

# HAYTOUG

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE ARMENIAN YOUTH FEDERATION WESTERN UNITED STATES  
APRIL 2008 - SPECIAL COMMEMORATIVE ISSUE

★ CONNECTING HISTORY  
PAST, PRESENT & FUTURE

ANCA **ADVOCACY** DAYS  
ACTIVISTS  
TAKE ON  
CAPITAL HILL

KOSOVO  
TODAY...  
KARABAKH  
TOMORROW?

INTERVIEW  
SPOTLIGHT  
SAMANTHA  
POWER

VIEW THE  
**DESTRUCTION:**  
THE  
ANCIENT  
CITY OF  
**ANI**

CRISIS  
IN DARFUR:  
**SUDAN**  
TURKEY'S  
GENOCIDAL  
APPRENTICE





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#### **Note About Back Cover:**

Haytoug would like to once again thank Zareh for allowing reproduction of his artwork in memory of the victims of the Armenian Genocide. The skeleton represents the victims of the genocide and their eternal spirit which is handing a new generation of Armenians a torch of light and of justice. The face represents Armenians today, remembering the pains of our past, with a wound yet unhealed. As long as the wound remains unhealed, it will drip blood into the torch of justice, continuing to fuel the flame of struggle. Please visit [www.ArtistZareh.com](http://www.ArtistZareh.com) for more of Zareh's works.





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# CONNECTING THE DOTS

Looking at the history of humankind, on a macro level, it is easy to see recurrences and patterns emerge. The rise and fall of empires – be they the Roman Empire or the Soviet Union – show us that powers may seem absolute, but are subject to decline. The inherent desire of people to govern themselves, rather than to be subjugated – whether referring to American colonists, South African Blacks, Kosovars or Armenians of Artsakh – demonstrates that the spirit of man yearns for freedom. History also illustrates to us the wretched capabilities of man’s inhumanity to man – from the Genocide of Armenians to the massacre of civilians in Sudan. The “Cycle of Genocide” which began 93 years ago in Eastern Anatolia only initiated an occurrence which has yet to be properly addressed.

Today we are in an age where the elected and unelected officials in the most powerful nations in the world have placed human rights and historical recognition in a position subordinate to that of political convenience. Morality and righteousness are at the mercy of bargaining and economic profit/loss analysis more apt for Wall Street, than the United Nations. We hear the phrase “never again”... again...and again. Noted psychiatrist and genocide scholar Robert Jay Lifton once wrote that, “Denial of genocide invites further genocide.” This description highlights the point that while denial is the last phase of genocide, it is simultaneously the first phase of the next.

Recent cooperation between the denialist government of Turkey and the genocidal regime of Sudan underscores the obviousness of this “Cycle”, whereby Turkey – through political and economic support – allows Khartoum to continue its murderous policies. Furthermore, the frightening similarities in rhetoric from each government, refuting the obvious, show that not only is the perpetration of genocide a phenomenon which can be learned, but the ways in which genocide can be denied can also be passed on.

As activists, we have a voice which cannot be dampened or silenced. We have won many small victories, but have mountains to climb. Some believe that the vitality of House Resolution 106 ended after its passage in the Foreign Affairs committee, but there are still battles to fight in Congress to secure its passage through the full House. Actions undertaken, such as the AYP’s “Fast for Remembrance” and the ANCA’s “Advocacy Days” are examples of works carried out to place our cause in its proper historical context and to end the “Cycle of Genocide.”

History has many lessons for us to learn from. Genocides are not isolated incidences that take place in a vacuum; they are calculated atrocities that must be met with resolute repercussions. Members of this country’s leadership, the international community and each and every one of us must connect the dots in order to create a clearer picture of a just collective future.

# AN INTERVIEW WITH **SAMANTHA POWER**

Samantha Power is professor of practice of global leadership and public policy at the Harvard Carr Center for Human Rights Policy. She is the recent author of *Chasing the Flame: Sergio Vieira de Mello and the Fight to Save the World*. Her book, *A Problem from Hell: America and the Age of Genocide* (New Republic Books) was awarded the 2003 Pulitzer Prize for General Non-Fiction.

The following interview with Samantha Power was conducted for the documentary film “The Armenian Genocide,” directed and produced by Emmy Award-winning producer Andrew Goldberg of Two Cats Productions ([www.twocats.tv.com](http://www.twocats.tv.com)). Segments have been reprinted from the Armenian Weekly newspaper. Haytoug would like to thank Andrew Goldberg, Two Cats TV and The Weekly for this collaboration.

## **1 Why is it necessary to use the word “genocide” to describe what happened to the Armenians in 1915?**

What the word “genocide” connotes is a systematic campaign of destruction. If you simply call the horrors of 1915 “crimes against humanity” or “atrocities,” it doesn’t fully convey just how methodical this campaign of slaughter and deportation really was. There are very few paradigmatic cases of genocide where you can really see either through the words of the perpetrators or through the policies undertaken in pursuit of the goal to annihilate a certain group—in this case, the Armenian community

in the Ottoman Empire. I think that’s why Armenians and other historians look at the record and can come to no other conclusion than this word “genocide” applies to this methodical campaign of destruction.

At the time the atrocities were being carried out, the perpetrators boasted about what it was they were trying to do: They were going to solve the Armenian problem by getting rid of the Armenians. In the aftermath of the atrocities of 1915, perpetrators were prosecuted for the crimes that they committed. Now, the word “genocide” did not exist then. It wouldn’t come into existence for another 25 years. But there was widespread knowledge that what had been attempted was a campaign of destruction, hence, genocide.

