The Cost of Memorializing: Analyzing Armenian Genocide Memorials and Commemorations in the Republic of Armenia and in the Diaspora

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Abstract

In April of 1965 thousands of Armenians gathered in Yerevan and Los Angeles, demanding global recognition of and remembrance for the Armenian Genocide after fifty years of silence. Since then, over 200 memorials have been built around the world commemorating the victims of the Genocide and have been the centre of hundreds of marches, vigils and commemorative events. This article analyzes the visual forms and semiotic natures of three Armenian Genocide memorials in Armenia, France and the United States and the commemoration practices that surround them to compare and contrast how the Genocide is being memorialized in different Armenian communities. In doing so, this article questions the long-term effects commemorations have on an overall transnational Armenian community. Ultimately, it appears that calls for Armenian Genocide recognition unwittingly categorize the global Armenian community as eternal victims, impeding the development of both the Republic of Armenia and the Armenian diaspora.

Keywords: Armenian Genocide, commemoration, cultural heritage, diaspora, identity, memorials

Introduction

On 24 April 2015, the hundredth anniversary of the commencement of the Armenian Genocide, Armenians around the world collectively mourned for and remembered their ancestors who had lost their lives in the massacres and deportations of 1915.¹ These commemorations took place in many forms, including marches, candlelight vigils, ceremonial speeches and cultural performances. The worldwide permanence of these events, and the international media coverage it procured, is in large part attributed to the transnational Armenian diasporic community; a community that was drastically remodelled by the early twentieth century, Young Turk promulgated deportations and killings of an estimated 800,000 to 1.5 million Ottoman Armenians.² However, despite the century-long passage since the Genocide, denial still permeates in official Turkish rhetoric while the majority of the world's nations officially do not recognize the great catastrophe of the Ottoman Armenians as 'genocide'. Thus, memorialization practices in worldwide Armenian communities often coincide with calls for international recognition. This combination of memorialization strategies with recognition endeavours precipitates a critical analysis of the socio-political impact Armenian Genocide commemorations have on a global Armenian community.

Studies of traumatic pasts and their intersection with identity-building strategies like the building of memorials and monuments constitutes a major theme in the field of heritage studies,³ but rarely has the field been applied to cases affecting ethnic communities connected to the South Caucasus. While literature in Armenian Studies is replete with research concerning the significance of the Armenian Genocide for diasporic and homeland populations⁴ and the socio-political tensions that exist between the diaspora and homeland,⁵ no comparative studies address the material heritage that is produced, modified and often shared between these two groups. More specifically there have been no studies in either discipline that have taken into consideration the impact Armenian Genocide memorialization has had on the advancement of a transnational Armenian community.

With over seven million Armenians in the diaspora, and over three million Armenians in the nation proper, it is unsurprising that the history of Armenians as a people has always been heavily dominated by a diasporic community, which from the eleventh century (a period which

witnessed the demise of the last Armenian Kingdom that in part encompassed present-day Armenian territory) to the Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic (SSR) shaped Armenian national identity and nationalism when no Armenian state existed.⁶ Yet, following the creation of the Armenian SSR, decades passed in which the diaspora felt marginalized and distanced from Armenian identity-building initiatives, processes they were so intimately involved with in previous centuries.

However, starting in the 1960s, fifty years after the commencement of the Armenian Genocide, memorialization and recognition strategies appeared to create a bridge between the groups. While Genocide memorialization had (and continues to have) different iterations and meanings for diasporic and homeland populations, as most Armenians in the Armenian SSR had not been directly affected by the Genocide, it transformed into a critical part of Armenian identity-building initiatives particularly for the diaspora who were searching for a rejuvenated way to get involved with nation-building strategies. Yet in the over fifty years of memorialization, little scholarly research has emerged addressing *how* memorialization affects a transnational Armenian community.

I seek to analyze commemoration practices through a focus on the visual forms of Genocide memorials, their semiotic natures and the rituals that happen around them. I intend to create a framework in which to understand Armenian Genocide ‘memory complexes’, or assemblages of practices, emotional affects and physical things in the present that have relations to specific memories of the past.⁷ With over two hundred Armenian Genocide memorials in thirty-two countries, often the centre of hundreds of commemoration events occurring every 24 April (the official day of commemoration), tangible memorials prove to be critical components of Genocide memory complexes and constitute an arena in which to study the transformative effects of Genocide memorialization strategies.⁸

I will primarily look at three Armenian Genocide memorials in Yerevan (Armenia), Paris (France) and Montebello (California) as a means to understand the variations in memorialization that occur worldwide. I have chosen to situate the Genocide memorial in Armenia against memorials in the diaspora, to compare, contrast and connect commemoration activities between homeland Armenians and the diaspora, two groups that have been negotiating a tenuous relationship since the Soviet era. While diasporic communities are spread throughout the

world, I have decided to focus on commemoration practices and memorials in the United States and France as they have some of the largest Armenian populations outside of the Armenian nation, ranking in at around one million and 300,000 respectively. They also constitute two diasporic communities that have focused the most substantial time, energy and resources on raising Genocide recognition.⁹ Through the use of visual, semiotic and textual analysis of Genocide memorials in addition to years of ethnographic fieldwork experience in Armenia and amongst the diaspora, which have included interviews and participant observations, I will analyze the potent role of memorial heritage on Armenian collective identity.

I claim that while the histories and experiences of diasporic communities in the United States and France may differ not only amongst themselves but also against the experiences of populations in Armenia proper, causing them to execute slightly differing forms of ‘past-presencing’, or unconscious and conceptual relationships with the past,¹⁰ the commemorative memories and visualizations employed at each site unintentionally imbricate the global Armenian population in an inhibitive cycle. This cycle, produced in large part through Armenian Genocide memory complexes which often promote Armenian identity as intimately associated with suffering and survival, victimizes and ultimately hinders the socio-economic advancement of both Armenian diasporic and homeland populations.

United but Divided: Understanding the Armenian Diaspora

While Genocide memorialization arose in the 1960s in the Armenia SSR, in lands unaffected by the Genocide, past-presencing of the traumatic events has since been primarily shaped and transformed by the diaspora, many of whom are descendants of Genocide survivors. In describing this transformation, it is essential to both understand the emergence of the Armenian diaspora and its historic relations to the population in the Republic of Armenia, in an attempt to apprehend how memorialization came about and what its subsequent effects were on a transnational Armenian community.

The study of diaspora emerged in 1960s scholarship associated with the Jewish experience in World War II. The term ‘diaspora’ originally

demarcated a 'segment of people living outside the homeland'.¹¹ In the past decade, the field of diaspora studies, influenced by theories of globalization, has conceptualized the notion of diaspora less as a term representing deterritorialized, segmented entities with little cohesion, and more as a concept that has powerful, interconnected potentialities in a transnational era.¹² While transnationalism encourages cross-border processes and interactions, challenging embedment in a singular place, social scientist Robin Cohen warns not to disregard the importance of home.¹³ Diasporic communities have simultaneous social ties to their home country, to their host nation (where they presently reside) and to their counterpart diasporic communities around the globe.¹⁴ Because of these multiple and differing levels of attachment to several places and peoples, each diasporic group must negotiate the particularities of their existence in their host nation against the qualities of belonging to a larger, imagined homeland community. Furthermore, since diaspora that share a common national or ethnic origin do not exist only in one localized area, they must be conceptualized as a heterogeneous, rather than homogenous community.

