

## From Gallipoli to Independence: Turkish and Australian Students' Perspectives

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### Abstract

Given the broad public appeal of WWI commemorations and in consideration of their inclusion in school curriculum, the question is raised of how do Turkish and Australian students view the importance and ways of commemorating the Gallipoli campaign? This comparative study, the first of its kind approaches this current gap in understanding how high school students view this historical event. The focus of this paper is to report on research conducted in Australian and Turkish\* high schools during the centenary years of WWI commemorations. 185 high school students agreed to participate and share their perspectives on commemorating Gallipoli and to respond to a series of five sources provided to them as part of the research activity. How students responded to the sources and engaged with questions of commemoration is detailed throughout this paper.

**Keywords:** History Education, High School, World War I, Commemoration, National Identity, Emotional Nationalism

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## INTRODUCTION

History can give students a sense of identity and this can be exemplified by significant national events—often conflicts—that the nation has participated in, while paying attention to their cultural roots (Turan and Ulusoy, 2013). Barnard discusses the complexity of learning national identity through the school curriculum:

“..teaching the succeeding generations history is an important part of the process by which the officially recognized narratives of the nations are passed on down the ages to succeeding generation, and by which these generations define themselves with reference to the nation state; learning one’s history is part of the process by which citizens learn to position their country and the values that their country espouses within the wider international society...History is not only seen as a matter of learning the narratives of the nation, but it is often taken for granted that one of the aims of the school subject of history is to inculcate in pupils patriotism and pride in the nation state. (2003, 9)”

Teaching history, in alignment with this, plays an important role in each nation’s education system. Internationally, the purposes of teaching a specific nation’s own history in schools and, importantly, the content selected to do so, has been at the forefront of public debates for almost two decades (Henderson, 2019; Taylor, 2019) . As observed by Slater, “history is an often unsettling and sometimes uncomfortable subject. It is controversial and often very sensitive. There is some consensus about its importance in the school curriculum but much less agreement about what it is for” (as cited in Lévesque, 2007, 349).

*The Australian Curriculum: History* (Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority, 2018) broadly guides the teaching of History in high schools across the nation, interpreted by each State and Territory into syllabuses that guide teacher planning. WWI and more specifically, Gallipoli, is taught as the third of three Depth Studies in Grade 9 (typically 14-15 year olds), which focuses on *The Making of the Modern World* as its year level description. The description of the depth study reads:

### World War I

Students investigate key aspects of World War I and the Australian experience of the war, including the nature and significance of the war in world and Australian history.

### World War I (1914-1918)

- An overview of the causes of World War I and the reasons why men enlisted to fight in the war.
- The places where Australians fought and the nature of warfare during World War I, including the Gallipoli campaign.
- The impact of World War I, with a particular emphasis on Australia (such as the use of propaganda to influence the civilian population, the changing role of women, the conscription debate)
- The commemoration of World War I, including debates about the nature and significance of the Anzac legend. (Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority, 2018, n.p.)

*The Turkish Curriculum:* In Turkish high schools, WWI is introduced briefly in Grade 8 with a unit titled, *Turkish Republic Revolution History and Kemalism*. Students are taught modern history from the French Revolution through to the last age of the Ottoman Empire (1839-1918), which includes Gallipoli being briefly mentioned. The students are taught WWI in greater depth during

Grades 10 and 11 who are approximately 14 to 15 years old. In the Turkish curriculum the topic is explained:

*Ottoman State and the world in beginning 20<sup>th</sup> century*

- Students analyse the status of Ottoman state in the beginning of the First World War in terms of political, economic and sociological perspectives.
- Students knows land and naval achievements in Gallipoli campaign, Kut’ul Amara in Iraq front,
- Examines the operations of Mustafa Kemal in Gallipoli, Qafkas and Syrian fronts.
- Recognizes the other commanders who take part in Gallipoli wars (High school curriculum, 2018, 22).

In general the Gallipoli campaign in Turkish history is represented as a war of existence and a war of defences. Therefore, it is important to consider the historical context of conflict (Ata, 2001).

Another study (Çoban, 2011), based on the views of high school students measured levels of perceptions about the Gallipoli campaign, sought to determine attitudes exhibited by teachers when teaching this topic. The results showed that due in part to the Anzac ceremony held every year at Gallipoli, communication between the former enemies is positive and has been effective in eliminating negative views and hostilities towards each other, contributing to feelings of goodwill to Australia and New Zealand by the Turkish people.

In Turkey, it is often asserted that the Gallipoli campaign has been a focus in education and training activities. However, research shows that the reality of teaching the Gallipoli campaign in Social Studies can be of inadequate quality and quantity (Kaymakçı, 2010). In an examination of History textbooks and curriculum in Turkey, it was found that it was difficult to determine whether the Dardanelles War is sufficiently covered. The conflict is included at a limited level within the fronts of the Ottoman Empire during WWI in Grade 10 and Mustafa Kemal's life and military success in the *Grade 11 topic Turkish Revolution History and Kemalism* lesson (Yazıcı, 2013).

