

COVERAGE OF THE SITUATION OF WESTERN ARMENIANS IN EGYPTIAN-ARMENIAN PRESS (1899-1904)*

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Abstract

The developing relations of production caused a great revival in the economic life of Egypt starting with the second half of the 19th century. Armenians who migrated to Egypt took an active part in the development of the country's economic and cultural life. The revitalization of the economic and cultural life of Egypt has caused significant positive changes in the social and cultural life of Egyptian Armenians, where the Armenian periodical press has been doing a lasting job. The Egyptian-Armenian press has always been concerned about the situation in Western Armenia and Cilicia. In addition, Egyptian-Armenian periodicals have set themselves the task of keeping alive the hope of reviving the Motherland, uniting the Armenian immigrants settled in different countries all across the world around that idea.

Keywords: Egyptian-Armenian press, Western Armenia, Kurdish atrocities, Sasun, Ottoman authorities.

Introduction

The article is devoted to the coverage of the situation of Western Armenians in the Egyptian-Armenian press of 1899-1904. The choice and importance of the mentioned period lies in the situation in Western Armenia being one of the most discussed topics in the Egyptian-Armenian press in 1899-1904. Prior to that (1865-1898), 4 social-political Armenian newspapers were published in Egypt, two of which were published for several months with several issues. In addition, those newspapers had very little coverage of the situation of Western Armenians. The limitation to the year 1904 is explained by the fact that in the period until 1908, when a new page was opened in the history of the Egyptian-Armenian press after the Young Turk's revolution, several socio-political periodicals were published, which were quickly closed after the publication of a few issues only.

At the beginning of the 20th century, the Egyptian Armenian community was considered one of the largest cultural centers of Armenia, where Western Armenian intellectuals, writers, public speakers Arpiar Arpiaryan, Ervand Otyan, Mihran Asqanaz, Eghishe Torosyan and others were carrying out their activities [40:338]. Armenian periodical press occupies a worthy place in the social and political life of Egyptian Armenians. The first Egyptian-Armenian periodical, *Armaveni* newspaper, was founded in Egypt in 1865. 165 Armenian newspapers and magazines (*Armaveni*, *Neghos*, *Arshalouys*, *Husaber*, among others) were founded in Egypt in

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1865-2010 [39:20]. Currently, four Armenian newspapers and magazines are published in Egypt: *Husaber*, *Arev*, *Areg* and *Teghekatu*.

One of the most important issues raised by the Egyptian-Armenian socio-political periodicals of the beginning of the 20th century was the liberation of the homeland from Turkish rule. Almost all Egyptian-Armenian periodicals of the early 20th century (*Phyunik*, *Arshalouys*, *Joghovurd*, *Azat Bem*, *Partez*, *Nor Or*) referred to the coverage of the national liberation struggle at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century and tried to communicate the difficult situation in Western Armenia to Egyptian Armenians with their publications. Unlike the Egyptian-Armenian periodicals *Phyunik*, *Arshalouys*, *Azat Bem*, and *Nor Or*, which severely criticized the Armenian persecution policy of the Ottoman authorities, *Joghovurd* and *Partez* were satisfied with reporting only some information about the situation of Western Armenians.

Coverage of Turkish-Kurdish persecution

At the beginning of the 20th century, the rights and dignity of the Armenian people continued to be violated in the Ottoman Empire. All of this was reflected in the Egyptian-Armenian press of the time. In the articles on Western Armenians, much attention was given to the coverage of Kurdish atrocities, and Armenian-Turkish and Armenian-Kurdish collisions. The plight of Western Armenians and the Turkish-Kurdish persecution were mostly covered by the *Phyunik* periodical edited by Smbat Byurat, a supporter of the ideas of the liberation movement, public speaker, and public figure [41: 320], who criticized the anti-Armenian policy of the Ottoman authorities with editorial articles and tried to keep alive the hope of restoring the independence of the Motherland. Referring to news from the newspapers of Constantinople, *Phyunik* periodical reported that Armenians killed 5 Turks in one of the villages of Bitlis in May of 1899, because of which 7 Armenians were arrested [3: 15]. In the *Matnich* article, the periodical reported that in 1899, as a result of the betrayal of Gegham Vardanyan from Arabkir, arrests began in the areas from Erzurum to Arabkir. Many teachers and merchants were imprisoned in Yerznka, Baghesh, Tevrik and Sebastia. After these events, the traitor of the Armenian nation, paid by the Ottoman authorities and accompanied by 10-15 soldiers, roamed the villages of Kharberd and spread terror among the Armenian people [9: 5-6].

