This is the published version:

Basarin, John, Hall, John and Fewster, Kevin 2010, ANZAC day at Gallipoli: a Turkish perspective, in Reflections on Anzac Day: from one millennium to the next, Heidelberg Press, Heidelberg, Vic., pp.65-76.

Available from Deakin Research Online:

http://hdl.handle.net/10536/DRO/DU:30031149

Reproduced with the kind permission of the copyright owner.

Copyright: 2010, Heidelberg Press.
Chapter 5

ANZAC Day at Gallipoli: a Turkish Perspective

Vecihi (John) Basarin, John Hall and Kevin Fewster

Introduction

Over an eight-month period in 1915, nearly a million men fought each other on the Gallipoli Peninsula. Half became casualties. As part of the Triple Entente Forces, Australian soldiers were combined with New Zealanders to establish the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps (ANZAC) as a fighting force. The campaign started with a landing at a beach now known as ANZAC Cove, on the 25 April 1915 and ended on the 20 December the same year with all of the ANZAC troops leaving the Peninsula.

In terms of a military campaign, Gallipoli was a disaster, with around 25,000 casualties for Australians. Most Australian towns, villages and hamlets had sons buried at Gallipoli. The Turks had 250,000 casualties, fighting against not only ANZACs but also British, French and Indians.

The second significant encounter between the Turks and Australians occurred when sizeable Turkish migration from Turkey to Australia began in October 1968, a year after the signing of a migration agreement between the two countries. Today there are over 70,000 Australians of direct Turkish heritage. Most of the early Turkish migrants knew little about Australia, let alone her involvement at Gallipoli. When Turks arrived in Australia they were enthusiastically welcomed to the country. The surprised Turks soon worked out that this welcome had very strong roots, stretching back to 1915.

Turks in Australia

It is not an overstatement to say that the personal experiences of Australia’s Turkish migrants universally reflect the reference point of Gallipoli. For example, Raif Guclu, who arrived in Melbourne on the first flight from Turkey in November 1968, remembers:

"In 1970, I went with a couple friends to find jobs at a mine in southern New South Wales. Taking a wrong turn, we found ourselves on a hill where there was only a shack, a dog and an old man. Learning that we were from Turkey he insisted that we stay for a cup of tea. Definitely excited to meet us, he told..."
us how he became a prisoner of war in Gallipoli, and how well the Turks had looked after him during that time’ (Basarin, 1993, p.52).

It did not take long for migrant Turks to realise the significance of the Gallipoli campaign as Australia’s emotional birthplace and the ANZAC Day commemorations as the marker of that event. The curiosity for the migrants was to see the campaign remembered on 25 April. Back in Turkey the Gallipoli campaign is commemorated each year on 18 March – the date the Ottomans repelled the great naval assault by the Royal Navy and French Navy.

In 1972, less than four years after arriving in Australia, a small band of Turks marched in Sydney’s ANZAC Day parade behind a banner declaring ‘Turkish Australian Friendship Will Never Die’. Years later, the wife of the primary Turkish organiser recalled: ‘after a few years he gave up. Nobody marches now. Instead of uniting and telling the government their problems, members of the Turkish community were pulling in different directions’ (Basarin, 1993, p.66).

Figure 1: Turkish-Australians marching on ANZAC Day in Sydney, 1972

Development of the Turkish – Australian relations

At the level of official diplomatic relations, the first steps to build closer diplomatic ties through Gallipoli remembrance were taken in 1985 when a small group of Australian veterans returned to the Gallipoli Peninsula to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the campaign. The Turkish government announced that it was officially renaming Ari Burnu beach ANZAC Cove. Australia reciprocated by naming a park near the Australian War Memorial in Canberra, as well as a stretch of coastline near Albany in Western Australia (where the first Australian Imperial Forces convoy sailed in 1914), after Mustafa Kemal Ataturk. For its part, New
Zealand renamed a prominent piece of land near the entrance to Wellington Harbour in honour of Ataturk. The 75th anniversary of the campaign in 1990 attracted even greater attention. Fifty-eight Australian and six New Zealand veterans, accompanied by Bob Hawke, the first incumbent Australian Prime Minister to visit Turkey, were joined by leaders from New Zealand, Turkey and Britain, plus an estimated 5000 to 8000 people who gathered for the Dawn Service at ANZAC Cove. The anniversary attracted enormous publicity; in particular the Australian Broadcasting Corporation's live televising of the Dawn Service back to Australia.

