

REDUCTIO AD ABSURDUM

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August 8, 2016

As comment to an April 2016 article in "National Geographic Deutschland (Germany)" about the hidden Armenians of Western Armenia and the Armenian Genocide, Ludér Tavit Sahagian of Berlin submitted the below letter to the magazine:

Facing the Darkest Shadows

Dear Editor:



My gratitude for Paul Salopek's heartrending narrative on the open wounds and sacrifice of those indigenous Armenians trying to endure in their still-occupied lands in the cradle of civilization (*National Geographic*, "Ghostlands", April 2016).

I do, however, take issue with his periodic use of inappropriate, euphemistic language and citations to describe the first major and only unrepented genocide in modern history along with his mistaken assertion on the question of memory: "Never forget. But of course we do. Eventually we always forget."

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to describe the first major and only unrepented genocide in modern history along with his mistaken assertion on the question of memory: "Never forget. But of course we do. Eventually we always forget."

Armenians will never – and cannot – forget the tremendous pain inflicted by the sudden loss in 1915-1923 of two-thirds of their global population and the bulk of their homeland of several millennia.

When my American-born grandfather met with dispossessed Armenian survivors and even Kurdish municipal leaders in Diyarbakir (Dikranagerd) in 2009, he was privileged to contribute some funds towards the restoration of the 650-year-old Saint Giragos Cathedral, one of the largest and most significant churches in the greater region. He had not forgotten that his mother had been baptized in that very structure a century earlier and upon hearing news of its recent shelling and re-expropriation by Turkish authorities a century later, he confidently replied: "We will restore the church again. We will not forget."

It is the same determination that *National Geographic* itself has displayed many times since its July 1918 issue on the Armenian Genocide to remind the world in its intrepid way that we will not – and cannot – forget.

Sincerely,
Ludér Tavit Sahagian
Berlin

Four months later, when the magazine published Sahagian's comment in its August issue, the letter had amazingly shrank to the below few lines, which are a deplorable representation of the original letter:

Out of Eden Walk (5)

Ghostlands

April 2016

Armenians will never forget the terrible pain that they suffered through the loss of large parts of their population between 1915 and 1923. My U.S.-born Armenian grandfather financially contributed in 2009 to the reconstruction of the 650-year-old Saint Giragos Cathedral in Diyarbakir, one of the largest and most significant churches in the East of Turkey. His mother had been baptized there a 100 years earlier.

Ludér Tavit Sahagian
Berlin

Both letters were translated into English by the letter's author.



