Centenary (Armenia)

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Summary

In the midst of the First World War centennial, the centenary of the Armenian Genocide elicited commemorations whose unprecedented scope revealed some of the broad outlines of a geopolitics of memory. While in Turkey the event met with official state denialism, the Republic of Armenia, conversely, sought to render it an asset in its foreign policy. Elsewhere, and especially in some countries such as France, the unfolding of commemorations has provided a measure of the undeniable progress towards recognizing a genocide that had long been forgotten or ignored.

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Introduction

In 2015, the centenary of the Armenian Genocide seemed to mark a turning point in the commemoration of this event, if only through its scale and the media attention it attracted. However, rather than a rupture, 2015 actually represented an accentuation of an underlying trend observed since the beginning of the 2000s, with a growing internationalization of the memory of one of the first genocides of the 20th century,[1] and the slow but steady progress in gaining its recognition. In the particular context in which the 1915 genocide continues to be denied in the country that perpetrated it (Turkey), and where the memory of the descendants of victims faces state denialism, the issue of public recognition of the destruction of the Armenians remains, more than ever, a battlefield in its own right. While the annihilation of the majority of the Armenians of the Ottoman Empire was absolutely recognized in the wake of the First World War,[2] a combination of allied renunciations and the affirmation of the Kemalist Turkish Republic served to marginalize Armenian claims and ultimately reduced the

commemorations of the genocide to either silence or to the invisibility of intra-communal remembering.[3] After the Second World War, the memory of the Armenian Genocide was overdetermined by the stakes of international recognition, by militant struggles against official state denialism and the frustrations resulting from long periods of waiting. The impact of 2015 as a high-water mark of commemoration thus only makes sense if one considers these frustrations and memorial conflicts. Never before had the themes of the Armenian genocide and its recognition been voiced with such strength in the public sphere as during the centennial. This took the form of political declarations, scholarly events, publications, audio-visual productions, exhibits, concerts and other cultural and artistic productions. However, the importance of the commemorations, as well as the attention paid to them, proved geographically uneven, varying widely according to countries and their degree of public recognition of the Armenian Genocide. The global unfolding of the commemorations of the 1915 centennial thus highlighted the fractures which endure and the dynamics at work in these geopolitics of memory.

A Century of Solitude

After the Treaty of Lausanne (1923) buried the “Armenian question”, the commemoration of the Armenian genocide every April 24 long remained circumscribed to the community itself.[4] Even so, as early as 24 April 1919, a commemoration was organized by the Armenians of Constantinople, and a monument was erected to the victims. But this commemoration soon became impossible in Mustafa Kemal Atatürk (-1938)’s Turkey. The same was true in Soviet Armenia, where the expression of national specificities was considered contrary to prevailing internationalist ideology. Even within the ranks of the Armenian diaspora, May 28, the anniversary of the proclamation of the first Armenian Republic (1918-1920), was long commemorated with more fervor than April 24 by the advocates of the Revolutionary Armenian Federation. This situation only fundamentally shifted in the wake of the Second World War.

With the Holocaust came renewed focus on mass violence, and Armenians were able to produce a new reading of 1915 and their own history, starting with the use and appropriation of the neologism “genocide” coined by Raphael Lemkin (1900-1959).[5] Then, in 1965, fifty years on, the commemoration of the Armenian Genocide suddenly resurfaced, in a politicized and more assertive form, simultaneously in Soviet Armenia and among the diaspora. That year, massive demonstrations in Yerevan surprised the Soviet authorities, both because of their nature and their scope. A commemorative monument was erected two years later at Yerevan, on Tsitsernakaberd hill, which would emerge as the most emblematic “shrine” to the memory of the genocide.[6] Every April 24, hundreds of thousands of citizens of the

Republic of Armenia come there to pay their respects. In the decade running from 1975 to 1985, Armenian terrorism “dramatized the theme of genocide and arose Armenian communities” by demanding its recognition by Turkey.[7] At the same time, this claim emerged as the lowest common denominator of all Armenian actors and political parties, for whom the annual commemoration of the genocide gradually established itself as a moment of national unity.

