Memorialization on War-Broken Ground: Gallipoli War Cemeteries and Memorials Designed by Sir John James Burnet

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The Helles Memorial stands on the cliffs of the Gallipoli Peninsula, saluting passengers who voyage through the Dardanelles Strait between the Aegean Sea and the Sea of Marmara (Figure 1). The site of the memorial was chosen carefully by its Scottish architect, Sir John James Burnet (1857–1938), to “be easily seen from vessels passing through the Dardanelles.” The Imperial (now Commonwealth) War Graves Commission appointed him as the principal architect for the Gallipoli and Palestine regions on 29 November 1918. In his initial drawings after visiting the peninsula, Burnet described the landscape of the campaign as “war broken ground,” referring to the physical impact of bloody battles remaining as trenches and bomb craters. The idea of war-broken ground would become the basis of Burnet’s design approach in Gallipoli, where he planned three different memorials and thirty-one war cemeteries for the commission in the peninsula between 1919 and 1925. During this process, he dealt not only with the unique characteristics of each particular field of battle and its wartime significance, but also with the predefined design principles of the commission that were to be used in every theater of the war throughout the world. This article explores the architect’s challenge of memorializing both the campaign and the imperial dead on the foreign territory of Gallipoli, paying close attention to how Burnet modified predefined design elements to create a distinctive architectural language of commemoration.

The commission’s work on the western front has been a popular topic for scholars, especially since the 1980s. However, memorials and war cemeteries on the eastern fronts such as those in Macedonia, Egypt, Palestine, and Gallipoli have rarely excited the attention of researchers. This study, with its focus on Gallipoli, aims to correct a significant omission. Unlike the battlefields on the western front, Gallipoli, as a battlefield in enemy territory (in the political context of World War I), constitutes one of the earliest, rare examples of the commission’s design principles attuned not only to the local climate and geography but also to the culture and memory of the campaign on foreign land. By examining the differences and similarities between Burnet’s work in Gallipoli and the commission’s ideals applied on the western front, I investigate the connection between memory, memorialization, and the landscape of war, asking, how did the landscape, with its geographical and cultural particularities, shape Burnet’s approach in the construction of imperial identity on foreign land?

In terms of the history of empires and the politics of identity, World War I was pivotal because “while the governments that had failed to win the war collapsed entirely, the
winners found that victory could not possibly compensate their peoples for their sacrifices. In this context, commemoration was one of the most effective instruments to justify these sacrifices. In 1917, the Imperial War Graves Commission was officially founded in London in view of this need for commemoration, and it was empowered “to care for and maintain the graves of those fallen in the war, to acquire land for the purpose of cemeteries, and to erect permanent memorials in the cemeteries elsewhere.” In the initial phase of its foundation process a uniform architectural language was sought to produce a common imperial identity to be used for every war cemetery and memorial in battlefronts around the world where soldiers of the British imperial forces had fought and died.

Sir Frederic Kenyon, the director of the British Museum, was appointed aesthetic adviser to the commission. In his first report, War Graves: How the Cemeteries Abroad Will Be Designed, he recommended the adoption of a coherent architectural identity founded on clear principles. The general architectural scheme of the cemeteries and their key elements were designed by Sir Edwin Lutyens and Sir Reginald Blomfield and were first applied in the cemeteries of the western front in collaboration with the architects Herbert Baker and Charles Holden. Various architects were appointed to design the war cemeteries and memorials on the other fronts of the war, yet all of them were obliged to meet the principles of the commission and, at the same time, to respond to the geography of the widely varying landscapes to which they were assigned. Burnet used these principles as the basis of his work, but he also deviated from them; his modifications of the design principles of the commission referred not only to the geographical and cultural particularities of the peninsula but also to the landscape and its wartime stories.

The Helles Memorial and Its Site

The visibility of the site of the Helles Memorial, at the edge of the peninsula and at the very entrance to the straits, was a significant factor in its selection. Indeed, the memorial’s intimate bond with the landscape depends not only on external views but also on internal relations between its site and the scenes of battles it overlooks. The Helles Memorial is situated “on the actual ground fought over during the memorable first landing, and [overlooks] at close quarters the scenes of the first and last acts on V and W Beaches.” It is situated on a bluff between Lancashire Landing and V Beach cemeteries, where bloody battles took place between the landing in April 1915 and the evacuation in January 1916. Burnet visited the graveyards on the battlefields of the peninsula soon after his appointment, in the spring of 1919, just four years after the Allies’ first landing, and witnessed at first hand the cataclysmic visual and material impact of the campaign on the landscape’s turf. In his very first report, written upon his return, he claimed that “a shrine should be raised to the memory not only of the many gallant deeds of the campaign, and those who fell in it, but to all those who took part in it at Suvla, Anzac and Helles.”

Today, the pure form and the bare, even severe, tectonic expression of the obelisk-shaped Helles Memorial continue to echo the brutality of what was experienced on the peninsula in the course of the nine-month period before the Allies’ withdrawal. In his report, Burnet described how such a monument dedicated to the whole campaign should be treated architecturally: “Externally such a monument must necessarily be simple and even austere in its lines.” For the commission as well, simplicity was one of the main characteristics to be achieved in the “commemoration of the fallen.” Sir Frederic Kenyon stated in his report that the memorialization should be “simple, durable, dignified and expressive of the higher feelings.” To achieve such a simple and austere expression, Burnet chose an ancient, traditional form of memorialization: the obelisk (Figure 2).

In ancient Egypt, the obelisk was acknowledged as the symbol of “stability” and “permanence,” since the sun god Ra “was eternal.” It was believed that “the simplicity of [its]
form, and the hardness of [its] substance, would resist the injuries of time and violence.” Moreover, it was considered that “all the powers of rebirth and virility and fertility and creative force that he [Ra] possessed” reside in its phallic form. The act of erecting an obelisk as a symbol of victory has always represented masculine power, because “it embodies masculine ideals of conquest and domination that are typically considered to be prominent features of monuments representing war in a heroic light.” Historically, obelisk-shaped and pillar monuments constitute the most preferred commemorative structures, since the effectiveness of their simple and recognizable form “makes them especially suitable for expressing the linked concepts of power and military supremacy.” These structures manifest states’ power and everlasting presence by means of these connotations in their pure expression that valorize and justify soldiers’ sacrifices.