Despite all the brutality of the war, the friendly and strong relationship between Turkey and Australia is not included in the curriculum or textbooks (Yazıcı, 2013). In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, with concepts such as globalization, multiculturalism, and world citizenship being intensively discussed and social structures are changing rapidly, the role of history education becomes increasingly critical in preparing students for an unknown future.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Data collection and analysis**

Students’ expressions of nationalism present in their responses, forms the identified discourses analysed here. The discourses that are shown in these responses, include a focus on: nationalism today through events of the past; general expressions of nationalism; material and physical nationalism; emotional nationalism; origin narratives; and looking to the past to justify national pride through commemorations today. This section identifies the participant demographic data; report on a small content analysis conducted on identified key words commonly used by participants; and the analysis of discourses.

The research data collection occurred in 2015 in Australia and in 2017 in Turkey. Although there is a two-year difference, given that during this period the centenary of World War I commemorations were taking place, and internationally, there has been a lot of attention paid to this international conflict, it is not considered to be a disadvantage in terms of the validity of the data. The

aim of the research was to gain an understanding of whether or not current day high school students think Gallipoli/Çanakkale is worthwhile to commemorate, why they think this is the case, and also to respond to five sources that look at contemporary commemorations of Gallipoli from an Australian perspective for the Australian students and from a Turkish perspective for the Turkish students. One-sided sources were intentionally selected so as to gauge the level of participants' critical historical literacy. Students in both countries were provided with a five-page booklet that included basic demographic questions, three questions, and five sources. They were allocated one hour to complete the task independently, at which time the teacher collected the booklets from the students. Students who did not agree to have their responses included did not need to submit them to their teacher on completion; therefore they were not collected (see Table 1 for a breakdown of the demographic data).

In total, 185 students participated in the research. They were all high school students studying History in either Turkey (n. 103) or Australia (n. 82). The students were spread across five years of schooling with the age group ranging from 13-18 and with a concentration of students in the junior years of high school (years 8, 9, and 10).

### Research Questions

The three questions students were asked to respond to include (translated to Turkish for the Turkish students):

1. Is Gallipoli a significant event for us to remember today? Why or why not?
2. How should Gallipoli be remembered today?
3. Describe any perspectives/viewpoints about Gallipoli that you feel are missing from Sources A to E.

Sources for students from both countries aimed to be identical in type and purpose so that an accurate comparison could take place between the participants' responses. For the Australian part of the study, the five sources included: a historical photograph of wounded Australian troops on the beach at Anzac Cove; a promotion poster for the television series *Anzac Girls* produced and aired in Australia; a diary entry written by an Australian soldier at Gallipoli; and two recent photographs of commemorative Anzac Day services: one at a cenotaph in the regional Australian city of Toowoomba, and one of the pilgrimage of young Australians and New Zealanders to Gallipoli, Turkey. The five sources for the Turkish part of the study included: a historical photograph of wounded Turkish soldiers being transferred to hospitals in Istanbul; promotional poster for the Turkish film *Last Letter*, a production that focuses on the 18 March 1915 Dardanelles Battle and released on its centenary anniversary; a diary entry by a Turkish Lieutenant; and two recent photographs of Çanakkale commemorative services: one of two soldiers laying a wreath emblazoned with the white crescent moon and star with a red background of the Turkish flag at the Mehmetçik monument, Çanakkale, and one showing Turkish tourists visiting a monument on the Gallipoli Peninsula on the centenary of the Dardanelles War.

How students make meaning and communicate idea of national identity when learning about key historical events that are seemingly intrinsically linked to citizens' ideas of who they are, as is the case with Australia's commemoration of Gallipoli and Turkey of Çanakkale is of central concern to this paper. As Wertsch has pointed out, "narratives about the past serve as a kind of 'cultural tool' in 'mediated action' that creates and re-creates identity" (1997, 5). The sources put to the students were cultural artefacts with well-used cultural tools and could be reasonably expected that students were familiar with, given their pervasiveness not just in schools but in the wider public sphere. This "knowledge about the past is widely viewed as a crucial ingredient in the construction of identity. From this perspective we can't know or we are if we don't know where we have been, or, in the words of the historian David Lowenthal (1985): 'the 'sureness of *I was* is a necessary component of the sureness of *I am*'" (Werstsch, 1997, 5). The participants who live turkey and Australian information is presented table 1:

**Table 1: Student demographic data**

		Turkish Participants (f)	Australian Participants	Total
Gender	Male	58	66 <sup>1</sup>	124
	Female	45	16	61
School Year	8	-	21	21
	9	34	21	55
	10	30	8	38
	11	41	2	43
	12	-	29	29
	unspecified	-	1	1
<b>Total</b>		<b>103</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>185</b>

