

Remembering Gallipoli in New Zealand and beyond¹

At the end of this week, Referendum One on a possible new flag for New Zealand will open. The task will be to choose between five possible designs. The preferred design will then be considered against the current flag in a second referendum in March 2016.² In drawing up its shortlist, the panel that sifted through 10,000 suggested alternative flag designs drew up a number of criteria, which included the following. The flag should:

Unmistakably be from New Zealand and celebrate us as a progressive, inclusive nation that is connected to its environment, and has a sense of its past and a vision for its future;

Be a great flag [... that] has an enduring quality which will not become outdated, and will work well in all situations from celebration to commemoration;

Be inclusive, in that all New Zealanders should be able to see themselves within it;³

It is a central premise of the flag consideration project that the existing flag may no longer pass this test. With its Union Jack in the corner, it speaks to the country's strong historic links with the UK, but does not reflect its multicultural present. In particular, it is not inclusive of Aotearoa New Zealand's proud Maori heritage. Nor is the present New Zealand Ensign unmistakably from New Zealand, given its strong similarity to Australia's flag. Nonetheless, it remains a powerful symbol on commemorative occasions and one of the strongest lines of criticism of the mooted change has been that New Zealanders have fought and died under the current flag for more than a century.⁴

The question underpinning these flag referenda is 'What do we stand for?' The question was posed to the New Zealand people and a huge range of responses

¹ An event organized by the NZ-UK Link Foundation in collaboration with the Institute of Historical Research and the Institute of Commonwealth Studies, School of Advanced Studies, School of Advanced Study, University of London. The event is part of the Being Human Festival (12-22 November 2015). The lecture was delivered on 16 November 2015 in Senate House, Malet Street, London. A video of the occasion is available here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LFqgnTnRCiI&index=38&list=PLYIXXEouA28QkeGW3-8QOVIyxTC8LraY->

² Flag Consideration Project, NZ Government, *The NZ flag – your chance to decide* (2015).

Available online: <https://www.govt.nz/browse/engaging-with-government/the-nz-flag-your-chance-to-decide/> [Accessed 11 November 2015].

³ Flag Consideration Project, NZ Government, *Get to know the five flags before you rank them* (2015). Available online: <https://www.govt.nz/browse/engaging-with-government/the-nz-flag-your-chance-to-decide/elections-pack-brochure/> [Accessed 11 November 2015].

⁴ Royal New Zealand Returned And Services' Association, *Join the Fight for our Flag* (2015).

Available online: <https://rsa.org.nz/Community/FightforOurFlag> [Accessed 11 November 2015].

were submitted – including this from Stacey: ‘I stand for not wasting millions on new flipen[sic] flag!’⁵ I’d like to reflect on the question ‘What do we stand for’ in a different way – by reflecting on some aspects of the commemoration of Gallipoli in New Zealand.

On the New Zealand battlefield memorial at Chunuk Bair there is the inscription, ‘From the uttermost ends of the earth’. Tonight I wish to place New Zealand’s commemoration not at the periphery, but at the centre. Too often, the NZ in Anzac has been silent; the analysis of Australia’s memory of the campaign has been assumed to stand for two countries, not just one.

Taking some cues from those criteria for a new flag, I’m going to explore what has been unmistakably characteristic of New Zealand in its commemoration, but also how it has come to pass that it has been confused with or overwhelmed by Australia’s concerns. I’m going to look at the resonance of the Union Jack in the corner of the flag by tracing how long a sense of Britishness survived in the rhetoric of commemoration before becoming outdated. I’m also going to touch on how commemoration has become more inclusive, to better reflect an experience and a meaning ‘that all New Zealanders should be able to see themselves within’.

NZ in WW1

But first, a reminder of the role New Zealand forces played at Gallipoli. The New Zealanders who fought at Gallipoli were all volunteers. Commanded by the British General, Sir Alexander Godley, they formed part of the New Zealand and Australia Division, the second division of the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps. About 3,000 New Zealanders landed at what became known as Anzac Cove on 25 April 1915. They formed the second wave of the invading forces, and landed from around 9am onwards. Perhaps 20% of them became casualties that day.⁶ The New Zealand forces saw action in both sectors of the peninsula – at Cape Helles as well as at Anzac during the campaign. They were reinforced from home by the dismounted New Zealand Mounted Rifles Brigade a couple of weeks after the landings, and then by the New Zealand Maori Contingent in early July.