The Egyptian-Armenian *Phyunik* periodical noted that although according to article 61 of the Berlin Treaty in 1878, the Ottoman government undertook to carry out reforms in Western Armenia, the situation of Western Armenians had not improved for 20 years; on the contrary, it had worsened [3:5]. The periodical reported in the article "News from Taron" that Bitlis authorities sent 1,500 soldiers to arrest 8 Armenian hayduks hiding in Tsnork village of Mush region on September 8, 1899. The Turkish army destroyed and looted the village of 500 Armenian houses. Armenian hayduks were killed during the uneven clashes that took place. The newspaper noted: "After this incident, the Armenians of the Mush are in fear and

terror [6: 13]”. On the way to the village of Tsnork, the Turkish army conducted a search under the pretext that Aghbyur Serob was allegedly hiding in the village of Berdak, which was also accompanied by robbery and looting. During this same period, two Kurds killed Armenian fellow villagers during a dinner in Yerishter and Asvarich villages. In response to the complaints of the families of the murdered Armenian villagers, the local authorities of Mush imprisoned the sons of the murdered as rioters. S. Father Lazar and three congregants were killed by Kurds of Khut village in the Aghberka monastery; the property of the church was looted. In addition, the periodical added that Armenian-Kurdish clashes took place in Babshen and other villages of Mush [6: 13-14]. After looting and destroying the villages of Spaghank, Helenk, Khastur, Shushnamerk, and Sirnad, the Turkish army, with the support of the Kurds, carried out searches and destructions in Berdak village under the pretext of looking for Armenian hayduks, during which 3 Armenian villagers were killed and 7 were injured. "In order for Europe to intervene, we will have to wait for all the Armenians to be destroyed" [8:5] added the columnist indignantly. The periodical pointed to the armed struggle as a way out of the existing situation for Western Armenians. For such an output the libertarian editor also used the thoughts and ideas of progressive Armenian writers commemorating the armed struggle. This position of the periodical was probably due to the fact that in 1896 editor Smbat Byurat barely survived the Armenian massacres and took refuge in Egypt with his family.

Egyptian-Armenian periodical *Arshalouys* edited by Eghishe Torosyan [42: 709] also reported about the Armenian-Kurdish clashes in early November, of 1899, when bloody Armenian-Kurdish clashes took place also in the city of Erzurum. These clashes were witnessed by German traveler T. Belk who informed that the Armenians were attackers, armed with Russian weapons; 50 casualties were registered on both sides. Peace has been established only with the help of the Turkish regular army. The German telegram ended with words of praise for the governor of Erzurum, whose efforts put an end to the clashes. The Berlin correspondent of the London's *Daily Chronicle* newspaper, conveying this information to the newspaper's editorial office on November 16, added that from German traveler Belk's telegram he concluded that the governor of Erzurum had asked him to spread information about the attacks of those Western Armenians in the European press. In connection with this telegram, both the correspondent of the London newspaper and the editorial office of *Arshalouys* agreed that "there will be a great bloodshed and that Turkish officials will try to keep it a secret" [1:2-3]. The main goal of *Arshalouys* was the liberation of Armenia, like other Egyptian-Armenian periodicals of the early 20th century. However, unlike the famous Egyptian-Armenian *Phyunik* periodical of the early 20th century, which saw the liberation of Armenia only in the event of an armed struggle, on the pages of *Arshalouys*, armed self-defense, if not completely denied, was at best considered the last resort. The periodical considered that, first of all, peaceful means should be used to find a solution to the current situation. *Arshalouys* criticized the working style of the Armeni-

an national parties, blamed the Armenian rulers and party leaders for the unhappiness of the Armenian people, who, instead of building industrial and educational institutions in the country, wasted huge sums on various senseless actions. However, in the publications of 1910-1914, the periodical finally changed its attitude towards the constitutional authorities and became convinced that the latter were the descendants of the Hamidian regime and had a sense of Turkish supremacy over foreigners, which could lead to newly organized massacres.