What is so tragic is that in the wake of the Armenian horrors and in the wake of the trials of Turkish perpetrators, a blanket of denial has smothered Turkey and there’s no willingness to acknowledge what was boasted about at the time.



## **2 What are some of the effects of genocide denial?**

I think denial is devastating both for the victims or descendents of victims on the one hand and for the descendents of perpetrator societies on the other. For victims or their family members, there just can’t be anything worse than living through the loss, the



obliteration of your livelihood, your home, and the systematic extermination of your family—extermination that is accompanied by the taunt of “no one will ever know,” “no one will ever remember,” “no one will ever believe you, even if you make it out of here, no one will believe you.”

Imagine what that would feel like. You survive and you live with those memories, you tell your truth, a truth you were told you would never get to tell, and then you’re told that your truth is inadequate or is subjective or is overly emotional and inaccurate.

The other community that I think denial has affected in a very harmful way is of course the community in whose name these horrors were committed. Turkish officials and citizens today had nothing to do with the acts that were perpetrated, with the forced marches, the executions and the hangings that took place in public squares. But because all that information is acquirable, because the genocide is manifestly knowable, they are complicit in denying a truth. As a result, they are asked to go back to their history and to scrutinize it carefully, they are thus asked to learn what there is to be learned about why the genocide was carried, and thus of course asked to incorporate lessons from that period.

The Turkish government is nowhere close today to committing atrocities of the scale that were carried out in 1915, but human rights is a big issue in Turkey and I think by kind of closing their ears and their eyes to what has gone on in the past and by spending such resources to ensure that this climate of denial persists, they’re really missing an opportunity to create more amicable ties with their neighbors. But they’re also missing an opportunity to understand their history and to apply the lessons so that those kinds of atrocities don’t ever get carried out again.

### **3 So, specifically in the Turkish case, how should one respond to denial? Do you debate history? How do you respond to denial?**

Denial is very hard to respond to. It’s almost like little kids who block their ears and say, “I’m not listening, I’m not listening.” It’s very hard to have a rational conversation because every set of facts that is presented in defense of the truth is met with a whole series of claims about the future threat posed by those Armenians to Turkish existence. You know, there’s an awful lot of extrapolation that is done in order to justify the deportations. So you end up having a very fruitless and very frustrating debate in which they say, “Well, yes, but the Armenians would have become a threat had they not been removed, had the problem not been solved.”

So what I have suggested to Armenian friends and colleagues is that the focus be on building a kind of

fortress of fact and truth that gets salient and gets picked up by communities other than the Turks of Turkey or the Turkish government or even the U.S government.

So if every scholar referred to the Armenian genocide as a precursor to the Holocaust, if in talking about the Holocaust they talked about the ways in which Hitler learned from what had been done by the Turks to the Armenians and made reference to that kind of community of perpetrators that really has existed throughout time, it would be an immensely effective way of building a record that no amount of Turkish government denial would be able to blot out.

When I wrote *A Problem from Hell* and included the Armenian genocide, I actually expected in city after city to have to defend the inclusion of that case—because I understood how much controversy there was about use of the term “genocide” and what amazed me was that the people who raised their hands were always either Turkish officials or individuals who had been sent out by the Turkish embassy in order to stack the meetings. Not even on one occasion did I have anybody who wasn’t affiliated in some way with the Turkish cause challenge the inclusion of the Armenian genocide among the major genocides of the 20th century.

That’s a sign that already Turkish deniers are becoming the equivalent—socially and culturally—of Holocaust deniers. Where you hear somebody raise their hand in the back of the room and say “the gas chambers didn’t exist” or “Hitler wasn’t intending to exterminate the Jews,” you know you look at them like they’ve lost their minds. You know that they’ve missed that History 101 course or that they have some kind of ulterior agenda. The very same is true now of people who deny the Armenian genocide. So you can argue that even though official recognition remains elusive for Armenians and that’s incredibly tragic for those who survived the genocide and who are now passing away, that they haven’t seen the Turkish government give them the recognition that they deserve on the other hand, through their efforts and the efforts of their descendants, there is now a historical record that shows that this genocide did occur and that it has rendered deniers the equivalent, almost, of Holocaust deniers. And I think strengthening that historical record, strengthening public awareness through film, through art, through literature, through course syllabi at universities and elementary, middle and high schools, is the way that this genocide is going to become official fact. And ultimately, the day will come when neither the Turks nor the American government is going to be able to deny it any longer.

### **4 Why do particular nations deny genocide and then why does Turkey deny the genocide? Is it about pride? Is it about not wanting**

to be labeled internationally as another Germany? Is it about the reparations and the issue of money?

Deniers in general have several ways of evading responsibility. One very characteristic response is “They started it,” “they rose up.” The “they,” of course, is a whole group that rose up, the implication is that any abuse that was carried out was in excess of what was ordered but it was very much in response to this sort of first-order sin which was the rebellion. And in the case of the Turks, that’s what they say about the Armenians. That the Armenians teamed up with the Russians, that Turkey was at war, and that it had to get rid of any traitors within their midst because of the security threat that was posed, the existential threat to Turkey as a country and to the lives of Ottoman citizens. So “they started it” is sort of recourse number one. The second recourse is uncontrolled elements. They say, “We as a state didn’t have any intention of harming Armenian civilians or citizens, but again once you get involved in counter-insurgency campaigns, bad things tend to happen. It’s really unfortunate, but name a war in which torture, the killing of civilians, the raping of women, hasn’t occurred.”

