

# The First World War Cemeteries in Alexandria: Ignored Heritage

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Within the context of the 100th anniversary of World War I, this paper sheds light on an ignored part of the cultural heritage of Alexandria, which are the cemeteries of First World War. Unfortunately, few studies dealt with the role-played by Alexandria during that war. In addition, no research has been found that surveyed all the First World War cemeteries in the city. Therefore, this paper aimed to uncover the impact of this war on Alexandria, coupled with describing the Commonwealth, French and Turkish cemeteries of World War I in the city that is to provide the tour guides with the basic information. The conclusions highlighted the importance of raising the cultural heritage knowledge and awareness of the local community, in addition to the use of those heritage sites in flourishing the heritage tourism in Alexandria.

**Keywords:** WWI- Alexandria- War Cemetery- War Memorial- Heritage Tourism.

## Introduction

The Cemeteries of First World War<sup>2</sup> in Alexandria are unknown to the local community and to the stakeholders of the tourism sector. Conversely, *Alamain* cemeteries of the Second World War are so famous and their site is in the tourist itineraries. From 2014, the countries that participated or affected by that war, are organizing cultural events related to the war. Accordingly, the aim of the paper is to focus on the WWI heritage of Alexandria, by presenting the remained tangible heritage of WWI through studying the cemeteries in Alexandria.

This paper is a descriptive study that starts with a historic introduction about the war and the operations that affected Alexandria during the war as well as describing Alexandria during the wartime. Thereafter, the researcher provides an account of the cemeteries of the WWI in Alexandria with the details that could help the tour guides in their work. Ordinarily, the information are acquired from various sources as the Commonwealth War Grave Commission (*CWGC*), the French Center of Alexandria studies (*CEALEX*) and the Turkish Consulate General in Alexandria (*TCCA*). Afterwards, the ignored heritage of WWI Cemeteries in Alexandria will be revealed and its importance will be proven, that is to concentrate on the methods of making use of it to be known for everyone.

## II. Historical background

The spark of the WWI ignited on 28 June 1914, when Serbian terrorist assassinated Archduke Franz Ferdinand, the crown prince of Austria-Hungary, and his wife. European leaders took a series of decisions that turned a localized conflict in southeast Europe into a world war.<sup>3</sup>

Austria-Hungary with German encouragement, declared war on Serbia on 28 July, so France brought into the conflict when Russia supported Serbia. Then on 1 August, Germany declared war on Russia and after two days on France, and one day after on 4 August, the commonwealth countries brought into the war because of its fears of German domination in Europe and Germany's violation of Belgian neutrality.<sup>4</sup>

When the Ottoman Empire entered the war in alliance with the Triple Alliance, Britain responded by declaring Egypt's independence under a British protectorate as a nominal independence what was really only confirmed Egypt colonial possession, and its people were treated as colonial subjects for the duration of the war.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>“The High Institute of Tourism and Monuments Restoration at Abukir”

<sup>2</sup> It used to be called «Great War» or «European War» and it will be mention in the paper as WWI.

<sup>3</sup> Samuel R. Williamson, “The Origins of World War I,” *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, Vol. 18, No. 4, (Spring, 1988): 795-796

<sup>4</sup> Williamson, “The Origins of World War I,” 806-816

<sup>5</sup> Eugene Rogan, Egyptian labour gangs on the western front. *The Forgotten Heroes North Africans and the Great War 1914-1919*. (Forgotten Heroes 14-19 foundation VZW, 2014), 15

On 2 November 1914, the British declared the martial law that pledged to spare the people of Egypt any role in the war but the British were quick to break their word, recruiting Egyptian laborers to meet their manpower needs on both the Western and Middle Eastern fronts.<sup>6</sup>