The Egyptian-Armenian *Nor Or* periodical, like *Phyunik*, pointed to the armed struggle as a way out of the existing situation for Western Armenians, as it was edited by *Phyunik*'s editor Smbat Byurat [43:150]. The periodical also noted that at the beginning of the 20th century, the Kurds in Western Armenia continued to plunder, with green light from the Ottoman authorities. The newspaper noted: "Many Armenians converted to religion in the hope of finding protection from the authorities, but the Kurds continue to rob Armenians who have converted to Islam" [17:3]. The periodical complained that the majority of Egyptian Armenians showed indifference towards the massacres taking place in Western Armenia, Western Armenian immigrants and orphans. In order to make an impression on Egyptian-Armenians, the Egyptian-Armenian newspaper presented the translation of the famous lover of Armenia Mr. Anatole France's article dedicated to Armenian orphans published in newspaper Figaro on June 13, 1900, which reflected the general picture of the deprivations that took place in Western Armenia at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century. The article covered the Armenian massacres in 1894-1896, during which more than 300,000 Armenians were killed. In many places, such as Sasun and Zeytun, Armenians showed serious resistance, but in many villages there was a massacre of unarmed Armenians. The Egyptian-Armenian periodical urged the Egyptian-Armenians to become active and provide assistance to Armenian refugees and orphans. "If we allow the fathers to be slaughtered, at least we must help the children" [18:2].

In 1899-1902, Armenians of Sasun and Mush also fell victims to Turkish-Kurdish atrocities. Referring to the news published in the British Times newspaper, the Egyptian-Armenian *Phyunik* periodical reported that the Kurds robbed the Sasun monastery, killed the monastery's abbot, two monks and also set fire to 5 Armenian villages, killing 150 Armenians and kidnapping 20 Armenian women. "A telegram from Vienna will increase the number of crushed Armenians to 800" [4:18]. The field of Mush was covered with blood in the spring of 1900 [14:4-5]. 106 Armenians were killed in one month¹. On July 8, 1900, one thousand Kurdish gangs set fire to the area between the villages of Talvorik and Geiliguzan, not sparing children, the elderly and women. In particular, they tortured and killed priest T. Petros and the pregnant wife of the head of the village of Spagank. After setting the

¹ In particular, 10 Armenians were killed in the village of Arak, 4 in Havaturik, 7 in Karner, 10 in Bifshidz, 17 in Hunna, 2 in Berdak, 6 in Ashuarinj, 4 in Akhjoi, 2 in Tsronk, 30 in Korvon and 20 in Mokunk village.

tomb on fire, the Kurdish thugs organized massacres in the villages of Yeghard and Dzorer. *Phyunik* sarcastically turned to progressive humanity, asking if these are private cases, and answered: "No, the arch, this is the repetition of events 1892-1893, which will soon be followed by 1894-1896 massacres" [15:4-6]. At the beginning of the 20th century, the Egyptian-Armenian periodical already predicted the impending disaster and considered the Turkish-Kurdish atrocities to be the forerunner of the Great Genocide.

In yet another article *Phyunik* reported that the Turkish police, together with the Hamidian Kurdish detachments, carried out many destructions and murders in the villages of Baghesh, looted S. Aghbrik monastery located between Mush and Sasun, killing the abbot and two churchmen [5:17]. In the spring of 1901, the Ottoman authorities arrested the bishop of Zeytun, priests, and a large number of teachers and transferred them to Marash. After being imprisoned for several weeks, most of them were released for a bribe of 600 gold [7:8]. Taking news from other newspapers, *Phyunik* reported that the anarchy prevailing in Van and surrounding villages created a disastrous situation in 1901, in connection with which the National Patriarchate of Constantinople submitted complaints regarding the disputes that took place. In June 1901, a group of 500 people led by Mahmud agha Boybek attacked the village of Alpis, where 72 Armenian families lived. The Armenians managed to escape to the nearby Kefertis village, with 4 casualties as a result of the clashes [16:5-7]. A few days later the aforementioned gang set fire to Kefertis village, killing 5 more Armenians. In the summer of 1901, due to the murder of Sheriff agha's brother, the villages of Havatorek, Marnink, Arak, Berdak and Mokunk were greatly destroyed, with most of the villagers killed [10:7].