Diasporas are borderless yet organized and imagined communities that reproduce a subjectivity of belonging through institutional and collective practices, a process that Khachig Tölölyan terms 'stateless power'.¹⁵ Leadership elites negotiate stateless power, and through institutional or political postings, shape diasporic commitments to the homeland and to their hostlands.¹⁶ While these leadership elites attempt productively to represent their respective diasporic communities, they sometimes champion initiatives and ideals that are prohibitive to the advancement of the homeland, the diaspora or both.¹⁷ The Armenian diaspora, in appropriating Genocide recognition ceremonies and initiatives as a form of stateless power, exhibits the complexities in maintaining transnational agendas and identities.

The Armenian diaspora has a long history that has been characterized and affected by integration into multiple hostlands, variegated political ideologies and differing idealizations of 'Armenianness' and 'homeland'. Many scholars accept that between the 1045 AD collapse of the Armenian Bagratuni Kingdom, the last Armenian dynasty to encompass present-day Armenian territory, and the rise of the First Republic of Armenia in 1918, all Armenians could have been considered diaspora as they often lacked a concrete polity and territory.¹⁸

The late nineteenth century marked a new era for the Armenian diaspora, when pockets of Armenian intellectuals in Moscow, Tiflis (now Tbilisi), and the Middle East began to mobilize around creating and sustaining Armenian national aspirations, in an attempt to rally around the idea of reclaiming a historic 'homeland' and to strengthen connections between far reaching diasporic groups. Out of this political fervour, the emergence of three dominant Armenian political parties in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries spurred the creation of the first Armenian Republic in 1918, headed by the Armenian Revolutionary Federation (*Dashnaks*), which only after two years seceded to the Red Army. However, the new Soviet leadership exiled the *Dashnaks*, who continued to thrive in diasporic enclaves outside the Armenian SSR, espousing an anti-Soviet rhetoric and championing for a once again independent Armenia, free of outside rulership.¹⁹ This rift automatically created a distancing between those who lived in the Armenian SSR and certain factions of the diaspora that supported the *Dashnaks*.

Furthermore, while the Armenian SSR constituted roughly 20% of historic Armenia,²⁰ Soviet leaders in Armenia claimed that the new autonomous republic was *the* homeland for the Armenian people as a whole, even inviting diaspora to resettle in the Armenian SSR in initiatives starting in the 1920s and lasting until the 1970s.²¹ It was the first time in centuries that national identity and nation-building initiatives were focused in a tangible 'homeland' rather than in dispersed diasporic centres.²² This was especially unsettling for large number of newly displaced Ottoman Armenians, who had fled or survived the deportation and massacre of around 800,000 to 1.5 million Ottoman Armenians. Many of the lands they had once occupied constituted almost four-fifths of the historic territory of the Armenians,²³ and only a small portion of refugees had settled in the Armenian SSR, instead finding residence in the Middle East, Europe and America.²⁴ Thus many diasporic Armenians had little to no affiliation with the lands of the Armenian SSR, and an increasing disconnect between the diaspora and the original citizens of the Armenian SSR crystallized as differential ideas of what constituted the homeland began to percolate. It was not until 1965 that tensions between the diasporic and homeland Armenians thawed and certain agendas began to align through Genocide commemoration practices.

The Demand to Memorialize: The Friction Between Denial and Remembrance

In April 1965, fifty years after the commencement of the Genocide, thousands of Armenians gathered in the streets of Yerevan demanding Soviet recognition and memorialization of the Genocide. This late memorialization was due to the need to break the silence of trauma, Khrushchev's political thaw and the contemporary international development of a public and scholarly consciousness of the Holocaust.²⁵ The protesters, shouting 'Lands, Lands!', demanded that the Armenian Communist Party (and more broadly the Soviet Union) publicly recognize the tragedy that had befallen their eastern Anatolian ancestors, called for the building of a memorial and pressured the Soviet Union to help secure the return of historic Armenian territories in Turkey and Azerbaijan.²⁶

The equation of land reparation with Genocide memorialization in the 1960s has since become naturalized within Armenian past-presencing rhetoric. Many Armenian figureheads, like Aram I, the current Catholicos of the Cilician branch of the Armenian Apostolic Church, have demanded the restitution of former Armenian-owned churches and private property seized during the Ottoman Armenian deportations.²⁷ Furthermore, demands for reparation aligned with previous late-nineteenth-century agendas of diasporic political parties that sought to create a unified, independent Armenia that would one day encompass all of historic Armenia. Conflating land reparation with Genocide recognition made Genocide memorialization a common meeting ground for diasporic Armenians, who felt isolated from the new homeland rhetoric being espoused in the Armenian SSR, and the Armenians living in Soviet Union. The misfortune of the Genocide became one of the first sources of shared national consciousness amongst a dispersed Armenian population, 'lessening the distance between Soviet Armenia and the diaspora'.²⁸

Despite a shared commemorative consciousness amongst Armenians around the world, Armenian Genocide denial plays a large role in challenging the remembrance of Armenian traumatic memories and ultimately shaping modes of past-presencing. While it is far too complex to delve into the nuances of the history of the Genocide, as these narratives have been enumerated in the works of many respected historians,

sociologists and contemporary eye-witnesses,²⁹ it is important to note the fervour with which the Republic of Turkey continues to deny the Genocide. This denial provides a framework within which to understand the potency of Armenian Genocide memorialization amongst diaspora communities and their continued fervent demands for international recognition.

The 1948 United Nations *Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide* officially codified ‘genocide’ as ‘the intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group.’³⁰ State officials of the Republic of Turkey continue to deny Young Turk involvement in *intentionally* committing genocide, merely suggesting that they only meant to deport, and not kill, Armenians for wartime security purposes.³¹ Admitting to genocide would potentially reify Western notions that denigrate Turks as barbaric, call into question the foundations of modern Turkey and propagate other minority groups to speak against aggression, and it could potentially force Turkey to concede to Armenian property restitution claims.³²

Furthermore, many official state governments worldwide, including the United States, refuse officially to recognize the Genocide for various socio-political reasons, frustrating many Armenians in their search for justice. While some national governments and international organizations, like the EU, have called for the Republic of Turkey to recognize the events of the early twentieth century as genocide, denial has for the most part been unchallenged because Turkey ‘simply matters more in a material sense than Armenia or the Armenians’.³³ Constantly facing transnational denial or the refusal to explicitly recognize a traumatic past, Armenian Genocide commemorations often include references to a hoped-for future, when denial will have dissipated.