The Maori Contingent was just in time to take part in a major renewed effort in the campaign. In August, a breakout from the Anzac sector was attempted. In the difficult terrain of Gallipoli it was vital to gain the three high points of the Sari Bair ridge that dominated the sector: Koja Chemen Tepe, Hill Q and Chunuk Bair. During the offensive, the Gurkhas briefly captured Hill Q, and it fell to New Zealand forces to attack and hold Chunuk Bair. The man who led them was

⁵ Flag Consideration Project, *What do we stand for?* (2015). Available online: <http://www.standfor.co.nz/> [Accessed 11 November 2015].

⁶Ian McGibbon, ‘Gallipoli’, in *The Oxford Companion to New Zealand Military History*, ed. Ian McGibbon (Auckland: Oxford University Press, 2000), 194.

Lieutenant-General William Malone. His Wellington Battalion, with support from other British and New Zealand battalions held the summit, or ground just below it, between 8 and 10 August. Whilst they did so, they gained a brief view of the Narrows of the Dardanelles on the other side of the peninsula. It was a beguiling sight that must have made victory seem within their grasp. During the battle Malone and many of his men were killed. The Ottomans also suffered important losses, and in the reorganisation of their command structure that took place as battle raged, Lieutenant Colonel Mustafa Kemal was put in charge of the area. Some hours after the exhausted New Zealand forces were relieved by an inexperienced New Army battalion, the Lancashires, Kemal struck the decisive blow. He personally crept forward to launch 16 battalions into the attack, and succeeded in sweeping the British and New Zealanders from their toeholds on the Sari Bair ridge. Chunuk Bair is known in Turkey as Kemelyeri (Kemal's place).⁷

Although it was not immediately apparent the loss of Chunuk Bair marked the failure of the August Offensive. The failure of the August Offensive signalled the failure of the Gallipoli campaign. Five months later, the peninsula was evacuated. It is difficult to say how many New Zealanders served at Gallipoli, but we know that 2,700 of them died at Gallipoli, including 50 Maori.

NZ commemoration

The first commemorations of the New Zealanders' service and losses at Gallipoli took place on the first anniversary of the landings on 25 April 1916. They were held here in London, and across New Zealand. In reflecting on these commemorations and how they evolved during the 1920s and 30s, I want to concentrate, to begin with, on those aspects that were 'unmistakably' from New Zealand. It will be seen that many of the activities were shared with Australia, but the tone, the emphases, and the meanings attributed to them were distinctive.⁸

In towns and cities across New Zealand there were marches of returned men and services of remembrance.⁹ And we can trace what was said at them and what was written about them through the extensive available newspaper coverage – in editorials, and through the reported sermons, prayers and speeches. Indeed, churches and religious or spiritual sentiment in general, figured much more prominently in New Zealand's Anzac Day than they did in Australia where similar events were also held across the country. Anzac Day 1916 was a newly minted

⁷ Peter Hart, *Gallipoli* (London: Profile Books, 2011), 321–5; Sean McMeekin, *The Berlin-Baghdad Express: The Ottoman Empire and Germany's Bid for World Power, 1898-1918* (London: Allen Lane, 2010), 187.

⁸Margaret Harris, 'Anzac Nations; Creation Myths, Expressions, and Anxieties' Master of Arts thesis (University of Chicago, 2012), 18.

⁹ For further details, see Maureen Sharpe, 'Anzac Day in New Zealand: 1916 to 1939', *New Zealand Journal of History* 15, no. 2 (1981): 97–114.

tradition, which drew upon the established format of a military funeral.¹⁰ Its hymns, prayers and benediction will have had a comforting familiarity and a consoling message of sacrifice and redemption.