India was British colony at that time, so it actively supported the war effort in its bid to gain dominion status. The majority of the political opinions in 1914 were united in the view that India must share in the burden of Imperial defense.<sup>7</sup> Therefore, the Indian soldiers served in numerous battlefields, one of those battlefields was Gallipoli, Egypt, Mesopotamia and Palestine.<sup>8</sup>

By December 1914, Indian forces came together in Egypt for instance: two divisions, the 10th and 11th Divisions, the Bikaner Camel Corps, the State Force of Imperial Service Cavalry Brigade units and three of mountain artillery batteries. In January and early February 1915, these troops could defeat the Ottoman attack towards Suez Canal.<sup>9</sup>

On 9 January 1917, the troops could clear the Peninsula of Sinai. Furthermore, after three days, under the commandment of General Edmund Allenby, they could succeed in invading Palestine and capture Jerusalem. Significantly, by May 1918, the Egyptian Expeditionary Force consisted of the 4th and 5th Indian Divisions of Cavalry, the 3rd and 7th Indian Divisions, and 24 other Indian battalions.<sup>10</sup>

Before recognizing the cemeteries of WWI in Alexandria, it is important to shed light on Alexandria during the years of the war. Alexandria was suffering as all of Egypt from the unemployment and the rise in prices level, but in March 1915, Alexandria became the base of the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force that was transferred to Alexandria from Mudros<sup>11</sup> and the city became a military base and hospital center for Commonwealth and French troops<sup>12</sup>, which means more suffering in the city and huge pressure on the city facilities to serve the wounded soldiers.

Many medical units established in Alexandria like the 17th, 19th, 21st, 78th and 87th General Hospitals and No.5 Indian Hospital, and After the Gallipoli campaign of 1915, Alexandria became a very important hospital center during the later operations in Egypt and Palestine and its port was used by many hospital ships and troop transports that brought reinforcements and carrying the wounded out of the war fields.<sup>13</sup>

The aspects of life in Alexandria had been influenced by the war, but all of the negative impacts disappeared when the war had finished. On the other hand, the immortal things that remain in the city as a witness of the role of Alexandria in the war are the cemeteries and the war memorials that would be explained now in the next lines to recognize the locations of those cemeteries, and how we can make use of it without ignoring its existence in the city.

### III. Military and War Memorial Cemeteries of the First World War in Alexandria:

Nine different locations in Alexandria have military and war memorial cemeteries of WWI. It is divided into three main parts depending on the forces that fought in the war. Firstly, the Commonwealth forces include five main sites of burials. Secondly, the French forces which buried their casualties in three different cemeteries and thirdly, the Turkish war memorial. The next lines explain all those cemeteries in detail.

#### 1- Commonwealth Military and War Memorial Cemeteries

The burials of the Commonwealth are located in five sites in Alexandria; two of them took traditional shape of the cemeteries of Commonwealth. For instance, *Chatby* and *Hadra* cemeteries have a central front entrance building with a metal gate secured archway leading into it from two small-grassed areas, which form part of the roadside in front of the cemetery, which is bounded by a rendered wall. The other cemeteries are parts of bigger cemeteries so it is difficult to follow the tradition in the cemeteries of the Commonwealth.

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<sup>6</sup> Rogan, *The Forgotten Heroes North Africans and the Great War 1914-1919*, 15

<sup>7</sup> Rana Chhina, *Last post: Indian war memorial around the world* (New Delhi: United Service Institution of India, 2014) 16

<sup>8</sup> Chhina, *Last post*, 16-18

<sup>9</sup> Chhina, *Last post*, 25

<sup>10</sup> Chhina, *Last post*, 25

<sup>11</sup> It is a port in the island of Lemnos, North Aegean in Greece. For more information about its role during the WWI you may read:

John N. Yiannakis, "Addressing the Lemnos Heritage of Gallipoli and its Forgotten Foundations," *modern Greek studies*, vol.16-17 A, (2013-2014):105-125

<sup>12</sup> Latifa Salem, *Misr Fi Al-Harb Al'almiah AlAwla* (Cairo: Dar el-Shorouk, 2009) 301-303