Genocide commemoration and remembrance have become reflective of a shared *orthodoxy* amongst disparate Armenian communities. At Armenian Genocide commemoration events, regardless of the type of past-presencing that occurs (e.g. concerts, speeches or vigils), there is always a generalized call for Turkey to stop denying and the whole world to recognize the injustices suffered by the Armenians. This crusade for global recognition has become *orthodoxy* for all Armenians. *Orthodoxy* stems from Pierre Bourdieu’s theorization of *doxa*. *Doxa* has come to be conceptualized as ‘pre-reflexive, shared but unquestioned opinions and perceptions [which] determine natural practice and attitudes’.³⁴ In the case of *orthodoxy*, *doxa* is no longer an unconscious

truth, but becomes a recognized, acknowledged truth that is still accepted in practice.³⁵ Thus, ‘different or antagonistic beliefs’ are known to exist, but they are not universally accepted.³⁶ *Orthodoxy* ultimately aims to restore the ‘primal state of innocence of *doxa*’ and in turn moulds perceptions and practices.³⁷

In the case of commemorating the Armenian Genocide, calls for recognition and the end of the denial function as an *orthodoxy* that Armenian communities hope to ultimately make an unquestioned, unconscious and universally accepted *doxa*. This push to restore *orthodoxy* into *doxa* is harming the socio-economic advancement of the global Armenian populace, for reasons which I will enumerate through the analysis of three memorials, in Armenia, France and the United States.

Memorializing Trauma in Armenia, France and the United States

Armenia

The first concrete memorial dedicated to the Armenian Genocide, the Tsitsernakaberd Armenian Genocide Memorial Complex in Yerevan, was constructed in 1967 as a result of the 1965 protests, due to which the Armenian Communist Party conceded to memorialization pressures. This memorial was a breakthrough in creating initial forms of Genocide past-presencing that emerged from a hybrid form of socialism. Located on Tsitsernakaberd, a hill on the outskirts of Yerevan’s city centre, the memorial consists of a mausoleum with twelve stone slabs surrounding an eternal flame, a thirty-meter high needle-shaped obelisk, and a subterranean Armenian Genocide Museum, which was added following Soviet independence (Fig. 1). The absence of any Armenian signs or inscriptions on the monument and its aesthetic imitation of Soviet war memorials allowed Armenian Genocide remembrance to function as a localized historical event that did not challenge the ideals of collective Soviet identity and power.³⁸ This form of ‘apricot socialism’, which Maike Lehmann sees as a Soviet hybrid of national and socialist elements,³⁹ was permitted to allude to the Armenian Genocide, as Genocide commemoration supported two main Soviet master narratives developing in the 1960s. These included championing Soviet victory over the villainous Nazi Germans who could be equated to the murderous Young

Figure 1. The Tsitsernakaberd Armenian Genocide Memorial Complex in Yerevan, Armenia, 2017 (author).

Turks, and Soviet solidarity with the Third world's struggle for independence; an arena of the world where citizens, like early-twentieth-century Ottoman Armenians, were suffering injustices and oppression.⁴⁰ Armenian Genocide memorialization emerged in a time in which the commemorative narrative had to appease several groups: Armenian civil society, Soviet officials and the active and large Armenian diaspora.

Today, attempts to make Armenian Genocide memorialization applicable to a wide audience is not only a product of Soviet practice

but also a result of efforts to gain recognition through alignment with more internationally acknowledged events, like the Holocaust. Starting in the 1990s, names of prominent foreign individuals who contributed to globally revealing the atrocities that occurred during the Armenian Genocide were inscribed on the back of a hundred-meter long basalt wall (built originally for technical reasons) located at Tsitsernakaberd. These names are engraved on memorial stones (Fig. 2), which are

Figure 2. The 100-meter basalt wall at the Armenian Genocide Memorial Complex in Yerevan features the names of international individuals that brought attention to the Armenian Genocide, 2017 (author).

embedded within the basalt wall and contain soil from the graves of the individuals commemorated, including Franz Werfel, Austrian author of the popularly acclaimed novel, *The Forty Days of Musa Dagh*, James Bryce, a British historian, and Henry Morgenthau, US ambassador to the Ottoman Empire during the Genocide. While Tsyplma Darieva sees the inscriptions as turning non-Armenians into ‘Armenian treasures’, thus bringing significant symbolic capital to national narratives,⁴¹ the assertive and almost forceful (removing soil from graves of foreign social and political figures appears overtly intrusive) incorporation of international individuals highlights the repeated, and failed, attempts of Armenians to gain international recognition for the Genocide.

Efforts to incite global morality and to champion the Genocide as an internationally recognized atrocity can be seen as an effort to include the events in a global ‘cosmopolitan curriculum’, where knowing about horrific events and their developments and visiting their associated heritage becomes an act of moral witnessing that transforms one into a global citizen.⁴² In regards to Armenian Genocide commemorations, attempts to cosmopolitanize have two debilitating effects: one that muddles the history of the Genocide and another that makes Genocide history an encompassing, Armenian identity marker.

First, much of this cosmopolitan curriculum has emerged around heritage associated with the Holocaust, where knowing about it and visiting Holocaust heritage has become a cosmopolitan credential. The universality of Holocaust memory acts as a ‘powerful prism’ that has coloured the way other instances of genocide have been conceptualized.⁴³ The Holocaust has lost its quality as an index of a specific historical event and functions as a transnational, anachronistic metaphor for other traumatic histories and memories, subsequently convoluting and diluting the specificity and historicity of the comparable event (e.g. the Armenian Genocide). This conflation of events was directly touted on street posters throughout Yerevan in 2015, the year of the Armenian Genocide centenary. One of the most popular posters featured the outline of a fezzed and mustachioed Young Turk enclosing the date ‘1915’ next to an outline of Hitler’s distinctive hair and moustache style surrounding the year ‘1939’ (Fig. 3). The direct equation of a Young Turk’s visage to that of Hitler not only coalesces the two completely separate and different historical events but also minimizes the nuances of the Armenian Genocide and Holocaust.

Figure 3. The 100th anniversary Armenian Genocide posters, demanding recognition and memorialization, were spread throughout Yerevan in 2015. Here a Young Turk's visage is compared to Hitler's, 2015 (Yerevantsi [CC BY-SA 4.0], via Wikimedia Commons).

The second debilitating effect of the desire to cosmopolitanize concerns Armenia and the Armenian Genocide, both standing at the periphery of European memory, as the EU decides whether to extend its borders to Turkey.⁴⁴ As EU recognition creeps closer to Armenia's borders, gaining international notoriety mostly on the grounds of a need for the global recognition of a particular moment of collective suffering threatens to weaken Armenia's international prestige and notoriety.

Besides the post-Soviet attempts to modify the Memorial Complex to reach a more transnational audience, the Memorial Complex has had an increasingly prominent place in modern-day Armenian society. Starting covertly in the Soviet era, but officially sanctioned as a memorial day in the mid-1990s, thousands of Armenians, both in the homeland and diaspora, collectively march on 24 April to the eternal flame within the twelve stone slabs, and lay flowers at the rim of the fire. The official sanctioning of this memorial day and the iconic march to Tsitsernakaberd, which has an uncanny metaphorical resemblance to the distinctive lines of Ottoman Armenians marching on the Young Turk sanctioned deportation routes to Syria (Fig. 4), transformed the Complex from a marker of Soviet political culture to a symbol of Armenianness, making the character of loss and trauma 'the collective property and symbolic capital of the new nation-state'.⁴⁵

Figure 4. Ottoman Armenians, rounded up by Ottoman soldiers, and marched through the streets of Harput on their way to a prison in Mezireh, 1915 (anonymous German Traveler, via Wikimedia Commons).