## Analysis

### Summative Content Analysis of Significant Terms

With a qualitative approach taken to analysis data in this article, given the high frequency of some key terms that emerged organically from the data, *that is, these terms were not pre-empted from the questions asked* a qualitative content analysis also took place. It is used just to count keyword recurrences that illuminate the types of language high school students from Australia and Turkey have used in their responses. Summative content analysis is used here as that qualitative measure and was undertaken to frame the DHA component. As described by Hsieh and Shannon, “typically, a study using a summative approach to qualitative content analysis starts with identifying and quantifying certain words or content in text with the purpose of understanding the contextual use of the words or content” (2005, 1283). From the initial read-through of the data, keywords were identified and their recurrence counted so that they could then be used as part of the critical discourse analysis. The keywords provided a signposting of the discourses that were then extrapolated and contextualised so that a deeper understanding could be gained of how participants intended them to be read. Relevant to this research, which seeks to examine both the similarities and differences in responses to similar content by high school students in Turkey and Australia, “a summative content analysis involves counting and comparisons, usually of keywords or content, followed by the interpretation of the underlying context” (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005, 1277) took place. Although content analysis is more commonly associated with quantitative approaches, the utilising of summative content analysis as a precursor to the DHA approach puts it firmly in the area of qualitative research. Ensuring that a qualitative approach was maintained, the identification and counting of keywords was “used to identify patterns in the data and to contextualise the codes” (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005, 1285). Demonstrating the importance placed on key persons and key attributes of soldiers and key figures, *Table 2* provides an overview of word frequency to show context of participants’ responses. The students mentioned these terms independently, that is, nowhere in the questions nor the provided sources were these terms used, and thus no influence by the researchers was on the students when they responded this way.

Understanding the context of the words used is of utmost importance—an aspect that content analysis does not address. For example, the word “sacrifice” was used 49 times by Australian high school students. By stopping at a content analysis that is quantitative in focus, the context in which this word was used would have been missed. Some students wrote about sacrifice as a way of praising Australian men who fought in WWI. For example, WC33M12<sup>2</sup> writes, “The experiences of the soldiers and their sacrifices embodies the idea of mateship and patriotism.” While others dispute that it

<sup>1</sup> The large number of male students in the Australian data is due to one of the participating schools being an all-boys’ school.

<sup>2</sup> To protect the identity of students alphanumeric codes were ascribed to participants, adhering to the following conventions: the first letters are the anonymised school; the first set of numbers is the order in which participants’ responses from each school were typed; the gender selected by the participant follow, with either F (female) or M (male) (note, no students selected other); and the final two numbers is the school year of the participant.

was a sacrifice, drawing on background or pre-existing knowledge to write, for example, in response to Q1, “However, nowadays it [Gallipoli] is remembered as a grand sacrifice to protect Australia – which I disagree with” and in answer to Q2 “As I have stated above, not with glory and as a sacrifice – but as a massacre directed by a country we had no need for following” (AGHS5F09).

Gleaned from prior research in the area, such as textbook and other educational media analysis, an idea of what keywords might be present in participant responses did exist. However it was on reading participant responses that the keywords became apparent by their repetition between and within each participant’s response. Only keywords that emerged organically from participant responses have been included. This method such as that recommended by Hsieh and Shannon (2005), is explained by Boréus and Bergström:

is at least partly inductive (data-drive), meaning that although the researcher might start from broader themes or research questions when analysing the material, the text is coded directly, with categories growing out of that coding. The label ‘qualitative content analysis’ is also frequently used for analysis in which quantification is part of the analysis but more complex interpretations must be made. (2017, 24)

For this research, as the focus is on making “complex interpretations of texts” (Boréus & Bergström, 2017, 24), the content analysis is small with DHA as the main methodological focus. By itself, summative content analysis does not necessarily provide the rich data contextualisation required when analysing participant responses to a set of narrative style questions; however combined with a CDA analysis approach, it provides a relevant introduction to the types of discourses that emerge from participant responses.

### **Key findings that emerged from the data: Expressions of nationalism**

Nowhere in the three questions were students asked to comment on anything to do with nationalism, patriotism, the nation state, independence, or any other term related to nationalism in any sense. However, so prominent in both countries’ educational and public discourses and in the general socio-political context, that the students are well versed in various narratives of their respective nation’s involvement in WWI so much so that they are able to respond to questions with greater knowledge than just the content provided in the sources, mainly in terms of expressing nationalistic views towards involvement in this conflict. They were only asked to comment on whether Gallipoli was significant, how it should be remembered, and to identify missing perspectives in the sources provided. While Australian students mentioned Turkey quite often (although the focus did remain on this being an Australian event), no Turkish student makes mention of Australia, New Zealand, Anzac or any other country. For these students at least, it is clearly a Turkish-focused historical event. Turkish participants associated Atatürk and Corporal Seyit specifically with notions of nationalism and the Australian participants associated unnamed soldiers, in the main, with their associations of nationalism to this event.