The ring around Zeytun and Sasun was getting tighter as the Ottoman authorities built barracks and fortresses on the hills and ravines surrounding the cities. On July 3, 1901, the Hamidie detachments, together with the regular troops, resumed the destruction and massacres in the Mush field, as a result of which many villages, particularly the important center of the Armenian population, the village of Shekhokhan, were completely destroyed. *Phyunik* regretfully noted that after all of this, Europe still remained silent [11:3].

At the end of 1901 and the beginning of 1902, the situation of Western Armenians in Cilicia and the provinces of Western Armenia continued to be disastrous. In July-August 1901, Kurds killed more than 100 Armenian villagers. The Kurds looted Gotanli village, burned the fields and imprisoned 40 Armenian villagers, citing the murder of Sheriff agha, the Kurdish chief of the village [12:15]. Referring to the article about Armenia published in the British *Tan* daily, *Phyunik* reported that on September 1, 1901, the governor of Bitlis sent 8 troops to Mush. The author of the article noted that the situation in Mush and Sasun was the same as on the eve of the massacres in 1894-1896 and expressed fear that new massacres might take place. In addition, the author of the article added that the Ottoman authorities not only failed to implement the Armenian reforms stipulated by Article 61 of Berlin, but also organized new murders and massacres [12:9-11].

At the beginning of November 1901, Andranik, together with a group of hayduks and armed villagers, entered S. Arakelots Monastery not far from Mush and turned it into a self-defense fortress. In relation to this incident, *Phyunik* informed that the Ottoman authorities were spreading false news that the Armenian gang led by Andranik was holding 60 hostages in the monastery and Turkish troops were sent to free the hostages at the request of the Bishop of Mush. At the same time, the author added that according to the news from Constantinople, the Ottoman authorities asked the Armenian Patriarchate to intervene and convince them to lay down their arms and leave the territory of the Ottoman Empire under the condition of guaranteeing Andranik's and his troops' lives [13:4-5]. Let us add that Andranik did not accept any conditions offered by the Ottoman authorities, and on November 27, the hayduks, wrapped in white sheets, left the monastery unnoticed. The Battle of S. Arakelots Monastery left a great impression on the Armenians of Taron and Sasun and significantly raised the fighting spirit of Western Armenians.

Along with presenting the dire situation of Western Armenians, the Egyptian-Armenian periodical called on all Armenians not to despair. The periodical added that in the 1880s anti-Jewish persecution forced young Russian Jewish intellectuals to abandon their studies, leave for Palestine and engage in agriculture, and so the Zionist movement began. Jews from around the world began to return to Palestine, bought land and eventually put down deep roots in their homeland. The newspaper considered that the Armenian people had to follow the example of the Jews and start returning to the Motherland, and to this end an ideology similar to Zionism was needed [9:4-5].

Reference to Sasun's uprising in 1904

The peak of the national liberation struggle of the beginning of the 20th century was the uprising of Sasun in 1904, the last mass outburst of the Armenian armed struggle in Western Armenia, the coverage of which was also made by the Egyptian-Armenian press. Describing the course of the uprising, the Egyptian-Armenian *Joghovurd* periodical edited by Avetis Palyan [44:30] noted that a new massacre like the massacres in 1894-1896 was taking place in Sasun, which also threatened the unarmed and defenseless Armenians of Erzurum and Van [19:177-181]. *Joghovurd* referred very briefly to Sasun's uprising in 1904 and the situation of Western Armenians in general, because the periodical emphasized the coverage of the Eastern Armenian struggle against the confiscation of the property of the Armenian church in 1903-1904 after the adoption law on the June 12 in 1903. The periodical called on Armenians to live without foreign intervention and help, to improve life by their own efforts.

In its turn, *Partez* periodical edited by Mihran Asqanaz reported that on December 26, 1903, news reached them from Sasun that the situation was very serious. About 1,000 Armenian hayduks gathered there under the leadership of Andranik, and Kurdish guerrilla groups camped in the border areas of the province to prevent new Armenian hayduk groups from entering Sasun. "The Armenians of

Sasun are waiting for the repetition of events in 1894” [27:13]. *Partez* was a periodical of a pedagogical nature and its educational orientation was Christian morality [44:32]. The periodical saw the guarantee of the existence and stability of the Armenian nation in the improvement of the character of the individual and instilled in the readers noble human qualities: kindness, honesty and others. Being a periodical of a pedagogical nature, *Partez* was satisfied with reporting about the atrocities of Turkish-Kurdish barbarians in Western Armenia, Sasun's uprising in 1904 and did not mention the exit of Armenians from the existing situation.