As the complex has transformed into ‘symbolic capital’ of the nation state, it has fallen into the banal ubiquity that other national markers (i.e. flags and anthems) subsume. The Memorial Complex is prominently located on a hilltop on the outskirts of the capital, where the visage of the obelisk can be seen from many vantage points in Yerevan. Because the memorial can be glimpsed so easily in the day-to-day, visiting the memorial on 24 April does not necessarily create a large disjuncture from daily practice, as is the case of visiting memorials in the diaspora, which are often harder to access. Rouzanna Vartanian, a diaspora Armenian who has been living in Yerevan for over a decade, noted that people, while they come to commemorate ‘their martyrs’, during the march ‘they chat, they laugh, they drink Pepsi Cola, they smoke.’⁴⁶ The march on 24 April becomes a walk not only for commemorating but also for community gathering and socializing. It is important to note that many of these individuals, unlike members of the diaspora, have no direct links to people who were affected by the Genocide, as much of the population of Armenia was not formed from a mass exodus following the 1915 deportations and massacres. Thus, the atmosphere, while

sombre, is punctuated by friends and family walking together in groups, talking and texting on their phones.

In addition to being a popular tourist attraction and visual icon that is an integral part of the cityscape, Armenian men, who are compulsorily enlisted in the army, are often marched through the Memorial Complex during training, further highlighting the use of the Memorial in the construction of national identity. Yet the banality of this march through the Complex, which I witnessed in July 2015, suggests that the Complex is passively accepted as an ordinary national symbol, as the forty young men, while solemnly walking through the Complex, paid little attention to the details of the museum and the memorial site around them. In Armenia, the Genocide is an unquestioned *doxa* of national identity, where symbolic gestures and visits to the Memorial Complex are not drastic breaks from the day-to-day and are accepted nation-wide as an undisputed, necessary practice. However, as exhibited in the basalt wall and further in diasporic examples, desires to receive international and cosmopolitan credentials are ‘orthodoxic’ in nature.

France

Just as in Armenia, memorials in diasporic communities have become central components of past-presencing strategies concerning the Armenian Genocide. Yet the diaspora, which are torn between the Armenian homeland and their host nations, have a much harder time negotiating Genocide memorialization as a ubiquitous national practice that goes undisputed in their host nations.

While the majority of Armenian diasporic communities experienced an influx of members following the Armenian Genocide, the French Armenian community has had roots in France for several centuries. In the early seventeenth century, with the emergence of a dominant Armenian merchant diaspora, a significant number of Armenians settled in France to further their business propositions.⁴⁷ However, the most significant influx of Armenians happened after the massacres of Ottoman Armenians, with France taking in 30% of the total of all Armenian refugees.⁴⁸

Due to its long history and its more recent status as a refugee community, the Armenian diaspora in France were able to non-threateningly integrate into French society. Because many Armenians, at the

end of World War I, arrived in France as refugees, they were regarded much more favourably than migrants who were in pursuit of economic advancement and jobs.⁴⁹ Armenians were considered even more approvingly after the publication in April 1965 of an article in a French daily, in which a French historian claimed that Armenians had historically been some of the most loyal citizens of France, many of whom had died in World War I and World War II on behalf of France.⁵⁰ Concurrently, in the 1960s and 1970s Charles Aznavour, a famous French Armenian singer-songwriter, began to receive worldwide attention, garnering international acclaim. In this socio-political milieu, which emerged parallel to the time Armenians began to demand memorialization in the Armenian SSR and the United States, Armenians in France appeared as non-threatening, and as dedicated and proactive citizens of France. It is within this French nationalistic rhetoric that French Armenians have fashioned their Genocide commemoration practices and memorials.

The Komitas Monument and Armenian Genocide Memorial (Fig. 5) was constructed shortly after the passage of French parliamentary recognition of the Genocide in 1998. Armenian local elites took advantage of this timely event, and appealed to the Parisian mayor at the time, who gave the go ahead to erect the memorial statue.⁵¹ The inscriptions on the statue and its tangible form couch the Armenian Genocide within a digestible French nationalistic history. On the base of the Komitas statue, which stands four meters high in the Jardin d'Erevan ('Garden of Yerevan'), the following inscriptions can be read:⁵²

In homage to Komitas composer, musicologist and to the 1,500,000 victims of the Armenian Genocide of 1915 carried out in the Ottoman Empire (front base inscription)

Reverend Father Komitas collected, up until the Genocide of 1915, the songs of oral tradition of the Armenian people and transcribed them: in this way he was able to save a patrimony of universal significance (right base inscription)

To the memory of the Armenian fighters who were voluntarily engaged in resistance and gave their lives for France (left base inscription)

The inclusion of the Genocide within a longer historical purview relating back to both World War I and World War II, suggests that the Genocide narrative has become a seamless part of French history. The

Figure 5. The Komitas Monument and Armenian Genocide Memorial in Jardin d'Erevan in Paris, France, 2017 (Chabeo1 [CC BY-SA 4.0], via Wikimedia Commons).

Genocide victims are propelled to the martyr-like status of soldiers, thus sanctifying victimhood. Every year, these sentiments are continuously evoked at annual commemorations, where the mayor of Paris and

other high-profile government officials legitimize and nationalize the diasporic narrative and link the diaspora to French citizenship.

In 2015, on the hundredth anniversary of the commencement of the Genocide, over 10,000 people crowded in front of the statue, where the Prime Minister of France, Manuel Valls, called the ceremony 'historical' and claimed that France always stood by its victims, who today are 'Christians of the Middle East'.⁵³ With Valls' words, Genocide commemoration is recognized as a legitimate practice, one that highlights France's role as a nation fighting for cosmopolitan human rights. Through using the Armenian diaspora's trauma, French government officials bolster their own agendas in an attempt to garner worldwide prestige as fighters for universal justice. Following the speeches, the crowd marched to the Turkish embassy chanting Armenian slogans and later in the evening attended a candlelight vigil at the Cathedral of Notre-Dame, at which point the lights of the Eiffel Tower were shut off in recognition of Armenia's historic loss.⁵⁴ Genocide commemoration becomes nationally sanctified as the diasporic and government officials negotiate narratives to serve their own respective agendas; hence the rhetoric of a particular ethnic group's traumatic memory becomes subsumed into a wider national cause, making the diaspora's identity less threatening to an overall French identity.⁵⁵ Despite being aligned with an overall French identity, Armenian identity has found this alignment through motifs of suffering and victimhood.

Furthermore, the focus of the memorial on a single, cultural figure, that of the composer and poet Komitas, dilutes the controversial nature of the Genocide narrative and attempts to make it benign through several measures. Firstly, to a non-Armenian onlooker of the statue, who was unfamiliar with Komitas and even with the Armenian Genocide, but more familiar with pop-culture, the equation of the statue of the composer with another more contemporary French Armenian figure like Charles Aznavour would evoke a neutral if not positive and familiar reaction. Introducing a traumatic theme, like the Genocide, in less threatening cultural terms, tempers emotional responses that may otherwise be negative or contradictory.

Secondly, rather than a cross or another sombre identification, such as the eternal flame at the memorial in Yerevan, the stately figure of Komitas blends in with other statues in the parks nearby, including those of Simon Bolivar, Winston Churchill and Charles de Gaulle.