### **Nationalism today through events of the past**

A significant topic that surfaced consistently in the responses provided by both Turkish and Australian students was expressions of nationalism. Students related current feelings of nationalistic pride and what it meant to be ‘Turkish’ or ‘Australian’ *today* with the experiences of World War I, namely through prominent persons such as Mustafa Kemal Atatürk and Corporal Seyit (for the Turkish students) and an anonymous but archetypal soldier (in the case of the Australian students). They are written about as though they embody all that is good in the nation, historically and in contemporary times, and typify what it is to be Australian or what it is to be Turkish. The similarities in student responses, from two very different cultural standpoints, arguably reflect the prominence placed on the Gallipoli/Çanakkale narratives in both countries. These narratives are taught in formal education settings, such as schools; in informal education settings such as advertising, public

memorials, and conversations within families; and semi-formal education settings such as visits to museums, viewing documentaries, and reading history books.

There was less mention of nationhood as a physical, bordered space compared to it being attributed to an emotional or internal experience. The expressions of material or physical nationalism was limited to 14 Turkish students and 4 Australian students (13.5% and 5% respectively). Given these low numbers, the focus of the analysis reported here is on the affective discourses of nationalism expressed by students. To briefly describe participants' inclusion of this discourse, Gallipoli/Çanakkale was remembered through memorials, songs, cinema and other entertainment, literature, school teaching, political parties, Atatürk, sports, marches, ceremonies, and prayer. Its significance was for nation-building, 'birth of a nation' discourses, victory, sacrifices of martyrs, and independence as a sovereign nation.

### **Emotional nationalism**

Narrating national identity through emotional nationalism was the most common discourse that emerged in responses. For the Australian participants, emotional nationalism was frequently connected to ideas of being grateful for the soldiers and to see them as an example of what it means to be Australian. While the term sacrifice was used frequently (n. 49), it was not done with Christian or other religious intent; rather the words was used as a way to comprehend the sheer scale of death that occurred to soldiers fighting at Gallipoli and as a way to communicate respect for their actions—often mixed in with ideas of “people died for us” (WC8M09) and also expressed explicitly by WC11M08: “People/soldiers died for us to be a better country and a safer one too. It would be disrespectful for us to not you remember the dead and the survivors...soldiers fought their hearts out to be where we are today.” For the Australian participants, at times the expressions of nationalism in the data are more difficult to detect because it is a kind of de facto nationalism, expressed through soldiers rather than explicitly. For example WC3M09 writes, “...it demonstrates who true Australians are and their sacrifice to their country.” While this fits within emotional nationalism, it is mitigated through the soldier experience.

On the other hand, for the Turkish participants, emotional nationalism is inextricably linked to expressions of religion. The participants' use of the term martyrdom (n. 42) does not separate concepts of the nation and religion. While although the modern Turkey nation state was created as a secular country, the Islamic influence as a national religion remains and is apparent in the participants' responses, especially as the Çanakkale battle is increasingly seen through the lens of a religious war against non-Islamic nations. This is exemplified through the intensified language used by Ö12M10 who writes: “We must read Mevlids [a holy poem about the Prophet], we should read 3 ihlas 1 fatiha [subdivisions of the Kur'an]” in responding to the question of how should Gallipoli be remembered (Q2). When using the term martyr or martyrdom, the Turkish participants often used emotive language that is at least overt, but frequently, intensified according to Wodak's questions (Wodak, 2004, 207; Wodak & de Cillia, 2006, 717-718). For example, Ö30M10 not only writes of “thousands of martyrs” but also to “remember our glorious days”, “victory”, and that there is pride in “remembering again and again that Çanakkale is impassable.”

Other topics raised frequently by Turkish participants include the homeland or motherland, Çanakkale as a unifying event, and Corporal Seyit. These three topics as part of the emotional discourse are included here.

On the importance of the emotional idea of a homeland, Ö25F10 writes in response to Q1:

Yes, it is an important fact to remember. Because if we can live this way today, we are hundreds of thousands of soldiers fighting for the homeland in this war. It is important for them to fight against thousands of enemies for the sake of their homeland, to ignore their own lives, to remember everything for the sake of the homeland.

The repetition of the term homeland emphasises the importance Ö25F10 places on linking Turkish involvement in the war to protecting the land borders. Her response then carries this idea further of the importance of homeland by then linking it to being “martyrs” as she goes on to write in response to Q2: “Thousands of our soldiers must be remembered to fight their enemies for the sake of their lives, to ignore their lives and to throw themselves in front of the bullets for the sake of the homeland, to be martyrs to save their homeland.” Also making connections to the homeland, Ö26M10 writes in response to Q3 that asks if anything is missing from the sources: “In Canakkale, people struggle for homeland in difficult conditions.”