The 1915 Gallipoli battles have undoubtedly been the major factor in fostering friendship between Australians, New Zealanders and Turks at both national and local levels over the past decade or so. Virtually every year since 1990, the Governor-General, Prime Minister or another senior government minister has represented Australia at the ANZAC Cove service. The 85th anniversary in 2000, for example, saw both the Australian Prime Minister and Turkish President in attendance. In 2005, Australian, New Zealand and Turkish Prime Ministers and Britain's Prince Charles joined 20,000 others (overwhelmingly Australian and New Zealanders) at the annual Gallipoli commemorations. It is not just in Australia and Turkey that this new spirit of camaraderie is evident. Australian and New Zealand diplomatic missions across the world all commemorate ANZAC Day; many invite their Turkish colleagues to the event.

The efforts of Turkish Australians to be accepted into ANZAC Day commemorations within Australia have, to a large extent, followed in the wake of the diplomatic developments. Their early overtures were largely rejected. Melbourne is home to Australia's largest Turkish community and when the idea was first mooted in the mid-1980s that Turks might participate in Melbourne's ANZAC Day march, the State's Returned and Services League (RSL) President, Bruce Ruxton, stated bluntly: 'Anyone that was shooting us doesn't get in' (Fewster, et.al., 2003, p.18). In the mid-1990s Ruxton and his New South Wales (NSW) colleague, 'Rusty' Priest, visited Turkey as official guests of the Turkish Veterans' Association. That same year the Victorian RSL recognised changing community opinion by inviting two representatives of the local Turkish Returned Soldiers' Association to join the Melbourne ANZAC Day march. NSW soon followed Victoria's lead. In both cases, the Turks were permitted to march because they were Australia's ally in Korea, not because of their Gallipoli link, but one suspects this distinction was made for purely 'technical' reasons. Soon thereafter Ruxton's committee decided that because Turks and Australian diggers had served alongside each other in the Korean War, a Turkish sub-branch of the RSL could be established in Melbourne. With the RSL's blessing, Turks now march every year in ANZAC Day parades in Melbourne, Adelaide, Hobart, Canberra and Sydney. Large numbers of Turkish-Australian contingents began marching on ANZAC Days, in Melbourne from late-1990s onwards. For the first time in 2002, a Turkish diplomat, Mr Hasan Asan,
Consul-General for Victoria lead a march of the Turkish-Australian contingent on ANZAC Day.

Finally, the RSL officially allowed Turkish-Australians to march on ANZAC Days in 2007 due to the Gallipoli link with the justification that ‘The Turks were an honourable enemy’. It seems only a matter of time before Turkish-Australians will become part of every major ANZAC Day procession across Australia. Most Turkish marchers are likely to view their involvement as celebrating their own heritage as it relates to Gallipoli, acknowledging the sacrifices made by all, and finding common ground that might foster and celebrate their own integration into Australia’s multicultural society.

**ANZAC Day and Gallipoli**

ANZAC Day was first commemorated on 25 April 1916, one year after the original landing, when church services were held in Melbourne, Brisbane and London. In 1923, encouraged by the newly-formed Returned Servicemen’s Association (now the Returned and Services League, or RSL), each Australian state gazetted 25 April as a public holiday. ANZAC Day veteran marches first occurred in 1924, with the first official Dawn Service held at Sydney’s Cenotaph in 1927.
While the ANZAC Day beach service was first held at the Gallipoli Peninsula in 1925, these did not become very popular until the 1980s (Wahlert 2008). The first organised pilgrimage to the Gallipoli Peninsula took place in 1929, when 86 Australians sailed with the Burns Philp shipping company.

It is claimed that battlefield tourism may also contribute to building and strengthening national identities (Holguin 2005). C. E. W. Bean (1981, p.910), the official historian of the Gallipoli campaign, and to a large degree, the creator of the ANZAC legend, stated that:

'In no unreal sense (sic.) it was on the 25th of April, 1915, that the consciousness of Australian nationhood was born'.

As early as 1916, this consciousness became evident. Billy Hughes, the Australian Prime Minister of the time, addressing Australian soldiers in London in the first ANZAC Day speech in 1916, proclaimed:

'Soldiers, your deeds have won you a place in the Temple of the Immortals .... The world has hailed you as heroes. On the shining wings of your glorious valour you have inspired us to a newer and better and nobler concept of life; and the deathless deeds of the valiant dead will yet be sung in sagas to generations of Australians to the end of time' (Das, 2005).