These international historical figures transform the Armenian composer's life story, and subsequently also the contested history that he represents, into a global narrative of triumph and survival. Furthermore, the inclusion of a statue in a park located near a handful of other grander memorials and monuments elides the individual narratives they present. Gilly Carr's study of memorials on the Channel Islands of Jersey and Guernsey reveals that the sheer number of statues and plaques dedicated to the Occupation era is both visually inundating (in Jersey one can see several memorials from a single vantage point) and underwhelming (several memorials are covered with ivy or hidden within an urban infrastructure).⁵⁶ Like the case of the Channel Islands, the cityscape of Paris is strewn with hundreds of monuments. It is within this landscape that the Komitas statue is digested, and where an overwhelming plethora of memorials and monuments obscure the events, people and individuals the composer represents.

United States

Armenian Americans, unlike French Armenians, have had a harder time gaining state support and legitimation for their memorialization practices, and because of their variegated immigration history, have had more difficulty in creating a unified representation of themselves in the United States. The substantial diasporic population in the United States arrived in several droves, particularly in the years immediately after the Genocide, the turbulent years of civil war in the Middle East in the mid to late-twentieth century, and during the last decades of the Soviet Union.⁵⁷

In a bid to establish themselves in America, many diasporic Armenians have fully integrated into U.S. culture, often forgoing many distinctive features of Armenian identity, including the use of the Armenian language and attachment to the Armenian Apostolic Church.⁵⁸ The feelings of collective victimhood resulting from the Genocide have become a characteristic identity marker that can be subsumed more immediately in comparison to learning a second language or regularly attending church services. Genocide memorialization, rather than being an accepted, unquestioned and ubiquitous symbol of national identity, like in Armenia, or a form of past-presencing that is incorporated into other national narratives, like in France, becomes a defining feature that

diaspora in the United States inculcate and use to negotiate their identity from being entirely consumed by their hostlands.

In fact, Genocide recognition has become a seminal lobbying platform of many Armenian-American diasporic organizations. The United States has a vested interest in U.S.-Turkey relations, as they are both major partners of NATO and because the United States seeks an alliance with Turkey to forward U.S. agendas, including regional security and America's reputation in the Middle East following U.S. military missions in Iraq.⁵⁹ With these geo-political interests, the U.S. government has been reluctant to legally recognize the Genocide. Through diasporic lobbying organizations and cultural institutions, which constitute the leadership elite of the Armenian-American community, Armenian-Americans try to maintain their 'stateless power' in the United States, whether it is creating petitions to pass legal recognition measures or organizing memorial events.

In California, the state that harbours the greatest diasporic population in the United States, Genocide recognition became a championing cause for Armenian-Americans in April 1965, the same month protests broke out in Yerevan. Tired of staying silent, and empowered by the demonstrations in Soviet Armenia, a group of Californian Armenians raised funds to construct the Armenian Genocide Martyrs Monument in Montebello (Fig. 6) in 1968, a year after the erection of the Armenian Genocide Memorial Complex in Yerevan.⁶⁰ Situated on a hill in Bicknell Park, eight, seventy-five-foot cement columns, arranged to look like an Armenian church, symbolically draw the eye to the heavens where the victims of the Genocide, memorialized as martyrs in the monuments name, lay to rest.

While its placement on a hill recalls the positioning of the Memorial Complex at Tsitsernakaberd, the Montebello memorial is not part of the day-to-day visual landscape of most diaspora, the majority of whom live in Glendale, which is a city around a half hour to an hour's drive from the structure. Lusine Grigoryan, an Armenian who moved from Yerevan at an early age and has been living in California for most of her life, noted that the monument is in 'an isolated area' next to a golf course, making it not 'a place where you go [that is] central to everything.' Armenians mainly visit the Montebello complex on 24 April and can only do so by driving there. Lusine further noted that going to the Martyrs Monument you 'feel like you are inconveniencing [non-Armenian] people (...) they

Figure 6. *The Armenian Genocide Martyrs Monument in Montebello, California, 2012* (ai pohaku [CC BY 2.0], via Wikimedia Commons).

feel like what are you doing what's the point. Why are you doing it in front of us?' The traffic to Montebello on 24 April in addition to the road closers during the ceremonial marches in Glendale cause disruptions to what non-Armenians see as a seemingly normal and uncharacteristic day. The act of memorializing, which is routine for the diaspora on 24 April, becomes a form of past-presencing that is not automatically nationally accepted as *doxa*, as it is in Armenia, and rather creates disjuncture and resistance from non-Armenians, forcing American Armenians to realize that their memorialization is *orthodoxy* in their hostland, both in terms of the act of commemorating and the need to recognize.

Furthermore, dissimilar to other minority groups in America who are also participating in 'memorial mania', or 'an obsession with issues

of memory and history and an urgent desire to express and claim those issues in visibly public contexts' as a means to achieve self-definition, national purpose and even political representation,⁶¹ the Montebello memorial represents a history with very little relevance to the United States. For example, Japanese Americans who are championing for the recognition of the atrocities practised against them during World War II through the maintenance of Manzanar National Historic site in California or African Americans commemorating the labour of New York's slave population in the African Burial Ground National Monument⁶² have created memorials that speak to particular events of American history on American soil. The Armenian Genocide happened in Anatolia, in lands far from US purview. With no connection to American history or identity, unlike the Komitas statue and its relation to French national history, it is no wonder that non-Armenians view the Montebello structure as peculiar, difficult to relate to and at times inconvenient.

Furthermore, the size and religious symbolism of the Montebello memorial are uncharacteristic of other memorial statues and places of commemoration in America. For example, in Washington D.C., which Kirk Savage dubs as the 'monumental core of the nation', monuments reflect the ancient architecture of the Egyptian, Greeks and Romans, exuding a timeless aura rather than explicitly referring to the historic event or personage the monuments represent.⁶³ In the case of the Montebello monument, the seventy-five-foot structure meant to represent an abstract church alluding to the religion of the persecuted Ottoman Armenians and that of the American Armenians, clashes with the many traditionally neoclassical, secular monuments seen in D.C. and around America. Thus, the semiotics that the Montebello structure espouses creates a disjuncture in the memorialized heritage landscape typical to monumental cores in the United States.

On 25 April, 2015, the day after the official commemoration of the Genocide, which attracted over 160,000 marchers in Los Angeles who ended a six-mile walk in front of the Turkish consulate in protests,⁶⁴ remembrance ceremonies were held at the Montebello memorial. The fact that the highly publicized and politicized march occurred before a day of memorialization (some years they are done on the same day) suggests the fervour with which Armenian Americans conflate searches for justice, recognition and peaceful remembrance. The ceremony in front of the Montebello monument on 25 April lasted for over two and a

half hours and attracted over a dozen speakers, who included representatives of Armenian diasporic organizations and a few local municipal leaders, mostly of Armenian descent. The leadership elite spoke about how justice had to be served for Armenians and ultimately in the name of human rights. This universal call for human rights echoes the inscription at the base of the memorial, which reads: ‘This monument erected by Americans of Armenian descent, is dedicated to the 1,500,000 Armenian victims of the Genocide perpetrated by the Turkish government, 1915–1921, and to men of all nations who have fallen victim to crimes against humanity.’