Unity also featured prominently in participants’ responses, with Ö18M10 writing:

It's a good thing to remember. Because the Gallipoli War is an unforgettable war. Thousands of people are martyred for the homeland and this should not be forgotten. War is a war of unity and solidarity. We do not know what they lived, but when we think it is a war that has been won in the absence, and we should not forget it.

Two more examples that typify the type of intensified language used by the Turkish participants include Ö11M10 who writes: “...the Çanakkale war is a war that we should take lessons and it is very important for the Turkish nation. This is a war of national unity and coexistence.” Similarly, Ö18M10 writes: “...the Gallipoli War is an unforgettable war. Thousands of people are martyred for the homeland and this should not be forgotten. War is a war of unity and solidarity...”

Featured strongly (n. 18) was the inclusion of famed soldier, Corporal Seyit who is given hero status not only in the general public discourse—there are monuments dedicated to him in Turkey—but also by the participants of this project. They hold up Corporal Seyit, full name Seyit Ali Çabuk, as representative of all soldier for the attributes he displayed in battle that are symbolic of those that all Turkish people should strive to emulate. Corporal Seyit is famous for his physical strength, allegedly having carried three artillery shells, weighing in at 275kgs, during the Çanakkale battle to defend the Dardanelles.

Many Turkish participants identified Corporal Seyit as missing from the sources and mentioned this in their responses to Q3. Ö24M10 writes in response to Q1: “...Our soldiers who fought in Çanakkale have never thought of their own lives for the future of our nationality and think and think only of creating a safe and free Turkey for the future.” Then, in response to Q3, he raises the point about key people/famous identities missing from the provided sources, extending his response to Q1, commenting about the revered Corporal, writing: “Of course it is also missing. Seyit Corporal struggled to put his life on his teeth to hit the enemy ships, which was three times heavier than his own weight. But unfortunately there is no picture of him here.” Here, Ö24M10 implies that it is remiss not to include Corporal Seyit, so embedded is he within the Turkish discourse of WWI; exemplified through the statement, “of course it is also missing” and then going on to explain the importance of his role and that it is “unfortunate[ly]” that there is no picture of the Corporal. Likewise, other participants also note his absence, including for example, Ö26M10 who writes in response to Q1, “Our ancestors and victories won in the Gallipoli War and the struggle of Seyit corporal under difficult conditions.” While many of the comments connect Corporal Seyit one way or another with nationalism or specifically make judgement statements about his exclusion. His frequent inclusion in student responses are all positive about Corporal Seyit and many can be explicitly and overtly linked to ideas of nationalism. This can be seen, for example, in Ö42M11’s response to Q3: “Seyit corporal should not be ignored and also women's nationalism, who sacrificed his life to help the front line in this war, must also be narrated from generation to generation.”

Whereas the Australian participants frequently wrote about soldiers dying for them to enjoy freedom 100 years after the fact (a dubious and rather presentist claim), Turkish students viewed it as their responsibility to act in ways that honoured the actions of the Turkish soldiers, as pointed out by Ö56M11 in response to Q1: “Yes, because thousands of people in Canakkale have been martyred and we owe them our future.” So whereas the Australian participants see it as an individual benefit, the Turkish students view it as of benefit to the whole nation.

### **Origin narratives: Examples of being Turkish originating with WWI**

Origin narratives constituted a large portion of the discourses identified from participants' responses. Of the 103 Turkish participants, 51—almost 50% of responses—included information about Çanakkale being the origin of the Turkey nation. It is understandable that participants feel this way when considering Turkish 20th century history. At the end of WWI the Treaty of Sèvres, was signed on 10 August 1920. This Treaty dismantled the former Ottoman Empire, but did not create an independent Turkish state. It can be reasonably argued that the hostilities that followed—namely the Turkish War of Independence led by Atatürk which led to a second treaty, The Treaty of Lausanne signed on 24 July 1923 (it came into effect 6 August, 1924)—the modern nation state of Turkey was then born from the new national boundaries that were set for a number of countries in the region. Students enrolled in Turkish schools are well versed in their nation's modern history, learning about these events systematically from Social Studies in the primary years of schooling through to History in secondary school. The origin narratives that students wrote about in response to the three question posed to them frequently referred to independence, martyrdom, salvation, linking Atatürk explicitly to the nation's origin story (and bestowing much praise onto him), and at times crossed over into discourses of emotional nationalism. A selection of student responses are provided here to illustrate these points.