<sup>13</sup> Cecile Shaalan, »Navires stationnées dans le port d'Alexandrie les 1-3 avril 1915,« in *Alexandrie 1914-1918*. (Alexandria: CeAlex, 2014), 15

A. *Chatby* Military and War Memorial Cemetery (Pl. 1) This cemetery was called the “Garrison cemetery”; it is located in Abdel-Hamid Abo-Heaf Street in *Chatby* district within the Christian Cemetery of the city. The municipality of Alexandria granted this part of the great cemetery to be a cemetery to the commonwealth forces. In April 1916, the municipality allocated another site in *Hadra* to be a cemetery for the commonwealth forces. Therefore, *Chatby* Cemetery was abandoned until after the war when they were brought into the cemetery from other burial grounds in the area and then used during the WWII.<sup>14</sup>

The cemetery is enclosed by low walls and entered through an iron gates, divided into plots, indicated with a number and organized in rows, indicated with a letter. Each grave has an identification number. The side of the first headstone of each row indicates the plot number and the row number. It contains graves of 2291 casualties;<sup>15</sup> each one has a headstone engraved at the top with regimental badge for the British or national emblem for the other nationalities, for instance a maple leaf for Canadian, a rising sun for Australian, a fern for New-Zealandian, Springbok for South African and a caribou for those of Newfoundland.<sup>16</sup>

The rank of the soldier was engraved under the emblem. In case of a common soldier has no rank, it is called “private” if served in infantry, “gunner” if served in artillery, “sapper” if served in the engineers and “trooper” in cavalry. Under the rank, the name was engraved followed by the date of death if it is available, then the age upon the request of the family, then religious symbol, which is a Latin cross with an epitaph if the family desired unless New Zealand do not agree with any personal text.<sup>17</sup>

In the center, there is a stone cross with a bronze sword embedded on the front, mounted on an octagonal base, which is the so-called “Cross of Sacrifice”, which was designed by *Reginald Blomfield* in March 1918, and symbolize the self-sacrifice of the soldiers.<sup>18</sup>

According to CWGC, the number of casualties from the commonwealth countries are 1587 British, 4 from Newfoundland,<sup>19</sup> 1 Canadian, 467 Australian, 28 South African, 9 Indians, 28 British West Indian, 12 Russians and 155 from New Zealand,<sup>20</sup> other sources refers to only 129 casualties.<sup>21</sup>

To the east there is the so-called “Stone of Remembrance”, which is engraved with the words “*Their name liveth for evermore*”, chosen by *Rudyard Kipling*, recipient of the Nobel Prize in Literature, who lost a son in the war.<sup>22</sup>

On the same axis of the Stone of Remembrance, at the eastern end of the cemetery, stands the War Memorial, its façade has an arcade with two columns supporting three semicircular arches. The memorial commemorates 981 Commonwealth soldiers, (823 British, 1 Canadian, 135 Australian, 3 South African and 19 Indian),<sup>23</sup> who died during the First World War and have no other grave but the sea.

The names inscribed on slabs on the both sides of the arcade and inside memorial. In addition to two donation stones of marble, one in Arabic and the other in English of four lines and says “*The land on Which this cemetery stands is the free gift of the Egyptian people for the perpetual resting place of those of the allied armies who fell in the war of 1914-1918 and honoured here*”.

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<sup>14</sup> “Alexandria (Chatby) Military and War Memorial Cemetery,” CWGC, accessed September 21, 2018

[http://www.cwgc.org/find-a-cemetery/cemetery/10702/alexandria%20\(chatby\)%20military%20and%20war%20memorial%20cemetery](http://www.cwgc.org/find-a-cemetery/cemetery/10702/alexandria%20(chatby)%20military%20and%20war%20memorial%20cemetery)

<sup>15</sup> The cemetery also contains war graves of WWII and some non-war burials.