The cosmopolitan ethos in the inscription and speeches recalls the inscribed names of international figures on the hundred-meter basalt wall at the Memorial Complex in Yerevan, highlighting efforts to heighten global morality for political purposes. This attempt to universalize the Genocide narrative in the terms of human rights endeavours to supersede a national disregard as the United States has repeatedly refused to officially recognize the events of 1915 as genocide. American Armenians, unlike French Armenians, have a difficult time reconciling their history with their host nation’s history, thus making their commemoration events appear more didactic and covertly undermining of their hostland’s national narrative.

The Price of Memorializing

The culture and nations in which Armenian communities reside have a significant impact on past-presencing practices related to the Armenian Genocide. Despite these differing forms of past-presencing, an overall *orthodoxy* dominates a majority of Armenian communities. This *orthodoxy* champions the need for Turkey to stop denying, and for other powerful nations, like the United States, to aid in worldwide recognition. The *orthodoxy* of annihilating denial and garnering just recognition in an attempt to transform the Armenian Genocide narrative into a worldwide *doxa*, where genocide recognition and memorialization is accepted ubiquitously and unquestioningly, is unknowingly inhibitive for Armenian communities worldwide.⁶⁵

As indicated earlier, Armenians have latched onto the *orthodoxy* of Armenian Genocide recognition and denial abatement as a form of stateless power. Through ceremonies, memorials, posters and speeches,

Armenian Genocide recognition has become a symbolic, cultural marker of Armenian identity, due especially to the encouragement of the upper orders of Armenian diasporic society. This identifying feature has seeped into the socio-cultural structure of Armenian communities and has unwittingly internationally associated all Armenians as eternal victims, ultimately compromising both the diaspora's and the Republic of Armenia's prestige and socio-economic potential.

Armenian Genocide recognition has unfortunately become white noise in the international arena. Since the 1960s, Armenia has chiefly been internationally acknowledged in the media for its connection to the Genocide, whether it is for the Armenian extremist bombings of Turkish embassies around the world in the 1970s, annual commemoration marches that disrupt traffic flows in major cities, or the recent visits of the Kardashians and the Pope to Armenia. The international community has generally been unresponsive to repeated acknowledgement demands, in part because of a fear of upsetting capitalist relations with groups that Armenians are implicating. This acknowledgement *orthodoxy* has complicated the Republic of Armenia's foreign relations strategies, as this developing, landlocked nation works diligently to procure transnational relations.

In fact, diasporic activism has at times inhibited Armenia's geopolitical autonomy. In 2009, two protocols signed between Armenia and Turkey that would renew diplomatic relations between the nations were delayed in part by diasporic displeasure with the protocols' stipulations regarding Genocide recognition.⁶⁶ For the Republic of Armenia, the reopening of borders between Turkey and Armenia, which closed in 1993 due to Armenia's war with Azerbaijan (Turkey's ally), constitutes a geopolitical necessity that would provide growth in the economy, connect Armenia to international markets and lessen the nation's dependence on Moscow.⁶⁷ To the Republic of Armenia, Genocide recognition is secondary to more immediate socio-economic gains. Yet in order not to upset the diaspora, which provides substantial forms of economic remittances, Armenia must balance its own foreign policy and domestic interest against the desires of the diaspora.

Beyond the direct involvement of diaspora in Armenian politics, seemingly benign actions, like Genocide commemoration practices, memorials and their inscriptions, and the repeated, unsuccessful attempts to merge memorialization with global recognition, has contributed to a more generalized worldwide image of Armenians as a

struggling, suffering people that cannot overcome a traumatic past for a brighter future. These qualities make partnership with Armenia and Armenians tenuous and uncertain. Therefore, the worldwide Armenian population and the broader international community are encapsulating diasporic and homeland Armenians in an inhibitive framework, where certain markers of culture, championed as an *orthodoxy* meant to return to *doxa*, are preventing a group from reaching potential capabilities.

Conclusion

Over a hundred years ago, the commencement of the Armenian Genocide in Ottoman Turkey desiccated and displaced an estimated 800,000 to 1.5 million Armenians from eastern Anatolia. This seminal event led to the emergence of a globally distributed Armenian diaspora that drastically changed the shape and ideology of Armenian communities worldwide. Almost concurrently, the newly minted and short-lived Republic of Armenia followed by the longer-lasting Armenian SSR was learning how to position itself as a new nation with a large diasporic population. Tensions flared between many diasporic populations who felt that their homeland was not in this new Armenia but rather in the lands wrongfully snatched by the Young Turks or in other regions of historic Armenia no longer accessible to the state of Armenia. Soviet strategies to attract diaspora to the Armenian SSR over a period of decades was also ultimately met with dissatisfaction, as diaspora witnessed marginalization by existing populations and dire living situations.

Amidst these differences, diaspora and homeland Armenians appeared to reach a thawing of relations in the late 1960s when both groups called for worldwide recognition and more local forms of memorialization for the Armenian Genocide. Despite the fact that many Armenians who resided in the Armenian SSR were never directly affected by the Young Turk deportations and massacres, Genocide recognition agendas and commemoration strategies transformed into a shared form of past-presencing that united disparate and dispersed Armenian communities into a larger, imagined transnational Armenian population.

However, Genocide memorialization practices have not evolved simultaneously nor do they necessarily represent similar intended outcomes. In this article, I have demonstrated that localized ways of

commemorating are demonstrated through variegated memory complexes in Yerevan, Paris and Montebello. Localized past-presencing practices, enacted in differential ways due to place and history, not only act as processes meant to soothe collective traumatic memories but also facilitate the dissemination of stateless power which attempts to reify an *orthodoxy* espoused by the majority of Armenian populations. This *orthodoxy* calls for a universal recognition of the injustices suffered by Ottoman Armenians and often demands an end to Turkey's denial. Without knowing it, this appeal for justice and recognition has imbricated the total Armenian population, both diasporic and homeland individuals, in an inhibitive cycle that jeopardizes their prestige and credibility. This decrease in authority further isolates the already landlocked Republic of Armenia and often hinders Armenian diasporic communities from beneficially integrating into their host countries. Further research in the fields of Armenian diaspora and heritage studies should more closely follow the complicated relationships that are created, negated and ultimately affected by the lingering after-effects of Genocide commemoration and denial.

Notes

- 1 In the following article, I refer to the Armenian Genocide in capitals to signify a particular symbolic event that resonates within the worldwide Armenian community. I use genocide with a lower-case 'g', to refer to genocide as a concept and as a term codified officially by the 1948 United Nations *Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide*.
- 2 Several estimates claim that upwards of eighty per cent of diasporic Armenians are descendants of Genocide survivors. See Razmik Panossian, 'Between ambivalence and Intrusion: Politics and Identity in Armenia Diaspora Relations', *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies* 7:2 (1998) 149–196 at 154; Yossi Shain and Aharon Barth, 'Diasporas and International Relations Theory', *International Organization* 57:3 (2003) 449–479 at 468.
- 3 See John Tunbridge and Gregory Ashworth, *Dissonant Heritage: The Management of the Past as a Resource in Conflict* (Chichester, 1996); Lynn Meskell, 'Negative Heritage and Past Mastering in Archaeology',