The Ottoman government started the campaign against Sasun at the beginning of spring of 1904. Uneven fighting continued until mid-May. The enemy, having taken over Sasun, retaliated against the civilians who remained there, looting and desolating the villages. Reporting various information about the course of the uprising, *Partez* noted that the events of 1894 were repeated. In addition, it was reported that 20 Ottoman soldiers were killed, 23 were wounded, and 12 villages of Talvorik region were destroyed during the clashes at the beginning of April [28:14]. In another article about the Sasun uprising, the newspaper reported that on May 15 they received a telegram from Mush, in which it was said that the inhabitants of Sasun resisted valiantly against 14 Turkish regiments and a 700-strong Kurdish militia led by Sheikh Ahmad on the heights of Talvorik, but the forces were very unequal. 45 Armenian villages of Sasun were destroyed; 12,000 Armenians were captured, and another 8,000 Armenians were killed by the Turks. To avoid torture and massacre, 12 Armenian women in Talvorik threw themselves into the river with their children [32:13-14]. The Egyptian-Armenian *Azat Bem* periodical edited by Ervand Otyan [44:26] reported that in April-May 5000 Armenians were killed in Sasun, and 50 villages were destroyed [22:3-4]. According to private sources in Constantinople, the periodical notices that, contrary to the claims of the Ottoman authorities, a large number of unarmed and innocent people were killed in Sasun [22:4]. *Azat Bem* condemned the anti-Armenian policy of the Ottoman Empire, with words of accusation against the diplomatic games of Western European countries. The periodical raised the idea of solidarity and cooperation of Armenian national political parties and saw the nation's salvation in working together.

During the spring in 1904, the Armenian villages of the Mush plain were captured by Turkish regular troops, and, to avoid torture and massacre, the Armenians of the province went up to the mountains of Sasun. After the Sasun massacre, the Ottoman government began to forcefully deport the Armenian population of Sasun: more than 6,000 Armenian women, children and the elderly. In addition, the construction of 8 new barracks and the process of formalizing the lands belonging to Armenians in the names of Kurds began in Sasun. *Partez* reported that despite the presence of foreign consuls, the Armenian massacres continued in the Mush field, during which the villages of Araks, Alita, Komar, Tatrako and Trink were almost completely destroyed, many women and children committed suicide, and most of the corpses of Armenians were not buried [35:13-14].

The situation of those settled in the Mush field was getting worse. The Ottoman government forbade them to go to the city of Mush. On July 3, 1904, the women of the destroyed villages of Mkragom and Temert sent a petition for help to the governor of Mush. Four Armenian women carrying the petition were raped by the soldiers. The Ottoman authorities placed around 1,300 Armenian refugees in the Basdr settlement, forbidding the locals to provide them with food for 15 days, as a result of which most of the Armenian exiles died, and some were tortured by Ottoman soldiers and Kurds [36:13]. The periodical *Partez* testified that the ambassadors of England and France presented a complaint to the Ottoman government regarding the Armenian massacres, adding that under the guise of suppressing the Sasun rebellion, the Ottoman troops together with the Kurdish guerrillas killed many innocent Armenian villagers [31:13]. In June-August, the appeals of the consuls of the European countries forced the Ottoman authorities to allow some of the emigrants to return to their homes. British vice-consul in Van, Turrell, who visited Sasun twice during the summer, reported in a July 31 newsletter that the data published by Armenian sources about the casualties were exaggerated, because before the Ottoman troops entered Sasun, most of the population had already left the villages of Sasun. British vice-consul Turrell put the number of Armenian casualties at around 900, while Heathcote, British vice-consul at Mush, reported around 4,000 casualties. Turrell claimed that Armenian hayduks burned the villages in order to stir up European public opinion. After studying the circumstances of the massacre near Mush, Turrell came to the conclusion that the massacre was the revenge of the Turks for the killing of 17 Turkish soldiers in Kuraghu village on July 29 [29:2].