<sup>16</sup> Jeroen Geurst, *Cemeteries of the Great War* by Sir Edwin Lutjens (Rotterdam: 010 Publishers, 2010), 98.

<sup>17</sup> Geurst, *Cemeteries of the Great War* by Sir Edwin Lutjens, 98

<sup>18</sup> Geurst, *Cemeteries of the Great War* by Sir Edwin Lutjens, 44–46.

<sup>19</sup> Canadian island

<sup>20</sup> Michael Greet (Archive Assistant in CWGC), e-mail message to author, December 02, 2015.

<sup>21</sup> Ian McGibbon, *Gallipoli: A Guide to New Zealand Battlefields and Memorials* (New Zealand: Penguin, 2014), Appendix 2.

<sup>22</sup> Geurst, *Cemeteries of the Great War*, 51.

<sup>23</sup> Greet, e-mail message to author, December 02, 2015.

The commemorated ones on the memorial, More than 700 of them died when their vessels were mined or torpedoed and those vessels are as follow<sup>24</sup>:

- i) SS “Persia” which was a passenger defensively armed vessel sailed out of Tilbury<sup>25</sup> for Port Said, torpedoed and sunk on 30 December 1915 off Crete, with the loss of 334 soldiers.
- i) HT “Cameronia” which was carrying reinforcements for Mesopotamia and torpedoed and sunk on 15 April 1917 east of Malta with the loss of 127 officers.
- ii) HT “Cameronian” which was torpedoed and sunk north of Alexandria on 2 June 1917 with the loss of 49 officers.
- iii) HT “Aragon” which was torpedoed and sunk on 30 December 1917, when it was entering the port of Alexandria with the loss of 380 officers.
- iv) HT “Osmanieh” which was hit by a mine on 31 December 1917, when it was entering the port of Alexandria, with the loss of 76 officers.
- v) HT “Leasowe Castle” which was torpedoed and sunk on 27 May 1918 in the port of Alexandria with the loss of 83 officers.

### B. *Hadra* Military Cemetery (Pl. 2).

This Cemetery is located in Manara Street, in front of the first gate of the Muslim cemetery of EL-Manara. The municipality of Alexandria received the acceptance of the Egyptian Cabinet on 12 January 1916 on assigning this location to be a new cemetery of the British troops<sup>26</sup> due to the lack of space in *Chatby* cemetery. For that necessity, rapidly the use of it started in April 1916 under the name of the New Military Cemetery of *Hadra*, and it received burials until December 1919.

Nearly all the burials took place from the 15th, 17th, 19th, and 21st General Hospitals and the Military Hospital at Ras-el-Tin<sup>27</sup>; but a number of burials came from the loss of HT “Aragon”<sup>28</sup> and HT “Osmanieh”<sup>29</sup>.

Due to the operations against the Senussi troops,<sup>30</sup> sixty British graves from some small-scattered graveyards in the Western Desert were brought to be buried in the cemetery in December 1919 and January 1920 and from Maadia and Rosetta were some others brought in.<sup>31</sup>

In addition, *Hadra* Cemetery received burials from other three cemeteries: from Al-Sollum Military Cemetery<sup>32</sup> brought burials of 30 British soldiers, 1 South African; from *Sidi El Barani* Military Cemetery<sup>33</sup> they brought the graves of 14 South

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<sup>24</sup> “Chatby memorial,” CWGC, accessed September 21, 2018

<http://www.cwgc.org/find-a-cemetery/cemetery/142020/CHATBY%20MEMORIAL>.

<sup>25</sup> Port in England located on the river Thames

<sup>26</sup> Al-Ahram, January 13, 1916, p.5

<sup>27</sup> Greet, e-mail message to author, December 02, 2015.