It also reflects the importance of the church within New Zealand that the difficulty of agreeing on combined ecumenical services was a particularly vexed feature in the preparations for the day. Arguments and resignations occurred across the country as clergymen attempted to adhere to their churches' rules, whilst commemorative committees and returned men sought to recreate the unified arrangements they had had at the front.¹¹

The fervent religiosity of early twentieth century New Zealand also shaped the meanings ascribed to Gallipoli. Commentators there appear to have conceived of Gallipoli as a spiritual rather than a military test. Thus whilst criticisms of the failed campaign were met in Australia by assertions of their soldiers' heroism, in New Zealand they were just as likely to emphasise their spiritual achievements. For example, in its Anzac Day editorial in 1920, the newspaper, the *Northern Advocate* found meaning in the sacrifice at Gallipoli that far outweighed the reality of defeat:

The remembrance of the free sacrifice of all that life counts dear, and the meditation on such heroism, is a moral and spiritual tonic. [...] That the full result of the military objective was not attained is a minor matter when compared with the spiritual objective which was as much higher than the material as the sky is above the earth.¹²

Well into the 1920s, the spirit of sacrifice was held up as an inspiration to present day action. As Reverend Fielden Taylor put it in 1925, 'the call of Anzac is the call to service'.¹³

There was also a particularly intense insistence that the day was sacred, and thus sporting or commercial activities were inappropriate to the solemnity of the day. Horse races were cancelled, hotels were closed during the day and picture theatres didn't open until after the memorial services had been completed.¹⁴ The sombre tone of the day established in 1916 survived for years. It was enshrined in law that Anzac Day should be treated as a Sunday, and it was sometimes claimed to be on a par with the sacred nature of Good Friday.¹⁵ The Returned Soldiers' Association was instrumental in this process of reinforcing Anzac Day as a day of mourning. Interestingly, although returned soldiers proved deeply influential on

¹⁰ Scott Worthy, 'A Debt of Honour: New Zealanders' First ANZAC Days', *New Zealand Journal of History* 36, no. 2 (2002): 191–2.

¹¹ See for example, 'Why Not? United Religious Service', *Auckland Star*, 25 March 1916, and 'Soldiers and Anzac Day', *Auckland Star*, 5 April 1916.

¹² 'Anzac Day', *Northern Advocate*, 24 April 1920.

¹³ 'Impressive Memorial Service', *Evening Post*, 27 April 1925.

¹⁴ 'Local and General', *Evening Post*, 15 April 1916; 'Local and General News', *Hawera and Normanby Star*, 17 April 1916; 'Macmahon's Theatre', *Evening Post*, 25 April 1916.

¹⁵ 'Legislative Council. Anzac Day Bill', *Hawera and Normanby Star*, 27 January 1922; Vivien, 'Topics of the Hour', *New Zealand Herald*, 22 April 1922.

the nature of commemoration in both New Zealand and Australia, their influence pushed in opposing directions. Where New Zealand returned men pushed for greater solemnity, Australian returned men encouraged an element of celebration to be introduced into the day.

It followed, therefore, that in New Zealand any commercial activity on Anzac Day was roundly condemned. Indeed the enforced Sabbatarianism of the day led a man to be prosecuted in 1927 for his behaviour on Anzac Day. His alleged crime? He had been seen hoeing his turnips.¹⁶ Indeed, it reached the point that the Governor General stepped in and suggested in 1929 that Anzac Day was too mournful.¹⁷ As one columnist in the *Auckland Star* had commented,

To the teeming millions at Home such an occasion as Anzac Day would ask, should a country spend a whole day in mourning, and why should a mantle of gloom be permitted to envelop its inhabitants from dawn till dark? The dead of the Old Country are not forgotten; Armistice Day is observed with unflinching reverence and poignancy, but after the great silence the heart of the Empire beats as vigorously, nay, as gaily as ever, and the rest of the day is one of rejoicing. Surely it is some strong strain of self-repression, drawn from a stern and Puritan ancestry, which impels New Zealand to honour her valiant dead by a day of tears and woe.¹⁸

During the 1930s, as the tradition became more well established and the immediacy of grief reduced, some of the gloomier aspects of the day were relinquished. And we can see here a further example of how New Zealand reflexively looked to Britain for a lead. In Britain the funeral of George V in 1936 was marked by two minutes' silence rather than a day of mourning. In that context, New Zealand's Anzac Day began to look out of step with commemorative traditions elsewhere.¹⁹ Thus the first characteristic of commemoration that was unmistakably from and of New Zealand was its religious dourness.

It is sometimes asserted that the sorrowful tone of New Zealand's commemoration of Gallipoli and the war reflects the unusual scale of its loss. This idea is to be found in the otherwise fantastic exhibition about Gallipoli at the Te Papa Museum in Wellington. Built around eight extraordinary oversized sculptures of New Zealanders who were at Gallipoli, the exhibition tells the story of the country's participation in the campaign. It is a powerful, moving and informative exhibition, but in one important regard I think it is also misleading. At the end of the exhibition, it sets out the casualty statistics for all the participant nations. Expressed in terms of the numbers of men who were killed and wounded, they tell a terrible story of sacrifice and loss. But expressed as a percentage of men

¹⁶ 'Hoed the Turnips', *Auckland Star*, 8 June 1927.