Reprinting the information published in British newspaper *Tan*, *Azat Bem* informed that on July 2, 1904, the Ottoman government decided to grant amnesty to the captured citizens of Sasun, to rebuild 547 burnt houses, and to allow emigrants to return to their places of residence. Contrary to the announcement of amnesty, the Kurds continued to incite disputes in the Mush field. In particular, at the end of July, 19 Armenians were hanged near the city of Mush [23:3].

Not receiving help, Sasun fell at the end of August, and the massacre of the civilian population began. About 40 villages were destroyed; more than 7000 Armenians died. The rebellion that started in Sasun turned into a general uprising in Western Armenia. The struggle did not stop with the fall of Sasun. In May-August 1904, Armenian hayduks waged guerilla battles against Turkish-Kurdish regular and irregular military units. On August 2, 1904, the Kurds set fire to the Armenian village of Goms, and on August 11, 2 Armenians and 24 Kurds were killed during the bloody Armenian-Kurdish clashes. On August 12, a massacre of the population of the Armenian villages of Khavu and Akhchan was organized. *Partez* emphasized that this information is only a small part of Kurdish atrocities [37:11].

In May-July 1904, the situation worsened in Baghesh vilayet, Mush Valley and other provinces of Western Armenia, which were also covered by the Egyptian-Armenian press. Reporting from *Armenia* newspaper, *Azat Bem* weekly reported that on July 9, Kurds burned down the Armenian market in Baghesh, looted

the goods of Armenian merchants, and the local authorities forbade journalists to cover the fire [25:3-4]. On July 26, Kurdish chieftain Salo attacked the villages of Ichkilise and Kumlupuchak with his gang, robbing and killing many Armenians. Other Kurdish terrorist groups destroyed the villages of Chupun and Karapazar, and set fire to the Armenian shops in the city of Mush [24:4].

After the massacre of Sasun, a difficult situation was also created in Erzurum. *Partez* reported that arrests of Armenians had become frequent, with local authorities inciting Muslims against Armenians. The situation was the same in Khnus, Baghesh, where many Armenian shops remained closed [33:13]. On July 9, 1904, a fire broke out in the Christian neighborhoods of Marzuan, a city of 2,000 inhabitants in the Svaz province. While the Christian population of the town tried to move their families and movable property to safety in terror, the two wells of the governorate did nothing to put out the fire. During that fire about 600 houses and 200 shops belonging to the Christian population of the city, including Armenians, were burned [34:13]. Referring to the article published in the British newspaper *Standard*, *Partez* reported that the British consul in Erzurum was arrested as a revolutionary while visiting the Armenian provinces, but after a short time the local authorities apologized and released the consul. The newspaper noted that the Ottoman government intentionally created such obstacles for foreign consuls so that the latter would refuse to visit the distant provinces of the empire and would not learn about the conflicts that were actually happening there [26:13]. After climbing the mountains, under the pretext of looking for the Armenian hayduks, the regular Ottoman troops and the Kurdish guerrilla groups attacked the Armenian settlements with fire and sword. In particular, in August-September 1904, the small town of Shahira located on the shores of lake Van suffered a similar fate. *Partez* testified that in the same period, they were expecting a new massacre in Van every minute. "The local authorities distributed weapons to the 150-member terrorist group in the city, and if clashes occur in Van, the Ottoman government will bear all the responsibility [38:10-11]"

Eastern Armenians did not remain aloof in providing assistance to Western Armenians, which did not escape the attention of the Egyptian-Armenian press. Taking news from European newspapers, the Egyptian-Armenian periodical *Arshalouys* reported that on November 9, 1899 an Armenian group of 120 people from the territory of the Russian Empire entered the Alashkert field and fought with Turkish troops and Kurdish detachments near the village of Astur. Causing great human losses to the Turks and Kurds and suffering 15 casualties, and 2 prisoners, the Armenian group managed to return to the territory of the Russian Empire. After this incident, the governors of Bitlis, Mush and Van ordered the Hamidi regiments to be more ruthless towards the Armenian population [2:2-3]. Referring to the European newspapers, the *Phyunik* periodical reported that the group consisting of Eastern Armenians, which was going to support the liberation movement of Van, got into a battle with the Turkish troops on the way and retreated, leaving 10 victims on the battlefield [5:17]. Referring to newspaper *Armenia*, *Joghovurd* mag-

azine reported that in early July 1904, a group of 60 Eastern Armenians led by Tuman Tumanyan from Artsakh was discovered and surrounded by Russian border guards on their way to Western Armenia. The Armenian group did not show resistance and surrendered, counting on the mercy of the Russian border guards. “The prudence of some of our passionate patriots did not help; they started massacring the Armenians who disarmed themselves [20:270-271]”. As a result of the clash, 38 Armenians were killed; other members of the group were arrested.