<sup>28</sup> Paul Oldfield, *Victoria Crosses on the Western Front August 1914- April 1915: Mons to Hill 60*, (East Yorkshire: Pen and Sword Military, 2014), 188-189

<sup>29</sup> “Alexandria (Hadra) War Memorial Cemetery,” CWGC, accessed September 21, 2018

[https://www.cwgc.org/find-a-cemetery/cemetery/54600/ALEXANDRIA%20\(HADRA\)%20WAR%20MEMORIAL%20CEMETERY](https://www.cwgc.org/find-a-cemetery/cemetery/54600/ALEXANDRIA%20(HADRA)%20WAR%20MEMORIAL%20CEMETERY)

<sup>30</sup> In November 1915, the Turks decided to extend the theatre of war by invading Western Egypt from Cyrenaica by forces of Arabs, Turks and Berbers, under the leadership of Sidi Ahmed, the head of the Senussi fraternity of Moslems. The campaign lasted about five months then the invaders were beaten. The Times, *The Times history of War*, vol. IX (London: The Times, 1916), 281

<sup>31</sup> Greet, e-mail message to author, December 02, 2015.

<sup>32</sup> This cemetery is located on 400 Km. West of Alexandria. British forces occupied it on 14 March 1916; the place contains a rest camp and a hospital near the shore. The Cemetery contained the graves of 30 British soldiers, one South African and 1 French. At *Al-Sollum*, on 6 November 1915, one Egyptian coastguard steamer was sunk and one disabled by a German submarine. Greet, e-mail message to author, December 02, 2015.

<sup>33</sup> This place is on the seacoast 320 Km. West of Alexandria. The cemetery contained the graves of 14 South African and 2 British soldiers who died in February and March 1916, and a memorial to the men of the first and third South African Infantry who fell at *Agagiya* on 26 February 1916. Greet, e-mail message to author, December 02, 2015.

African and two British soldiers and from *BirHakim* Burial Ground<sup>34</sup> they brought one officer and three men. *Hadra* cemetery contains 1704 burials from all over the Commonwealth countries, 1571 British, 58 British West Indians, 24 Australian, 22 South African, 18 Indian, 4 Canadian, 2 from New Zealand and 5 from other nationalities.<sup>35</sup>

*C. Chatby* British Protestant Cemetery. It is located in Abdel-Hamid Abo-Heaf Street, next to *Chatby* Military and War Memorial Cemetery. There are three burials of WWI in this civil cemetery. The burials are of the officers of HT "Aragon", which the Royal Mail Steam Packet Company over those graves erected a stone memorial<sup>36</sup>.

*D. Chatby* Jewish Cemetery No.3 (Pl. 3). It is located at the eastern end of Abdel-Hamid Abo-Heaf Street. This cemetery is one of the Jewish civil cemeteries in Alexandria. It contains twenty burials of WWI, all of them together in one plot<sup>37</sup> except a memorial to a man of the Zion Mule Corps. In the center of the plot, there is an Ionic column on a high square base and around it the headstones similar to those of the Commonwealth cemetery but with the Star of David instead of the cross.

*E. Al-Manara* Indian Muslim Cemetery - Gate no.3 (Pl. 4). It is located inside Al-Manarah Muslim cemetery in Manara Street. The burials are in one plot, which is accessible from gate no. 3, which is the last gate in the street towards the south. The cemetery was made by Indian medical units stationed at Alexandria and was in use from 1915 to 1920. According to CWGC, the cemetery contains 108 Indians and three war graves of other nationalities<sup>38</sup>, but other sources mentioned 106 war graves Indians<sup>39</sup>.

On the northeast side of the plot, there is a wall engraved with the names of the buried soldiers. In the top middle of that wall, there are Arabic inscriptions in *Thuluth* Calligraphy, between two blocks engraved with 1914-1918. The Arabic inscription's is the *basmallah* and the Muslim declaration of faith, which says, "*In the name of Allah, The All-Merciful, The Ever-Merciful. There is no god but Allah, and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah*". Below that, another engraving but in English that says, "*These soldiers of the Indian Army are buried here*" and on the back of the wall there is the donation stone in Arabic which is similar to that one in *Chatby* War Memorial Cemetery.