¹⁷ 'Too Mournful?', *Auckland Star*, 18 April 1929.

¹⁸ H.A.B., 'A-N-Z-A-C. A Tie that Binds', *Auckland Star*, 24 April 1928.

¹⁹ 'Anzac Day Observance', *Auckland Star*, 5 February 1936.

who served in the campaign, they become problematic. It is stated at Te Papa that 93% of New Zealanders became casualties at Gallipoli. But that only 50% of the Australians who served there did so. Now, don't get me wrong – even the smaller of these figures is dreadful. But that 93% figure is almost certainly wrong.

It is notoriously difficult to establish precise statistics for the fallen. Oddly, it is even more difficult to establish how many men served in total. The Te Papa exhibition draws on the figure in Fred Waite's official history, *The New Zealanders at Gallipoli*.²⁰ This slim volume very probably underestimated the numbers who served by simply replicating a miscalculated statistic from the commander-in-chief, General Sir Ian Hamilton. A more recent calculation by Richard Stowers gives a significantly higher number for the men who served, and thereby reduces the casualty rate to 53%.²¹ This seems more likely to me – the New Zealand forces were not given significantly different tasks at Gallipoli to the Australians, and it seems reasonable to expect a similar casualty rate.²² To exaggerate such a figure holds the potential to profoundly alter the public understanding of Gallipoli from one that is a shared part in a tragically botched campaign to one of victimhood – I don't believe such a deeply political idea was the aim of the exhibition.

Let us return now to what was unmistakably characteristic of New Zealand in the country's commemoration of the campaign. Along with the religious ideas of sacrifice, the most important theme in the editorials and sermons of the early Anzac Days was New Zealand's proud role within the empire. The Union Jack in the corner of their flag was truly meaningful. As the *Otago Daily Times*' editorial put it in 1916: 'Anzac Day symbolises, as it were, that new unity of the British Empire which the war has brought into being.'²³ Far from the experience of Gallipoli heralding a new sense of nationhood, for New Zealanders it appears to have engendered a deeper sense of the bonds of Empire. The *Evening Post*, on the eve of Anzac Day, argued that 'heroes of those new countries added lustre to that world-honoured name "British"'.²⁴ Such was the commitment to empire and the even-handed instincts of New Zealanders, that some amongst them felt

²⁰ Major Fred Waite, *The New Zealanders at Gallipoli* (Auckland: Whitcombe and Tombs Ltd, 1921).

²¹ David Green, 'How many New Zealanders served on Gallipoli?', <http://ww100.govt.nz/how-many-new-zealanders-served-on-gallipoli> [Accessed 12 November 2015]; Richard Stowers, *Bloody Gallipoli: The New Zealanders' Story* (Auckland, N.Z.: D. Bateman, 2005).

²² It also broadly tallies with figures for overall losses per head of population for the entire war which show New Zealand to have lost more heavily than Australia, but slightly less so than Britain. (Australia lost 12 men per 1,000 in its population, New Zealand 15 per 1,000, and the UK 16 per 1,000; Jay Winter, *The Great War and the British People* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 1985), 75). That is, New Zealand's casualty rate in the war overall was not almost double that of its nearest comparators, as the Te Papa figures regarding Gallipoli may lead one to conclude.

²³ 'Anzac Day', *Otago Daily Times*, 26 April 1916. See also, Scott Worthy, 'A Debt of Honour: New Zealanders' First Anzac Days', *New Zealand Journal of History* 36, no. 2 (2002): pp. 186, 189.

²⁴ 'Honour the Heroes', *Evening Post*, 24 April 1916.

uncomfortable with the exaggeration of their role that was developing through the use of the word Anzac. In order to better acknowledge the role of the British at Gallipoli, one New Zealand MP even proposed altering the acronym to 'Banzac'.²⁵ The idea didn't catch on.