The uprising of Sasun in 1904 and the subsequent guerrilla struggle was the last outburst of the Armenian armed struggle in Western Armenia. Despite its efforts, it remained isolated and did not develop into a nationwide uprising.

One of the most important issues of the Egyptian-Armenian press at the beginning of the 20th century was the liberation of the homeland from the Turkish yoke. In its publications, it criticized the Ottoman dictatorship, exposed the Hamid tyranny, and condemned the anti-Armenian policy of the Ottoman Empire. The Egyptian-Armenian press has always been concerned about the situation in Western Armenia and Cilicia and has regularly tried to present the difficult situation of Western Armenians to the reader through its publications. The Egyptian-Armenian press devoted much space to the coverage of national issues among the Egyptian-Armenians, with particular attention to the uprising of Sasun in 1904. Unlike the Egyptian-Armenian periodicals *Phyunik*, *Arshalouys*, *Azat Bem*, *Nor or*, which severely criticized the Armenian persecution policy of the Ottoman authorities, *Partez* and *Joghovurd* periodicals were satisfied with reporting some information only about the situation of Western Armenians. Among the national issues, the Egyptian-Armenian press also covered the Kurdish atrocities in Western Armenia, and the situation of Western Armenian immigrants and orphans. At the beginning of the 20th century, the Egyptian-Armenian periodicals already predicted the impending disaster and considered the Turkish-Kurdish atrocities to be the forerunner of the Great Genocide.

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**ԱՐԵՎՄՏԱՀԱՅՈՒԹՅԱՆ ԴՐՈՒԹՅԱՆ ԼՈՒՍԱԲԱՆՈՒՄԸ ԵԳԻՊՏԱՀԱՅ
ՄԱՍՈՒԼՈՒՄ (1899-1904 ԹԹ.)**

Մյասնիկ Եսոյան

Բանալի բառեր՝ եգիպտահայ մամուլ, Արևմտյան Հայաստան, քրդական վայրագություններ, Սասուն, օսմանյան իշխանություններ:

20-րդ դարասկզբի եգիպտահայ մամուլի կարևորագույն խնդիրներից է եղել թուրքական լծից հայրենիքի ազատագրումը: Այն իր հրապարակումներում քննադատել է օսմանյան բռնապետությունը, մերկացրել համիդյան բռնակալությունը, դատապարտել Օսմանյան կայսրության հայահալած քաղաքականությունը: Եգիպտահայ մամուլին մշտապես մտահոգել է Արևմտյան Հայաստանում և Կիլիկիայում տիրող իրադրությունն, ու այն պարբերաբար իր հրապարակումներով փորձել է ընթերցողին ներկայացնել արևմտահայության ծանր իրավիճակը: Եգիպտահայ մամուլը մեծ տեղ է հատկացրել ազգային խնդիրների արձարժմանն ու լուսաբանմանը եգիպտահայության շրջանում՝ մեծապես անդրադառնալով 1904 թ. Սասունի ապստամբության լուսաբանմանը: Ի տարբերություն եգիպտահայ «Փիւնիկ», «Արշալոյս», «Ազատ Բեմ», «Նոր օր» պարբերականների, որոնք խիստ քննադատության են ենթարկել օսմանյան իշխանությունների հայահալած քաղաքականությունը՝ «Ժողովուրդը» և «Պարտեզը» բավարարվել են միայն որոշ տեղեկություններ հաղորդելով արևմտահայության դրության վերաբերյալ: Ազգային խնդիրների շարքում եգիպտահայ մամուլն անդրադարձել է նաև Արևմտյան Հայաստանում քրդական վայրագությունների, արևմտահայ գաղթականների ու որբերի դրության լուսաբանմանը: Եգիպտահայ պարբերականները 20-րդ դարի սկզբին արդեն կանխատեսում էին սպասվելիք աղետը և թուրք-քրդական վայրագությունները Մեծ Եղեռնի նախակարապետն էին համարում: