaks were 15 minutes. Students had lunch at 11:00 in summer and 12:00

68 COA, MF.MKT, 130-12, H. 09.01.1309.

69 COA, DH.MUİ, 3-7, H. 19.10.1327; MF.MKT. 130-55, H. 20.01.1309.

70 Լինչ, Հայաստան, 244-245.

71 Հնգամեայ Տեղեկագիր, 44; Ելմտական Եւ Ուսումնական Տեղեկագիրք Սանասարեան Վարժարանի Կարնոյ 1894-1893 Տարիոյ (Կ Պօլիս: Սահակ Նիկողոսեան, 1895), 25.

in winter. Lunches were usually meat dishes and fruit, soup and baked goods were served once a week. Bread was baked in the school's own bakery, and on holidays a special menu was prepared. Afternoon classes were held between 13:00-15:00 in summer and 14:00-16:00 in winter. But the afternoon classes were devoted entirely to spiritual lessons. Oratory classes were held every weekday afternoon from 16:00 to 17:00. As soon as the students had dinner at 17:00, they would attend the spiritual classes again. The younger students had to go to bed at 20:30 in winter and 19:30 in summer, and the older students had to go to sleep at 20:30 in summer and 21:30 in winter. Students were also taken to church on Sundays and holidays.<sup>72</sup> This program - with some exceptions - remained unchanged for 30 years.

## **Education and Training Activities of the School**

### **Student Profile of the College**

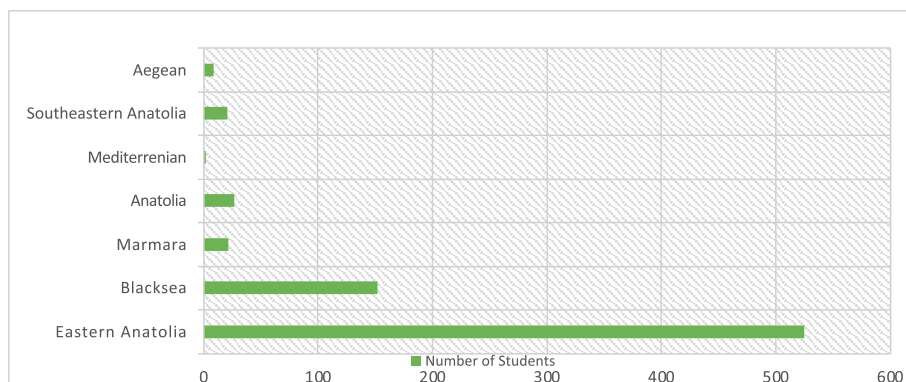
We have already mentioned that the Sanasarian College started education and training in 1881 with 19 students recruited by the founding principal Madatian from Erzurum, Van, Moush, Hınıs and Kiğı. All of these were poor students with nocturnal/scholarship status. Two years later, from the 1883-1884 academic year onwards, the school also began to accept fee-paying students. Thus, the number of students gradually increased from an average of 20 in its founding years to 187 in the 1900-1901 academic year. According to the data, the number of students enrolled in the school between 1881-1910 was 3,616.<sup>73</sup>

Although the Sanasarian College was a co-educational school, the number of female students was almost negligible. In fact, among the hundreds of students who graduated from the school, there was only one female student.

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72 Քսանամայ Տեղեկագիր, 57-58; Քառամայ Տեղեկագիր, 42.

73 Հնգամայ Տեղեկագիր, 34; Քառամայ Տեղեկագիր, 32; Քսանամայ Տեղեկագիր, 43.



Distribution of students by region of origin

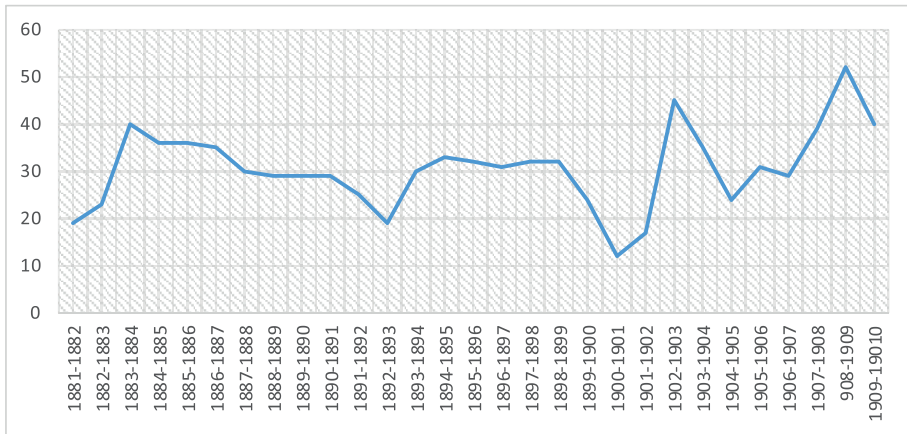
According to the data, 69% of the students came from Eastern Anatolia, 20% from the Black Sea region and 4% from Central Anatolia regions. A similar distribution was also observed on a city basis. 31% of the students were from Erzurum, 9% from Malatya, 7% from Trabzon, 4% from Sivas and Erzincan. As the graph shows, the Sanasarian College had become a centre of attraction for Eastern Anatolian Armenians. Among the students were also those from Armenia, Georgia and Iran.

As stated in the bylaw, 30% of the students were educated as free boarders, while 70% of the students could choose one of the *leyli* (nocturnal/day) or *nehari* (boarding) classes depending on their preference in return for an annual fee. As of the 1899-1900 academic year, there were 8 types of students (scholarship boarding-*leyli*, protected boarding, half-scholarship boarding, paid boarding, scholarship day-*nehari*, protected day, paid day, and non-paid day). Paid boarding students were one of the most important sources of income for the school. The number of paid boarding students reached a record-breaking high in the 1886-1887 and 1887-1888 academic years and then declined rapidly. Meanwhile, the cholera epidemic of 1892-1893 further reduced the number of students. As the number of paying boarding students dropped below 25 in the 1895-1896 period, it was decided that some students would be educated by foster families.<sup>74</sup> Thus, students in need were educated, and the school was provided with hot money.<sup>75</sup>

74 The benefactors of the sheltered students were Markar Papovian, Arakel Zaturian, Boghos Gukasian, Yeghishe Nabatian, Baklar Duluhanian, Hovhannes Adamian, Harutyun Adamian, Krikor Arakilian, M. Mirzabekian, Balabeg Lalaian, Sarkis Canimian, Isahak Jamharian, H. Tumayan, Z. Melikian, Gayzag Arabian, Hachig Aslanian, and Abraham Yakubian. See here. Քսանաւմէյ Տեղեկագիր, 45; Հնգամնէյ Տեղեկագիր, 35; Քառամնէյ Տեղեկագիր, 33)

75 Հնգամնէյ Տեղեկագիր, 35, 42; Քառամնէյ Տեղեկագիր, 33, 59; Քսանաւմէյ Տեղեկագիր, 14, 45, 56.

## The Adventure of an Armenian School From the Ottoman to the Republic: Sanasarian College 1881-1935



Distribution of Full Scholarship Students by Year

According to sources, the Sanasarian College gave scholarships to a total of 888 students in 30 years. In other words, an average of 30 students benefited from Sanasarian scholarships every year. 29% of the scholarship students were born in Erzurum, 8% in Erzincan, 7% in Malatya and 6% in Van.

As we mentioned above, Sanasarian did not only provide scholarships to high school students but also sent some successful students abroad for specialized studies. According to the reports, dozens of students, including Aram Vahanian, Hagob Melkonian, Hagob Semerjian, Armenak Hayirian, Barvir Balasarian, Kevork Djerdjian, Simon Aghabalian, Levon Basbanian, Aram Hagobian, Sargis Manugian, Manvel Dedeian, Sarkis Hachadrian, Sanasar Soghigian, Vahan Habeshian, Hagob Culhagian, Sarkis Shishmanian, Hrachian Lusbaronian, Davit Umikian, and Koryun Mgrdichian were educated abroad with Sanasarian scholarships.<sup>76</sup>

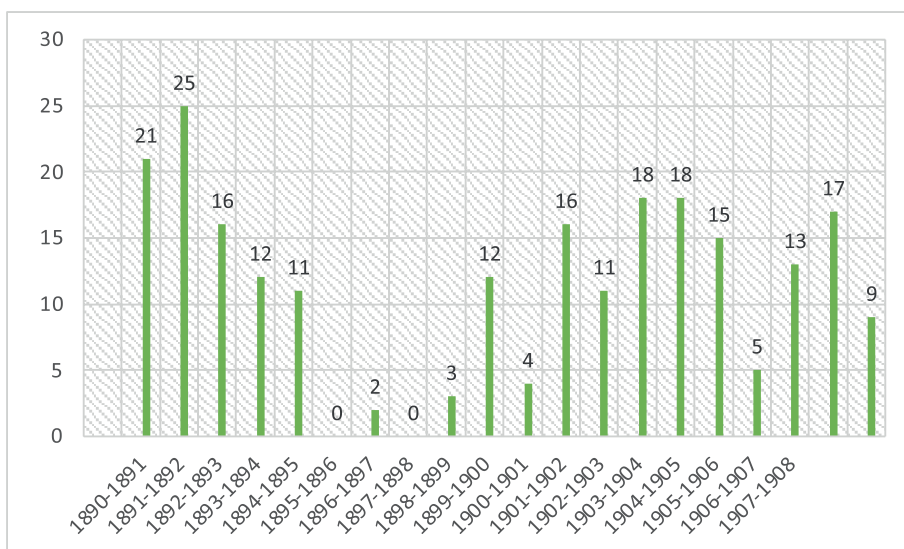
### Graduation Exams and Graduation Statistics

Starting from the 1882-1883 academic year (excluding 1885-1886, 1886-1887 and 1889-1900 academic years), the end-of-year exams of Sanasarian College were held as open public exams. The exams were eagerly followed by military and civil officials, embassy staff and students' families. The 1884-1885

<sup>76</sup> COA, AՅՄԿՏ.ՄԻՄ, 533-24, Կ. 27.04.1312; ԴԻ.ՏՄԻԿ.Մ, 103-55, Կ. 19.01.1319; ԴԻ.ՏՄԻԿ.Մ, 112-19, Կ. 09.07.1319; ԴԻ.ՏՄԻԿ.Մ, 112-12, Կ. 17.06.1319; ԴԻ.ՏՄԻԿ.Մ, 150-21, Կ. 10.05.1321; ԻՐ.ԻԺ, 40-32, Կ. 28.10.1894; Չարլզ, Հուշամատենն Բարձր Հայքի, 208; Քսանաւմայ Տեղեկագիր, 88-89; Հնգամայ Տեղեկագիր, 71-72; Քառամայ Տեղեկագիր, 55.

graduation exams were held with the participation of Mgrdich Sanasarian, and the 1888-1889 exams were held with the participation of Sami Pasha, the Governor of Erzurum at the time.<sup>77</sup>

Final exams were usually oral, and senior students had both written and oral exams. But there were some exceptions. For example, in 1906, under the supervision of the inspector Krikor Zakarian, the final exams were conducted entirely in written form, and the exam papers were sent to Istanbul for evaluation after being read by the teachers.<sup>78</sup> However, this practice was cancelled by the decision of the teachers' board as of the 1907-1908 academic year.<sup>79</sup>



Graduates by Year

The Sanasarian College graduated its first students in the 1890-1891 academic year. As the graph shows, 21 students graduated from the school in 1891 and by 1901, a total of 106 students had graduated. Of these, 94 graduated from the basic education department, 12 from the vocational department and 4 from both departments at the same time.<sup>80</sup>

77 Քսանամեայ Տեղեկագիր, 62.

78 Հնգամեայ Տեղեկագիր, 49.