Nevertheless, in most countries outside of modern-day Armenia, the Armenian Genocide occupies a secondary, even marginal role in the broader calendar of First World War commemoration. The perceived parochial nature of April 24 contrasts with the transnational character of the official commemorations of 1914-1918. Despite their concurrence, the centennial of the Great War and that of the Armenian Genocide thus differ considerably. Different forms of commemoration, which were undertaken in 2015, stem from the highly topical question of recognizing the genocide.

The Centenary of the Armenian Genocide: A Global Event

The existence of a sizeable Armenian diaspora – largely resulting from the dispersion of Ottoman Armenians following the genocide – on all continents contributed significantly to the internationalization of the memory of the genocide and to the global reach of the centennial. Preparations for the centenary intensely mobilized diasporic Armenians, as well as political parties, large organizations (such as the Armenian General Benevolent Union and the Gulbenkian Foundation), and local associations. The claims embedded in the commemorations were put forward by local committees known as “committees of April 24”, whose goals involved honoring the memory of the victims of the genocide and contributing, by heightening awareness, to an advancement of the recognition of this crime by Turkey as well as in the many countries with Armenian communities. In the 2000s, the activism of Armenian associations abroad was illustrated by the multiplication of initiatives designed to create commemorative monuments, and this with greater urgency as the centenary approached. The monuments included *Khatchkars*, or sculpted stone crosses, commemorative plaques, works of contemporary art (such as those located in Lyon, Geneva and Boston), and various replicas of the Tsitsernakaberd memorial (including in Marseilles and Fresno). The erection of these types of monuments was not foreordained; in fact, they often elicited violent opposition, in particular on the part of Turkey’s diplomatic representatives, and from local associations comprised of people of Turkish origin. A perfect example can be found in the inauguration of the Lampposts of Memory (*Réverbères de la Mémoire*) by artist Melik Ohanian in Trembley Park in Geneva in April 2018, after a decade of legal battles waged relentlessly by Armenian associations in Switzerland. As 2015 neared,

thousands of collective and individual initiatives converged around the form of stylized forget-me-nots, accompanied by the Armenian slogan *hishoum em yev bahantchoum* ("I remember and I demand.")[8]

To this militant dimension, one should add other kinds of commemoration, including official ceremonies, academic and cultural events which unfolded at the moment of the centennial, at least in the nations where public recognition of the Armenian Genocide has made the most headway. The 2000s already saw echoes of the commemoration of the Armenian genocide being reinforced in a number of countries. The trend appeared distinctly at the time of the commemoration of the 90th anniversary of the genocide in 2005, which received unprecedented media coverage. As the centennial neared, the proliferation of these forms of action contributed to making such commemorations global events. One of those drawing the most media attention was the creation in 2015 of the Aurora Prize, dedicated to the memory of Aurora Mardiganian (1901-1994).[9] The initiative came from a wealthy Russo-Armenian who assembled a prize committee composed of celebrities including Elie Wiesel and George Clooney. Since 2016, the prize is awarded annually to people who distinguish themselves for their humanitarian commitment against mass crimes.[10] Numerous films were also produced on the occasion of the centennial, including works of fiction such as *1915 The Movie*, the US film *The Promise*, *The Cut* by Faith Akin, the German filmmaker of Turkish origin, and finally *Une histoire de fou* by French filmmaker Robert Gédiguian. It is worth highlighting that works of fiction were also released in Turkey at this time, but these productions featured more or less denialist perspectives in movies such as *Karavan 1915* and *The Ottoman Lieutenant.* Many documentaries were also released on the occasion of the centennial, one of the most significant being *Arménie 1915*, an initiative of the City of Paris and the Armenian embassy in France, under the direction of historian Raymond Kévorkian, with the support of the Armenian Genocide Museum-Institute of Yerevan and the AGBU Nubar Library (Paris). Moreover, countless artistic displays and concerts marked the centenary. For the first time, the theme of the 1915 genocide even found its way into the Eurovision contest, put forward by Armenia's group Genealogy (their song *Face the Shadow* featured the unambiguous refrain "Don't deny"). This competition, which is especially popular in Eastern Europe, in the Eastern Mediterranean (Greece, Turkey, Cyprus), and in the Caucasus, is frequently the stage of national rivalries and political afterthoughts.