Denier communities, I think, deny for lots of good, sound, totally immoral but prudential reasons. Denier communities deny atrocities carried out not even by them but by their predecessors for prudential reasons and for emotional reasons. Prudentially, they really don’t want to have to deal with the claims of the descendants to this alleged genocide, they do not want to have to pay reparations for crimes, and more fundamentally, they don’t want the rights of return to be established, they don’t want to have to manage property claims.

Another factor is just plain old unwillingness to wrap your mind around atrocities carried out by people like you. I think it’s again the same factors that made Americans very unwilling to believe reports of torture in Guantanamo, in Bagram, in Afghanistan or in Abu Ghraib in Iraq. They’re the same factors you see at work when it comes to Turkish disbelief to this day that their kin could have rounded up civilians, executed them in public squares, and sent whole families out into the desert with no provision made for them, and that most Turks as a whole could have stood by while their neighbors were being systematically butchered. I think it’s really hard to wrap your mind around that and to admit the crime. Turkey is not alone in denying abuses carried out long ago. The difference is that the Armenian community has mobilized in a far more effective way than many other victim groups and survivor groups.

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# KOSOVO TODAY, KARABAKH TOMORROW?

By  
Tamar Shahabian

February 2008 was an important month in both the Balkans and the Caucasus. On February 17, Kosovo officially declared its independence from Serbia. Two days later, overshadowed by that news, Armenia held its presidential election, which was followed almost immediately by mass protests, street violence, political arrests and a nationally-declared state of emergency.



Kosovo's self-proclaimed independence has also incited its fair share of dramatic turmoil. Serbs throughout the Balkan region are angry and humiliated; and at the time of this writing, fewer than 40 countries out of 192 member states of the UN have formally recognized Kosovo's declaration – hardly a majority. Serbia, Russia and a handful of European countries have been outspoken about their belief that recognizing Kosovo's unilateral declaration of independence is tantamount to trouncing the international laws that govern matters of state sovereignty. They are worried about their own unhappy minorities getting ideas or gaining momentum for



separatist quests. There has been much talk about whether a 'Kosovo precedent' has been created and what implications that might have for self-determination movements the world over.

They are right to worry. The manner in which Kosovo became a state was a historical event and historical events set precedents, period. Moreover, secessionist states such as Nagorno-Karabakh, Abkhazia, Palestine, Somaliland, and Western Sahara have much more in common with Kosovo than the US or UN want us to believe. Like Kosovar Albanians, citizens of many aspiring states have suffered discrimination, pogroms and ethnic cleansing at the hands of their 'parent states.' They have responded by taking political measures to separate themselves from those national leaderships that failed to protect or include them; they have built democratic institutions of their own; and, over time, they have become functioning entities. After so many years of self-rule, it is not only unjust, but unrealistic to expect them to reintegrate into the states which forced their separation in the first place.

To be sure, the sheer amount of resources and attention that has been devoted to Kosovo by the international community cannot be rivalled by the other aspiring states; in this sense, Kosovo is unique. No other comparable movements have received the extent of



military, economic or political support enjoyed by the Kosovars. Political circumstances have been the determining factor in which self-determination movements become valid in the eyes of the international community. But the way *external* actors regard Kosovo is not the only thing that matters. The *internal* drive and passion of the Kosovar Albanians to be free to govern themselves and exercise the same right of self-determination that all 'peoples' are entitled to is the same drive and passion which motivates other such movements.

Indeed, the Albanians of Kosovo and the Armenians of Karabakh base their statehood aspirations on the same principle: the right of self-determination, which was first enshrined by the UN Charter in 1945 and reinforced in subsequent texts which still form the basis of international law on the issue of national territory. The fact that Kosovo's plight has received unequivocally more attention than Karabakh's does not change the fact that both movements are legitimate for the same reasons.

Still, the outcomes have played out differently as Kosovo has now achieved its goal of independence - to the credit of the US, most of Western Europe, and the UN rather than Priština (the capital of Kosovo), necessarily. In other words, Kosovo's self-proclaimed independence would not have mattered so much to anyone but the Serbs if it were not for the acceptance of that proclamation by other countries, including the world powers (with the notable exceptions of Russia and China). To use the words of New School University professor, Anna DiLellio, independence is not so much declared as recognized - meaning that a claim of independence is not legitimate unless or until others confirm the legitimacy of the claim.



Armenians are well aware of this political realism; Karabakh made its own declaration of independence in 1991 but still no country in the world has recognized it as a sovereign state. So how real is the claim? Isn't the essence of self-determination that peoples should be the determinants of their own fate? Why should the rest of the world disregard their voices? Why should we force them to be part of a state they want nothing to do with? Whose right is it to say that they, the very people inhabiting the land, should not have the final say in how that land is governed? Is that not what democracy means at its core?

Yes, it is, but only in principle. In the real world, states will choose whether to recognize Kosovo based on political considerations such as their own domestic state of affairs, positions of their allies, and economic matters. Nations will not base their policy towards Kosovo on principle, or even really consider whether the Albanians there have a just claim to independence. We live in a state-centric system; by definition, it is in the national interest

of countries to discourage and dismantle self-determination movements since they threaten to change the lines on the world map from which states derive their authority.

Thus, the outcome of the Kosovo situation is the exception and not the rule. In principle, it is a precedent, but in practice, it may be an anomaly.