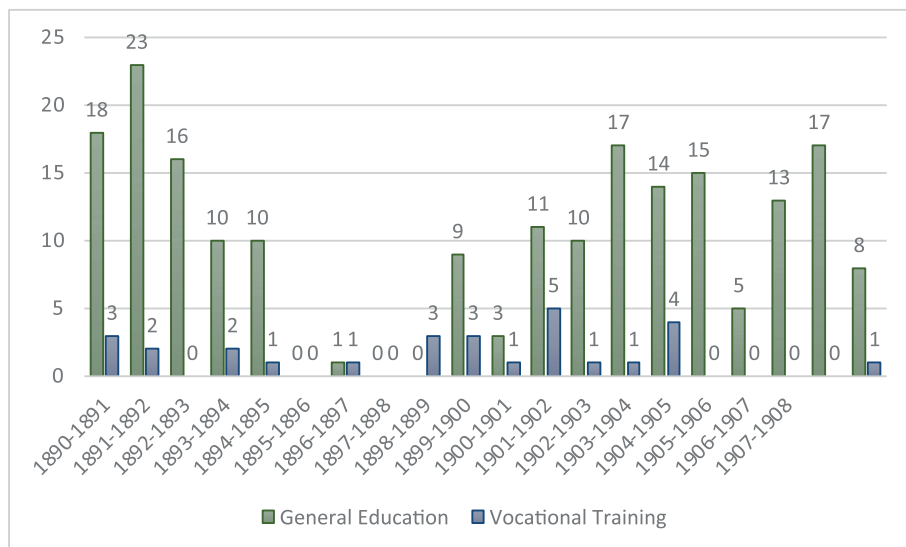
79 Քառամեայ Տեղեկագիր, 49.

80 Քսանամեայ Տեղեկագիր, 62.



## The Adventure of an Armenian School From the Ottoman to the Republic: Sanasarian College 1881-1935

Of the 78 students who graduated between 1902-1906, 67 had completed basic education, 6 had completed both basic and vocational education, and 5 had completed only vocational education.<sup>81</sup> Between 1906 and 1910, there were 44 graduates. Thus, a total of 228 people graduated from the college in 30 years.<sup>82</sup>



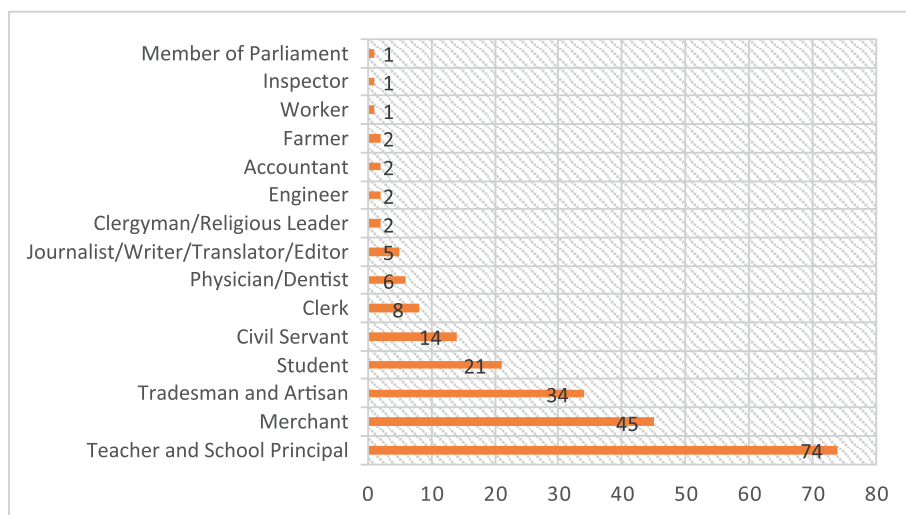
Graduates by Department

On the other hand, 34% of the graduates started working as teachers and administrators in Armenian schools in Elazığ, Erzincan and the Black Sea Region immediately after graduation. 10% were sent to Europe to study at university, 21% became merchants, 16% chose to become tradesmen or craftsmen, and 6% were appointed as civil servants in public institutions.<sup>83</sup> Among the graduates of the Sanasarian College were famous names such as Karekin Pasternadjian (Armen Garo).

<sup>81</sup> Հնգամսայ Տեղեկագիր, 49-50.

<sup>82</sup> Քառամսայ Տեղեկագիր, 49.

<sup>83</sup> Չարլզ, Հուշամատեն Բարձր Հայրի, 219-221.



Graduates by Field of Study

### Social and Cultural Activities of the School

The Sanasarian College not only carried out educational activities but also organized sporting and cultural activities to increase the passion and excitement of the students.<sup>84</sup> The school administration also organized hiking trips on days when the weather was good. Sanasarian's campsite was located in Dumludağ, 25 kilometers from Erzurum. In 1882, 1906 and 1907, the students traveled with their teachers to the Red Monastery (Karmiravank), and in 1883 they camped in Kırkdeğirmen, the Red Monastery and Iğdasor. In 1885 they stayed again in Iğdasor. In addition, almost every summer from 1885-1886 until 1906, students traveled to Sirdasor and camped in tents.<sup>85</sup> At times, the school administration also organized historical and touristic trips, such as during the 1907-1908 school year.<sup>86</sup>

In addition, the school administration organized commemorative or celebratory programs with the participation of military and administrative officials on the occasions of the Ottoman sultans' *veladet-i hümayun* (birth of heirs), holidays, festivals, or other extraordinary events.<sup>87</sup> For example, the reinstatement of

<sup>84</sup> Չարլզ, Հուշամատեն Բարձր Հայքի, 211.

<sup>85</sup> Հ. Աճառեան, Պօլսէն Կարին (Նոր-Նախիջևան: Ս. Ավագեանի, 1909), 27; Քսանաւայ Տեղեկագիր, 61.

<sup>86</sup> Քսանաւայ Տեղեկագիր, 45.