The same point cannot really be said of Australia. Although Australians also viewed their achievements within the context of Empire in the war years, there always seems to have been a greater readiness to proclaim their special qualities. As one recruiting sergeant put it in 1917,

it was Anzac Day, terrible and glorious, that proved the Australian to be worthy of [the] first rank amongst the fighters of the world – men at once brave, tenacious of purpose, strong in execution, and rich in imaginative [sic].²⁶

Indeed, Australians readily latched on to the message propounded by their official war correspondent and official historian Charles Bean: that the Australian soldiers exemplified particular qualities – the best qualities – of their nation. This idea has always been at the heart of Australia's Anzac Day.

Both New Zealand and Australia shared common elements of British imperial culture. Amongst these was the shared idea that nations are born in war. Another revolves around race and the idea that men of fine British stock might develop further strengths when transplanted to the New World. This kind of thinking informed Bean's work and it was certainly not unknown in New Zealand. Take this extract from Ormond Burton's 1935 book, *The Silent Division*:

... it needed only some catastrophe, some great suffering, borne together, some great deed done in common to make the New Zealanders conscious of their identity as a nation. Such a deed and such suffering they found on the slopes of Sari Bair. When the August fighting died down there was no longer any question but that the New Zealanders had commenced to realize themselves as a nation. The process was not complete, but it was well begun.²⁷

Ormond continues to explain that in comparison to the English, 'Our men were taller and stronger, deeper-chested, better muscled, capable of greater and more prolonged physical effort. [...] Their general standard of intelligence was much higher.'²⁸ 'Englishmen and New Zealanders were of one blood', had grown up in a similar climate, but New Zealanders were better fed, better housed, had led more

²⁵ Mercutio, 'Local Gossip', *New Zealand Herald*, 6 May 1916.

²⁶ 'RECRUITING.', *The West Australian (Perth, WA: 1879 - 1954)*, 16 April 1917, 6.

²⁷ Ormond Burton, *The Silent Division: New Zealanders at the Front, 1914-1919* (Angus and Robertson Ltd, Sydney, 1935), 121-122. Available online:

<http://nzetc.victoria.ac.nz/tm/scholarly/tei-WH1Sile-t1-body-d12.html>

²⁸ *ibid.*, 122.

of their lives outdoors, and had played more sport in a society where ‘class distinctions are very slight.’²⁹

By way of comparison, here is an extract from Bean’s official history:

The Australian came of a race whose tradition was one of independence and enterprise, and, within that race itself, from a stock more adventurous, and for the most part physically more strong, than the general run of men. By reason of open air life in the new climate, and of greater abundance of food, the people developed more fully the large frames which seem normal to Anglo-Saxons living under generous conditions. An active life, as well as the climate, rendered the body wiry and the face lean, easily lined, and thin-lipped.³⁰

The two extracts are nearly interchangeable, but Bean’s chimed with his country’s sentiments and the man himself was instrumental in a great nation-building project. Whereas the New Zealander Burton’s take on the significance of his country’s Anzacs remained a minority view that did not inform the commemoration of Gallipoli. So a further unmistakable characteristic of New Zealand commemoration was not just the continuing allegiance to Britain, but its flipside, an absence of nationalism.

What is there in the two countries that explains this difference? If we continue with the theory that nations are born in war, we could look to the Boer War – soldiers from Australia fought there as representatives of different states, whereas New Zealand was already well established when its men fought in South Africa. Yet although it’s been argued that they did develop a sense of identity from the experience, this doesn’t seem to have set in train a particular national tradition.³¹ Similarly, I don’t have a sense of national identity flowing from the New Zealand Wars. And certainly this is not the case with Australia and its Frontier Wars, or else the Australian War Memorial would not continue its disgraceful policy of not acknowledging this internal violence against indigenous Australians within its precincts. Differences between earlier experiences of war, don’t seem to help to solve the conundrum of why First World War-era Australia was ready to forge a nation-building story from Gallipoli and New Zealand was not. This makes me wonder:

- am I asking the wrong question by assuming that, for New Zealand, war, commemoration and national identity are inevitably linked?

- am I looking in the wrong place? Perhaps New Zealand drew its identity from its 19th century history: from the Treaty of Waitangi, its progressive gender politics

²⁹ *ibid.*, 123-4.

³⁰ C.E.W. Bean, *The Story of Anzac from the Outbreak of War to the End of the First Phase of the Gallipoli Campaign, May 4, 1915*, vol. 1, *The Official History of Australia in the War of 1914-1918* (St Lucia, Queensland: University of Queensland Press, 1921), 4-5.