- Anthropology Quarterly* 75:3 (2002) 557–74; Annie Coombes, *History After Apartheid: Visual Culture and Public Memory in a Democratic South Africa* (Durham and London, 2003); Andreas Huyssen, *Present Pasts: Urban Palimpsests and the Politics of Memory* (Stanford, 2003); Sharon Macdonald, *Difficult Heritage: Negotiating the Nazi Past in Nuremberg and Beyond* (Abingdon and New York, 2008); Sharon Macdonald, *Memorylands: Heritage and Identity in Europe Today* (London and New York, 2013).
- 4 See Rouben P. Adalian, 'The Historical Evolution of the Armenian Diasporas', *Journal of Modern Hellenism* 6 (1989) 81–114; Bahar Baser and Ashok Swain, 'Diaspora Design vs. Homeland Realities: Case Study of Armenian Diaspora', *Caucasian Review of International Affairs* 3:1 (2009) 45–61; Natasha Azarian-Ceccato, 'Reverberations of the Armenian Genocide: Narrative's International Transmission and the Task of Not Forgetting', *Narrative Inquiry* 20:1 (2010) 106–23; Razmik Panossian, 'The Past as Nation: Three Dimensions of Armenian Identity', *Geopolitics* 7:2 (2002) 121–46.
 - 5 See Panossian, 'Between Ambivalence and Intrusion'; Susan Pattie, 'Longing and Belonging: Issues of Homeland in Armenian Diaspora', *Political and Legal Anthropological Review* 22:2 (1999) 80–92; Shain and Barth, 'Diasporas and International Relations Theory'; Khatchik DerGhougassian, 'Genocide and Identity (Geo)politics: Bridging State Reasoning and Diaspora Activism', *Genocide Studies International* 8:2 (2014) 193–207.
 - 6 Razmik Panossian, *The Armenians: From Kings and Priests to Merchants and Commissars* (New York, 2006).
 - 7 Macdonald, *Memorylands*, 6.
 - 8 The Armenian National Institute maintains a list and description of every Armenian Genocide memorial in existence. The list can be accessed at <http://www.armenian-genocide.org/memorials.html>.
 - 9 Shain and Barth, 'Diasporas and International Relations Theory', 468.
 - 10 Macdonald, *Memorylands*, 16.
 - 11 Walter Connor, 'The Impact of Homelands Upon Diasporas', in Gabriel Sheffer (ed.), *Modern Diasporas in International Politics* (New York, 1986): 16–46, at 16.
 - 12 For a general overview of diaspora studies and current trends in the literature see Robin Cohen, *Global Diasporas: An Introduction* (2nd edition; London and New York, 2008); Thomas Faist, 'Diaspora and Transnationalism:

- What Kind of Dance Partners?', in Rainer Bauböck and Thomas Faist (eds), *Diaspora and Transnationalism: Concepts, Theories and Methods* (Amsterdam, 2010) 9–34; Tsypylma Darieva, 'Rethinking Homecoming: Diasporic Cosmopolitanism in Post-Soviet Armenia', *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 34:3 (2011) 490–508; Peter Mandaville and Terrence Lyons (eds), *Politics from Afar: Transnational Diasporas and Networks* (New York, 2012); Sadananda Sahoo and B. K. Pattanaik (eds), *Global Diasporas and Development: Socioeconomic, Cultural, and Policy Perspectives* (New Delhi, 2014).
- 13 Cohen, *Global Diasporas*, 2.
 - 14 Khachig Tölölyan, 'Rethinking Diaspora(s): Stateless Power in the Transnational Moment', *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies* 5:1 (1996) 3–36; Baser and Swain, 'Diaspora Design vs. Homeland Realities'.
 - 15 Tölölyan, 'Rethinking Diaspora(s)', 23.
 - 16 Tölölyan, 'Rethinking Diaspora(s)'; Khachig Tölölyan, 'Elites and Institutions in the Armenian Transition', *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies* 9:1 (2000) 107–36; Sossie Kasabarina, 'Whose Space, Whose Interests? Clashes Within Armenian Diasporic Civil Society', *Armenian Review* 51:1–4 (2009) 81–109.
 - 17 Baser and Swain, 'Diaspora Design vs. Homeland Realities'; Ben Page and Claire Mercer, 'Why Do People Do Stuff? Reconceptualizing Remittance Behavior in Diaspora-Development Research and Policy', *Progress in development Studies* 12:1 (2012) 1–18; DerGhougassian, 'Genocide and Identity (Geo)politics'.
 - 18 While it can be argued that the Armenian Kingdom of Cilicia (1198–1375) was the last independent Armenian dynasty to exist, its territory lay outside of the Armenian Highland on the south coastal region of Asia Minor. Because the Kingdom did not encompass any part of present-day Armenia, it can technically be considered a diasporic polity. To understand how scholars conceptualize the waxing and waning of Armenian kingdoms and republics see Adalian, 'The Historical Evolution'; Panossian, 'Between ambivalence and intrusion'; Simon Payaslian, *The History of Armenia: from the Origins to the Present* (New York, 2007).
 - 19 Shain and Barth, 'Diasporas and International Relations Theory', 467.
 - 20 Panossian, 'Between Ambivalence and Intrusion', 154; Shain and Barth, 'Diasporas and International Relations Theory', 467.
 - 21 Panossian, 'Between Ambivalence and Intrusion', 156; Susan Pattie, 'Armenians in Diaspora', in Edmund Herzig and Marina Kurchiyan (eds),

- The Armenians: Past and Present in the Making of National Identity* (New York, 2005) 128–129; Darieva, ‘Rethinking Homecoming’, 496.
- 22 Panossian, ‘Between Ambivalence and Intrusion’; Panossian, *The Armenians: From Kings and Priests to Merchants and Commissars*.
 - 23 Panossian, ‘Between Ambivalence and Intrusion’, 154.
 - 24 Panossian, ‘Between Ambivalence and Intrusion’; Tölölyan, ‘Elites and Institutions’; Cohen, *Global Diasporas*.
 - 25 Donald Bloxham, *The Great Game of Genocide: Imperialism, Nationalism, and the Destruction of the Ottoman Armenians* (Oxford and New York, 2005) 218; Tsypylma Darieva, ‘“The Road to Golgotha”: Representing Loss in Postsocialist Armenia’, *Focaal European Journal of Anthropology* 52 (2008) 92–108, at 92; DerGhougassian, ‘Genocide and Identity (Geo) politics’, 200.
 - 26 Tsypylma Darieva, ‘Bringing the Soil Back to the Homeland: Reconfigurations of Representation of Loss in Armenia’, *Comparativ* 16:3 (2006) 87–101; Darieva, ‘“The Road to Golgotha”’.
 - 27 George S. Yacoubian, ‘Financial, Territorial, and Moral Reparations for the 1915 Armenian Massacres’, *War Crimes, Genocide, & Crimes Against Humanity* 4 (2010) 59–98; Aram I, ‘The Armenian Genocide: From Recognition to Reparations’, *International Criminal Law Review* 14:2 (2014) 223–41.
 - 28 Ronald Suny, ‘Writing Genocide: The Fate of the Ottoman Armenians’, in Ronald Suny et al. (eds), *A Question of Genocide: Armenians and Turks at the End of the Ottoman Empire* (Oxford and New York, 2011) 15–41 at 24.
 - 29 For a comprehensive overview concerning why, when and how the Armenian Genocide occurred consult these texts: Vahakn N. Dadrian, *The History of the Armenian Genocide: Ethnic Conflict From the Balkans to Anatolia to the Caucasus* (Providence, 1995); Vahakn N. Dadrian, *German Responsibility in the Armenian Genocide: A Review of the Historical Evidence of German Complicity* (Watetown, 1996); Norman N. Naimark, *Fires of Hatred: Ethnic Cleansing in Twentieth-Century Europe* (Cambridge and London, 2001); Bloxham, *The Great Game of Genocide*; Belinda Cooper and Taner Akcam, ‘Turks, Armenians, and the “G-Word”’, *World Policy Journal* 22:3 (2005) 81–93; Henry Morgenthau, *Ambassador Morgenthau’s Story: A Personal account of the Armenian Genocide* (New York, 2008); Grigoris Balakian, *Armenian Golgotha: A Memoir of the Armenian Genocide, 1915–1918* (New York, 2009); Suny, ‘Writing Genocide’; Uğur U. Üngör and Mehmet Polatel, *Confiscation and*