According to Stanley (2005, p.140), World War One was a pivotal event in Australia's history, as Gallipoli provided Australia with 'its single most influential national myth'. As a result, many Australians are drawn to visit World War One battle sites. The Gallipoli Peninsula, the site of one of the 'bloodiest and hardest fought battles of all time' is a firm favourite with tourists and the fascination with the site seems to be increasing.

Motives for Visiting the Gallipoli Peninsula

Tourists visit battlefields for a variety of reasons that include people who have an interest in history or a desire to reconnect with the past. Others are trying to recreate the drama of the event within the actual physical surroundings. While some want to pay respect and commemorate those who took part in the battle. With regard to Australians and New Zealanders visiting the Gallipoli Peninsula, Slade (2003, p. 792) suggests:

'In visiting the site, Australians and New Zealanders do visit a battlefield, but the area represents a time and place where their countries began. Their motives are concerned with nationhood. Generally, they come to see the place where their great nation building stories happened'.

This is rather similar to the experience of Turkish visitors who want to see the lands, gullies and the hills where Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, the commander of the
Turkish forces and later the inaugural President of the Republic of Turkey, defeated the ANZACs at great human cost.

Battle site pilgrimages have taken on a sense of holiness, with a sense of spiritual sanctity similar to that of religious rituals. Hannaford (2001, p.140) believes pilgrims are vastly different from tourists, and describes pilgrimage as:

‘a journey to the centre of the pilgrim’s most valued ideals, ideals that can be termed sacred’.

People who have experienced the trip to the Gallipoli Peninsula often feel intrinsically changed. Pam Coogan visited in 2001 and reported that ‘she came back from ANZAC Cove wanting to spread the gospel of Gallipoli’ (Van Reyk, 2005, p.2).

Slade (2003) argues that the idea of Gallipoli was transformed into a more profound experience, which is different from a traditional battlefield visit; therefore, the reasons for the visit are also different. He claims that:

‘Most of the Australians and New Zealanders who travel to Gallipoli are engaged in a journey of discovering themselves, their roots and the meanings of their nations in the modern world.’ (Slade 2003, p.792)

Therefore, their motivation is related to national identity. A trip to the Gallipoli Peninsula can be classified as a true spiritual pilgrimage, which describes a way of marking generational links and continuity through their families as well as being personal quests for casting and re-creating their self and national identities in a global era (Hannaford 2001, p.128). Van Reyk (2005, p.2) places the motivation to visit in the following terms:

‘Perhaps this reconnection with a heritage site in a foreign country gives pilgrims a firm place to stand and feel pride in their Australian identity.’

With such strong motives, significant support at the highest level of the governments, increasing ease and affordability of travel, it is likely that the travel to the Gallipoli Peninsula on ANZAC Day will increase in the future.

In 1990, ANZAC Day at the Gallipoli Peninsula took on a new and significant meaning when the then Prime Minister, Bob Hawke, accompanied a group of World War One diggers to the site. The event, attended by an estimated 5000 to 8000 was televised live to large audiences in Australia and hence began the ever-increasing interest in attending the ceremonies at the Gallipoli Peninsula on ANZAC Day. In his speech, Hawke acknowledged the Turkish hosts by saying:

‘It is remarkable to reflect that the tragedy of our first encounter has been the source of nationhood of both our countries’ (Hawke, 1990, Folder No.25).
The ever-increasing number of visitors attending the ANZAC Day ceremony has resulted in the building of a more spacious site for the Dawn Service called the ‘ANZAC Commemorative Site’ in the year 2000, north of ANZAC Cove at the North Beach.

In 2005, it was estimated that there were 20,000 Australians and New Zealanders at ANZAC Cove on ANZAC Day. In 2008, the maximum expected number of 10,000 was exceeded by 20% (12,000). The prediction for 2015 is that there will be 50,000 visitors. For an unadvertised event, which takes a considerable amount of time, money and effort to attend, and occurs at a time and place that is often physically challenging, the participation rate is nothing less than amazing.

Turkish Initiatives and an Economic Impact Study of the Gallipoli Peninsula Tourists

With increased awareness of the importance of the Gallipoli Peninsula for Australians and New Zealanders, the Turkish Government took several important steps in the 1980s, and particularly 1990s, culminating in:

- Official recognition of the name ‘ANZAC Cove’ at the Gallipoli Peninsula
- The development of a master plan for the Gallipoli Peninsula National Peace Park
- Allowing, and actively supporting, Dawn Services on ANZAC Day at the Gallipoli Peninsula
- Constructing several Turkish memorials, museums and cemeteries, dotted along the Peninsula
- Promoting visitation to the battlefields.