So what then is the relevance of Kosovo to Karabakh? My only answer is this: the exceptional international attention that has been and will continue to be devoted to Kosovo's independence may be able to serve as a starting point for launching a more widespread dialogue on the issue of national self-determination. If nothing else, perhaps the simple fact that a decisive outcome to the Kosovo situation has finally been reached will give hope to other peoples in similar situations that the deadlock need not last forever.

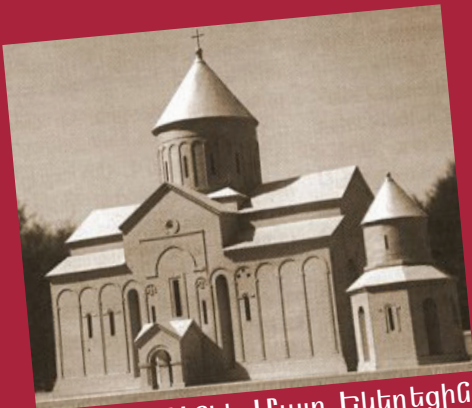
Պատմական Հայաստանի նշանավոր քաղաքի՝ Անիի կործանումը սկսաւ 14-րդ դարուն երբ Մոնկոլները արեւելքէն գրաւեցին զայն ու գրաւումը Անիի պատճառ դարձաւ որ կարելոր առեւտուրի կեդրոն ըլլալէ դադրի: 1579 թուին Օսմանեան կայսրութեան ենթակայ կը դառնայ: Վերջին հարուածը կը ստանայ երբ Քիւրտերու արշաւանքները կը կոտորեն ու կը թալանեն քաղաքը ստիպելով որ Անին 19-րդ դարու սկիզբին արդէն հայերէ զուրկ մնայ:

Յեղասպանութենէն ետք, Թուրքերու յանձնարարութեամբ, մշակութային ջարդ մը սկսաւ ջնջելու ոեւէ հայու դէպք: Բնականաբար, որոշ բնութեան պատճառաւ աղէտներէ, ըլլայ երկրաշարժ կամ մորիկ, տկար դիրքի շինութիւնները կը կոտորէ, որը հասկնալի է: Սակայն, այս շինութիւններու անկումը որուն պատճառներն են մասնաւոր բարբարոսական եւ «կործանումէ փրկելու» արարքներ, անընդունելի են: 1990-էն ի վեր, յատուկ ազգի գոյատեւման մաքրագործումները ուղղուած են հայկական հնօրեայ գերեզմաններու, եկեղեցիներու, վանքերու, բերդերու եւայլն մինչեւ նաեւ այս պատերու իւրաքանչիւր քարերու իւրաքանչիւր գծագրական տեղեկութիւններու: Ամէն ջանք կը թափուի որպէսզի հայ ժողովուրդի մշակոյթի եւ ինքնութեան կոթողները անհետանան:

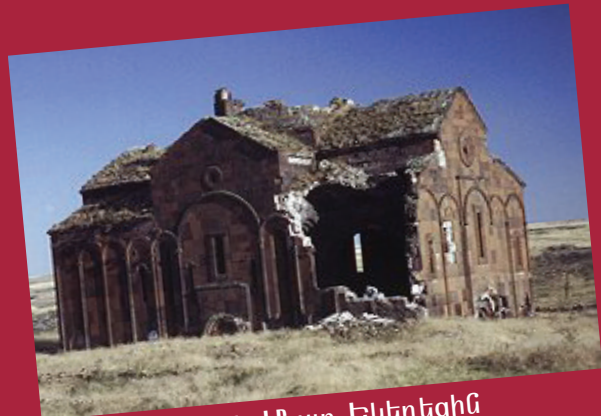
Անհրաժեշտ է նաեւ այս նիւթերն ալ որոշ չափով մաս կազմեն մեր առօրեայ կեանքերու ընթացքին, թէկուզ հազարաւոր մղոն հեռու կը գտնուինք, որովհետեւ անոնք կարելոր մասնիկներ կը պարունակեն մեր Հայացի գոյութեան:

- Սարո Հարուն

## Անիի Մայր Եկեղեցի



Հնօրեայ Անիի Մայր Եկեղեցին



Ներկայի Անիի Մայր Եկեղեցին



Տեղական Գծագրութիւն  
(Թորոս Թորամանեան)



Ներկայի Անիի Մայր Եկեղեցին



# Գագիկ Թագաւորի Սուրբ Գրիգոր Եկեղեցի



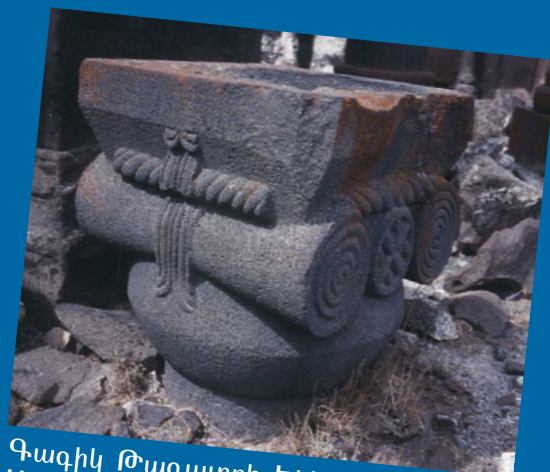
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Վերագծագրուած