2- French Military and War Memorial Cemeteries The 130 French burials of the WWI are located in three cemeteries in Alexandria.

a) The Roman Catholic Cemetery of the Holy Land.<sup>40</sup> (Pl. 5).

This cemetery is located in *Al-Horaya* road, in front of Bab-Shark police station. In one plot are the Military French 91 burials<sup>41</sup> that died in the hospitals of Alexandria, after participating in the battle of *Galipoli* (February 1915 – January 1916) and the

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<sup>34</sup> *Bir Hakim* is 240 Km. South West of *Al-Sollum*, in the desert. It was the place of confinement of the prisoners from the armed boarding steamer "Tara", which was torpedoed in November 1915. They were rescued by armored cars soon after the reoccupation of *Al-Sollum*; but one officer and three men had already died and been buried there. Greet, e-mail message to author, December 02, 2015.

<sup>35</sup> Greet, e-mail message to author, December 02, 2015. The cemetery also contains war graves of WWII and some non-war burials.

<sup>36</sup> "Alexandria (Chatby) British Protestant Cemetery," CWGC, accessed September 21, 2018  
[http://www.cwgc.org/find-a-cemetery/cemetery/10701/Alexandria%20\(Chatby\)%20British%20Protestant%20Cemetery](http://www.cwgc.org/find-a-cemetery/cemetery/10701/Alexandria%20(Chatby)%20British%20Protestant%20Cemetery)

<sup>37</sup> "Alexandria (Chatby) Jewish Cemetery No.3," CWGC, accessed September 21, 2018  
[https://www.cwgc.org/find-a-cemetery/cemetery/2000006/alexandria-\(chatby\)-jewish-cemetery-no.3/](https://www.cwgc.org/find-a-cemetery/cemetery/2000006/alexandria-(chatby)-jewish-cemetery-no.3/)

<sup>38</sup> Manara Indian Muslim Cemetery," CWGC, accessed September 21, 2018  
<http://www.cwgc.org/find-a-cemetery/cemetery/11104/Manara%20Indian%20Muhammadian%20Cemetery>

<sup>39</sup> Chhina, Last Post, 210

<sup>40</sup> The cemetery also contains war graves of WWII and some non-war burials.

<sup>41</sup> This cemetery had 93 burials but two of it brought back to France due to their family request, so the cemetery contains only 91 burials now.

operations in Cilicia (May 1920-October 1921).<sup>42</sup>

The cemetery contains a 91 headstones, each one has the cross, rank, name and date of death,<sup>43</sup> with a simple memorial has a French inscription says, "Mort pour la France" below to it a protruding alter.

In front of this cemetery was the war memorial of the French soldiers of WWI (Pl. 6). The best description of this memorial that does not exist nowadays is the description of Forster in his book "Almost opposite the entrance to the cemetery is the War Memorial to French soldiers, a truncated obelisk of Carrara marble, designed as labor of love in memory of his fallen comrades by Mons. V. Erlanger, the French architect of Alexandria and unveiled April 23, 1921, by Lord Allenby. The scroll facing the main thoroughfare bears the following inscription: in the memory of French Soldiers fallen during the Great War and offered by members of the British community to the French colony to commemorate the glorious deeds of arms, *performed by the French Armies*"<sup>44</sup>. Unfortunately, the memorial was moved to the northern *Shalalat* gardens when they started to enlarge *Al-Horaya* road in 1927,<sup>45</sup> and nowadays there is no trace of that memorial.

