Gallipoli: The Turkish Perspective

Gallipoli Education Project
Schools’ Conference
Birmingham, 14 March 2016
D.Burcin Cakir
burcin.cakir@gcu.ac.uk
View not the soil you tread on as mere earth - recognize it!

And think about the shroudless thousands who lie so nobly beneath you.

You're the glorious son of a martyr - take shame, grieve not your ancestors!

Unhand not, even when you're promised worlds, this paradise of a homeland.

Our blood which we shed for you shall not be worthy otherwise;

For freedom is the absolute right of my God-worshipping nation!

Written by Mehmet Akif (Ersoy) adopted in 12 March 1921, framed properly, the national anthem occupies the wall above the blackboard in the classrooms of every public as well as most private schools in Turkey, along with a Turkish flag, a photograph of Atatürk, and a copy of Atatürk’s speech to the nation's youth.
This was an operation conducted by the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force which consisted of British and French divisions supported by colonial troops. Multi-nationality of the troops at Gallipoli:

- Britain – regiments from Lancashire, Gloucestershire, Essex, London and elsewhere; Highland and Lowland Scots, Welsh borderers and Irish troops
- British Empire – Australia, Newfoundland, Ceylon, New Zealand, India, Nepal
- France and French Empire (Algeria, Morocco, Senegal)
- Palestine
- Russian and Syrian Jewish refugees (the Zion Mule Corps)
- Turkey (Arabs, Armenians, Greeks and Jews)
- and Germany

The Ottoman Empire lost more than 80,000 men; Britain nearly 35,000; France close to 10,000; Australia almost 9,000 and New Zealand nearly 3,000. More than double these numbers were wounded.

It was a truly global campaign that produced multiple of narrations which led to ongoing mass scale of official, public memory and commemorations.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Dead</th>
<th>Wounded</th>
<th>Missing &amp; Prisoners</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ottoman Empire</strong></td>
<td>56,643</td>
<td>107,007</td>
<td>11,178</td>
<td>174,828</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>United Kingdom</strong></td>
<td>34,072</td>
<td>78,520</td>
<td>7,654</td>
<td>120,246</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>France</strong></td>
<td>9,798</td>
<td>17,371</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>27,169</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Australia</strong></td>
<td>8,709</td>
<td>19,441</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>28,150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>New Zealand</strong></td>
<td>2,721</td>
<td>4,752</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>7,473</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>British India</strong></td>
<td>1,358</td>
<td>3,421</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>4,779</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Newfoundland</strong></td>
<td>49</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Allies</strong></td>
<td>56,707</td>
<td>123,598</td>
<td>7,654</td>
<td>187,959</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Sheich-ul-Islam in Constantinople proclaiming the Jibad, or Holy War.
“Theatre at Seddulbahir,” *Harp Mecmuasi*, June 1915. no:21
“Tug of War,” Harp Mecmuasi, June 1915, no: 21
“Our Faithful Soldiers Resting,” Harp Mecmuasi, September 1915, no: 24
Çanakkale Martyr's Memorial, 1960

Turks use the name “Çanakkale” for Gallipoli. It is also used as the Turkish name for the Dardanelles. Since Turks view the naval battle on the Straits as the most significant event, they have chosen to name the battle after the Straits.

There are a total of 71 monuments or memorials dedicated to the memory of the Turkish war efforts, which also included cemeteries, both real and symbolic. In larger cities and towns, a monument to those fallen in the Battle of Çanakkale can be found.

There are monuments built and cemeteries have even been constructed in other countries for the Turkish martyrs.

Monuments and memorials were constructed all over the Gallipoli Peninsula beginning in the 1960s and continue to spread at a faster pace through the 1980s and 1990s. There are a very few monuments built immediately after the war.
Canakkale Martyr's Memorial, 1960

Measuring approximately 40 metres in height, the memorial stood 7 metres higher than the British Cape Helles Memorial.

Dominating the skyline, four thick pillars were capped by a thick concrete slab.

At night-time, the memorial was flood-lit making it visible to ships.
National Peace Park

The historic battlefields on the Gallipoli Peninsula were set up as a national park on 2 November 1973 by the Ministry of Environment and Forestry.

The whole of the Peninsula was declared a national park on 14 November 1980. Also referred to as the Peace Park, the Gallipoli Peninsula Historical National Park covers an area of 33,000 hectares.

20,000 hectares are owned by the state and the rest is private land subject to governmental regulations in keeping with its status as a national park.
Across the straits and also easily visible from the ferry, is the other great ancient fort guarding the Narrows – Kilitbahir (Lock of the Sea). Above the fort, and on a hilltop to the right, is a huge figure of a 1915 Turkish soldier carved in white upon the hillside. In one hand he holds a rifle while his other arm is outstretched towards a Turkish inscription:

Dur yolcu!
Bilmeden gelip bastigin
Bu toprak, bir devrin battigi yerdir.

In English:
Traveller halt!
The soil you tread
Once witnessed the end of an era.

The words suggest that the defeat by the Turks of the Allied armies and navies of 1915 started a new era.

Tim Travers, Gallipoli 1915, Stroud, 2002, p.32
During 18 March Naval War, there was only one battery standing, on Mecidiye forts located on the European side. However, its shell crane was heavily damaged.

Corporal Seyid with an unbelievable strength lifted the shell which was 275 kg, for three times and positioned into the battery. This heroic strength of Seyid seriously damaged the HMS Ocean.

Seyid returned home in 1918 where he worked as a forester and a coal-miner. He died in 1939, because of a serious lung disease.
‘Mehmetçik’ is a common/generic name given to Muslim/Ottoman soldiers at war.

The monument is an example of transnational narrative of Gallipoli which focuses on peace and friendship after the war among nations.

It is a sculpture of a Turkish soldier carrying an Australian officer. The sculpture is based on an event in the Dardanelles Campaign of the World War 1 in which a Turkish soldier, after raising a white flag, carried a wounded Australian officer to Australian lines and returned to his line at the trenches.
GALLIPOLI WAR

"Prayer for Victory of the Ottoman Army"
ÇANAKKALE'NİN KÜÇÜK CASUSU
Sevinc & Salim KOÇAK

Masal Tadında Çanakkale

FENERBAHÇELİ KAHRAMAN ARİF'İN ÇANAKKALE DESTANI

ÇANAKKALE ASLANLARI
Kan URGAN

beyalikus cikak
ÇANAKKALE DESTANI
100. YIL ANİSINA - ÇİZGI ROMAN ve HEDİYELER
Clouding the Issue

Erdogan's Smoke-Screen:
Bijach, Side-Steps (and Celebrates)
the Turkish Genocide of
Armenians, Assyrians and Greeks

Foreign Policy Journal, April 2, 2015.