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Հաճեցէք Այցելել



# Թուրքերը եւ Մենք

Ինչպիսի տարի անցած է Ծափան Նաթալի-ի «Թուրքերը եւ Մենք» գրութեան հրատարակութիւնէն բայց միայն վերջերս օրինակ մը ձեռքս անցաւ: Ներկայիս անգլերէն թարգմանութիւնը առանց դժուարութեամբ կը գտնուի իսկ նախատիպարը գրեթէ անգտանելի է: Օրինակս 1992-ին տպուած է Հայաստանի մէջ եւ Հայկական Ժողովրդային Ծարժումի հրատարակութեամբ: Ինչպէս այն օրերուն՝ այսօր Հայաստանը մտահոգիչ կացութեան մատնուած է: Վերջին նախագահական ընտրութեան արդիւնքէն բռնկուած իշխանափոխութեան ցուցերն ու յաջորդող քաղաքական լարուածութիւնը ժողովուրդին երկփեղկման կը սպառնայ: Սակայն աւելի վտանգաւոր պէտք է համարել սահմանակից Ազրպէյճանի նենգամիտ ուշադրութիւնը եւ Հայաստանի ներքին իրավիճակը չարաշահելու անոր պատրաստակամութիւնը: Փոխադարձ հրացանացութիւնը Արցախի սահմանին վրայ հագուագիւտ երեւոյթ չէ, բայց Մարտի սկիզբին տեղի ունեցած կոիւները անսովոր էին իրենց մակարդակով: Այժմ Արցախի հարցի խաղաղ լուծման կարելիութիւնը պակասած է եւ Ազրպէյճանի վարուելակերպը հետզհետէ աւելի յարձակողական կը դառնայ: Ինչպէ՞ս պատասխանել այս եւ տարածաշրջանէն բուսող մեզի անհանգստացնող հարցերուն: Պէտք է հարցերուն ծագումը փնտռել:

Երկիրներու միջեւ հարց կը ստեղծուի ընդհանրապէս տնտեսական, ռազմական կամ քաղաքական շահերու խաչաձեւումներէ: Վատագոյն պարագային այդ հարցերը պատերազմով կը լուծուին: Մեր պարագային նոյնիսկ պատերազմը օգուտ չունի: Աւելին՝ կարծ էս թէ մեր հարցերը Թուրքիոյ եւ Ազրպէյճանի հետ՝ բազմակողմանի են եւ ոչ միայն տնտեսական կամ ռազմական: Ի՞նչն է որ երկիրներու միջեւ կրնայ ճակատում ստեղծել ամէն գետնի վրայ: Նաթալի պատասխան կու տայ, «Թուրքիզմը, մեզի համար, կը նշանակէ Անատոլիոյ միացումը Ազրպէյճանի հետի Հայաստանի դիակին վրայով»: Ահա թէ ուրկէ, գէթ իմ կարծիքով, կը ծագի այս բոլորը:

Անշուշտ Թուրքիզմը (Pan-Turkism) նոր գաղափարախօսութիւն չէ եւ պէտք է ընդունիլ որ ցարդ Թուրքերուն լաւ ծառայած է: Ծառայած է ոչ միայն Համաշխարհային Առաջին պատերազմին բայց նաեւ Համայնավարներու միջոցաւ՝ երբ Նախիջեւանն ու Արցախը Ազրպէյճանին նուիրուեցաւ: Անոր խոչընդոտը միշտ Հայաստանն եղած է եւ թիրախը պիտի մնայ մինչեւ յաջողի՞ն զայն անհետացնել: Նաթալի այս կէտը հասկցած էր եւ փորձեց իր ժամանակակիցներուն համոզել: Իր թելադրանքները տեղին են նաեւ այսօր: Ան կը հաւատար որ, «ապրելու համար հալը պէտք է քալէ ապրողներուն հետ», այսինքն վարուիլ այնպէս ինչպէս ուրիշներ կը վարուին մեր հետ, այլապէս մահուան դատապարտուած ենք: Օրինակի համար Ազերիները Նախիջեւանը պարպեցին հայերէ եւ կ'աշխատին քանդել ամէն բան որ այդ հողը կը կապէ իր իսկական տիրոջ՝ հային: Ըստ Նաթալի-ին այդ տեսակի հակահայ արարքները փոխադարձ եւ առնուազն հաւասար հարուածի արժանի են: Դժբախտաբար այդ տարածաշրջանի բոլոր հնութիւնները հայերուն կը պատկանին ուրեմն հաւասար հարուած չկայ: Ամենայնդէպս մեր պատասխանը նոյնքան խիստ պէտք է ըլլայ եթէ կ'ուզենք որ մեր թշնամիները հասկնան թէ իրենց քայլերը անպատասխան չեն մնար: Ըստ Նաթալի-ին միայն այդպէս պիտի կրնանք մեր գոյութիւնը երաշխաւորել: Թերեւս շատերը համաձայն չեն եւ ծայրայեղ թուի այս մտածելակերպը: Բայց պէտք է յիշել որ մեր հակարակորդներուն քով այս տեսակի մտայնութիւնը սովորական է:

Տրամաբանական է որ Նաթալի իր խօսքերը չուղղեց քսանմէկերորդ դարու սփիւքահային: Եթէ ուղղեր կ'ենթադրեմ որ իր խրատը կ'ըլլար Հայաստանի շահերը եւ Հայ Դատը յառաջացնող դիրքերէն երբեք չի նահանջիլ: Մեծ Եղեռնի հատուցման պահանջատիրութիւնը այդ նպատակակէտին կը յարմարի անտարակոյս ինչպէս նաեւ հայկական մշակոյթի եւ լեզուի զարգացումը: Իմ կարծիքով «Թուրքերը եւ Մենք» գրքոյկի տպագրման վերսկսումը նոյնիսկ կ'իյնայ այդ նկարագրութեան տակ:

-Ռազմիկ Հարուն

# ANCA ADVOCACY DAYS IN DC: ACTIVISTS CONVERGE ON CAPITAL HILL

By Shant Hagopian



As far as good years for Armenian-American activists go, 2007 was a good year. But not just for the obvious reasons. Yes, the Armenian Genocide Resolution passed through the House Foreign Affairs Committee and we were all looking forward for a swift House vote in 2008 but it was not the only success for Armenian-Americans. 2007 saw the withdrawal of the ambassadorial nomination of Dick Hoagland, a major statement to the White House and the State Department regarding moral integrity of the next Ambassador to our beloved homeland.