<sup>87</sup> Հնգամեայ Տեղեկագիր, 51

the constitution was met with such enthusiasm at the school that a large group of teachers and students travelled to Haçkavank to hold a funeral in absentia for the martyrs of freedom who had lost their lives during the events, and even visited the mosque next to the monastery to offer condolences to the imam. On other important occasions, such as on January 8th, 1887, the school choir gave concerts for invited guests. In the 1891-1892 period, the students staged Molier's "The Imaginary Invalid" and in 1892-1893 "The Doctor in Spite of Himself". In 1910, with the support of the students' union, the school's theatre group staged the plays "Towards Freedom" and "The Russian-Turkish War".<sup>88</sup> Sanasarian also hosted theatre groups from abroad from time to time. For example, the theatre group of the Baku Armenian Cultural Union came to Erzurum in the fall of 1908 and performed in the hall of the college.<sup>89</sup>

One of the most important events of the Sanasarian College was the graduation ceremonies. On July 15th, 1891, a magnificent graduation ceremony was held for the school's first graduates with the participation of the governor of Erzurum, Hasan Hayri Pasha, the provincial letter carrier, the director of education and high-ranking government officials. The 1901 graduates received their diplomas in person from Mr. Mehmet, the director of education in Erzurum.<sup>90</sup>

The school also published a school newspaper called *Sird* (heart).<sup>91</sup> This newspaper, which covered topics related to education, art and politics, was followed with interest not only by the students but also by the Armenian community of Erzurum. Under the moderatorship of the Armenian language teacher A. Hachadrian, the school's senior students held debates every weekday afternoon on topics determined by the school administration.<sup>92</sup> The debates, which were initially held in Armenian, were later (starting in 1909-1910) held in Turkish.<sup>93</sup>

The Sanasarian College was visited by dozens of bureaucrats, ambassadors and scientists, including Mgrdich Sanasarian and Yezian. Between 1906 and 1910, Bishop Nerses Harahanyan of Muş, Tahir Pasha, the former governor of Erzurum, Karekin Pasternadjian, a member of parliament from Erzurum, Vartkes Serengülian, Naci Bey, the party inspector of the Committee of Union

88 Ելմտական Եւ Ուսումական Տեղեկագիրք, 38-39; Քսանաւնայ Տեղեկագիր, 64-65; Քառամնայ Տեղեկագիր, 46.

89 Քառամնայ Տեղեկագիր, 47-48.

90 Քսանաւնայ Տեղեկագիր, 66-67.

91 Պողոսյան, "Կարիքի վարժարաններ", 74.

92 Չարլզ, Հուշամատեն Բարձր Հայքի, 218; Հնգամնայ Տեղեկագիր, 46.

93 Քառամնայ Տեղեկագիր, 44.

and Progress, and Kevork Medzadurian, the prosecutor of Erzurum, were hosted in the guesthouse of Sanasarian College. The students sometimes paid return visits to high-ranking government officials in Erzurum.<sup>94</sup>

## **The Physical, Sanitary and Financial Situation of the School**

### **The Physical Condition of the School**

#### **The School Library**

The Sanasarian College had a rich collection of printed and handwritten books in different languages. S. Soghigian, K. Shehlemian, H. Tutundjian, G. Djerdjian, G. Ğoyinian, M. Fetvacian and A. Hachatirian were the heads of the school library from 1892 to 1900, G. Djerdjian from 1900-1901, Manvel Dedeyan and Hosrov Chitchian from 1903-1905 and Aghabalian from 1906. The last head of the library was Serovbe Noradungian. The first labeling of the school library was initiated during Djerdjian's tenure as head. The books in the library were procured both through purchases and donations. F. Vartanian and S. Mandinian, two of the first students at the college, donated 487 volumes of books to the library. As of 1903, there were 4,806 volumes of books in the school library, worth an average of 20 thousand piastres. In order to keep Yezian's memory alive, on August 31st, 1910, the school administration established a new collection in the library named after him. In the 1908-1909 semester, the school students established a new library under the name "students' union library".<sup>95</sup>

As of August 31st, 1910, the school library contained a total of 6,024 volumes, including 1450 volumes in Armenian, 1,002 volumes in French, 2,900 volumes in German, 398 volumes in Turkish, 119 volumes in English and 55 volumes in Russian. In addition, the library inventory included 942 notes, both with and without bindings. The number of books in the student union library was close to 400 volumes.<sup>96</sup>

#### **The Museum**

The Sanasarian College had a rare museum available to students. Cabinets in the museum displayed human organs, skulls, embalmed taxidermic objects,

94 Քսանամայ Տեղեկագիր, 61; Քառամայ Տեղեկագիր, 45-47.

95 Քսանամայ Տեղեկագիր, 68; Հնգամայ Տեղեկագիր, 55; Քառամայ Տեղեկագիր, 34.

96 Քառամայ Տեղեկագիր, 37.

shellfish, animal fossils, precious stones and antique coins. The museum's inventory also included works by world-renowned painters such as Orlov, Lami, Rubens and Aivazovsky.<sup>97</sup> On the other hand, a small zoo was built inside the museum.<sup>98</sup>

The school's garden was as colourful as its museum. In the 1884-1885 semester, Madatian created a green area in the school garden by planting trees and flowers sent by Sanasarian, and after a while he started to grow vegetables in the garden with the students. In the 1907-1908 academic year, the fields around the school were rented and agriculture began. In fact, the first crops grown here were presented to Erzurum Governor Mustafa Pasha and officials.<sup>99</sup>

In addition to all this, the Sanasarian College had a museum collection of 66 manuscript books. The oldest of them was written in 986 and included religious and literary texts of Armenian culture as well as rare manuscripts on Christianity.<sup>100</sup>

### **The Sanitary Condition of the School**

The school administration took a close interest in the health status of the students, and weak students were either not admitted to the school at all or were sent to their families for treatment as soon as they became ill. In addition, the school was periodically inspected by Dr. Krosman, the Erzurum sanitary inspector, and Şerif Bey, the municipal physician.<sup>101</sup>

According to the documents, the health status of the students -in the first ten years- was exceptionally good. The school administration survived the cholera epidemic that broke out in Erzurum in 1892 thanks to the measures taken by the quarantine director Dr. Guti. During the epidemic, a doctor was assigned to the school, rooms were regularly disinfected, and vegetable dishes and fruits were added to the menu to prevent students from getting sick. On the other hand, students were regularly taken to the Turkish bath during the year and their clothes were periodically cleaned. During the pandemic, the school administration cancelled traditional visits to minimize the school's contact with the outside world and even built a kiln in the garden to stop people from entering and leaving the school. In addition, Madatian's

97 Չարլզ, Հուշամատեն Բարձր Հայքի, 215; Քսանամայ Տեղեկագիր, 68-71.