The Helles Memorial as a shrine to the memory of soldiers’ sacrifices derives its strong expression not only from its form but also from the particularities of its site. V Beach, overlooked by the rocky cliffs beneath the Helles Memorial, had witnessed “one of the worst and bloodiest of all the landings” (Figures 3 and 4). During the first landing on 25 April 1915, the British collier SS Clyde functioned as a kind of Trojan horse with more than 2,000 soldiers inside. The ship had been altered for use both as a carrier and a shield for the soldiers. The plan for the landing “was to beach her as near the shore as possible” and “to make a kind of boat bridge from her to the beach.” When the landing began, however, the soldiers were trapped below the rocky cliffs, and under heavy fire, the Clyde turned into a sitting duck. Midshipman George Drewry recalled his situation in the Clyde during the landing: “All the time shells were falling all around us and into the ship, one hitting the case of one boiler but doing no further damage. … I stayed on the lighters and tried to keep the men from going ashore but it was murder and soon the first lighter was covered with dead and wounded and the spit was awful, the sea around it for some yards was red.”

Those who succeeded in reaching the shore intact or wounded were no luckier than those in the Clyde, since “V Beach was a natural amphitheater.” The configuration of the beach provided Turkish soldiers, who were located at higher positions, with an extensive view of the landing soldiers. Private Robert Martin, one of the survivors of the battle, noted that of the twenty-five men in his boat, only three survived the shelling: “It was a terrible sight to see the poor boys dead in the water; others on the beach roaring for help. But we could do nothing for them. … Those who were lying wounded on the shore, in the evening the tide came in and they were all drowned and I was left by myself on the beach.” Although Allied troops captured the beach in two days, the Clyde’s wreck became “a conspicuous seamark at Cape Helles throughout the rest of the Campaign.” In his first report to the commission, Burnet suggested as sites for a monument either one of the two ends of V Beach, Cape Helles, or Sedd-el Bahr to emphasize the fact that SS Clyde “still lies” on the shallow shoreline of the beach between these sites. The presence of the wreck apparently affected Burnet in the selection of the site of a memorial dedicated to the whole campaign.

The Landscape of the Gallipoli Campaign

Landscape acquires layers of meaning as war unfolds. Thus commemoration may be seen to embrace its accumulated impact that further defines its significance. Paul Hirst notes that “space is not just a ‘container’ for war, an abstract coordinate system in which conflict just happens. Space is shaped in complex and qualitative ways by circumstances, and in turn its specific features condition and shape war.” In Gallipoli, the landscape shaped the war itself in very particular ways. Military historians and battlefield specialists Peter Doyle and Matthew Bennett have argued that the
The terrains of Anzac Cove and Cape Helles had a great role in the debacle at Gallipoli:

Although the strategic aims were well served by the initial plans, the terrible loss of life at Cape Helles was the result of a commitment to landing on beaches which were clearly too narrow and commanded on both sides by easily-fortified positions. The mistake of landing at Anzac Cove was costly, as after the initial failure to exploit early gains the positions became untenable. The vexed question of water supply was not clearly addressed and became a major issue, as was the provision of rest camps, which were not overlooked by the Turkish artillery. Both of these the Turkish forces had in abundance.28

Indeed, because of its geopolitical position, the landscape of Gallipoli has a long history of military action. The peninsula forms a gate for the straits not only between the Aegean and Marmara seas but also between Europe and Asia. Due to its geographical significance, the landscape around the straits had witnessed many important battles, including the Trojan War. During the Ottoman period, fortifications, bunkers, and heavy artillery were placed at strategic sites on the peninsula in order to strengthen the defense of the straits (Figures 5 and 6). The Gallipoli campaign broke out in order to open the straits to the movement of Allied troops. To capture the capital city of the Ottoman Empire, Istanbul, to increase the number of fronts that the Ottoman Empire had to battle, and thus to guarantee its defeat, the War Council in London agreed on an attack on the Dardanelles on 15 February 1915. When the war began, the majority of the population of the peninsula lived in a few inland and upland villages.29 British historian Robert Rhodes James describes in his book Gallipoli how the peninsula looked before the campaign: “Apart from the town of Gallipoli, some 25 miles
Figure 4  V Beach, its cemetery, and at the far end, Sedd-el Bahr (author’s photo).

Figure 5  The Kilitbahir fortress (author’s photo).
north of the Narrows, the Peninsula was sparsely populated in 1915. ... The few large towns built on the Peninsula crumbled away and disappeared; apart from the building of the two massive fortresses of Sedd-el Bahr and Kilid Bahr in the sixteenth century, the centuries had done little to alter the face of the bleak, narrow, wind-swept and barren Peninsula."

In the course of the campaign, the appearance of the peninsula totally changed. When the evacuation of the forces of the Allied nations was completed on 9 January 1916, especially the western coastal region of the peninsula was full of evidence of intense battle: trenches, tunnels, bomb craters, unexploded artillery shells, fortifications, individual and mass graves, and even unburied corpses. It was a chaotic ground. The trenches of the belligerent soldiers were so close that "one jump" would bring one "from the Turkish trench to the Allied line." There was not enough time or space to bury the fallen appropriately. Under the bursting shrapnel, the bodies of the fallen were either hurriedly entombed or they fell to pieces, mingling with the mud before they could be buried. Turkish soldiers who lost their lives during the campaign were not entombed properly either. They were put into mass graves or were left on the ground where they fell. Because of the unsettled political situation in Turkey after the campaign, most of the remains of scattered bodies were not buried until after the declaration of the Turkish Republic in 1923. Essentially, the land where Anzacs fought became too "broken up for any cultivation to be possible" thereafter. The actions of battle had transformed a "barren" piece of land into war-broken ground.

After the evacuation, Turkish general staff ordered Şevki Paşa (1876–1939), one of the most important Turkish commanders of the campaign, to prepare a map of the peninsula, including the battlefields in Suvla, Ariburnu (Anzac), Conkbayırı (Chunuk Bair), and Sedd-el Bahr. This map indicated military information, such as artillery positions, guns, wrecks, and trenches, as well as graves. However, the war was ongoing and the Turkish general staff changed scarcely anything in the battlefields. After the Armistice of Mudros in 1918, the British returned to the peninsula as victors. When the first unit of the commission was launched to work on commemoration, most of the grave markers were lost and most of the bodies were either missing or unidentifiable. The first comprehensive commemoration work started in 1918, but it interfered with the War of Independence in Turkey and was completed only in 1926. Articles 124 to 136 of the Treaty of Lausanne, which was signed 24 July 1923, guaranteed the construction, protection, and maintenance of the war cemeteries of Allied nations in Gallipoli and included some restrictions about future planning and development of the peninsula. The accord ensured that the battlefields and war burials remained intact until the entire area was declared a historical site and national park. The remaining visible remnants of the intense battle on the landscape still make the memory of the past events tangible for visitors across the entire peninsula.

Place, Memory, and the Politics of Commemoration

The intimate relationship between memorability and place has been widely discussed, and many theories on this relationship have been developed from antiquity onward. The structure of the classical art of memory, or architectural
mnemonics, for example, depends upon this relationship.\textsuperscript{38} Edward S. Casey, in his seminal work Rememering: A Phenom- enological Study, argues that place can be considered a “con- tainer of experiences that contributes so powerfully to its intrinsic memorability.” According to Casey, every experience and its memory “takes place in place,” and therefore, “our memory of what we experience … is bound to place as to its own basis.”\textsuperscript{39} Pierre Nora discusses this relationship, claiming that contemporary memory “crystallizes and secretes itself” in the sites of memory (lieux mémoire), such as battlefields, museums, and monuments. These are the places “where a sense of historical continuity persists.”\textsuperscript{40} Such a sense of “historical continuity” is evident in the landscape of the Gallipoli campaign that preserves not only its embedded war cemeteries and memorials as markings on the peninsula but also the war-broken ground of the battlefields. In “Battlefields of Memory,” Slawomir Kapralski defines “battlefield” as a “place in which groups compete for the fullest possible representation of their identities, trying, according to the means at their disposal, to structure the landscape and invent it with the meaning that is appropriate with respect to their identities.”\textsuperscript{41}

Battlefield as a place in warfare is invented in reference to identities that are enhanced by means of memorialization upon this landscape. Indeed, considering some of the major upheavals in the history of belligerent nations following the Gallipoli campaign, it is possible to acknowledge that the landscape of the peninsula is the producer of different identities. First of all, historically, the landscape is acknowledged as the “birthplace” of nations like Australia and New Zealand, which were known as Anzac (Australian and New Zealand Army Corps) during World War I. Predominantly because of the narrative constructed after the campaign, which was the first military action of the Anzacs in World War I, Anzac “became akin to a ‘secular’ religion.”\textsuperscript{42} In 1925, the first “pilgrim ship” with New Zealander and Australian pilgrims visited the site.\textsuperscript{43} Each year from that time onward, Anzac Day (25 April, the anniversary of the landing in Gallipoli) has been commemorated on the actual site of the battles by an increasing number of visitors. The cove where Anzacs first landed, an unimportant and ordinary piece of land, was transformed into a symbol at the end of the war and during the process of constructing national identities for Australia and New Zealand: landscape itself became a monu- ment to commemorate the birth of these nations.\textsuperscript{44} The entire peninsula acquires similar importance for the construction of modern Turkish national identity. Atatürk first emerged as a national hero during this campaign, and this victory empowered him to be the national leader during the Turkish War of Independence and enabled his success as founder of the modern Turkish Republic in 1923.\textsuperscript{45} The Gallipoli campaign had a significant impact on the process that replaced “religion as the primary signifier of identity” with nationality.\textsuperscript{46} The expansive area of the battlefields is acknowledged as sacred, and the Turkish memorials and cemeteries marking the landscape are still deployed by the state to enhance national identity.

Imperial Identity in British Memorialization

Commemoration of a battle is a political act; “to commemo- rate war unavoidably creates a distinct political landscape.”\textsuperscript{47} In battlefields, where soldiers from different national and religious backgrounds fought and died, catastrophe and mourning intertwine with state policies, and the question of representation in memorialization becomes even more signi- ficant. Here the dual status of World War I as a global con- flict and a war of empires was critical.\textsuperscript{48} In 1918, the Imperial War Graves Commission announced in a press statement that “British cemeteries in foreign lands will be the symbol for future generations of the common purpose, the common devotion, the common sacrifice of all ranks in a united Empire.”\textsuperscript{49} In the early years of the commission, there were major debates about how to commemorate the war dead and how to agree on a common architectural language for war cemeteries.\textsuperscript{50} After long discussions and proposals from dif- ferent architects, Kenyon, in his report of 24 January 1918, compared and coordinated various ideas, and he suggested a basic architectural scheme, key elements, and principles for commemorating the dead. In this report, Kenyon considered the diversity of the sizes, positions, and geographies of war cemeteries on the landscapes of battle and explained why uniformity and the principle of equality in their treatment were necessary. In respect to the spatial arrangement inside cemeteries, he proposed that they should be “marked by rows of headstones of uniform height and width.”\textsuperscript{51} According to him, “The headstones clearly indicate the nature of the closure, that it is a cemetery and not a garden.” He justified his opinion by claiming that “the rows of headstones in their ordered ranks carry on the military idea, giving the appear- ance as of a battalion on parade, and suggesting the spirit of discipline and order which is the soul of an army.” According to Kenyon, the need for simplicity demanded that the memo- rial “must have, or be capable of, religious associations, and while it must satisfy the religious emotions of as many as possible, it must give no reasonable ground of offence to any.” He considered Lutyns’s suggestion of an altar stone to encapsulate this ideal and quoted Lutyns: “This was to the effect that the main memorial in every British cemetery should be ‘one great fair stone of fine proportion, 12 ft. in...
length, lying raised upon three steps, of which the first and third shall be twice the width of the second; and that each stone shall bear, in indelible lettering some fine thought or words of sacred dedication. This stone would be, wherever circumstances permit, on the eastern side of each cemetery, and the graves will lie before it, facing east, as the Army faces now.\textsuperscript{52}

Kenyon claimed that such an ancient symbol of sacrifice transcended religion and would not offend any belief. He was more attuned, however, to possible criticism about the lack of a Christian symbol in war cemeteries; thus he suggested a “cross” along with the “stone” to be erected in each cemetery. He completely ignored the thousands of non-Christians who served in the imperial army and claimed that “the cross and stone combined would be the universal mark of the British war cemetery.”\textsuperscript{53} Just one year later, in Rudyard Kipling’s book \textit{The Graves of the Fallen}, which was published by the commission to disseminate to the public the design principles of war cemeteries, the stone and cross were described as the Stone of Remembrance and the Cross of Sacrifice. Kipling explained that on the Stone of Remembrance, the inscription “their name liveth for evermore,” was chosen from the book of Ecclesiastes.\textsuperscript{54} Historian John R. Gillis pointed out that the words “had never before been used for commemorative purposes” and “in August 1918” they “still had a strange ring.”\textsuperscript{55} Designing memorials and graves to be as inclusive as possible was one of the major decisions made by the commission, but it presumed the dominant religion to set the tone. Kipling stated in \textit{The Graves of the Fallen}: “In a war where the full strength of nations was used without respect of persons, no difference could be made between the graves of officers or men. Yet some sort of central idea was needed that should symbolize our common sacrifice wherever our dead might be laid. … Plain headstones, measuring 2ft. 6 in. by 1 ft. 3 in., were therefore chosen, upon which the Cross or other religious symbol of the dead man’s faith could be carved and his Regimental badge fully displayed.”\textsuperscript{56}

Uniformity in treatment was the main rule, not only because of the idea of equality but also because of the intention of ignoring national differences among soldiers who fought for an imperial identity. Kipling attached foremost importance to the representation of British imperial identity; he was after all more than just an imperialist, he was, in George Orwell’s words, “the prophet of British Imperialism in its expansionist phase.”\textsuperscript{57} Mark David Shetfall, in \textit{Altered Memories of the Great War}, claimed that “the fact that he [Kipling] had lost a son in the Great War” made more touching his “role in choosing and creating the inscriptions that would mark the overseas graves of those who died in the service of the Empire.”\textsuperscript{58} Shetfall added: “Even if this had not been the case, the status of Kipling as the author whose work had most contributed to the mythology of Empire so fundamental to mainstream late-Victorian and Edwardian British identity would have made him a natural choice to express the sentiments of the Empire’s citizens toward their war dead.”\textsuperscript{59}

Considering the wide range of soldiers’ origins and beliefs, the artists, architects, and intellectuals of the commission decided to abstain from denominational expression. Emphasizing “common sacrifice” instead of differences became key, and the idiosyncratic classicism of Lutyens, which “provided the symbols for the last days of British Imperialism,” became the model to be emulated.\textsuperscript{60} Moreover, cultural historian of war Ana Carden-Coyne argues that “with a mythic representation of human equality,” classical architectural elements “in cemeteries and memorials aimed to transfer the site of ‘traumatic memory’ from bloody battlefield to pristine panorama, from painful place to soothing space.”\textsuperscript{61} In this sense, what such elements make people forget becomes as important as what they are intended to recollect.

The commemoration of war, as Casey argues in \textit{Remembering}, “is at the same time not to remember its many horrors, its unspeakable and even unthinkable mutilations and agonies.”\textsuperscript{62} The bodies of the British dead that were “blown apart, drowned in mud, or fragmented by bombardment” were commemorated on the home front idealistically, by abstract memorials like cenotaphs or by figurative sculptures: “dwelling on death, pain and injury was avoided at all costs.”\textsuperscript{63} This was a deliberate omission of the devastation of war, emphasizing sacrifice but concealing its physical cost. Classical architectural elements were chosen not only for their geometric logic, which is in accordance with their overall design language fashioned from pure, simple, and ancient forms, but also for the singular message they convey to all the world in the battlefields where British soldiers fought and died. Imperial rhetoric conflated the difference between the British and their colonized subjects, who fought for the empire but were not accorded the same societal and political rights as the British.

**British Memorialization on the Landscape of Gallipoli**

The use of uniform design principles in war cemeteries of the Imperial War Graves Commission so as to represent a cohesive imperial identity all over the world was one of the main principles that governed the selection of architects and the briefs they were given. Nonetheless, at the initial phase of the project, in his report to the commission of 1918, Kenyon made reference to the possibility of exceptions.
He remarked that “difficulties are the artists’ opportunity, and it will be expected that every effort will be loyally made to carry out the plan adopted by the commission, and that no departure will be made from it without the commission’s sanction.”63 For Burnet, his task at Gallipoli was both a challenge and an opportunity that resulted in some departures from the commission’s architectural principles. Specifically, these departures consisted of a walled cross instead of the freestanding Cross of Sacrifice; “simple sloped stones” instead of headstones; and the use of a rubble-walled ha-ha to bound war cemeteries (Figures 7 and 8). As Philip Longworth states in his history of the commission, “The departures from the standards of the western front were dictated by necessity, not by disagreement with the commission’s principles, of which Burnet was a staunch supporter,” because “it was a hard struggle to impose order on that chaotic ground.”64

The Gallipoli campaign, its objective, and its landscape were exceptional. General Sir Ian Hamilton, commander of the Allied forces in Gallipoli, wrote in his diary: “A three or four mile advance should be easy enough, but, in the West,
that would mean just three or four miles of land; nothing more. But here [in Gallipoli], those three or four miles—nay, two or three miles—(so ineffective in France) are an objective in themselves; they give us the strategical hub of the universe—Constantinople."

Kenyon himself, in his report to the commission, signaled the particularities of the Gallipoli campaign and their effects on memorialization by comparing it to other battles. He introduced his report by saying that “the theatre of war at Gallipoli presents some special features of its own, since, owing to the restricted area of the fighting, the question of battle memorials and that of cemetery treatment are to some extent combined.” On the western front, most of the burials in the small temporary cemeteries established during the war were later concentrated in larger cemeteries. It was “inevitable,” since the landscape was farmland. However, at Gallipoli, battlefields were on steep cliffs so that most of the war cemeteries, which had been situated where soldiers fought and fell during the battles, were preserved. It was one of the major decisions taken during the design process.

In a letter to Burnet of 7 August 1919, for example, the deputy assistant director of the commission at Turkey, R. C. Everett, asked to retain the burials at V Beach on the actual site of battle because of the importance of its place: “As the landing at V Beach was so intensely dramatic in its conception and execution and as its story occupies so important a place in the history of the campaign, do you think that this little cemetery should carefully be kept as a permanent memorial of one of the most famous spots on the peninsula?”

Not only V Beach Cemetery, but also those at the top of a steep ridge or on a high plateau like the 4th Battalion Parade or Plugee’s Plateau cemeteries were preserved on their actual grounds. Burnet described his work for the commission in an article titled “The War Cemeteries in the East,” published in 1922, and in it he referred to this approach to preservation: “In some cases the graves were not disturbed, merely suitably enclosed and memorial stones added; in others scattered bodies were collected in one spot.”

In the extensive landscape of the peninsula, which functions as the repository of all the stories of battle, memory dwells not only in mind but also in place. From 1915 onward, the landscape of Gallipoli was never understood simply as a natural geographical formation. Bruce Scates, one of the most important contemporary historians of Anzac, elaborates on the charged quality of the landscape as it was related to him by a Gallipoli pilgrim experiencing the battlefields: “[You] hear the gentle lapping of the water on to the shore below and the place gains a voice and becomes real. You can hear the explosions, the shouts … the accents as if you were there in 1915. … It’s possible to imagine the men as they climbed out of the trenches. … They all lay there now, in row after row, much as did when they died.”

The importance of the landscape of the Gallipoli campaign as the container of the memory of the battles crystallized in the Australian government’s proposal at the initial phase of the memorialization process. Since the Allied troops had to evacuate the peninsula in a short time period after nine months of battles, many burials could not be carried out until after the armistice, and “over two thirds of the total number were unidentified. The “abnormally high proportion” of unknown burials constituted a great difference between Gallipoli cemeteries and all other cemeteries of the commission around the world. In a letter to the commission, in October 1919, the Australians opposed marking existing cemeteries distinctly on the landscape and instead proposed the preservation of the whole area where the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps had fought as a huge burial ground:

On this triangulation plan are shown certain individual cemetery areas. I should like to point out, with all the emphasis possible, that these burial spots do not truly indicate the whole extent of the Australian and New Zealand burials. The cemeteries marked were those, which were in existence prior to the evacuation of the Peninsula. They contain only a small percentage of the graves. The great majority of officers and men of the Oversea forces who fell in the Anzac at all events, lie scattered over every portion of the delineated area, which is, in fact, a huge burial ground.

Burnet admired the Australian’s proposal in theory. In his report to the commission he pointed out that “nothing better could have been done” than preserving “the Anzac district as consecrated ground with trees and shrubs in which the cemeteries, unwalled, and retained simply in the positions in which they were found.” On the other hand, he also added that “their upkeep” in such an extensive area “would involve careful annual inspection and considerable labor, and any more than usually severe storm might, in one night, do irreparable damage.” Kenyon, in his report on the architectural treatment of the cemeteries and memorials at Gallipoli, also expressed sympathy with the proposal, yet he refused to endorse it due to similar practical reasons. On the other hand, parallel to the Australian’s proposal, Burnet suggested another project. He planned to mark the battlefields in Gallipoli with “stones of great size,” like “Druid stones, [to] be raised on the fields of battle where the remains of the unknown have been interred.” According to him, such stones should bear just “the name of the battlefield and its date.” This proposal has never been realized, but it clearly demonstrates Burnet’s view of memorialization as integral to the landscape.
According to Burnet’s approach, the grounds of battles with their cemeteries, memorials, and preserved warfare topographies turn into the memorial of the campaign par excellence. However, as Sally Morgan, artist and writer, argues, “The marking of the landscape with names, effigies, memorials and built monuments, is a conscious act of history writing.” She adds: “Those who control memory control identity; and those who control the landscape control memory.” Renaming the landing areas with their British names such as V Beach or Anzac Cove functioned as an attempt to write history in Gallipoli. Burnet’s idea of marking the battlefields with stones of great size and using their British names was also a means of occupying the landscape and appropriating its identity. War cemeteries on the western front designed by the creators of the commission’s architectural language were located on Allied ground, whereas the ones designed by Burnet in Gallipoli were on Ottoman land; that is, on previous enemy territory. This circumstance began shaping the memorialization process even before the end of the campaign. Bill Gammage prefaces his article “The Anzac Cemetery,” for example, with these remarks: “Over two nights in December 1915, 20,000 men evacuated Anzac’s trenches undetected by the enemy. For weeks they had taken enormous trouble to pretend that all was normal, yet one sight might have warned watching Turks: a sudden activity around Anzac cemeteries. In those last days units mapped and photographed them, and hundreds of men fenced and tidied graves, made new crosses, re-carved names and edged mounds with white-washed stones.”

From the early days of the postwar period, the situation of these cemeteries in enemy territory sparked a very important debate, especially in Commonwealth countries. At the end of the campaign, those who identified themselves with the British war cause and British imperialism considered Gallipoli a foreign and hostile land. It was believed in Australia, for example, that the soldiers surrendered not only the peninsula but also “the graves and bodies of some eight thousand Australian dead … to the Turks. The care of the dead, once the preserve of comrades, now passed to the enemy.” Until the armistice on 31 October 1918, their attempts to inspect the landscape were unavailing. Australian journalist W. E. J. Macguire commented: “The difference between our dead in France and our dead in Gallipoli lies in the fact that the former are buried on friendly Christian soil, but the latter lie in a heathen, hostile country.” Only after the Treaty of Lausanne was signed in 1923, commencing the beginning of official communication between governments, was “the impression of the Turk as honorable foe” sanctioned.

**War Cemeteries on War-Broken Ground**

When Burnet visited the peninsula in 1919, it was full of trenches, tunnels, bomb craters, and so forth, and each one of these battle remnants was related to a particular scene of the campaign. In his initial drawings of the cemeteries, now preserved in the Royal Institute of British Architects Library Drawings and Archives Collections at the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, Burnet used two different colors: blue for existing features of the landscape and red for “proposed treatment.” As these drawings reveal, Burnet deliberately referenced the landscape defined by war as clearly as possible in his commemorative schemes. In his handwritten note at the upper-left corner of the initial drawing of Walker’s Ridge Cemetery, he indicated that “the site is on war broken ground,” and he marked all existing features such as trenches, graves, or important geographical formations with blue (Figure 9).

In this drawing of Walker’s Ridge Cemetery, the general outline of the cemetery was formed by two different rectangular parts placed facing each other at an angle. The relationship between the red and blue lines shows that Burnet intended to preserve the original positions of the existing graves as much as possible as he designed the form of the cemetery. The orientation of the land area of the Anzacs might also have guided the decision of where to locate the approach to the cemetery and the angle between the rectangular parts. Burnet’s handwritten note specified that “the cemetery overlooks Suvla & Northern Anzac Area,” and he designated the angle of the form of the cemetery according to the position of these areas. The preservation of visible traces of the campaign was so important for Burnet that in the drawings he proposed existing trenches of battles to be used as channels around each cemetery; just a few of them were to be diverted and filled. In some cemeteries of the peninsula, even the irregular positions of original burials were retained rather than realigned as on the western front. For this reason, the burials in these cemeteries still evoke the hurried entombments that took place in hells between heavy fighting.

Furthermore, in these drawings, Burnet indicated each and every important detail regarding the natural formation of the topography around the cemeteries. In the initial drawing of Walker’s Ridge Cemetery, for example, he marked significant geographical details such as bushes or steep falls in the color blue and wrote that the area is “covered closely with rhododendron and other shrub” and the soil is “sandy loam.” He wanted to make the cemeteries compatible with the particularities of the geography as much as possible. The author of the most recent official history of the commission, Julie Summers, states in her book *Remembered* that
the cemeteries in the Dardanelles are an excellent example of the Commission’s ideas interpreted to suit the environment.” Moreover, she adds: “Burnet succeeded in capturing the mood of the landscape in his treatment of the cemeteries and memorials, and the harmony of this place makes it remarkable.” In his first report to the commission, after visiting Gallipoli, Burnet outlined the geography of the peninsula:

These hills [the Anzac area] seem to be entirely composed of layers of sand and gravel, and although in certain places they stand almost vertical they exhibit, particularly in the Northern section of Anzac, Shrapnel Valley, the Sphinx and below Walker’s Ridge—traces of extensive landslides which, though covered at the time of our visit with a rough scrub, indicate in my opinion unreliable and insecure ground unsuitable as foundations for permanent monuments of any size or weight.

Due to the unstable ground, Burnet proposed erecting perimeter walls “to protect the cemeteries from the ravages on the soil made by the heavy rains consist[ing] of a dry stone-lined trench and embankment planted with rock-growing plants native to the country.” He proposed to make them “as far as possible in simple level lines culminating in a raised portion on the highest side of the cemetery” and to separate them from the landscape with a surrounding ha-ha to channel rainwater. In many instances in his report, Burnet repeated the significance of simple treatment in design applied to the overall landscape. When Burnet explained his design ideas for the Helles Memorial in his report to the commission, he suggested that “as a memorial to the whole Gallipoli Campaign it [the Helles Memorial] may justify a simpler treatment of the cemeteries than has been found possible in the various European fields in action.” This side note on the design principles of war cemeteries can be considered the first glimpse of the modifications on the commission’s principles that he was planning to make.

According to his contemporaries, simplicity characterized Burnet’s architecture. In 1923, on the occasion of Burnet’s receiving the Royal Gold Medal for the Promotion of Architecture from the Royal Institute of British Architects, English architect and former president of the institute Harry Stuart Goodhart-Rendel (1887–1959) noted that
Burnet’s architecture has the “quality of directness and essential simplicity which makes detailed descriptions unnecessary and even impertinent; it makes its effect simply and immediately, and needs no exposition.” He added: “It is, in fact in the reconciliation of conflicting requirements and the simplification of complex problems in design that Sir John peculiarly excels.” Others, such as Burnet’s partner Thomas Smith Tait (1882–1954), claimed that Burnet’s architecture was distinctive because of “its wonderful versatility and fitness for its peculiar purpose.”

Adaptability to the existing environment, mapping the conflicting parameters of design problems, and proposing simple and versatile solutions were all qualities critical to Burnet’s ability to adjust the commission’s design principles to the landscape of Gallipoli. Using sloped stones flat on the ground instead of upright headstones was also integral to his approach. In Gallipoli, Burnet preferred sloped stones to headstones for the identified burials, and he chose to mark the unidentified burials in the plans of cemeteries rather than on the ground. As Summers notes, “This gives the cemeteries an atmosphere unlike that of the silent cities of the Western Front, for wide expanses of open space are dotted with a small number of low grave markers.” This comparison between “the silent cities of the Western Front” and “wide expanses of open space” of Gallipoli signifies Burnet’s attempts to adapt the commission’s principles for the distinct characteristics of the campaign and its landscape.

In his first report, Burnet pointed out that “the burials are so close that the present white crosses touch and in some cases appear to interlace with one another, actually giving the appearance of fences.” According to him, “This effect is destructive of all quiet and offers a very violent contrast between the fallen who have been identified and those who have not.” He suggested that “the graves of the identified be each marked by a simple sloped stone about 14” x 12” and standing 6” x 8” above the level of the ground. These stones would bear the number and name of the individual.” Burnet claimed: “If the graves are marked as suggested such stones will ultimately lose their newness of color and, whilst the graves of the identified will be easily found, there will be little to disturb the unity and quiet reverence of the cemetery.” Kenyon approved all of Burnet’s initial suggestions in his report to the commission of 4 August 1919, except for the use of pedestal stones instead of headstones. However, Burnet succeeded in convincing the commission to follow his proposal, as can be read in the minutes of the meeting held at the British Museum in May 1921:

Sir John Burnet definitely prefers the low, almost square stone to the upright headstone used in France. His conception of the Cemetery is a white wall surrounded (mainly for protection against surface water), by a broad belt of trees and shrubs, and enclosing a ground surface spotted with low stones. His object is that as much grass as possible should be seen. He considers this more important in these countries than in France, because of the arid character and general grey or yellow color of the country. With the upright stone, he thinks that most of the grass would be obscured. His whole design is based upon this conception, and the substitution of upright headstones would in his opinion immediately effect and injure it.

The view of the sloped stones on the ground completed the overall simple and coherent presentation of the cemeteries. Nevertheless, not only architectural elements but also trees and shrubs were part of Burnet’s design process; he “planned the planting with care, to fit in with and to complement the architecture.” In Lone Pine Cemetery, for example, the pine, as one of the most important symbols of the battle that took place in the vicinity, constitutes the focal point of the cemetery design along with the squat obelisk-shaped memorial to the Australian missing (Figure 10). In sketches of his cemetery designs, Burnet treated horticultural elements as if they were architectural components, describing them structurally: “belt of trees densely planted” or “belt of shrubs densely planted” (see Figure 9). He tended to place these belts of trees behind the screen wall opposite the entrance to serve “as a dark backdrop to set off the white stone.” Art historian and war memorial specialist Paul Gough argues that Burnet also incorporated into his design specific trees that carry importance in terms of the stories of battles (Figure 11): “Twelve Tree Cemetery, for example, stands a little distance south of the site of the original stand of pines. These trees were used for observation posts by the British artillery in 1915 but were destroyed in the battles for the heights of Achi Babar. After the war the trees were re-sited within the perimeter of the eponymous cemetery, but not in an informal way. They became an integral element in the architectural plan, planted in two rows either side of an imaginary line down the centre of the garden.”

The integrity and unity of cemeteries both internally and in relation to the surrounding landscape were central characteristics of Burnet’s design in the peninsula. Burnet designed the wall inside the cemeteries as a seamless sloped surface of grass from the ground to the topmost level. This design decision provides the visitor with the impression of a continuous spatial relation between interior and exterior, even though the viewer stands in a carefully enclosed space (Figure 12). As I suggested before, Burnet admired the Australian proposal that the whole area be preserved as a huge burial ground but had to reject it for practical reasons.
Figure 10 View of the lone pine and squat obelisk-shaped memorial in Lone Pine Cemetery (author’s photo).

Figure 11 Pine trees integral to the layout of Twelve Tree Copse Cemetery (author’s photo).

Figure 12 View of the landscape from Shell Green Cemetery (author’s photo).
However, the uninterrupted visual relationship between inside and outside the cemeteries reminds the visitor that the burial ground continues across the entire war-broken landscape and the memorialization extends over the borders of the cemeteries. The view of the other monuments and war cemeteries that dot the battle landscape enhances this impression (Figure 13).

Even though the perimeter wall and the rubble-walled ha-ha were the design elements that Burnet initially thought necessary to protect the cemeteries from the effects of harsh climate, he made them appear to dissolve in the landscape in some cemeteries. For example, in Beach Cemetery, located where most of the Anzacs first landed, fought, and died, the wall on the shoreline vanishes, and it is substituted by an embankment that appears to welcome incoming waves and by a sloped stone that explains the importance of the scene to the visitor (Figure 14). The palpable story of the place and visible importance of the scene are manifested by means of the memorialization. Similarly, in Shrapnel Valley Cemetery, one side of the perimeter wall seems to dissolve into the ground and part of it turns into entrance steps (Figure 15). This valley, named for the heavy bombardment on 26 April 1915, constitutes a huge burial ground because of the great number of unidentified and lost soldiers. The alteration of the perimeter wall provides the visitor with a panoramic view of the valley as a burial ground from the very entrance.

One of the most distinctive characteristics of Burnet’s architecture, the “reconciliation of conflicting requirements,” reveals itself especially in his endeavor to reconcile the Cross of Sacrifice to the cultural characteristics of the “foreign land” of Gallipoli. In order to respect the religious beliefs of the majority of the people who live on these lands, Burnet successfully transformed the Cross of Sacrifice from a freestanding structure to a relief on a wall, in order to avoid
the offense its silhouette could cause. In almost every cemetery, the surrounding wall gradually ascends and turns into a white stone surface that bears an engraved cross directly opposite the entrance. Indeed, just as Kenyon suggested, Burnet used the challenge as his opportunity and combined the surrounding cemetery wall, walled cross, and in some cases Stone of Remembrance in one composition. In cemeteries that contain one thousand or more burials, like Twelve Tree Copse, V Beach, or Redoubt, the walled cross gains more space by the interruption of the perimeter and embraces the Stone of Remembrance (Figure 16). The cross forms a background for the altar stone, and all these components, along with the dark green belt of trees behind, constitute a deep spatial articulation. Thus, unlike most of the war cemeteries of the western front in which the freestanding Cross of Sacrifice and Stone of Remembrance are placed centrally and surrounded by an independent wall, in Gallipoli each component of the design became inseparable, not only from one another but also from the land itself.

Conclusion
No battlefield is a tabula rasa. The memory of the campaign and its dead is regenerated by means of the landscape cast by
memorials, war cemeteries, and the remains of battles. Each element in that particular topography serves to affect the visitor's remembrance of events. The landscape not only provides the visitor with a place to remember and mourn the loss, but also enables the state to remodel that past and to designate what to remember and what to forget. Likewise, the past is reconstructed in the battlefields by the belligerent states of the Gallipoli campaign through memorialization. Among these reconstructions, the scheme of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission is distinctive owing to the common language of commemoration used not only in the entire peninsula but also all over the world. The coherent imperial identity that the works of the commission attempted to produce derived from appointed architects' obligation of using predefined design principles and similar architectural elements in every theater of war. On the foreign landscape of the peninsula the appearance of this identity changed as a result of Burnet's modifications of these elements.

Unlike the ones on the western front, the Gallipoli war cemeteries are composed of simple sloped grave markers on a wide green grass lawn surrounded by a continuous perimeter wall elaborated only by an engraved Cross of Sacrifice and, in some cases, accompanied by the Stone of Remembrance. Burnet's major motivation behind these modifications was to make the war cemeteries compatible with the unique characteristics of the landscape. Archival research and close analysis of Burnet's drawings and works in Gallipoli demonstrate his keen understanding of the landscape of the peninsula from the very initial phases of the design process. The erstwhile enemy land of Gallipoli, with its harsh climate and topography, required a distinct architectural treatment. However, the use of an engraved cross instead of an independent, freestanding Cross of Sacrifice, for example, shows that Burnet's fondness for the compatibility of the cemeteries with the landscape was about not only its physical particularities but also its cultural characteristics.

In spite of all these modifications and the simplified language of commemoration, the war cemeteries of Gallipoli reassert the imperial identity that the commission aimed to represent all over the world. The commission's sanction at every stage of the design process was approval of this quality of Burnet's approach. Especially the Stone of Remembrance, universal mark of the common sacrifice in British cemeteries, relates the ones in Gallipoli to the collective image of imperial identity. At the same time, the remarkable integrity, with the landscape within which the cemeteries are situated as well as with the peninsula's wartime stories, makes Burnet's work belong to the topography of the campaign and distinguishes his design from those on the western front. His ability to reconcile complex design problems and the versatility of his design approach provided the commission with an outstanding adaptation of its basic principles. The particularities of the landscape that shaped the fate of the Gallipoli campaign transformed, as time passed, into a container of its stories and ultimately into a memorial itself.

In the pristine panorama of the peninsula where the burials intertwine with the remains and the constructed narrative of the campaign, Burnet modified and deployed the commission's uniform design language of imperial identity to reveal the embedded memory of the landscape itself and to memorialize war-broken ground.

Notes
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4. Sir John James Burnet, drawing of Walker's Ridge Cemetery, Royal Institute of British Architects Library Drawings and Archives Collections, Victoria and Albert Museum, London, file PA 855/5.4 (see Figure 9).
5. Bruce Scates is one of those rare researchers who authored many books and articles about the memorialization in Gallipoli. However, these works focus mostly on the pilgrimage experiences of Australians and New Zealanders and not on the architecture of memorialization itself. Some of those works by Bruce Scates are following: “In Gallipoli’s Shadow: Pilgrimage, Memory, Mourning, and the Great War,” Australian Historical Studies 119 (Apr. 2002), 1–21; Return to Gallipoli: Walking the Battlefields of the Great War (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006); “Manufacturing Memory at Gallipoli,” in War Memory and Popular Culture: Essays on Modes of Remembrance and Commemoration, ed. Michael Keren and Holger H. Herwig (Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland, 2009), 57–75.
10. The site was first suggested by the principal beach master of the British imperial army at Cape Helles in his letter to the commission on 5 May 1919. Cecil M. Staveley to the Imperial War Graves Commission, 5 May 1919, catalogue no. 612, Commonwealth War Graves Commission Archive, Maidenhead, Berkshire.


13. Ibid.


16. Budge, Cleopatra’s Needles and Other Egyptian Obelisks, 21–22.


20. Ibid., 48.

21. Ibid., 48–49.


25. Masefeld, Gallipoli, 48.


30. James, Gallipoli, 2–3.


33. Ibid., 308.

34. Sates, Return to Gallipoli, 68.

35. Ibid., 307.


37. In 1973, the Ministry of Forestry declared the area a historical and national park. It covers 33,000 hectares of the peninsula, containing nearly all of the battlefields, memorials, war cemeteries, and war remains. The Ministry of Culture registered the area as a historical, cultural, archaeological, and natural heritage site in 1980; and in 1992, most of the memorials, war cemeteries, and all other remains of war were registered as cultural heritage. Bademli, Sari, et al., “Tespitler ve Degelendirmeler,” 66.


42. Sates, “Manufacturing Memory at Gallipoli,” 59.

43. Sates, Return to Gallipoli, 69.


51. Kenyon, War Graves, 7.

52. Ibid., 10.

53. Ibid., 10–11.


61. Casey, Remembering, xi.


63. Kenyon, War Graver, 14. Indeed, Kenyon himself was extremely effective in that sanctification process. Fabian Ware, The Immortal Heritage: Memorialization on War-Broken Ground.

64. Longworth, *The Unending Vigil*, 112, 117.


71. Scates, “In Gallipoli’s Shadow,” 9–10, 16.


74. E. A. Box to the Imperial War Graves Commission, 10 Oct. 1919, Australian House Commonwealth Offices Correspondences, catalogue no. 514, Commonwealth War Graves Commission Archive, Maidenhead, Berkshire.


76. Kenyon claimed that “the acquisition of so much ground, much of which, except at Anzac, is good agricultural ground, is a question of general policy,” and also that “the question of maintenance of such areas must also be taken into account.” Kenyon to the Imperial War Graves Commission, 4 Aug. 1919, Kenyon Report, catalogue no. 1067, p. 1, Commonwealth War Graves Commission Archive, Maidenhead, Berkshire.

77. Burnet to the Imperial War Graves Commission, 30 June 1919, Burnet Report, catalogue no. 408, p. 6, Commonwealth War Graves Commission Archive, Maidenhead, Berkshire.


83. Burnet, drawings of Walker’s Ridge Cemetery, Royal Institute of British Architects Library Drawings and Archives Collections, Victoria and Albert Museum, London (see Figure 9).


88. Ibid., p. 9.


91. Ibid., 1066–67.


99. Ibid., 80–81.