#### b) *Al-Manara* Muslim Cemetery- Gate no. 2 (Pl. 7).

This tomb contains the remains of thirty-eight Muslim French infantrymen of WWI. It was inaugurated in April 1933 after transferring the remains from *Khat el-Naar* cemetery in Chatby, which was inaugurated on 7 September 1919.<sup>46</sup>

The grave has marble headstone that takes the shape of a sarcophagus with a column with a turban headgears capital, which symbolizes the gender of the deceased is male. The sarcophagus has a neo-classic design with epitaph-written inscriptions. In the front, it is written in Arabic "Allah is the living God, and he endures forever", from the rear is written a Koran verse, *Aya* no. 169- *Sura Aal-Imran*, and on both sides of the sarcophagus is written the names of the buried soldiers.

#### c) Chatby Jewish Cemetery - No.1 (Pl. 8).

It is located in Al-Khartoum square. In this cemetery, there are only five French burials of WWI, which were donated by the chief rabbinate of Alexandria. One of the graves was for an aspiring doctor who died from his injuries after the battles of 11 November 1918.<sup>47</sup> Another grave was for Marcel Erlanger who died on 14 July 1920, and his family demanded the return of his body to France<sup>48</sup>.

### 3- Turkish Military and War Memorial Cemetery (Pl. 9).

It is located in *Mahmoud El-Eisawi* Street, in *Sidi Bishr* district, adjacent to the Muslim cemetery of *Sidi Bishr*. For the importance of the site where the ottomans imprisoned, killed and buried, the association of Turkish Aid bought the site from Alexandria municipality in 1931 then the Turkish government built the memorial in 1941 and restored it in 1968.<sup>49</sup>

The memorial takes a pink granite bayonet-shaped sculpture stuck in a base of three steps. At the foot of this bayonet, there are marble slabs bears the names of 500 soldiers and civilians buried in the cemetery. In addition, there is an epitaph of Turkish poet *Akif Ersoy Mehemet*.<sup>50</sup> The epitaph written in Turkish,<sup>51</sup> its translation is "Touched by her innocent forehead, he sleeps lying. O God, how many suns should disappear for the glory of one moon"<sup>52</sup>

<sup>42</sup> For more information about the soldiers buried there you may visit: "Alexandrie 1914-1918," CeAlex, December 2014, accessed September 21, 2018 <http://www.cealex.org/ww1/index.php>

<sup>43</sup> CeAlex, Alexandria 1914. 1918: Cimetière militaire français (Alexandria: 2014), [http://www.cealex.org/ww1/diffusion/Mort%20pour%20la%20France\\_w.pdf](http://www.cealex.org/ww1/diffusion/Mort%20pour%20la%20France_w.pdf)

<sup>44</sup> Edward Forster, *Alexandria: A History and Guide* (London: TPP, 2014) 206

<sup>45</sup> Nicole Garnier, »Le temps de la mémoire : les Monuments aux Morts pour la France et le retour des soldats rapatriés« in *Alexandrie 1914-1918*. (Alexandria: CeAlex, 2014), 27

<sup>46</sup> Jean-François Fau, »Les cimetières militaires français : chrétien, juif et musulman.« in *Alexandrie 1914-1918*. (Alexandria: CeAlex, 2014), 26

<sup>47</sup> Fau, *Alexandrie 1914-1918*, 26

<sup>48</sup> Garnier, »Le temps de la mémoire,« 27

<sup>49</sup> Serdar Belentepe (consul General of Turkey in Alexandria), in discussion with the author, December 15, 2015

<sup>50</sup> He is the author of the Turkish national anthem.

<sup>51</sup> The Turkish text is "Vurulup tertemiz alından uzanmış yatıyor Bir hilal uğruna Yarab ne genesler batıyor".

<sup>52</sup> TCGA, Monument aux morts tués de Sidi Bichr (Alexandrie, 2015)

<http://alexandria.cg.mfa.gov.tr/Content/assets/consulate/images/localCache/1/76c97be5-355a-440b-bc15-355a26c33bec.pdf>

To the right of the memorial, there is a marble slab engraved with a poem in Ottoman Turkish language that invites the visitor to supplicate for the martyrs.<sup>53</sup> According to what is mentioned in the cemetery, there are 500 ottomans buried in this cemetery, but other source say 513.<sup>54</sup> The commonwealth forces captured the ottoman soldiers of the 48th regiment of the 16th division in Palestine or Sinai during the years 1915 to 1918 and imprisoned them in the Camp of Sidi Bishr, with 20 civilian captured by Sherif of Mecca<sup>55</sup> because this camp was divided into two camps, one civilian and one military.<sup>56</sup> (Pl. 10).

The life of the Ottoman prisoners in the Camp of *Sidi-Bisher* was a matter of debate between the researchers. On one hand, there are studies that researched their activities especially the culture activities. For instance, twelve newspapers were published in Sidi-Bisher camp by the prisoners themselves.<sup>57</sup> On the other hand, the secret of their death still a mystery till now.

## IV. Conclusions

It can be concluded that Alexandria has nine sites of cemeteries and memorials of WWI. The sites are ignored and out of any kind of cultural activity or use from the tourism sector. The main characteristic of those sites is the variety in the nationalities of the buried soldiers for instance: British, Australian, Canadian, Indian, South African, west African countries, New Zealand, French, Russian and Turks. Moreover, the variety of their religions as Muslim, Jewish and Christian (protestant- Catholic-Roman).

In light of that, it is the right time to spread the awareness between the local communities. In addition, the stakeholders of the tourism sector could make use of these sites in flourishing the culture and heritage tourism in Alexandria.

In fact, the military and war memorial cemeteries of WWI in Alexandria have a great historical importance and represent an essential part of the preserved heritage of Alexandria. In order to reveal these cemeteries to be known, they can be placed as a new destination for the heritage tourism in Alexandria that can play an important role in raising the cultural heritage knowledge and awareness of the local community.

Finally, it is recommended to start thinking in establishing a museum of WWI in Alexandria by putting in connection all the countries that have cemeteries in the city to be a new start in the city using its abilities to make new attracting point in the city.

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<sup>53</sup> TCGA, Monument aux morts turcs de Sidi Bichr.

<sup>54</sup> TCGA, Monument aux morts turcs de Sidi Bichr.

<sup>55</sup> The international committee of the Red Cross, Turkish Prisoners in Egypt (London: s.n., 1917), 48

<sup>56</sup> Mahon Murphy, "Prisoners of War and Civilian Internees Captured by British and Dominion forces from the German Colonies during the First World War" (Ph.D., LSE, 2014), 59

<sup>57</sup> Akmaleldin Oghly, *Abatrak Fi Misr Wa Torathuhum Alththaqafi*, (Cairo: Dar el-Shorouk, 2012) 340-341.

## The plates



*Plate 1: Chatby Military and War Memorial Cemetery. Photo taken by researcher*



*Plate 2: Hadra Military and War Memorial Cemetery. Photo taken by researche*





*Plate 3: WWI Burials in Chatby Jewish Cemetery No.3  
After: CWGCarchive*



*Plate 4: Al-Manara Indian Muslim Cemetery- Photo taken by researcher*



*Plate 5: The memorial of the WWI French soldiers in the Roman Catholic Cemetery of the Holy Land  
Photo taken by researcher*



*Plate 6: The memorial of the French soldiers of WWI  
After: CEALEX Archiv*



Plate 7: The headstone of the Muslim French burials of wwI at Al-Manara Muslim Cemetery- Photo taken by researcher



Plate 8: Map shows the French military cemeteries of WWI in Alexandria. After: CEALEX Archive, C. Shaalan.



*Plate 9: Turkish Military and War Memorial Cemetery - Photo taken by researcher*



*Plate 10: The Ottoman prisoners in front of their sleeping hut in Sidi-Bishr camp.  
After: <https://grandeguerre.icrc.org/en/postcards/gb>*

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