Ö3F10 writes that there is no question that this was the origin of the Turkish nation, and that it was the result of soldiers acting as martyrs, writing: "Of course it is an important turning point. It is the history of mankind's salvation. Though thousands of soldiers are martyrs, which we have gained independence, it is a war that announces the name of the Turks. This should not be forgotten!" Independence is seen by Ö36F11 as being "rescued from foreign states." In an extract of a rather lengthy response, she writes, "...it is a very important thing to remember because it is an event that every human being should remember because the independence of our country. This is a war in which our country was rescued from foreign states and taken with determination and national power on very difficult conditions." She also praises Corporal Seyit and connects him to this independence, writing

Seyit must have been at the moment when he was alone to lift bullets, which were heavily weighted, and the ships of foreign states, his troops poured into the sea and the battle was won. The dishes, the clothes, the weapons used, the difficulties of that time, must have been here in the fighting tools, which were won in difficult conditions.

Following the thread of freedom from foreign nation states is also in the mind of Ö55M11 who responds to Q1, writing: "Yeah. Because if the Turks did not win the Çanakkale war, maybe we could be in the shadow of the English today. We could not be independent." Again the notion of being independent from a foreign government is included in a participant's response. Ö44M11 writes, following the lines of one of Atatürk's most famous phrases, "...if we did not beat that war, we wouldn't be Turkish, we were not free. Who knows who would be a slave? We have won our independence, independence through this war. How happy is the one who says I am a Turk..." Ö42M11 writes, in response to Q1: "Yes, it was an important one. Our soldiers who fought in Çanakkale have protected our country's independence and future, and our crescent-star flag has been formed reflecting the blood of our soldiers who were bloodshed in this war."

The reverence given to Atatürk's role in creating the modern Turkey nation state is significant. Participants' responses that included Atatürk were full of praise to the former and inaugural Turkish President in a way that could almost be described as deifying. Ö19M10 writes, as an example, "The Gallipoli War is an important turning point for the Turkish nation. Mustafa Kemal's foresight and military intelligence played an important role in winning the war." Again typifying the admiration—some could say devotion to Turkey's most famous leader—Ö71M11 writes: "Yes, it is a good thing to remember because the struggle there is not an unforgettable event. This battle, which our soldiers enter into for the homeland, is not an event that can be easily forgotten by us and the Turkish people. The struggle that Mustafa Kemal and his troops gave us was our salvation." The final example comes from Ö73F09 who, in response to Q3 asking if there is anything missing from the sources, writes: "I think

that the part where the women's bullet carries bullet must be added, and of course Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, our leader who pioneered the establishment of this state and we owe our independence.”

Crossing over between an origin discourse and emotional nationalism is the idea of unity and solidarity put forth. Arguably, the response here could be placed in the emotional nationalism discourse, however it is relevant here because it discusses not just Turkish history, but also refers to the Çanakkale battle in terms of unity. Ö32M11 writes: “Çanakkale war is one of the biggest and most lost wars [in terms of casualties] of Turkish history. It has been shown that no one can stand in the face of the unity and solidarity of the Turkish nation... So this war should not come out of our mind every day every month every year.”

Ö8F10 relates the origin discourse to a revival of Turkey as a nation, comparing Çanakkale to being freed “from captivity.” She writes in response to Q1: “It's definitely a big deal. Because this war has cleared the Turkish nation from captivity. It made us free in our thoughts, we made our elections free.” Similarly referencing this historical event to revival of sorts Ö18M10's response is an almost Homeric homage to soldiers, that extends beyond an origin of nation narrative, with terms such as unity, solidarity, and ancestral epic used to describe how Gallipoli should be remembered today. His statement connects the Gallipoli victory with ancestors and reads: “As a result of unity and solidarity, it was a battle that finally won. Ancestral epic was written and should not be forgotten.” Ö4M10 ethuses: “Yes, it is an important thing to remember that the Gallipoli battle was an event of revival of a nation. The end of the struggle to revive a depleted and desperate nation is the work of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk. For this reason, today Gallipoli should be remembered with great importance to Mustafa Kemal Atatürk.” Taking umbrage at Atatürk not being included in an unnamed memorial ceremony, Ö4M10 further writes: “Mustafa Kemal Atatürk had not been featured in the posters organized for the last memorial ceremony.” Ö28M10 describes the “struggle for independence” as rebirth, writing: “Çanakkale is a nation's enemy struggle for liberation. Both land wars and sea battles in Çanakkale are only one of the most important challenges to protect the homeland...A struggle for independence by giving a dense presence to a nation. The rebirth of a nation.”

Gallipoli, or Çanakkale (participants sometimes used the terms interchangeably) was also seen as a turning point regarding the success of the Turkish nation. Ö19M10 writes, “The Gallipoli War is an important turning point for the Turkish nation. Mustafa Kemal's foresight and military intelligence played an important role in winning the war.”