98 Քառամայ Տեղեկագիր, 37.

99 Քսանամայ Տեղեկագիր, 68-71.

100 Քսանամայ Տեղեկագիր, 72-75; Քառամայ Տեղեկագիր, 38.

101 Սանասարեան Վարժարան Ուսումնական Տեղեկագիր, 22-23; Քսանամայ Տեղեկագիր, 59.

agricultural classes and sporting activities such as gymnastics, swimming and ice skating improved the health of the students noticeably. However, despite these extraordinary measures, 11 of the 771 students enrolled in the school between 1881 and 1911 fell ill and died.<sup>102</sup>

The administration paid as much attention to the morals and behaviour of the students as to their health. Students who did not abide by the school rules were subjected to disciplinary punishment and expelled from the school. The school administration suspended 25 students between 1881-1900, 19 students between 1901-1906, and 43 students between 1906-1910 for laziness and bad behaviour.<sup>103</sup>

## The Financial Situation of the School

### The School's Assets

The Sanasarian College owned 32 pieces of real estate in different villages and neighbourhoods in Erzurum and Istanbul. The most important piece of real estate in Erzurum was the 9 pieces of land purchased by Sanasarian to build a school. In 1883, the land cost 87,138 piastres and had an average annual income of 1,500 piastres. In the same year, Sanasarian had purchased a large farm in the village of Ağvıran (Ağören) in Erzurum in order to generate income for the school. The farm, which included 60 pieces of fields, 7 pieces of pasture, 1 house, 1 haystack, 1 waste storage and 1 residential land, cost approximately 85 thousand piastres in 1883. The college, which operated the farm with its own means, earned an annual income of 150 liras.<sup>104</sup> In 1887, a house with a garden in the same village and 2 pieces of land in Kez Village were purchased with the farm's income. One of the most important sources of income for the college was the famous Sanasarian Inn in Istanbul. The Sanasarian Inn was purchased by the school's board of trustees from İhsan

102 Հնգամեայ Տեղեկագիր, 46-47; Քսանամեայ Տեղեկագիր, 60; Քառամեայ Տեղեկագիր, 44.

103 Քսանամեայ Տեղեկագիր, 60; Հնգամեայ Տեղեկագիր, 47; Քառամեայ Տեղեկագիր, 45.

104 The farm in Ağvıran (Ağören), which was the property of Hacı Mehmet Agha, a supply contractor for the 4th Army of the Ottoman Empire, had been sold to Der Azarian Karabet, acting on behalf of Sanasarian, by a court decision upon the bankruptcy of the contractor during the '93 War. However, after the Dersaadet Court of Appeal overturned the bankruptcy decision, a dispute arose between the school administration and the heirs of Hacı Mehmet Agha. Thereupon, in order to protect the heirs of Hacı Mehmet Agha, who had gone bankrupt due to his sacrifice for the provision of the Ottoman army, and to remedy the injustice caused by the school administration's inability to use the land it had purchased, the Council of State decided that the sale price of 1,000 liras would be paid to those concerned from the unexpended funds of the Ministry of Finance and the farm would be returned to its former owners. For details, see. COA, DH.H., 6-15, H. 14.09.1332; ŞD., 2830-5, H. 12.10.1332; BEO., 3693-276952, H. 14.01.1328; BEO., 3709-278108, H. 12.02.1328; BEO., 4203-315179, H. 02.09.1331.

Bey and a Circassian Ismail Pashazade, for 19 thousand Ottoman liras. The annual income of the inn was 2,730 Ottoman liras as of 1906.<sup>105</sup> In 1906, the Istanbul trusteeship built a new building behind the Sanasarian Inn and rented it to the Ottoman Bank for 15 years.<sup>106</sup> Real estate was not the only asset of the school. The interest on the 1,200,000 Francs in Sanasarian's time deposit account at the Petrograd State Bank was also used for school expenses.

### **Income and Expense Items of the College**

Sanasarian College's sources of income consisted of foreign currency interest, rents, student fees, workshop income and music lessons. Sanasarian allocated 123,600 piastres, which was worth approximately 1,200 Ottoman gold coins, from the interest income he earned from his deposit account at the Russian State Bank to the school's annual expenses. After Sanasarian's death, the school's expenses continued to be covered through his estate. Thus, an average of 3,500,000 Ottoman liras was transferred to the school by Sanasarian in the first twenty years. However, Sanasarian was not the only beneficiary of the school. Yezian's aunt Mariam Kaghachikyants also donated a large sum to the school. In addition, tuition fees collected from the students were also among the sources of income of the college. For example, in the period 1882-1883, an average of 20 Ottoman gold coins per person was collected from boarding fee-paying students and 10 Ottoman gold coins from daytime fee-paying students. Over time, tuition fees collected from students became one of the most important sources of income for the school. The amount collected from tuition fees increased to 21,571 piastres in 1901-1902 and 62,727 piastres in 1905-1906. On the other hand, as of the 1899-1900 semester, the school began to admit students with half scholarships for the first time. These students were charged 12 gold coins per person per year on the condition that they would cover their own expenses for books and clothes. Thus, in the first twenty years, the school fees collected from students reached an average of 2,950 thousand piastres. In addition, starting from the 1883-1884 academic year, piano lessons generated an annual income of 2 gold coins. Violin lessons also generated an annual income of 3 Ottoman gold coins.<sup>107</sup>

The school's workshops were also an important source of income. For example, the bookbinding workshop broke a record by earning 1,546 piastres

105 Քսանամեայ Տեղեկագիր, 84-87; Քառամեայ Տեղեկագիր, 63; COA, DH.H., 6-15, H. 14.09.1332.

106 Հնգամեայ Տեղեկագիր, 70.