Furthermore, Armenia enjoyed the benefits of the Millennium Challenge Fund and received a generous amount of aid. These important battles that were won, in the most part, do to the credit of Armenian American grass roots organizations and activists.

I was able to witness this activism first hand in the

battlefield (Washington DC) when the Armenian National Committee of America (ANCA) came together with the Genocide Intervention Network (Gi-Net) to hold the second annual advocacy days from March 12- 14. The three day program, entitled "End the Cycle of Genocide" brought together men and women of all ages from across the nation.



Students, young professionals and concerned citizens came to Washington DC to directly contact Congress to rally support in favor of House Resolution 106, but also to garner support for legislative initiatives to stop the genocide in Darfur. Over 100 participants of the event included many AYF members who came to support the efforts of the ANC

and also to channel their passion to end Turkey's campaign of genocide denial. The event, lasting three days, left an impression and opened doors to a whole new world of opportunities for young Armenians to help our cause.

I've seen time and time again the false belief that there are limited outlets for young Armenians to help our homeland and to help restore a sense of justice for the Armenian Genocide. Through direct actions, such as those undertaken by the ANC, we can see the 21<sup>st</sup> century battlefield is in the halls of Congress as well as in the legislative assemblies of every city and state nationwide.

Participation in advocacy days demonstrates there are many levels of ways for young Armenians can participate, and actually come away with real results and a sense of accomplishment. It is up to each individual to decide whether they want to take their enthusiasm to the next level and how their passions can be directed towards real results.

# TURKEY AND SUDAN:

By Serouj Aprahamian

While other countries in the world have criticized and increasingly distanced themselves from the Sudanese regime and its atrocities in Darfur, the Turkish government has been going out of its way to forge ever-closer ties with its genocidal apprentice in Khartoum. This past January, Turkey's president, Abdullah Gul, hosted an extravagant three-day visit for Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir. This was the second such official trip from Sudan to Turkey at the presidential level. During his stay, Bashir was treated to an exclusive state dinner at the Turkish presidential palace, met with several top level officials, and attended a Turkish-Sudanese business meeting held by the Turkish Foreign Economic Relations Board (DEIK) in Istanbul.

This latest trip is only the most recent manifestation of a Turkish affinity for Sudan that has been steadily growing in line with an escalation of violence in Darfur since 2003.

As has been well documented, the Darfur region of Sudan has been subject to a systematic campaign of murder, looting, rape and pillaging, carried out mainly by a government-sponsored militia known as the *Janjaweed*. According to international human rights groups, this campaign has already resulted in the deaths of over 400,000 people and the displacement of 2.5 million from their homes, in what the United States has officially described as genocide.

While the rest of the world has marginalized Sudan and called for an

end to its crimes in Darfur, the Turkish government has proceeded to turn this country into its largest trading partner in Africa. The volume of trade between Ankara and Khartoum shot up from \$48 million in 2002 to \$220 million in 2006—an increase that took place during the same period when Sudan was intensifying its killings in Darfur. Turkey hopes to develop these trade links even further in the future, with one of the stated goals of the above-mentioned DEIK meeting being to boost levels of trade to \$1 billion.

As a country that has been outcast in the international community,

Ministry is currently looking into supplying Sudan's deadly demand for weapons.

Perhaps it should come as no surprise that the country responsible for the first genocide of the twentieth century has no qualms about building a strong strategic relationship with the country now carrying out the first genocide of the twenty-first century. Indeed, not only is Turkey rewarding Sudan for its inhumanity by filling up its coffers and helping it access markets in Europe, but we also see it actively taking part in Khartoum's shameless campaign of genocide denial.

In a January 20 interview, prior to al-Bashir's visit to Turkey, President Gul told the Sudan News Agency that Turkey is in "solidarity" with Sudan and warned against any "foreign intervention" over Darfur aimed at breaking "the unity of Sudan." He later dismissed calls for putting pressure on al-Bashir to end the atrocities in Darfur by claiming what is happening there is a "humanitarian tragedy" that "stems from poverty and environmental conditions." Gul's colleague Prime

Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan, also joined in on the denial when he stated in March 2007, "I do not believe that there has been assimilation of a genocide in Darfur. In any case, the verses of the Koran reject tribalism and clans."

In fact, when one takes a close look at Sudan's method of genocide and its subsequent denial, we see that they are doing nothing more than taking a page out of Turkey's playbook (see Chart A for Sudan's almost word for word use of Ankara's genocide denial



**Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir meeting with Turkish President Abdullah Gul, January 22, 2008.**

especially in the West, Sudan very much values Turkey as an economic and political partner. As al-Bashir stated during his remarks at the DEIK meeting, "Sudanese businessmen do not only want to emerge in the Turkish market, but also to use it as a passage to European and other international markets." In turn, Turkey hopes to benefit economically from Sudan's potential in sectors such as oil, cotton, industry, and services. There have also been reports that the Turkish Defense



# A GENOCIDAL TANDEM

techniques). The fact that Turkey committed genocide and remains unpunished for so long has surely emboldened the regime in Khartoum to carry out similar policies in Darfur without fear of serious retribution. Like Hitler, al-Bashir must be thinking to himself, “Who, after all, speaks today of the annihilation of the Armenians?”