It appears in participants' responses, they conflate Gallipoli/Çanakkale and the Turkish War of Independence: important events that lead to the establishment of Turkish sovereignty. Demonstrating this, is the response of Ö103M09 to Q1: “The Gallipoli war is so important that it is a war of independence. But we are so technologically buried that we can forget the war of independence of our nationality.”

These responses show that the language used is not mitigated in any way, they are intensified with terms such as blood, martyr, independent, pioneer, freed from captivity. There can be no doubt that the 50% of participants who wrote responses that fit within the origin of a nation discourse are very clear about the importance they place on this event.

### **Origin narratives: Examples of being Australian originating with WWI**

There is much historical folklore surrounding the Gallipoli campaign as being the affective origin of Australia as a nation. The Gallipoli campaign was the first major international battle that Australia participated in *as a nation* since its Federation on 1 January, 1901. However despite this, only seven of the 82 participants, that is 8.5%, of Australian participants made that link. This could be attributed to a turn away from this historical perspective into a more generic emotional nationalism whereby *to be Australian* is to pay homage to soldiers who fought in WWI without giving specific reasons why this is the case. In addition, with Federation not being taught in Stage 5 (years 9 and 10) of high school, it is possible that these links are no longer being made by school students. Historically,

the understanding that Australia as a nation was born at Gallipoli has been supported by school textbooks. For example, this extract from a 1932 textbook makes that point, describing:

It has been said that the Great War made Australia a nation. Before 1914, the majority of Australians were inclined to think of themselves as Queenslanders, or Victorians, or Tasmanians, and so on, rather than as Australians, the war changed that. (Dunlop & Palfrey, 1932, p. 159)

Now, in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, those connections, on the whole, are not being made by school student participants in this study. For those seven participants who did perceive that Australia as a nation originated on the shores of Turkey, they describe the event as being the “birth of the Australian spirit” (WC34M12); as being “one of the biggest thing we have done since becoming our own nation (WC9M09); and as an “event that shows Australian independence with Australian fighting under their own flag” (WC39M12).

Participants sometimes asserted that what it is *to be* an Australia originated with WWI as well as the nation itself being born. This is different to the Turkish students’ responses who saw that from WWI, the borders of Turkey were formed and thus the Turkish people’s nation was created, rather than the cultural nation, which had already existed. To illustrate the origin of what it is to be Australian, WC34M12 writes: “In modern day Australia, Gallipoli is remembered as the birth of the Australian spirit, and this should not be changed as the deaths of all the Anzac’s gave birth to the nationalism and patriotism of Australia today.” Discussing the birth of Australia as also being a separation from the former coloniser, Great Britain, WC52M12 writes (of himself in the third person):

The significance of the event has spread widely in the past decades, mainly because of the historical theory that the events in the Dardanelles saw the birth of Australia as a nation and one with a separate identity to Great Britain. This student does not profess to a wide knowledge of this theory, but if adhered to, then Anzac day takes on a role more similar to national days such as Bastille Day then it does a remembrance day. As the event identified as the birth of a nation, Gallipoli is more significant to Australians than the official national day, Australia Day, making Gallipoli a very significant event to be remembered by Australians.

The popularly understood *Australian spirit* sometimes referred to as an *Anzac spirit* trope that can actually mean whatever the speaker determines, but is usually spoken about along patriotic—and more often than not, jingoistic lines—is included in the participants’ responses. WC58M10 writes:

Gallipoli is a significant event that should be remembered today. It is one of the most significant parts of Australia’s military history, it was one of the first major campaigns that Australia and New Zealand fought in and is seen by many as the birthplace of the Anzac spirit. This spirit is now seen as something to be desired in all Australian people, not just those serving in the military. Despite suffering many terrible losses throughout the campaign the Anzac’s showed courage and immense willpower whilst fighting a tough enemy in the Ottoman Empire.

Following that same line of thought, WC60M10 asserts: “Australia was seen as a young country and the bravery of the ANZACs proved that Australians were tough and resilient. As a result, this mental attitude is why Australia is what it is.”

## DISCUSSION

Participant responses generally fit within the common public discourses surrounding this historical conflict in both Turkey and Australia. Given the prominence of the Gallipoli/Çanakkale battles this is not altogether surprising outcome. Certainly in terms of commemoration, student ideas reflected those that already occur and their reasons for doing so, based largely on matters related to emotional nationalism, and is reflective of the public discourses. The analysis of responses show that when Australian participants are discussing this historical event, their version of emotional

nationalism is one where there is an archetypal and unnamed, or anonymised, soldier who is reflective of desired Australian values and is also brave and the very decision to participate as a soldier was motivated by expressions of sacrifice and to create a freedom that extends to the current day. Turkish participants linked nationalism to specific historical personalities, namely Atatürk and Corporal Seyit who were named but also written as though they embody all that is good in the nation and typifies what it is to be Turkish. The similarities between the two countries is that both the anonymous *The Australian Soldier* and Atatürk and Corporal Seyit are written as though they embody all that is good in the nation: they typify what it is to be Australian or what it is to be Turkish.