107 Քսանամեայ Տեղեկագիր, 76-78; Հնգամեայ Տեղեկագիր, 62-63; Ընդարձակ Օրացոյց Ազգային Հիվանդանոցի 1901, 419.

in 1899-1900 thanks to the orders it received from abroad. The school's other workshops generated 166,663 piastres in twenty years.<sup>108</sup>

In addition to all these, the school also had extraordinary revenues from financial and in-kind donations. For example, the Istanbul branch of Allianz France donated 22 liras to the school in 1901-1902, 40 liras in 1902-1905 and 25 liras in 1906.<sup>109</sup> The Luys company donated ten crates of coal to the school in the 1907-1908 and 1908-1909 academic years. On the other hand, hundreds of books, newspapers and magazines were donated to the school library from many parts of Europe, especially France.<sup>110</sup>

The school administration collected 3 Ottoman liras from boarding students who enrolled in the school and deposited it into a deposit account, with the condition that it would be returned afterwards. In some cases, 10,5 Ottoman lira was charged per student for the individual use of school equipment.

The school's expenses consisted of 21 items. For example, the school building was rented for an average of 10 thousand piastres per year. Other expense items were maintenance of dormitories, repair of classrooms and gymnasiums, supply of kitchen equipment, ceremonial and celebration expenses, postal and telegraph expenses, teachers' salaries, food and beverages, fuel and cleaning expenses, lighting and workshop expenses, and taxes paid on real estate.<sup>111</sup>

One of the most important expenses of the school was the salaries of teachers and workers. In the 1892-1893 academic year, the school principal Madatian was paid an annual salary of 22,248, Soghigian and Apoulian were paid 19,776, the head teachers were paid approximately 12,500, and the assistant teachers were paid an average of 2,500 piastres. In addition, the school janitor and the lightman were paid 618 piastres each, and the night watchman, secretary and cook were paid 1,236 piastres each.<sup>112</sup>

### **The Last Years of the College and the Debates in the Republican Era**

Soon after its establishment, the Sanasarian College became an ideological and logistical center for the Armenian separatist movements in Eastern Anatolia.

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108 Քսանամեայ Տեղեկագիր, 79.

109 Հնգամեայ Տեղեկագիր, 64, 73.

110 Քառամեայ Տեղեկագիր, 74-75.

111 Քսանամեայ Տեղեկագիր, 79-83.

112 Ելմտական Եւ Ուսումական Տեղեկագիրք, 14.



According to the report of Major Mehmet Şevki, One of the aides-de-camp to His Majesty the Sultan, the Sanasarian College was a place in which: *“... although the program of the provincial school announces that the sciences are taught in accordance with the program of the provincial education, their main education is to train teachers and craftsmen for the rapid production of small and large military equipment in the small and large continent after acquiring industrial tools such as knives, blades and daggers, as well as large and small carriages and carriage sets and bows, and the art of carpentry. Every year, from the tenth day of July until the fifteenth of August, the teachers of the school together with their students go to the Armenian town of İğdasor, which is located 4 hours away from the city of Erzurum, on the pretext of a change of weather, and spend 35 days of their daily expenses on transportation to the said town, and in order to prevent the discovery of their actions in the town and the creek in its vicinity, and in case they are discovered, they will keep a member of the gendarmerie of the province of Erzurum or an Armenian officer with them as a guard. Every day or every other day, the Armenian teachers and students who had retreated to the aforementioned İğdasor town with the aforementioned precautions and other measures would go to the pits in the creek to the south and west of the town and practice firing cartridges with the various types of weapons they had in their possession, and they would also screen their weapons, and in this way, they would learn the firing and firing methods, the Armenian instructors also keep a set of hunting rifles with them, so that the travellers who pass through and from the aforementioned town, which is the place of the endeavour, and from afar, do not suspect and, if necessary, answer in a way that is acceptable to reason and mind, and to be covered up, and from time to time, they would go to neighbouring towns in order to make rifles and learn how to use weapons under the treacherous veil of these kinds of deceptions and mischiefs, as well as to test their weapons, which they had in their possession...”*<sup>113</sup>

In 1890, a denunciation letter written under the signature of Informer Sadık and left at the residence of Erzurum Central Commander Rahmi Pasha reported that weapons were being secretly made and stored in the Sanasarian College and in the forges in the church. It was decided to search the school, but during the searches carried out on June 18th, 1890, no traces of weapons were found. The next day, the people of Sanasarian, who had heard that Mgrdich Sanasarian had died in Paris, went to the bazaar and tried to force the shopkeepers to close their shutters, but they were prevented by the intervention of the gendarmerie.

<sup>113</sup> COA, Y.PRK.ASK, 180-63, H. 00.00.1319.

On June 20th, during clashes between rioting students and the gendarmerie, shots were fired at the soldiers from churches, the diocesan office and houses.<sup>114</sup> In addition, according to Zotsikian, 750 people, who had taken refuge in the college with weapons they had received from the consuls during the events, clashed with the gendarmerie under the leadership of the bishop of Erzurum.<sup>115</sup>

According to the 4th Army's report, as a result of the confrontation, 2 Muslims were killed and 45 wounded. There were 8 dead and 74 wounded from the Armenian community. In addition, one of the soldiers who wanted to suppress the rebellion was killed and 4 people, including Captain Mehmet Efendi, were wounded.<sup>116</sup>

After the events of 1890, the overseas connections of the school's teachers and students, as well as the school's transportation and communication channels, came under the radar of Ottoman intelligence. For example, in a memorandum sent to the Governorate of Erzurum in 1891, the Ministry of Internal Affairs stated that the son of the French Consul General, who taught French at the Sanasarian College, was collaborating with the insurrectionists and asked the security forces to be careful.<sup>117</sup> On the other hand, when it was realized that Avedis Kirkor, one of the employees of Sanasarian, had travelled to Russia via Iran with the passport he had obtained in Erzurum and had been involved in incidents, the issuance of passports to Armenians who wanted to go to Iran was stopped.<sup>118</sup> The suspicions against the school were so great that even the laboratory equipment for chemistry and a telegraph machine sent to the school from Petersburg were deemed incompatible with the school's program due to the suspicion that they would be used in terrorist acts and were asked to be returned to the address they came from.<sup>119</sup>

In addition, the Sanasarian College had temporarily suspended its education and training activities from 1907 onwards, citing certain political developments. For example, classes were suspended on December 4-6th,

114 COA, Y.PRK.AZN, 4-49, H. 10.01.1308; Y.PRK.AZN, 4-37, H. 15.12.1307; Y.PRK.ASK, 62-103, H. 06.11.1307; Y.PRK.TKM, 18-20, H. 27.11.1307; Y.PRK.ASK., 62-100, H. 29.10.1307; Y.PRK.ASK, 134-97, H. 03.07.1315.