³¹ John Crawford, ‘Boer War’, in *The Oxford Companion to New Zealand Military History*, ed. Ian McGibbon (Auckland, N.Z.: Oxford University Press, 2000), 63.

or its sport, and it simply didn't need to use Anzac Day for this nation-building purpose? Whereas, Australia despite its peaceful creation through Federation and its claim to be a working man's paradise, may have been able to overlook its treatment of its indigenous people but couldn't quite shake off a concern that their racial stock had been tainted by the convict stain.³²

- or perhaps I'm employing the wrong time frame by looking for nationalism too early in New Zealand?

I think I probably am. Perhaps, then, another unmistakably New Zealand characteristic of its commemoration was the slower speed with which it proceeded towards espousing nationalism through Anzac Day.

This, in part, has to do with institutions and personalities. I think the business of who writes about history and how they do it has a significant impact on how a nation views its past. This is why I view Charles Bean as such an important figure in Australia, and the absence of an equivalent to him is so significant for New Zealand. It is both a symptom of the absence of New Zealand nationalism, and a cause of it. In the first instance, Charles Bean was an official war correspondent accompanying the AIF in the war; whilst New Zealand appointed Malcolm Ross to an equivalent role. However, dithering by the authorities at home delayed Ross' arrival on the peninsula such that he missed the landings. They then compounded the error by being too stingy to pay for Ross to cable his reports home. By the time his despatches arrived by post in New Zealand, they were out of date. Ross was also supposed to collect artefacts for a museum and to write an official history of the war. But Ross was not cut from the same cloth as Bean, and key figures in Wellington stood in his way.³³ The outcomes in each country were therefore very different.

Bean edited a twelve volume official history of Australia's First World War; whereas New Zealand's histories of the war were slim volumes for popular consumption with no greater ambition.³⁴ That extract I discussed earlier by Ormond Burton, followed on from his work writing the official history of the Auckland Infantry Regiment. He may have perceived the Anzacs in a similar light to Bean, but his overall purpose in life was very different. As a pacifist his goal

³² Margaret Harris, 'Anzac Nations; Creation Myths, Expressions, and Anxieties', 32.

³³ Ron Palenski, 'Malcolm Ross: A New Zealand Failure in the Great War,' *Australian Historical Studies* 39, no. 1 (2008), 19-35; Ian McGibbon, '“Something of Them Is Here Recorded”: Official History in New Zealand,' ed. Jeffrey Grey, *The last word?: essays on official history in the United States and British Commonwealth* (Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 2003), <http://nzetc.victoria.ac.nz/tm/scholarly/tei-McGSome.html>.

³⁴ McGibbon, '“Something of Them Is Here Recorded”: Official History in New Zealand.'; Roberto Rabel, 'War History as Public History'

was to work towards a fairer and more socialist society,³⁵ not to develop a new national tradition based on the war experience as Bean sought for Australia.

Bean was also instrumental in founding the Australian War Memorial. Communities across New Zealand, of course, erected their own memorials,³⁶ but there was no equivalent government-sponsored project. The government-funded national war memorial lapsed in the 1920s and was revived only by private subscriptions.³⁷ Nor was the national memorial accompanied by a museum as in Canberra. Perhaps the Auckland War Memorial Museum, which opened in 1929, is the closest equivalent to the Australian War Memorial. It seems characteristic of New Zealand's emphasis on the sacred nature of commemoration, rather than the didactic purpose of a museum that there was a degree of controversy as to whether the building was sufficiently sacred, and a Cenotaph and Court of Honour were added to the initial design.³⁸ I also think it is telling of the separation of commemoration and nationalism in New Zealand that the National Army Museum was only opened in Waiouru in 1978,³⁹ and that a separate national museum, Te Papa – decidedly not a war museum – opened only in 1992. For decades, there was no desire or effort made in New Zealand to institutionalize and thereby sustain and foster the memory of war.

The commemoration of Anzac Day has therefore carried a nationalist charge in Australia that has been largely absent in New Zealand. Australia used Anzac Day to steadily differentiate itself from Britain, whereas New Zealand felt comfortable with its Britishness for far longer. It was not truly shaken until after the Second World War when New Zealand's close ties with Britain were deeply damaged by the end of unfettered access for its goods and peoples once Britain joined the Common Market. Later, changing immigration patterns in the 80s and 90s made New Zealand more ethnically diverse and less British. Thus until fairly recently, the Union Jack in New Zealand's flag has spoken powerfully both to its sense of its past and a dominant portion of its inhabitants have seen themselves within it.