Indeed, Sudanese officials have repeatedly stated their lauding admiration for Turkey as “a model for Sudan” and desire to “want to benefit from Turkey’s experiences.” They have also sought to market themselves to the world in an identical manner, with Sudan describing itself as a “bridge between Arabic and African nations,” much like Ankara claims itself to be a bridge between Europe and Asia.

Thus, it is clear that the Sudanese regime is trying to follow in Turkey’s footsteps. This adds further proof to the fact that giving in to the Turkish denial machine makes the world a more dangerous place. As long as Turkey does not own up to the crimes it has committed (and is aided in this process by officials in the US), it will continue to serve as a model for governments such as that of Khartoum who seek to get away with slaughtering an entire group of people.

In the words of Mark Hanis, founder and director of the Genocide Intervention Network, “Increased cooperation between the two countries [Turkey and Sudan] serves to highlight the connections between genocides of the past and those of the present . . . The continued denial of the Armenian Genocide sends the wrong message to Sudan and those who would commit genocide in the future.”

If we want to stop the cycle of genocide today and prevent future atrocities, we have to start by speaking truthfully about the genocides of the past. In this way, recognizing the Armenian Genocide is not a historical issue but, rather, a very current one with real world consequences for peace today.

## Comparative Genocide Denial

### TURKEY

### SUDAN

#### “Our culture does not allow genocide”

Recep Tayyip Erdogan (National Press Club, 11/5/07): “In fact, our values do not allow our people to commit genocide. It does not allow it and there is no such thing as a genocide.”

Omar al-Bashir (MSNBC Interview with Ann Curry, 3/19/07): “Villages were burned, and people were killed, but it is not in the Sudanese culture or people of Darfur to rape. It doesn’t exist. We don’t have it.”

#### “The victims rebelled/foreign powers are to blame”

Recep Tayyip Erdogan (National Press Club, 11/5/07): “This was about the time when there was rebellion in different parts of the empire. But given the context of the time and the events that took place at that time, there was provocation by some other countries and the Armenians became part of the rebellion in those years.”

Omar al-Bashir (Asharq Alawsat Interview, 2/17/07): “There is a rebellion problem in Darfur, and it is the duty of a government in any state to fight the rebellion. When war takes place, civilian victims fall, and this has been exaggerated.”

Omar al-Bashir (Reuters, 1/22/08): “The people who really commit murders in Darfur are receiving help from Europe and others.”

#### “It’s deportation and war, not genocide”

Recep Tayyip Erdogan (National Press Club, 11/5/07): “I’ll tell you something now. There is no [Armenian] genocide here. What took place was called deportation. Because that was a very difficult time. It was the time of war, in 1915.”

Omar al-Bashir (MSNBC Interview with Ann Curry, 3/19/07): “The geographic displacement of people that took place in Darfur is due to the fight in Darfur. The citizen has to move out of the fighting areas to a place of security, seeking peace and security. . . yes, people were killed but not as much - it’s a war!

# STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS HOLD PANEL DISCUSSION ON GENOCIDE DENIAL

*By Alene Tchekmedyan*

**LOS ANGELES** – On March 6, the ARF Shant Student Association and the UCLA Armenian Graduate Student Association (AGSA) hosted a panel discussion to examine genocide denial from the points of view of nations that share a common history. Held at the UCLA campus, the event, titled “Facing Denial: the Last Stage of Genocide,” featured two Armenian and two Jewish speakers, who compared and contrasted methods of handling and coping with genocide denial. “The main purpose was to examine the denial of genocide as being the final stage of genocide,” said Levon Baronian, chairman of the Shant Student Association. “We wanted to draw similarities and differences between the denial of the Armenian Genocide and the Jewish Holocaust and also

examine why the repercussions or response to these denials have been different,” he added. The panel comprised Professor Richard Hovannisian, Chair in Modern Armenian History at UCLA; Dr. David Meyers, director of UCLA’s Center for Jewish studies; Aram Hamparian, executive director of the Armenian National Committee of America; and Joey Kurtzman, executive editor of the progressive Jewish website, jewcy.com. Catering to a younger demographic, the panel discussion sought to draw attention to the importance of persistence and consistent activism against genocide denial. “This event is immensely important because not only will it further our education about current and historical genocides, but it also serves as a good reminder about our community and our efforts to continue to proactively advocate our issues,” said Raffi Kassabian, president of the AGSA. Moderated by Glendale City Clerk Ardashes Kassakhian, the panel addressed a wide range of issues including the importance of the current campaign against the genocide in Darfur as a catalyst for recognition of past genocides. Hamparian said he considers the fact that Darfur has become a US presidential-campaign issue as a healthy development. “It is part of what [journalist and former Barack Obama adviser] Samantha Power described as the growth of an antigencide constituency in America, which is very important because historically the opposition to genocide is a moral opposition, but now we have force of politics and force of voters,” Hamparian said. Along with drawing parallels between past and present genocides, panelists also delved into the reasons behind denial and why it is crucial that activists continue the fight for recognition. Hamparian listed four reasons why Armenians should support ongoing genociderecognition efforts: morality, prevention, deterrence, and rehabilitation. The juxtaposition of these four points raises a moral obligation



