

Editorial Introduction

Gallipoli & Coniston: conflict, colonialism and spatial power

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In 1938, Coniston was a tragedy in the invasion of Australia. It was 23 years after distant Gallipoli witnessed the tragedy of the invasion of Turkey. In both of these disasters, many people died brutally and uselessly while those who survived were scarred for the rest of their lives. Both tragedies were a reflection of global colonial expansion and the attempt by colonising Western Europeans to impose control over other people's lands. The papers in this issue take new directions to address the challenging questions raised when the invasion of Australia is seen to be linked to 'modern' international wars – argued here to be the expansions of colonial power right up to the present day.

In Australia, there is rising, emotive emphasis being placed on the tragedy of the fighting at Gallipoli in Turkey in 1915. Yet Coniston, which lies geographically at the very heart of Australia and is more recent, is almost forgotten. It has been recognised only by the families of the survivors who still live there and who have just - after so many years - won the struggle to restore their power over their own lands. Gallipoli is claimed to have 'made' the 'nation' as if some Australian identity was created in the midst of brutality so far away. Yet the brutality which established British control over the continent, without which 'Australia' could not have existed, is ignored because it would mean acknowledging the people whose land was stolen. The power of colonial control – which was reflected in both conflicts – is almost completely unseen.

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This issue of *Cosmopolitan Civil Societies Journal* sets out to explain this selective memory of tragedy and power. The innovative essays within it ask – from different perspectives – how colonial control has been established and continues to be maintained, despite being seldom acknowledged. Essentially warfare inside and outside Australia in the last two hundred years of colonial expansion, competition and decolonisation has involved the carving out of 'national' identities and new borders – while ensuring hierarchies of control and power on national, ethnic and racial lines. The possibilities for 'cosmopolitan' collaboration or even communication have been constrained and distorted by the deadly conflicts generated by colonial border-making and ethnicising.

The papers have arisen from ongoing discussions, begun in a conference about state-generated and militarised 'emergencies' and then continued in a later conference about colonial conflicts and Australia's role in them. At this second conference, researchers and community representatives from the peoples present at Gallipoli in 1915 – Indigenous, Anglo, Turkish and Indian Australians – came together to question how war and borders were being framed – in these four years of WW1 commemoration – as being international only, while the frontier invasion conflict in Australia was ignored. Together, this series of discussions resonated with wider scholarship on the control of space in past and continuing colonial contexts in Africa which allowed common themes to emerge. Invasions, fences, borders and checkpoints have all been aimed at establishing and sustaining power over colonised, ethnicised minorities.

Francis Jupururla Kelly spoke to frame the Gallipoli-Coniston conference. Kelly is a Walpiri man, from the lands on which the Coniston massacre took place. He has spent many years working with his community to record the events of Coniston and, with David Bradbury, he made the film *Coniston* to bring that story to the world. In October, 2014, after many demands, the Walpiri people finally achieved full control over Yurrkuru, the land on which the 1928 massacre took place. This volume therefore begins as it should with Kelly's statements: firstly his words about the conference itself, then about the film and finally his statement on the momentous achievement of land restoration.

Colonies and power: past and present

Colonial expansions - in the past or the present - have mobilised force and spatial power. In order to demonstrate the common strategies across settings of colonial power, **Annie Pfungst** has compared the spatialised power exercised by the British during what it called the ‘Mau Mau Emergency’ in Kenya in the 1950s with the ‘state of emergency’ imposed by the Israeli Government in Occupied Palestine in the present. In her article ‘Militarised Violence... over Palestine and Kenya’, Pfungst brings tightly argued analysis together with visual imagery from the two colonial situations, separated by 70 years and half a continent but directly parallel in intention and effect. Control, marginalisation and repression under the British and Israeli occupations in Kenya and Palestine respectively have mobilised the same strategy of state-generated ‘emergency’. In fact the links are direct: the Israeli Government since 1947 has drawn on the precedents established under the British occupation of the same area – Palestine – before 1947.