Regarding use of specific terms and language in general, which is of interest when using a DHA methodology, Australia students used terms such as “national identity” far more than Turkish students who were, overall, more emotive in their language. Australians used defacto words to describe what could be referred to as emotional nationalism, as can be seen in the examples illustrated throughout this paper. The language of Australian students is dulled compared to their Turkish counterparts. For example, Ö14M10 thinks it is “wrong” to even pose the question of whether or not Gallipoli should be remembered, writing in response to Q1:

Absolutely yes, I think it's wrong to ask such a question. If we do not remember the people who have accomplished a lot with few possibilities in that day, and do not think about their children, their wives, and the father who fought for the homeland, this is a sign that we came to naught. On that day there are heroes, valor, and it is an important opportunity to learn some things from them.

Whereas Australian students were included to just write a simple “Yes” in response to Q1. Similarly, while Australian students may write that Australia was “born” at Gallipoli or “became a nation” at Gallipoli, the Turkish participants were far more emotive in their description of their origin narrative. For example, they would frequently use words such as “salvation”, with Ö3F10 writing: “Of course it is an important turning point. It is the history of mankind's salvation. Though thousands of soldiers are martyrs, which we have gained independence, it is a war that announces the name of the Turks. This should not be forgotten!” Despite the differences in language use, which could also be attributed to different cultural traditions around using descriptive language, there were more similarities than differences between Australian and Turkish participant responses, including their understandings of the military campaign and its purported wide spread impact and that this impact still influences everyday citizens still today.

Some participants wrote about their understanding of Gallipoli or Çanakkale in such precise and unproblematised ways as though as described by Fairclough and Wodak, as “try[ing] to pass off as assumptions...as mere common sense” (1997, 258). Here, it becomes apparent that “both the ideological loading of particular ways of using language and the relations of power which underlie them are often unclear to people.” (Fairclough and Wodak, 1997, 258). History teachers, in applying the signature pedagogies of their subject can avoid reproducing of the dominant historical values part of historical mythology and can instead approach them through the use of primary sources to challenge preconceptions. These dominant discourses are often referred to as *common sense*, an area problematized by scholars such as Gitlin who describes it as being “...a catchall phrase that refers to dominant discourses, the broad-based circulating value systems that often move across multiple contexts and local discourse, the specific contextual normative systems found in a particular locale” (2006, 171). This was evidenced in the participants’ responses, particularly when approaching the topic in an unproblematic way.

This paper has demonstrated complexities in students’ understandings of the legacy of Gallipoli and Çanakkale and how it is clear, that “viewing history simply as a neutral instrument for providing as accurate an account of the past as possible, it is taken to serve other functions as well” (Wertsch, 1997, 6), and in the case of this research, to provide an underlying narrative of national identity and *what it is to be* Turkish or Australian through the discourses of commemorations of World War I. Student responses have further shown that types of official histories that nation-states produce through material artefacts are consistently understood by the students: both those buying in to these

official histories and those reacting against them. It is clear the idea of a “blueprint” (Wertsch, 1997, 8) and an official history knowledge (Wertsch, 2002) of national identity has a common understanding. The notion of student who are fluent or well versed in official narratives, but don’t accept, or *buy into* it, “can demonstrate facility for using and reflecting on it *without* coming to accept it as legitimate and reasonable” (Wertsch, 1997, 16).

There are many contentious issues and arguments associated with ‘the school’ as an institution and that the socially constructed economic and political values it reinforces to students is not a “neutral enterprise” (Apple, 2004, 7). It is argued that dominant values are those usually viewed in society as being ‘normal’, ‘just’ or ‘right’ and broadly accepted to be ‘true’. In a sense they have been repeated so many times, they become naturalized as a way of understanding the way the world is, becoming part of the hegemonic practice of schooling students. This was certainly read in participants’ responses. Official knowledge, in theorising the way dominant values are communicated to students as a type of non-overt way of inculcating students to view the world in particular ways is at various times accepted, accepted with condition, rejected with condition, and outright rejected by students participating in this project. History curriculum can serve many educative purposes, including attempts to teach students history through the exposure to and use of primary sources so that students can be acculturated into the work of an historian and to develop historical understanding. However, the influence of public discourses and stories students are told through media, family, public events, and other informal education sources can be repeated so often and with such influence that sometimes this has such a strong impact that the school curriculum cannot overcome some of the national mythologies that surround such emotional and passionate topics. Teachers need to continue to be aware of the influence popular and public and media discourses has on students prior to them entering the classroom, that is, their background knowledge of this universally known event in each respective nation.

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