*UCLA Professor Richard Hovannisian and ARF Shant Student Association member Levon Baronian*

among Armenians to continue the campaign to prevent future atrocities, Hamparian said. “[Armenians] bear a special burden, having seen the depths of human suffering,” he explained. “Genocide followed up by a powerful campaign of denial, a genocide committed with impunity, makes the world a more dangerous place,” Hamparian continued. “Once we can get to the day where Turkey has ended its denials, we can talk about the modern consequences of that crime. Certainly, we



have worn the burden of that crime; it comes with population loss, the border is compromised in terms of the trade routes, agriculture, and resources. Once Turkey ends the denial, we can open up about what is owed to the victims.” Meyers pointed out that ongoing denial prevents wounded nations from moving forward to constructive activities. “If we don’t name criminal acts, we are somehow paralyzed from preventing it... it is not just international law that’s important, it’s our own sense of moral responsibility,” he said. “As descendants of those who suffered, we have a particular obligation to not just trumpet our own victimization but to call attention to examples of genocide or ethnic cleansing, wherever they occur.” Hovannisian discussed the strategic forms of Turkish denial, which have made their arguments more credible, as Turks no longer practice absolute denial. “They use what is much more effective,” he said. “We have professors in main universities in the United States who are

central to the [Turkish] thesis and they do not absolutely deny,” he said, explaining that these scholars admit the deaths occurred but rationalize them by claiming that they were justified. Hovannisian also urged the audience to remain optimistic. “There is hope because, on the other hand, we have the Turkish scholars who are challenging the state narrative and are much more effective in combating Turkish denial,” he said. When an audience member asked why Armenians are so adamant about achieving recognition in America, Hamparian alluded to the United States Convention on Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. “Americans and the international community believe that genocide should be punished and that the victims should not be the only ones that bear the consequences of the crime,” he said. “Those who committed the crimes should bear consequences as well. That’s a basic requirement of justice.” Hovannisian also said that the panel discussion reflects the importance of collaboration between the



Armenian and Jewish communities to achieve justice. “Without our Jewish scholars or Jewish colleagues... we would be way back in the dark ages,” he

noted. “They opened the doors for us; they have brought us forward.” Hovannisian added that Armenian-Genocide denial stems from one overbearing source in Turkey. “If you are able to shut down the denial from Ankara, all of the other fires that have been lit will immediately extinguish themselves,” he said.

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# THE BURDEN OF PRIVILEGE

By Vrej Haroutounian

In March of last year, I found myself in Armenia, walking to the AYF central office in Yerevan. There was a light snow coming down, the streets were filled with mud, and there were potholes everywhere. As I walked down those streets, I could not help but compare my experience in Hayastan to the life I had in the States. I thought, “Man, I have it nice back home: A nice house, new car, and . . . hot water.” Being in Armenia, I realized just how much we take things for granted in the States, things which are actually luxuries in Armenia.

For instance, that morning I had waited for forty-five minutes in order for the water heater to turn on so I could take a hot shower. After the wait my choice for water was simply hot or cold, there was no in-between. A few more comparisons of this sort crossed my mind as I got closer to the office.

Finally, I walked in to find a young man sitting there reading a book. He asked me whom I was there to see and showed me the way to his office. As I walked into the building my friend greeted me and we immediately started talking about the upcoming ARF rallies that were to take place later on that day. We waited for a few minutes before our fellow youth steadily began showing up at the office. We all quickly mobilized and headed off to a political gathering that was taking place in one of the regions of Yerevan.

It was great seeing all of these young people climbing into the vans with their Armenian and ARF flags ready to go. It was especially impressive because it was not taking place on a Saturday or Sunday—it was Monday afternoon.

When we got to the rally, everyone went off to do his or her job. Some people set up the stage, others waived the flags, and others listened while the ARF candidates spoke. As I stood there I could not help but feel a sense of humbleness. My fellow Armenians humbled me, as they were doing what

some of us do back in the States, but in their own homeland with much fewer resources to work with.

At the end, when the speeches ended and some folk dancers took to the stage, I remember looking around at the crowd, thinking how our people are a proud people, yet their state was not what it should be. The streets were filled with mud, everyone was dressed in gray and black, and the building weighed down upon the square. But, just then, I saw something that gave me hope. Behind the dancers on stage, there was the statue of Soghomon Tehlerian and there with it stood the spirit I am confident will lead to a brighter future.

On the drive back, all I could think of were the excuses. The excuses that we all have, the excuses that we all make about having work, having school, concentrating on our futures. The millions of excuses that we have given and, at times, heard; if not to someone else, then to ourselves. The end realization was that we in the US living in an abundance of “privilege.” Every one of us has a home, which, even if it may not be a mansion, still has running hot water every morning. Every one of us has a car and not once have any of us had to walk through a muddy street in order to get to school.

At the same time, every one of us has a burden: a “burden of privilege.” This is a burden that a person trying to survive does not have. We are privileged enough to have the financial means to attend universities and, as such, a special burden to use our skills

to work for the survival and future of the Armenian people. We have the privilege of being citizens of a country where we are not persecuted for calling for the recognition of the Armenian Genocide, and it is our burden to work towards that recognition.

I can go on listing a million other privileges that I have discovered to have for myself, and I am sure you can find many more that you have. But recognizing your luxuries and privileges is not what is important. The real question is, what are you willing to do with the burden that comes with your privilege?



*Vrej Haroutounian visiting Armenia in the Spring of last year.*

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