The enthusiasm for visitation may also have been driven by the income generated as a result of thousands of tourists arriving in Turkey to visit the Gallipoli battlefields.

A study was conducted to estimate the economic impact of Australian battlefield tourism, particularly associated with their attendance at ANZAC Day services on the Gallipoli Peninsula. A quantitative method was used to gather information from Australians partaking in ANZAC Day commemorations at the site. Questionnaires were given to a convenience sample of respondents, aged 18 years and over, while in transit from Istanbul to the Gallipoli Peninsula for the 2007 Dawn Service. In total, 482 completed questionnaires were obtained. In order to estimate the economic impact of the battlefield tourists, insights into related travel behaviour and intentions, a demographic profile of attendees, the value of various information sources and factors relating to travel agent selection was obtained.

The sample comprised 42% Male and 58% female respondents. The average age of attendees was quite young at 28 years of age, with respondents’ ages ranging from...
18 to 67. As can be seen in Table 1, 73% of respondents were aged from 22 to 29 years, with almost half of the sample (48%) in the 25 to 29 age category.

Table 1: Age categories

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age category</th>
<th>Percentage of respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18-21</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22-24</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-29</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-34</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-39</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40+</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In contrast to the picture that is often painted in the media, the attendees at the Gallipoli Peninsula, while in general being quite young, comprised of well-educated skilled, trained and employed individuals. The managerial/professional (41%) and para-professional (13%) occupations represented the majority of the attendees. Those in clerical/secretarial (13%), trades (13%) or sales/hospitality (9%) also had reasonable representation. However, students (4%), labourers/unskilled (2%), unemployed (1%) or retired (1%) certainly represented the minority of attendees. These characteristics are reflected in the education levels of attendees with 83% having completed tertiary level education.

The Gallipoli commemorative activities have a multiplicative effect with regard to tourism in Turkey, Europe and Asia. When participants were asked if they would be visiting other places of interest in Turkey, after the ceremonies at the Gallipoli Peninsula, most (95%) indicated that they would. Although it is important to recognise that it is almost essential that a return trip to Istanbul is required even if a participant wishes to fly out immediately after the ceremonies. However, more than 80% of respondents indicated that they would stay in Turkey for at least six days, with 25% of respondents staying for more than 10 days. The most popular destinations to be visited in Turkey after the Gallipoli Peninsula ceremonies were Istanbul (79%), Cappadocia (29%) and Antalya (22%). A large proportion of attendees were also planning to visit other cities in Europe including: London (79%), Paris (36%), Rome (34%), Athens (34%) and Munich (24%). While Singapore (27%) and Bangkok (26%) were popular Asian destinations to visit as was Dubai (16%) in the Middle-East. When respondents were asked who they had travelled to the Gallipoli Peninsula with; a small proportion travelled on their own (14%). However, most people travelled with others, either with friends (50%), or in a group (26%), or with family (10%).

It was found that many of the respondents used a variety of means to arrive at their decisions in making their travel arrangements. Word-of-mouth recommendation has often been accepted as being very important in the travel industry and this is
definitely the case with regard to attendance at the Gallipoli Peninsula commemorations. When respondents were asked; ‘How important were the following sources of information in assisting you to make your travel arrangements?’ More than sixty percent of respondents regarded word-of-mouth recommendations as being very important in their decision to travel to the Gallipoli Peninsula. The importance of the internet to the travel industry is also reflected in the use of the internet by attendees. The internet was viewed as a very important source of information by 65% of respondents while 35% of respondents also viewed travel agents websites as being very important. Other very important sources of information were travel guide books (50%), leaflets/brochures (35%) and magazines (35%). It is interesting to note that television and newspapers advertisements did not play an important role in the decision process.

When choosing a travel agent for the Gallipoli expedition, only twenty percent of respondents chose the travel agent because it was one that they generally use. The level of information that they were able to provide was regarded as being very important to forty percent of respondents while convenience (39%), good service (33%) and competitive price (33%) were also very important influencing factors in using a particular travel agent.

The expenditure estimate of the participant was ascertained as well as the duration of visit. The data was analysed for average expenditure per person per day, which was found to be $394. The average duration of the visit to Turkey was estimated to be 8.2 days. In the last two years, it was estimated that the average number of Australian participants at the Gallipoli Peninsula commemorative services on ANZAC Day ranged from 8,000 to 10,000. In Table 2, the estimate of the total expenditure potential range is shown to be between $25.88 and $32.36 million.