115 Քանի մը Խոսք-Սանասարեանի Տեղափոխութեան Առթիւ (Կարին: Հառաջ, 1912), 7; Պողոսյան, “Կարինի վարժարանների”, 72; Պետրոսյան, “Կարինի Սանասարյան վարժարանի”; Աճառեան, Պօլսէն Կարին, 27.

116 COA, Y.PRK.ASK, 62-103, H. 06.11.1307.

117 COA, DH.MKT, 1848-32, H. 01.12.1308; DH.MKT, 1802-75, H. 13.06.1308; HR. TH, 109-71, M. 27.05.1891.

118 DH.TMIK.M., 205-11, H. 03.07.1323.

119 DH.TMIK.M, 4-7, H. 29.11.1313; BEO, 722-54146, H. 12.07.1313; BEO, 1175-88061, H. 23.03.1316; DH.TMIK.M, 19-22, H. 08.05.1314.

1908 due to the opening of the Ottoman parliament. On April 8-11th, 1909, the school administration had to postpone classes due to the actions of anti-constitutionalists in Erzurum. On April 15th, 1909, classes were interrupted again due to the accession of Sultan Reşat to the throne. In the 1909-1910 academic year, the school's academic calendar was rearranged, and the school's work schedule was reorganized.<sup>120</sup>

On the other hand, since 1907, Madatian and Soghigian did not attend classes regularly, which caused discontent among the students. Upon reporting the situation to Istanbul, Krikor Zakarian was sent to Erzurum by the Istanbul trusteeship committee to investigate. As a result of the investigation, Madatian and Soghigian were dismissed from the principalship and replaced by Zakarian. Upon Zakarian's death, the post of principal was assigned to Apoulian. As of the 1909-1910 academic year, A. Hachatirian was appointed as the school principal. However, when Hachatirian resigned after one year, Apoulian was reappointed as principal. According to Gazar Çarık, all this was due to the rivalry between the trustees.

Meanwhile, the assets left to the school by Sanasarian were turned into a foundation in 1901 under the name Sanasarian Foundation by the British citizen Gümüşgerdan. Accordingly, the revenues of the Sanasarian Inn and all the real estate in Istanbul, which were purchased with Sanasarian's estate, were converted into a foundation to be transferred to the Sanasarian College.<sup>121</sup>

On the other hand, in 1912, the idea of moving the school to Kharpert began to be discussed again. According to those who wanted the college to be moved, the school building had become unusable after the 1901 earthquake. The dormitories for boarding students were inadequate, cots were cramped, and the cleanliness was extremely poor. In addition, the rent for the building was quite high. Although the school had enough money in its coffers, no new land for a school had been found in Erzurum for years. Even worse, there were no favorable conditions in and around Erzurum for the students to compete. The fact that wealthy Armenians from Erzurum were sending their children to study at Sanasarian had disrupted the other schools' sources of income.<sup>122</sup> Those who wanted the college to remain in Erzurum objected to moving, citing Sanasarian's will, and believed that such a decision would be disrespectful to Sanasarian's memory. While they acknowledged that the physical conditions

120 Քառամեայ Տեղեկագիր, 42.

121 *General Directorate of Foundations Archive*, D.N. 574, 37-14; D.N. 574, 38/39-15.

122 “Սանասարեան վարժարանի փոխադրութիւնը Խարբերդ”, 204-205.

of the school were unhealthy and inadequate, they could not see any justified and reasonable reasons to move the school.<sup>123</sup>

However, despite all these objections, the Istanbul trusteeship decided to move the school to Sivas in 1912. After the Armenian community of Erzurum protested and refused the decision, it was decided to move the school to Sivas on the condition that the daytime section of the school would remain in Erzurum.<sup>124</sup> Thus, according to Miroğlu's claim, part of the school was transferred to the courtyard of the Sivas Nishan Monastery on September 24th, 1912.<sup>125</sup> The old school in Erzurum continued to operate under a different name, "New Sanasarian", within the same campus.

According to Armenian historians, the New Sanasarian College continued its activities for about 34 years until it was closed down by the government during the 1915 Events. However, a review of the letters sent to Vratsian by the school principal Rostom Zorian shows that the school was closed long before the 1915 events due to the patriarchate's indifference. The Istanbul trusteeship did not pay teachers' salaries despite Sanasarian's legacy and forced the school to close by spending the school's sources of income in other areas - presumably financing insurrectionist activities. Zorian's letters, in which he hopes for an extraordinary issue of Hayrenik Newspaper to help the school, is clear evidence of the extent to which the Istanbul trusteeship respected the provisions of Sanasarian's endowment.<sup>126</sup>

The situation of the Sanasarian College was even reflected in the publications of the Armenian community of Erzurum. For example, in the report titled *A Few Words* published by the Armenians of Erzurum, it was stated that the college had lost its status as a school and that the patriarchate was trying to move the school instead of turning it into a center of science.<sup>127</sup>

The Sanasarian College remained closed until 1920 due to the war. The school campus was temporarily used as a hospital. In 1919, the Erzurum Congress even convened in the historic building of the Sanasarian College. The building, which was later converted into a school, was transferred to the Governorship

123 Քանի մը Խոսք, 1-7.

124 Քանի մը Խոսք, 1-7; Չարըզ, Հուշամատեն Բարձր Հայքի, 222-225.

125 Արմաւենի Միթողլու, "Կ. Պոլսոյ Սանասարեան Խաիը", Հանդէս ամսօրեայ, 551-560.