In order to appreciate the degree of impact of these commemorations on the general public, one should also underscore the deluge of publications and academic events relating to the Armenian Genocide which were released around the time of the centennial. Several vast international conferences were held in France (at the Sorbonne, the Bibliothèque nationale de

France and the Mémorial de la Shoah),[11] in the United States (for instance at UCLA),[12] and in Canada (at the University of Moncton),[13] among other locations, as well as a considerable number of colloquia of varying scale. While it isn't possible here to distill a single academic balance sheet from these conferences, one can nonetheless deduce that they were mostly interdisciplinary, and increasingly, they were cast in a comparative perspective. Beyond these academic breakthroughs, the centennial constituted a boon for presses and their editors, as it gave rise to an impressive number of publications on a heretofore rather neglected topic. If we consider only the period running from November 2014 to June 2015, sixty-eight books on the Armenian genocide were published in France alone. Over the same period, a plethora of books on the topic were released in multiple parts of the world, most notably in Europe, North America, and the Middle East. These included works by historians[14] and journalists,[15] reeditions of contemporaneous testimonies,[16] graphic novels, as well as countless written and audio-visual reportages, special issues and magazine covers in a host of languages.

In the world of publishing and of audio-visual productions, as in that of militant memorial mobilizations, the momentum provided by the centennial continued to generate ripple effects for years afterwards, as if it constituted a new point of departure rather than an end line – or perhaps it ushered in a hazy period stretching not for a year but rather for a longer period, out of which we have not yet emerged.[17] The context in which these commemorations were and are organized may have contributed to scrambling chronologies of past traumas with those of the present. Indeed, the current wars and the violence against civilians committed in Syria and Northern Iraq, most notably by the Islamic State, give rise to a gripping telescoping of temporalities. Here, the memory of the Armenian Genocide seems to resurface in the names of battles over the last few years in Aleppo, Afrin, Kobanî, Raqqa, Deir ez-Zor, Ras al-Ayn, and Mosul, where hundreds of thousands of Armenian deportees were starved and/or massacred in 1916. The abuses committed against Christians and Yazidis in these regions over the course of the recent wars in Syria and Iraq have often been presented in the press, or perceived by contemporaries, as a kind of stuttering or repeating of the violence which had bloodied these lands a hundred years prior. More fundamentally, the impact of the centennial, its widening over time, seems to reside in the cultural and political shifts which it triggered, whose effects are not yet fully understood, but are nevertheless being felt on a global scale. Paradoxically, it is the persistence of official denial in Turkey which serves as an engine for the reinforcement of memories of the genocide, and helps in part to explain interest in its commemoration as well as the mobilizations surrounding it.