Table 2: Economic impact of visitation to the Gallipoli Peninsula on ANZAC Day 2007

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Australian participants</th>
<th>Total expenditure estimate ($)</th>
<th>Total economic impact with multiplier effect ($)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8,000</td>
<td>25,884,000</td>
<td>50,730,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10,000</td>
<td>32,355,000</td>
<td>63,420,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For Turkey, the economic multiplier effect is estimated to be 1.96, which takes into account indirect spending (Koc, 2007, p.230). Utilising this multiplier effect, the estimate for the true economic impact potential would be between $50.73 and $63.42 million. Expenditure items would include travel services both in Australia and Turkey, accommodation, transport, food and beverages, other related tourism experiences, as well as the purchase of other goods and services.
Conclusions

The Gallipoli Peninsula is Australia’s touchstone in battlefield tourism. The ANZAC Day visits to the Gallipoli Peninsula, Turkey began in 1925. However, its growth coincides with a prime ministerial attendance at ANZAC Cove in 1990. The number of Australian participants increased to such an extent that it would not be unusual to have over 10,000 Australians attending ANZAC Day ceremonies at the Gallipoli Peninsula now, with around 50,000 expected in 2015. This is a result of strong motives that drive the participants to visit the Gallipoli Peninsula. Turkey is likely to welcome this development as it provides a significant economic impact.

The following interesting aspects relating to battlefield tourism were also unearthed, with the Gallipoli Peninsula as the focus of the case study:

1. Although the media portrays it differently, it was determined that the attendees at the Gallipoli Peninsula were, in general, quite young, well-educated, skilled, trained and employed individuals. The managerial/professional (41%) and para-professional (13%) occupations represented the majority of the attendees.
2. Possibly reflecting the age group of the participants, the internet was viewed as a very important source of information by 65% of respondents.
3. After leaving the Gallipoli Peninsula, Istanbul and London were the most popular destinations by far, particularly as most participants had to enter or exit Turkey via Istanbul airport and Qantas returns to Australia via London. Many Australians also have a UK heritage.

As an event that is not publicised, ANZAC Day attendance at the Gallipoli Peninsula has become a significant occasion. Its popularity is ever increasing and is expected to peak in 2015 with the centenary of the campaign.

ANZAC Day and the ceremonies at the Gallipoli Peninsula are recognised by participants as an important part of Australian culture and history. Participants attend the ceremonies for ‘high’ motives relating to freedom, and as an act of remembrance. Hence, it is extremely important that the event organisers ensure that the ceremonies keep their authenticity and meaning and are not diluted by introducing elements such as entertainment.

Remarks

Now that the last Gallipoli ANZACs have died, their medals are proudly worn each ANZAC Day by their children, grandchildren, or great grandchildren. While these marchers do not have any direct experience of Gallipoli, they march out of respect for the men who earned the medals and the values they fought for. ‘Rusty’ Priest defines these ANZAC values as ‘compassion, understanding and thinking of others’, while for the journalist and Gallipoli author, Les Carlyon, the ANZAC tradition means ‘refusing to give up no matter how hopeless the cause, it means
looking after your mates, keeping your sense of humour, improvising and making do’ (Fewster, et.al., p.19). The meaning of Gallipoli seems to be moving away from nationalistic chauvinism and more towards a celebration of universal humanist values of personal sacrifice and triumph over adversity. These values hold as true for the Turkish forces that fought at Gallipoli as they do for the ANZACs.

In less than half a decade from now, Australia and Turkey will mark the centenary of the Gallipoli campaign. Hopefully, in addition to the individual events that each nation will mount to honour their fallen, both countries will come together to acknowledge their shared Gallipoli inheritance.

It has been interesting to observe that, as Turks and Australians discover their shared Gallipoli heritage, increasingly the famous words proffered by Mustafa Kemal Ataturk in 1934 are being cited as a universally fitting statement of what Gallipoli represents. The future of ANZAC Day will be in good hands if his words continue to resonate and be heard around the world:

‘Those heroes that shed their blood and lost their lives. You are now living in the soil of a friendly country, therefore rest in peace. There is no difference between the Johnnies and the Mehmets to us where they lie side by side, here in this country of ours. You, the mothers, who sent their sons from faraway countries, wipe away your tears; your sons are now lying in our bosom and are in peace. After having lost their lives on this land, they have become our sons as well.’

References