Australia

The three papers which follow take up the challenge of linking internal, frontier warfare in Australia with its external international warfare. **Ray Kerkhove**, in ‘Aboriginal “resistance war” tactics’, reviews the established evidence about the ‘Black War’ in 19th century southern Queensland when Aboriginal people were opposing invasion by British settlers. Kerkhove demonstrates direct parallels on many counts with the guerrilla strategies which became familiar only in the 20th century with the conflicts in Vietnam and elsewhere in situations of unequal force. Strategies like sabotage and subterfuge, ambush and the targeting of economic resources along with tactical innovation are all well-documented but have seldom been compared systematically to what are now well recognised military tactics.

A key component of the military power of the invading settlers, as **Paddy Gibson** points out in ‘Imperialism, ANZAC nationalism and the Aboriginal experience of warfare’, were the Native Police. Again, this is an issue which is seldom considered in Australia, but there is more extensive analysis of ‘colonial armies’ in other settings, where works by Omissi, Tobias, Hack and others all point to the use of collaborating colonised people to conduct invasions and then maintain control. In this year of the Centenary of Gallipoli, there has been great concern to recognise not only the presence but the courage and professionalism of the Aboriginal soldiers who fought in the Australian Army in both World Wars and the many

‘smaller’ ones since. Yet, as Gibson points out, the real parallel of Indigenous peoples in uniformed roles in the Australian armed forces is with the Native Police who enforced settlement, not with the Indigenous resistance fighters who were opposed them. This, as Gibson points out, demonstrates the need for further research – to identify the tensions among those Indigenous men who became Native Police, willingly or unwillingly, and the impacts on them of being the face of the Invasion – as well as the effect on the defending Aboriginal people who had to make sense of their resistance when the people they were fighting were their own.

The third paper in this group, ‘The Politics of War and the “Battle of Balaklava”’ by John Maynard, brings the external war back home, following the lives of a family of South Australian Aboriginal soldiers in the years after they had returned home. Demobilised Aboriginal soldiers had to leave behind the relative egalitarianism of the armed forces overseas to face once more the continuing discrimination of their colonised homes. Unsurprisingly, this harsh reality led to conflicts at many levels. The conflict which Maynard explores around the small town of Balaklava in 1925 is just one such situation where Aboriginal frustration burst into open anger.

Turkey

The Gallipoli campaign had resonances of frontier conflict because it too was an invasion: the British had decided to use Empire troops to challenge Germany’s ally in the East, the Ottoman Empire. For Turks, the fighting on the Dardanelles was on home soil, and the massive resources needed to mobilise a military response called into being a new nationalism, opposed to the old Ottoman Empire, with the goal of establishing a modern and independent state. The British invasion was defeated, with the loss of many lives on all sides, but it was the Turkish people who were left to bury the dead, not only Turks but the New Zealanders, the Australians (both Indigenous and Anglo) and the Indians who all died on those hills. It was the Turks too who had to deal with the scars left on their lands and their people. The development of the new Turkish nation state proceeded however, with the Battle of the Dardanelles commemorated on March 18 in Turkey, becoming one of the symbols of this new nation in a strange parallel to the way the defeat of the invasion has been rising in significance in Australia. Yet, particularly since World War 2, Turks have been immigrating to Australia and so many Turks have made a new home in the heartland of their invaders. As

citizens and now long-time residents, Turkish Australians have had to face the complexities of being members of a country which commemorates war and service by focussing on a battle on Turkish land. Some have joined the conservative Australian RSL (best known by its former name as the Returned Services League) and some have marched in the annual ANZAC day parade. Others have refused to take part. Such are the complex dilemmas with which Turkish Australians have been grappling and **Muzaffer Orel**, a senior representative of the Auburn Turkish community, offers an insight into those dilemmas in his statement to the conference in August 2014.

Burcu Cevik-Compiègne is a Turkish researcher analysing the representations of Gallipoli among Turks, Indians and Australians, all of whom lost soldiers in 1915 in the Dardanelles. Cevik-Compiègne's paper in this volume identifies the desires for 'modernity' which shaped both the emerging nationalism in Turkey and the enormous mobilisation of the war effort to resist the British invasion. Cevik-Compiègne focuses on the role of women, who not only shared the desire for a new nation with other Turkish nationalists but were seeking to establish themselves in independent, economic and professional roles. In many ways this resonated with the 'modernising' rhetoric of the new nationalism, but in other senses it was deeply challenging not only to established Turkish custom but to the leadership and directions it posed for this new nation. Cevik-Compiègne considers nursing – a role which is one of the few identified in Australia as a legitimate female role in warfare. When gender inclusiveness is demanded in Australia and other places, it has invariably been to add representations of nurses and nursing to the pantheon of masculine 'heroes'. Yet in Turkey, as Cevik-Compiègne explains, nursing had until WW1 been a masculine profession, in which women had never been welcome. The demands of war ensured that Turkish women were indeed allowed entry into wartime nursing, and as Cevik-Compiègne demonstrates, they fulfilled similar work to that of nurses from other countries in the war – often arduous, always tragic and sometimes heroic. Yet whereas women as nurses in European warfare have been remembered and eventually celebrated, Cevik-Compiègne charts the process whereby Turkish WW1 nurses were forgotten – overlooked when the symbols of the new nation were developed in the 1920s. It was a bitter irony for Turkish women – but perhaps not a surprising one – that an archaic and marginalised symbol of womanhood, the Anatolian peasant woman and mother as warrior, whose image was adopted as the 'mother' of the new nation. Cevik-Compiègne explores the path of this forgetting of 'modern' women as nurses

and considers the challenges to the stereotype of the Anatolian peasant mother/warrior which came to dominate in the fantasy of 'nation'.

War everywhere

The final two essays in this collection pick up the focus on gender and warfare and return to the issue of spatial power. **Meredith Burgmann** offers a memoir which documents the peaceful challenge posed by the Women Against Rape in War (WARW) campaign to the distorted fantasies of war which had emerged around ANZAC Day in Australia. Burgmann was a part of the collective of women – composed of pacifists, Quakers, radical feminists and socialist feminists – who came together in the early 1980s to intervene in the commemorations of ANZAC Day and focus attention on the fact that women were victims of systematic rape as a weapon of war. While the rape of women as a weapon of war had long been documented and recognised, and had been formally and explicitly declared a war crime by the Fourth Geneva Convention in 1949, it has nevertheless continued and been ignored in the uncritical valorization of soldiers. The WARW brought their peaceful statement into the space of the war memorial and of the parade of soldiers in demonstrations in Canberra, Melbourne and Sydney over a number of years. Burgmann discusses the common threads which brought this often disparate group of activists together and the convictions which led them to find peaceful ways to make their protest visible. She also considers why their demonstration has been remembered with such vitriol by many commentators. Despite their deep commitment to peaceful methods, this protest touched very raw nerves across the still largely-masculine Australian media and power structures where the presence of women and of this issue in the physical space of the war memorial and of the parade of soldiers was seen as a deeply aggressive attack.

Since the 1980s, rape in war – and more broadly the sexual insecurity which is caused by warfare in all settings – has been far better recognised. Not only has the gendered violence of the Frontier Wars in Australia been better understood and documented, but the systematic rape which was undertaken against 'enemy' women in in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Rwanda and many other conflicts have all been widely publicized and condemned. **Lucy Fiske** and **Rita Shackel** have developed their paper, 'Ending Rape in War: How Far Have We Come?' from extensive empirical work in Tanzania and Uganda in east and central Africa, where women report the total breakdown of sexual safety in all circumstances once war-related instability

breaks down the fabric of conventional social protection. Women in this area – as indeed in many other areas facing militarised violence – report sexual attacks by everyone – enemy soldiers, by soldiers on their ‘own’ side and by ‘peace keepers’. Fiske and Shackel’s careful analysis shows the inverse relation so far between the growth and awareness of the legal apparatus to punish gendered violence in war and rising reports of experiences of gendered sexual insecurity. As warfare spreads, the fields where many women in agricultural societies make their livelihood become unsafe, either from attacks or landmines. Increasingly women face impoverishment and so as well as the sexual vulnerability they experience from troops and peacekeepers, they may be forced into commercial sex to feed their children. Fiske and Shackel outline the women’s organisations in Africa and elsewhere which are demanding not only recognition for gendered violence in war but real action to protect women in all spaces and in all situations of conflict. Most often, this involves empowering women to enable them to intervene to protect the vulnerable in warfare, whether they are women, children, the elderly or marginalised groups who become the targets of scapegoating.

Such very contemporary research sheds light on all the warfare, internal and external, not only that in which Australia has been involved but wherever it is occurring around the world. This Journal issue opens up critical new issues which speak not only to a new way to understand past conflicts but new options for the future.

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