Memorial Politics and the Geopolitics of Recognition

In general, the 2015 centennial underscored disparities which exist around the world concerning the recognition of the genocide. The global and planned nature of the commemorations had some bearing on the geopolitics of recognition. In Armenia, the state, which has placed international recognition of the genocide at the heart of its foreign policy since the end of the 1990s, also made considerable effort to bolster and promote the centenary of 1915, not merely in Armenia, but in the diaspora as well. The Armenian Church followed suit, as is evidenced by the decision of its leader, Karekin II, the Catholicos of All Armenians, to proceed, on the eve of 24 April 2015, with the canonization of one and a half million “martyrs”, who in this rendition “perished for their faith” over the course of the genocide. Indeed, the instrumentalization of the memory of the genocide has become, for Armenian authorities, be they lay or religious, a lever with which to achieve legitimation for their actions, especially in internal matters and with respect to the diaspora. This is, at any rate, the trend that could be observed in the years that preceded the recent political upheavals in Armenia, with the resignation of former president Serge Sarkissian, which took place on the symbolically charged eve of 24 April 2018. The creation of the Armenian Genocide Museum-Institute of Yerevan in 1995 and the prerogatives granted to it since then constitute one of the most obvious expressions of this politicization of the memory of the genocide on the part of the authorities of the Republic of Armenia over the last twenty years. Up until the centennial, these authorities positioned themselves as the natural interlocutors of Turkey and other nations on matters relating to the genocide, even though the vast majority of the descendants of the Ottoman Armenian victims of the genocide actually reside abroad, as members of the diaspora. The issue of international recognition of the Armenian Genocide has become a leitmotif of the the Armenian Republic’s foreign policy, which has also built on the centennial to officially recognize, by an act of its parliament on 24 March 2015, the genocides of the Greeks and the Assyro-Chaldeans of the Ottoman Empire.[18] This was a way of marking historical solidarity, but also of expanding claims before the Turkish state, thereby lending still greater resonance to the centennial of the Armenian Genocide.

In Turkey, recognition of the Armenian Genocide was long carried forward only by intellectuals and activists from minority groups such as the Kurds or the Alevis, or by the most marginal leftist fringes of the Turkish political scene, starting with some of the members of the Communist party. Indeed, up until the end of the 1990s, works on the Armenian Genocide published in Turkish were essentially the purview of Ragıp Zarakolu and Ayşe Nur Zarakolu (1946-2002), the founders and directors of the publishing house “Belge”, who were associated with the far left.[19] However, the 2000s coincided with a period of relative easing of the Turkish authorities over the Armenian Genocide, whose very mention in public had

previously been liable for prosecution for insulting the nation, based on the Turkish penal code. For some years after the Justice and Development Party's (AKP) arrival in power in 2002, it appeared as if the rejection of the Kemalist, nationalist and authoritarian heritage might lead to more discussion of the Armenian Genocide. Conferences at Bilgi and Boğaziçi Universities in 2005 and 2013, respectively, openly addressed the question. The funeral of Armenian journalist Hrant Dink (1954-2007), who was murdered in January 2007 in Istanbul, was widely covered locally and abroad.[20] Events that had been unimaginable since the 1920s, in particular meetings held on Taksim Square and at several emblematic sites of the former Ottoman capital, at the behest of progressive organizations, brought together Turkish, Kurdish and Armenian militants.[21] On 23 April 2015, on the eve of the ninety-second anniversary of the genocide, then Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan addressed a message of "condolences" to descendants of Armenians who died during the First World War, without, however, formulating an apology, and of course without ever uttering the word "genocide". Some saw in this a sign of progress, a confirmation that it would henceforth be easier to discuss the Armenian genocide openly, and perhaps even a sign that Turkey was heading towards a type of semi or partial recognition. In reality, it seems that it was instead an attempt by the Turkish authorities to try to defuse the effects of the commemoration of the centenary of the genocide beforehand – commemorations which held the potential to devastate Turkey's image on the international stage. Since then, Turkish authorities have reverted to more traditional rhetoric, denouncing "Armenian allegations of a so-called genocide" – Ankara's formula of choice. The centennial year and the period that ensued thus marked a stiffening in speeches by Turkish leaders and officials, starting with current President Erdoğan, over this question, while the country simultaneously adopted an increasingly authoritarian bent. Thus, in 2015, the government chose, exceptionally, to move the commemoration of the Battle of Gallipoli forward to April 24, nudging it up from its traditional date of April 25, so as to counteract the effects of the expected commemorations of the Armenian Genocide which were planned on that day around the world, including in Istanbul. In the event, in Istanbul, the commemoration of the Armenian Genocide only brought together a few hundred people, including many diasporic Armenians who made the trip, and was completely eclipsed by the lavish commemorations at Gallipoli, held in the presence of the leaders of Britain, Australia and New Zealand.

The repression which Turkish authorities are currently meting out on internal political opponents, combined with the accentuation of nationalist discourses, and finally the return of the outright refusal to even mention the Armenian Genocide, none of this should mask the fact that the centennial commemorations, did, in spite of it all, weigh considerably in the quest for international recognition. The clear position taken by Pope Francis in Rome on 12 April 2015 constituted the most resounding of all international acts of recognition expressed

by heads of state or parliamentary assemblies. This Papal stance broke with previous codes of Vatican diplomacy on the matter. It also elicited by far the strongest reaction from the Turkish government. The pontiff's words sent ripples not only to Ankara, provoking blunt reactions, but also to Germany, where the delicate issue of the recognition of the Armenian Genocide returned to the front of the agenda on the occasion of the centennial. In Germany, a country which boasts a strong relationship with Turkey, if only because of the many Turks and Germans of Turkish origin living on German soil, the question of recognizing the Armenian Genocide constitutes a hot-button issue. After the pope's speech, it became difficult for German deputies, even the most sheepish on this matter, to turn a blind eye to demands of recognition or to stick to minimalist readings. Building on the Pope's statement, and sharing the same moral ground, the speech of the President of the Federal Republic of Germany Joachim Gauck on 23 April 2015 in Berlin's cathedral, in which he recognized not only the reality of the Armenian Genocide but also Germany's responsibility as an ally of the Ottoman Empire, cut short the tergiversations of the federal government and German parliamentary groups. On the following day, 24 April 2015, a critical debate took place at the Bundestag over the question of formally recognizing the Armenian Genocide. The recognition was finally achieved on 2 June 2016, despite powerful pressure from the Turkish government, against the backdrop of negotiating international agreements to grapple with the "migrants' crisis".[22] The wave of votes in favor of recognition which took place between the end of 2014 and the spring of 2015 in parliaments in Austria, Cyprus, Luxemburg, Bolivia, Paraguay and Brazil, all magnified the effect, while the question of recognition was also debated in Belgium, and led to new stances on the part of the Belgian government, and to important debates in parliament. As for the Czech chamber of deputies, it too adopted a resolution recognizing the Armenian Genocide on 25 April 2017. Finally, deputies in the Netherlands came to the same decision with an overwhelming majority on 22 February 2018.

Admittedly, the number of states that have recognized the genocide remains under thirty, although the pace has increased since the centennial. As a general rule, while a plethora of votes took place in national and regional parliaments (in Catalonia and the Basque Country, for instance), executive branches have generally proven more cautious in their pronouncements.[23] At present, it is hard to predict whether the centennial effect's momentum will continue to carry forward. Undeniably, the significance of bilateral relations with Turkey weighs on some governments in their attitude towards the Armenian Genocide. Official recognition is still not the order of the day in nations such as the United States, the United Kingdom, or Israel, for essentially political reasons – even though the centennial was marked by numerous events in those countries. It is precisely because the memory of 1915 remains an injured one, still awaiting moral reparation and justice, that the centennial of the genocide generated so much interest and passion. In this context, it seems worth considering

the place of the centennial of 1915 in France in detail.

The centennial revealed that both representations and awareness of the Armenian Genocide are the subject of considerable variation around the world. Within the international geography of recognition, France has held a unique place ever since it publicly recognized the genocide by law in 2001, which is to say a little less tardily than most of its partners. France's sizeable Armenian community and the actions of groups such as the Committee of April 24, which became the Conseil de coordination des organisations arméniennes de France (CCAF) in 2001, help, in part, to explain this French exceptionalism. In the 2000s in France, public recognition of the Armenian Genocide reached such a level that it no longer relied on bilateral relations with Turkey (as is still the case in Washington, London, and Tel Aviv), and the question of how the Turkish government would predictably respond after each declaration from a government or public institution, actually became secondary. The situation is quite different in the United States, where despite promises reiterated during the presidential election campaign of 2008, President Barack Obama never pronounced the "G" word during his two terms. The same holds true for Israel, where the possibility of recognition is periodically raised as a kind of red herring in the Knesset, only when relations with Israel's Turkish ally have come under strain and the Israeli government deems that it can gain concessions in this manner. In France, on the contrary, public positioning on the 1915 genocide has become consensus-building, which is miles away from the ambiguity and fearful prudence of yesteryear. The study of the Armenian Genocide, conceived of as a kind of preview to the mass violence of the 20th century, has been inscribed into the teaching programs of the French ministry of education since 2008. In April 2015, the French government announced the creation of a special mission dedicated to research and teaching on mass violence and genocide; in 2016, Vincent Duclert was placed in charge of it.[24] President François Hollande's 24 April 2015 speech, held on a trip to Yerevan that had been planned for some time,[25] seems emblematic of the vulgate which has taken hold in official circles in France over the past decade.[26] It was not a first per se, inasmuch as two previous presidents, Jacques Chirac and Nicolas Sarkozy, had each visited the genocide museum and memorial of Yerevan, and had each in turn called on Turkey to confront its past. And yet François Hollande's speech took on special significance, and will no doubt be remembered as one of the centenary's highlights.[27] While the president was solemnly speaking at the Tsitsernakaberd Memorial of Yerevan, the presence of the Mayor of Paris Anne Hidalgo and of Prime Minister Manuel Valls in Paris on the same day lent an unusual aspect to the ceremonies, which reached their zenith with the exceptional and symbolic extinction of the lights on the Eiffel Tower that evening for ten minutes. Before the statue of the musician-priest Gomidas Vartabed (1869-1935), the traditional site of commemoration of April 24 in

Paris, the prime minister reviewed the efforts of the French government to pass a law that penalized denialism, an ongoing tricky issue that Emmanuel Macron reopened as soon as he was elected in May 2017.[28] The importance accorded to the centenary of 2015 in France also underscores the transformation of political and social uses of the memory of 1915 in a democratic country whose institutions and society had already achieved a degree of familiarity with the question of publicly recognizing the Armenian Genocide. In this sense, it can prove a useful lesson for the course of commemorations in other parts of the world.

Conclusion

Without drawing out a full balance sheet of the centennial, one can at least observe that the impressive flow of publications, conferences and other events organized in 2015 contributed to anchoring the issue of the Armenian Genocide in academic, publishing and artistic spheres. The consequences are hard to measure, but they are certainly there, and from this standpoint, the centennial marked a rupture: there was unquestionably a new level of awareness after it than before it. Admittedly, this does not necessarily translate into short or medium term breakthroughs in terms of the number of countries that recognize the Armenian Genocide. Conversely, the consequences of the centennial are manifest in the wider recognition of mass violence, not only in terms of advances in research, but also in terms of broader awareness among the general public, including in nations whose authorities have not yet dared take the step of recognizing the 1915 genocide. Rather than drawing up a summary, it seems worthwhile to underline the questions raised by the commemoration of the centennial, questions which we are not currently in a position to answer. In addition to the high expectations it produced among descendants of the victims and survivors of 1915, the centennial consistently elicited stinging questions about the level of commemorative engagement – would the event be worthy of the moment's high moral stakes? –; about the efficiency or even the rationality of such a collective investment, which seemed to surpass all bounds and occupy all energies, resources and minds; and, finally, about what would come of this mobilization once the centennial had passed. Four years on from 2015, the annual commemoration of the Armenian Genocide still remains entirely aimed at demanding recognition, a Sisyphean task that is perpetually advanced and which by definition remains incomplete.

Boris Adjemian, AGBU Nubar Library

Notes

1. It is significant that the designation of "first genocide of the 20th century" is nowadays granted to the genocide of the Armenians in many a public speech, when it was long

characterized by its absence in the public discourse of most countries, and, moreover, was actually preceded by the genocide of the Herero and the Nama in 1904, which has also been largely consigned to silence. ↑

2. See Adjemian, Boris / Nichanian, Mikaël: Du centenaire de 14-18 à celui de 1915. Quelle place pour la Grande Guerre dans la commémoration du génocide arménien?, in: Études arméniennes contemporaines 2 (2013), pp. 65-88. ↑
3. On the history of a community confronted by the denial of genocide and on its very existence during the first decades of Republican Turkey, see Talin Suciyan: The Armenians in Modern Turkey. Post-Genocide Society, Politics and History, London 2016, as well as Üngör, Uğur Ümit: Lost in Commemoration. The Armenian Genocide in Memory and Identity, in: Patterns of Prejudice 48/2 (2014), pp. 147-166. ↑
4. 24 April 1915 is the day on which the Ottoman authorities gave the signal to launch operations by arresting Armenian notables and intellectuals in Constantinople. ↑
5. See Beledian, Krikor: Le mot qui manque, in: Missakian, Chavarche: Face à l'innommable, Avril 1915, Marseilles 2015, pp. 121-137. ↑
6. See Ter Minassian, Taline: Le monument commémoratif de Dzidzernagapert à Erevan. L'invention d'un "haut lieu" de 1967 à nos jours, in: Kens, David El / Nérard, François-Xavier (eds.): Commémorer les victimes en Europe, XVIe – XXIe siècles, Seyssel 2011, pp. 145-162. ↑
7. Ter Minassian, Anahide: Histoires croisées. Diaspora, Arménie, Transcaucasie 1890-1990, Marseilles 1997, pp. 37-38. ↑
8. Forget-me-nots convey the same meaning in several languages. ↑
9. Herself a survivor of the genocide, Aurora Mardiganian was made famous by the telling of her experience under the title Auction of Souls, a book which inspired the 1919 Hollywood film Ravished Armenia. ↑
10. The first Aurora Prize was awarded to the Burundian Marguerite Barankitse on 24 April 2016. ↑
11. The conference was titled "Le génocide des Arméniens de l'Empire ottoman dans la Grande Guerre. 1915-2015, cent ans de recherche". ↑
12. "Genocide and Global History. A Conference on the 100th Anniversary of the Armenian Genocide". ↑
13. "Représentations du génocide des Arméniens et des crimes de masse". ↑
14. Special mention should be made of the large volume of documents published by Raymond Kévorkian and Yves Ternon, Kévorkian, Raymond / Ternon, Tves: Mémorial du génocide des Arméniens, Paris 2014. ↑
15. See, for instance, Marchand, Laure / Perrier, Guillaume: La Turquie et le fantôme arménien. Sur les traces du génocide, Arles 2013; Cheterian, Vicken: Open Wounds. Armenians, Turks and a Century of Genocide, New York 2015. ↑