126 "Հին թողութե- Ռոստոմի նամակները". Վեմ-Հանդէս մշակոյթի եւ պատմութեան, Գ-3(1935): 91-96, 101, 104, 111; Հայրենիք Բացառիկ Թիւ 2 կարինի Նոր Սանասարեանի Համար (Պօսթըն: Հայրենիք, 1914).

127 Քանի մը Խոսք, 5-6.

of Istanbul in 1928 as it did not belong to the Sanasarian Foundation - there is no statement or clause about the building in the foundation certificate. The Sanasarian Inn, which was among the immovable properties of the school, was expropriated by the state and placed under the command of the Istanbul Police Headquarters since the foundation no longer had any allocation. When the Patriarchate applied to the Police Headquarters a year after the Entente entered Istanbul and asked for the accumulated rent, the Police Headquarters was forced to evict the inn on the grounds that it did not have sufficient budget.<sup>128</sup> At the end of 1919, during the reign of Patriarch Zaven, the Istanbul trusteeship rented the inn once again. In order to regain the revenues of the foundation, the Patriarchate attempted to restart the school by adding the name Sanasarian to Getronakan College during the 1927-1928 academic year. During this period, Getronakan's building was transformed into an enormous structure with the addition of laboratories, libraries, dining halls, gymnasiums and workshops at a cost of 10 thousand gold coins. Bedros Adruni was the principal of the school, and by 1927 there were 200 students in total.<sup>129</sup>

The new name of the school was approved by the Directorate of Education as of 1931-32. However, the directorate later banned the use of the name Sanasarian, citing the ongoing court process. On the other hand, in 1928, the government deemed the Sanasarian Inn an abandoned property and placed it under the control of the Istanbul Governorate. It also prohibited the testator Patriarch Mesrob Naroian from receiving rent. Upon the Patriarchate's objection to the decision, the case was brought to court on October 23rd, 1928. On April 20th, 1929, the court dismissed the case, ruling that Naroian did not have the authority to sue, and that the patriarchate did not legally exist anyway. The Patriarchate appealed the local court's decision to the Supreme Court and sought to overturn it. In 1932, the supreme judiciary conducted an investigation into the Sanasarian College in Erzurum to determine whether the provisions of the will had been fulfilled. Thus, in 1935, the court ruled that the Sanasarian Inn be transferred back to the Governorship of Istanbul.<sup>130</sup> The building in Erzurum was used as a school for a while and then turned into a museum.

128 COA, DH.İ.U.M., 7-1, H. 19.06.1338, 1-20; DH.HMŞ., 6-11, H-02-06-1338; DH.HMŞ., 31-51, H-18-07-1338; DH. KMS, 52-22, H. 30.11.1337.

129 Ընդարձակ Օրացոյց Ազգային Հիվանդանոցի (Կոստանդնուպոլիս: Սեթեան, 1928), 392-399; Ընդարձակ Օրացոյց Ազգային Հիվանդանոցի (Կոստանդնուպոլիս: Սեթեան, 1929), 312-322.

130 Արմաւենի Միթողլու, “Պոլսահայ կրթական կեանքը Թուրքիոյ Հանրապետութեան -30-20ական թուականներուն (մամուլի գնահատմամբ)”. Լրաբեր հասարակական գիտությունների, 3-3(2007): 140-157; Միթողլու, “Կ. Պոլսոյ Սանասարեան Խաիը”, 551-560.

## Conclusion

The Sanasarian College was founded in Erzurum in 1881 by Armenian businessman Mgrdich Sanasarian. The idea behind the college was agent Garabed Yezian, an advisor to the Russian Ministry of Education. The college was one of four secondary schools established by Ottoman Armenians outside Istanbul. The aim of the school was to educate Armenian children in the spirit and rules of the Armenian Apostolic Church and to train them in general and vocational subjects. In the 1881-1882 academic year, the Sanasarian College had the status of a 9-year high school. Students enrolled in the college could receive a high school diploma after three years of elementary school education, followed by six more years of high school. In addition, the school's curriculum was modelled after German secondary schools (Realschule). Initially a basic high school, the Sanasarian College was transformed into a multi-program high school with the establishment of furniture, iron and bookbinding workshops.

From 1881 to 1890, the Sanasarian College was directly managed by Mgrdich Sanasarian. During this period, Sanasarian's advisor Yezian, an experienced educator, personally handled all administrative and academic affairs of the school. In 1882, the administration of the school was transferred to a special commission consisting of Maghakya Ormanian, Kevork Apoulian, Hovsep Madatian and Sarkis Soghigian. After Sanasarian's death, all the authority of the school passed to Yezian. In 1892, Yezian drafted a bylaw that delegated the administration of the school to the Istanbul trusteeship, the local trusteeship, the school administration and the teachers' board. In 1901, all of Sanasarian's real estate in Istanbul was turned into a foundation to be transferred to the college.

The Sanasarian College was not only an educational institution but also a indoctrination center where Armenian separatist movements were coordinated. In fact, the college was one of the most important catalysts of the 1890 Erzurum rebellion. During the rebellion, 750 people who had taken refuge in the college with weapons they had received from the consuls clashed with the gendarmerie under the leadership of the bishop of Erzurum. After the earthquake in Erzurum in 1901, there was an intention to move the Sanasarian College to Harput. In addition, the rent for the school building was very high and although the school had enough money in its coffers, for years no new land for a school had been found in Erzurum. In 1912, despite the objections of the Armenian community of Erzurum, the Istanbul authorities decided to

move the daytime section of the school to Sivas. The old school in Erzurum continued its activities in the same campus under the name “New Sanasarian”.

The Sanasarian College went through hard times after 1912 due to lack of funding. As Zorian notes, the school administration was even unable to pay the salaries of the teachers. Contrary to the claims of many Armenian historians, the school was closed in 1913, not because of the events of 1915, but because the Patriarchate did not transfer the foundation income to the school as stated in the foundation deed.

The Sanasarian College remained closed between 1915 and 1920 due to the war. The school campus was used as a hospital for a while. In 1919, the Erzurum Congress even convened in the historic building of the Sanasarian College. The Sanasarian Inn, one of the immovable properties of the school, was expropriated by the state after the closure of the college and transferred to the Istanbul Police Department.

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