Probably the most striking example of the end of Britishness in remembering Gallipoli in New Zealand is the 1982 play *Once on Chunuk Bair*. In its place, playwright Maurice Shadbolt espoused an unusually aggressive New Zealand

³⁵ David Grant, 'Burton, Ormond Edward', *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography* (2000). Available online: <http://www.teara.govt.nz/en/biographies/5b53/burton-ormond-edward> [accessed 14 November 2015]; Lawrence Jones, *Picking up the Traces: The Making of a New Zealand Literary Culture, 1932-45* (Wellington: Victorian University Press, 2003), 361.

³⁶ K.S. Inglis and Jock Phillips, 'War Memorials in Australia and New Zealand: A Comparative Survey' in *Packaging the Past? Public Histories*, John Rickard and Peter Spearritt (eds.), (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1991), 179-91.

³⁷ Mark David Sheftall, *Altered Memories of the Great War: Divergent Narratives of Britain, Australia, New Zealand and Canada* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2009), 141.

³⁸ Matthew Henry, 'Making New Zealanders through commemoration: assembling Anzac Day in Auckland, 1916-1939', *New Zealand Geographer* (2006) 62, 6-8.

³⁹ National Army Museum, *About Us*, available online: <http://www.armymuseum.co.nz/about-us/> [Accessed 12 November 2015].

nationalism. The play not only asserted the pivotal nature of the August offensive at Gallipoli and of the capture of Chunuk Bair within it, but contained enough pom-bashing comments to suggest to the audience that the Brits had let the valiant Kiwis down. The play was not immediately popular,⁴⁰ and the 1991 film version was artistically disappointing. Therefore, *Once on Chunuk Bair* didn't reach a wider audience or leave a lasting legacy.⁴¹

What I've been arguing is that there are certain aspects of New Zealand's commemoration of Gallipoli that are unmistakably characteristic of the country – the greater emphasis on sacrifice and on mourning the dead, a greater readiness to perceive the campaign's significance in terms of the empire and an absence of nationalism, and following on from that, the absence of a nation-building project through commemoration.

If we fast forward to the 21st century, what we see is the slow burning emergence of a New Zealand nationalism in war commemoration that has borrowed tactics from Australia but has deployed them in an unmistakably New Zealand way.

From 1990 onwards, Australian governments have made a concerted effort to develop Anzac Day. Bob Hawke's government lavishly funded the commemoration of the 75th anniversary at Anzac Cove. In his speech at the Dawn Service he drew on Bean and the sentiments of the Gettysburg address to renew a sense of the location as a sacred site for Australians. New Zealand sent its Governor General to the occasion. Instead, in 1990 it was probably the 150th anniversary of the Treaty of Waitangi that was the more prominent occasion in New Zealand. It was a decade later that New Zealand embraced the symbolism and its own Prime Minister attended the Dawn Service on the peninsula.

That was Helen Clark, and under her leadership, New Zealand started to make the kind of investment in the country's military heritage that Australia was already doing. Like her Australian counterpart, John Howard, she shared a personal link to the war. Ten of her great-uncles had fought in the First World War, and one of them had died at Gallipoli. She significantly increased funding for culture during her time in office,⁴² recognizing the potential to encourage the

⁴⁰ Helen Robinson, 'Remembering the Past, Thinking of the Present: Historic Commemorations in New Zealand and Northern Ireland, 1940-1990', PhD thesis (University of Auckland, 2009), 275.

⁴¹ James Bennett, 'Man Alone and Men Together: Maurice Shadbolt, William Malone and Chunuk Bair,' *Journal of New Zealand Studies* NS13 (2012): 52, 55-6.

⁴² Graham Hucker, 'A Determination to Remember: Helen Clark and New Zealand's Military Heritage,' *The Journal of Arts Management, Law and Society* 40 (2010): 108.

expression of the nation's identity therein. In this period, new war memorials were unveiled around the world, and she often attended commemorative services overseas – thereby underlining their importance through her office. Most prominent of these initiatives was the interment of a New Zealand Unknown Warrior in Wellington in 2004, an event attended by perhaps 100,000 people.⁴³ And yet, even then, the full throttle nationalism of Anzac in Australia was absent. If we compare the commemorative speeches of the countries' prime ministers, in place of the soaring rhetoric of Hawke or Keating on such occasions, Clark made more prosaic, yet heartfelt statements of New Zealand's identity.