16. Among the many examples here, I should cite the important collection of testimonies by survivors of the genocide, published by the National Archives of Armenia: Hayots Tseghasbanoutyoune Osmanyan Tourkiayoum, Verabradzneri vgayoutyounner [The Armenian Genocide by Ottoman Turkey, 1915, Testimonies of Survivors], 5 volumes, Yerevan 2012-2013. ↑
17. On this score, I should add that the chronology of the Armenian genocide is not delimited with the same clarity as the war of 1914-1918: while historians agree on dating the beginning of the operations constituting genocide between February and April 1915, there has not been an explicit reflection, nor a consensus on coming up with an end date, between the large-scale massacres in Syria/Mesopotamia in 1916 and those that struck Armenians in Iranian Azerbaijan in the Caucasus and in Cilicia in the years 1918-1921. ↑
18. In January 2018, the Armenian parliament also officially recognized the 2014 persecution of Iraqi Yazidis as a genocide. ↑
19. Other publishing houses have begun to release books about the genocide, including İlestişim and Aras. ↑
20. Journalist, founder of the Turkish and Armenian language newspaper Agos, Hrant Dink toiled for years to achieve reconciliation between the memories and recognition of the Armenian Genocide in Turkey. Based in Istanbul, the Hrant Dink Foundation still carries on its founder's militant struggle today. ↑
21. At the same time, comparable initiatives were being taken in Kurdish majority regions, most notably at Diyarbakır, where municipal authorities have tried for several years to rehabilitate the town's Armenian past, while also recognizing the genocide. Many personalities of the "pro-Kurdish" Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP), whose current president Selahattin Demirtaş is imprisoned, have called for the recognition of the Armenian Genocide in recent years, most notably through their deputy of Armenian origin, Garo Paylan. ↑
22. One should underline that this resolution on the recognition of the Armenian genocide was adopted with the support of several German deputies of Turkish origin, including Cem Özdemir, a leading German Green party member, and one of the instigators of this vote. ↑
23. See Marian, Michel: Génocide arménien. Retour sur un centenaire, in: Politique étrangère 3 (2015), pp. 83-91. ↑
24. During his 24 April 2017 speech, François Hollande also announced the creation of a "commission of judicial archives" on the Armenian Genocide, led by historian Raymond Kévorkian. Although its contours remain hazy, and it is common knowledge that commission reports are often buried in France, it is nonetheless evident that French authorities displayed undeniable creativity during the centennial period. See: Duclert,

Vincent (ed.): Rapport de la Mission d'étude en France sur la recherche et l'enseignement des génocides et des crimes de masse, Paris 2018. ↑

25. In fact, the French presidential press service spilled much more ink on this planned trip to Armenia on the occasion of the centennial, than on the visit undertaken the next day by François Hollande to Azerbaijan, a country which practices strict denialism of the 1915 genocide. ↑
26. See Adjemian, Boris: Le génocide arménien, entre objet de mémoire et objet politique. Regard sur le centenaire de 2015, issued by Observatoire du Centenaire, online: https://www.pantheonsorbonne.fr/fileadmin/IGPS/Adj%C3%A9mian_-_entre_m%C3%A9moire_et_politque.pdf (retrieved: 9 July 2019); and Adjemian, Boris: Un génocide dans l'amphithéâtre. Quelques impressions sur le centenaire de 1915 à la veille du 24 avril, issued by Observatoire du Centenaire, online: https://www.pantheonsorbonne.fr/fileadmin/IGPS/Adj%C3%A9mian_-_g%C3%A9nocide_amphith%C3%A9%C3%A2tre.pdf (retrieved: 9 July 2019). ↑
27. Hollande was, admittedly, one of few heads of state to have made the trip, alongside the presidents of Serbia, Cyprus and Russia. His speech proved considerably more forceful than Vladimir Putin's, which was judged to be ambiguous due to the care it took to use the word "genocide" as seldom as possible. ↑
28. Then candidate Emmanuel Macron went to pay his respect before the Gomidas statue in Paris on 24 April 2017, the day after having reached the second round of the presidential election against Marine Le Pen. On 31 January 2018, he reiterated François Hollande's promise to formulate a new law that would criminalize the denial of genocide before the CCAF. On 5 February 2019, during a speech delivered at the annual "dîner du CCAF" President Emmanuel Macron announced that, from then on, April 24 would be a national day of commemoration in France. ↑

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- Duclert, Vincent (ed.): Rapport de la Mission d'étude en France sur la recherche et l'enseignement des génocides et des crimes de masse, Paris 2018 (La Documentation française) (Book)
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Metadata

Regional Section(s)
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Thematic Section(s)
Post-war

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