- Destruction: The Young Turk Seizure of Armenian Property* (London and New York, 2011); Peter Balakian, 'Raphael Lemkin, Cultural Destruction, and the Armenian Genocide', *Holocaust and Genocide Studies* 27 (2013) 57–89; Fatma M. Göçek, *Denial of Violence: Ottoman Past, Turkish Present, and Collective Violence Against the Armenians, 1789–2009* (Oxford and New York, 2014); Thomas de Waal, *Great Catastrophe: Armenians and Turks in the Shadow of Genocide* (Oxford, 2015).
- 30 United Nations, *Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide* (New York, 1948).
 - 31 Naimark, *Fires of Hatred*, 29; Bloxham, *The Great Game of Genocide*, 85; Morgenthau, *Ambassador Morgenthau's Story*, 219.
 - 32 Cooper and Akcam, 'Turks, Armenians, and the "G-Word"', 85; Yacoubian, 'Financial, Territorial, and Moral Reparations', 97.
 - 33 Bloxham, *The Great Game of Genocide*, 9.
 - 34 Cécile Deer, 'Doxa', in Michael J. Grenfell (ed), *Pierre Bourdieu: Key Concepts* (2nd edition) (Durham and Bristol, 2012) 114–25, at 115.
 - 35 Ibid., 118.
 - 36 Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (Cambridge, 1977) 164.
 - 37 Ibid., 177. For a more in-depth understanding of how *orthodoxy* and *doxa* shape Pierre Bourdieu's understanding of *habitus* see Deer, 'Doxa' and Karl Maton, 'Habitus', in Michael Grenfell (ed), *Pierre Bourdieu: Key Concepts* (2nd edition) (Durham and Bristol, 2012) 48–64.
 - 38 Darieva, "'The Road to Golgotha'", 97.
 - 39 Maike Lehmann, 'Apricot Socialism: The National Past, the Soviet Project, and the Imagining of Community in Late Soviet Armenia', *Slavic Review* (2015) 9–31, at 13.
 - 40 Ibid., 18.
 - 41 Darieva, "'The Road to Golgotha'", 104.
 - 42 Macdonald, *Memoryland*, 214.
 - 43 Huyssen, *Present Pasts*, 14.
 - 44 Claus Leggewie, 'A Tour of the Battleground: The Seven Circles of Pan-European Memory', *Social Research* 75:1 (2008) 217–34, at 225.
 - 45 Darieva, "'The Road to Golgotha'", 99.
 - 46 All names of interlocutors have been changed to ensure anonymity.
 - 47 Tölölyan 2000, 'Elites and Institutions'.
 - 48 Hakem Al-Rustom, 'Diaspora Activism and the Politics of Locality: The Armenians of France' in Ato Quayson and Girish Dawani (eds), *A Companion to Diaspora and Transnationalism* (Walden, Oxford and West Sussex, 2013) 473–93, at 477.

- 49 Ibid., 476.
- 50 Ibid., 484.
- 51 Asbarez, 30 January 2001, 'Komitas Monument Dedicated to Genocide to be Erected in Paris', <http://asbarez.com/44393/komitas-monument-dedicated-to-genocide-to-be-erected-inparis/>, accessed 1 May 2016.
- 52 Photos of French inscriptions can be found at <http://www.gourmantic.com/2012/04/16/pere-komitas-statue-jardin-derevan-paris/>.
- 53 *News.am*, 25 April 2015, 'From Paris to Marseille: Armenian Genocide Commemorations in France', <http://news.am/eng/news/263949.html>, accessed 1 May 2016.
- 54 Ibid.
- 55 Al-Rustom, 'Diaspora Activism', 479.
- 56 Gilly Carr, 'Examining the Memorialscape of Occupation and Liberation: A Case Study From the Channel Islands', *International Journal of Heritage Studies* 18:2 (2012) 174–93.
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- 58 Bakalian, *Armenian Americans*; Pattie, 'At Home in Diaspora'.
- 59 Ekavi Athanassopoulou, *Strategic Relations Between the US and Turkey, 1979–2000: Sleeping with a Tiger* (Abingdon and Oxon, 2014), 149; Jim Zanotti, 'Turkey: Background and U.S. Relations', *Congressional Research Report* (Washington, D.C., 2014) 1–2.
- 60 Montebello Monuments, <http://www.ucla.com/montebello-monument.html>, accessed 3 May 2016.
- 61 Erika Doss, *Memorial Mania: Public Feeling in America* (Chicago and London, 2010) 2.
- 62 Paul Shackel (ed), *Myth, Memory, and the Making of the American Landscape* (Gainesville, 2001); Doss, *Memorial Mania*.
- 63 Kirk Savage, *Monument Wars: Washington, D.C., The National Mall, and the Transformation of the Memorial Landscape* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 2005) 4, 7.
- 64 *March for Justice: Armenian Genocide*, 7 May 2015, 'City Officials Raise Number of March for Justice Participants to 160,000', <http://march4justice.com/city-officials-raise-number-of-march-for-justice-participants-to-160000/>, accessed 12 November 2018.
- 65 In regards to the Armenian Genocide commemoration, the difficulty in transforming *orthodoxy* into *doxa* produces a type of non-physical violence

that inhibits development and progress. In order to understand these impediments, it is helpful to consider Johan Galtung's famous theorizations of violence which situates the term as the point when 'the actual somatic and mental realizations [of human beings] are below their potential realizations' (1968: 168). The differential between actual and potential impedes particular groups from achieving advancement, whether social, economic, political or even biological. In the case of Armenian Genocide recognition, the desire and initiatives of Armenian populations to transform Genocide recognition into *doxa* creates socio-political problems. This impediment of fully reaching one's potential capabilities lacks a direct, personal agent and leads to structural violence, where 'violence is built into the structure and shows up as unequal power and consequently as unequal life chances'. Because structural violence is built into a socio-cultural system, it does not necessarily *show*, it is static and 'about as natural as the air around us'. Past-presencing activities that eternally victimize Armenians may not outwardly appear as inhibitive to Armenian populations in Armenia and abroad, but in reality have become unquestioningly engrained within the socio-cultural system in such a way that it produces structural violence. See Johan Galtung, 'Violence, Peace, and Peace Research', *Journal of Peace Research* 6:3 (1969) 167–91 at 168, 171, 173.

66 DerGhougassian, 'Genocide and Identity (Geo)politics', 193.

67 Ibid., 195.

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