The sentiments that concluded her speech at the interment of the Unknown Warrior seem to me to capture key aspects that are unmistakably New Zealand – there are no bombastic statements of distinctive qualities, but instead an overriding sorrow at the loss in war. Instead of the place in the world achieved through Empire, an emphasis on internationalism through peace keeping. She said,

The Tomb of the Unknown Warrior symbolises of the very personal tragedies New Zealanders have endured in our engagement with wars overseas. Let it also be a testimony of pride in New Zealand's contribution; a reminder of the heroism of our people; and a symbol of our ongoing commitment to a more harmonious and peaceful world.⁴⁴

In Australia, Gallipoli has been an alternative to dealing with its troubled relations with aboriginal Australians – the 1990 extravaganza came hard on the heels of the difficult bicentenary of the arrival of the First Fleet. John Howard, the Prime Minister keenest on promoting Anzac was also the most vehement in rejecting what he termed the black armband view of history that attempted to grapple with Australia's history of dispossession. By contrast, New Zealand, which itself has sometimes struggled over the meaning and commemoration of Waitangi, has ultimately been the more successful in reflecting both Pakeha and Maori in its recent commemorations of Gallipoli.

None more so than at the centenary of the fighting at Chunuk Bair this August. It is not just that elements of Maori culture were incorporated in the ceremony as some kind of window dressing, they were absolutely fundamental to it. From the ceremonial beginning to the proceedings, the extensive use of Maori greetings, the clothing worn by the New Zealand Ambassador to Turkey, the singing of waiata – (Maori songs) and the New Zealand national anthem as ever sung in

⁴³ *ibid.*, 113.

⁴⁴ Helen Clark, 'Address at Memorial Service for Unknown Warrior', 11 November 2004 (<http://www.beehive.govt.nz/node/21453/2004>).

both languages, Maori elements were part and parcel of the proceedings as much as the familiar elements of military commemorations of British heritage: the Lord's Prayer, Laurence Binyon's ode for the Fallen, a bugler sounding the Last Post followed by the silence, and a piper playing a lament. Then most stirringly, the performance by members of the New Zealand Defence Force – men and women, Maori and Pakeha – of a haka dedicated to all soldiers of all nationalities who fought and died at Gallipoli.⁴⁵ Afterwards, as the military band played Elgar's Nimrod, New Zealand's most recent VC winner, Corporal Willie Apiata VC, greeted the haka party with a traditional hongī, pressing his nose and forehead to each of them in turn.⁴⁶

[Played clip from Youtube of the haka]

Thus was commemorated the centenary of the first time Pakeha and Maori New Zealanders fought together in Europe. A powerful and deeply moving ceremony that unmistakably came from New Zealand.

I've argued elsewhere that Anzac Day is Australia's greatest export. It is certainly true that important aspects of the day's format, not least the Dawn Service, are Australian in origin and specific to their role in the campaign. But when you look closely at the detail from a New Zealand point of view, it can nonetheless be argued that there are elements that are unmistakably characteristic of New Zealand – the emphasis on sacrifice and the mournful tone, the lingering strength of the British connection and the absence of nationalism for many years. Thus, like the flags of the two countries, there are strong similarities but in detail they are different. On Anzac Day overseas the crowds may merge, but when they separate as at Chunuk Bair this year, they undoubtedly show that enduring elements of commemoration can be updated for a bi-cultural nation so that all New Zealanders may see themselves, without losing a sense of its past.

⁴⁵ Lloyd Jones, 'Haka explained to the Turks at Chunuk Bair', *stuff.co.nz*, 9 August 2015. Available online: <http://www.stuff.co.nz/world/europe/70953959/Haka-explained-to-the-Turks-at-Chunuk-Bair> [Accessed 9 August 2015].

⁴⁶ WW100 New Zealand, 'Battle for Chunuk Bair 100th anniversary commemoration', https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b1zMHW_jaVg&list=PLYlXXEouA28Rrv5JUPdrFzSAtyQMrPxmF&index=18 [accessed 14 November 2015].

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