**Transcript of Gallipoli Film Analysis**

*Gallipoli* is a 1981 Australian film, directed by Peter Weir and starring Mel Gibson and Mark Lee, about several young men from rural Western Australia who enlist in the Australian Army during the First World War. They are sent to the peninsula of Gallipoli in the Ottoman Empire (in modern day Turkey), where they take part in the Gallipoli Campaign. During the course of the movie, the young men slowly lose their innocence about the purpose of war. The climax of the movie occurs on the Anzac battlefield at Gallipoli and depicts the futile attack at the Battle of the Nek on 7 August 1915.

Plot summary-Themes

**GALLIPOLI**  
Several themes feature in this film, the most prominent of those being; duty, mateship the loss of innocence, and the futility of war. The character of Archie is excited by the prospect of going overseas and fighting for his homeland and empire. He wants to participate in something for his country and has a sense of duty. We can see this when he exclaims “I’d be ashamed if I didn’t fight”. It’s this same sense of duty that is a major contributor for involvement in war, both from individuals and whole nations. But as the film continues, a lot of the soldiers’ expectations of war are proven false. It is not the heroic journey they once thought, but instead a ruthless bloodbath. Even after they discover their doom, the men still hurl themselves at the Turks because they are bound by their duty.

***Loss of Innocence***  
A major theme of the film is loss of innocence and the coming of age of the Australian soldiers and of their country. An early scene in the film depicts Archie's Uncle Jack reading from *The Jungle Book* about how Mowgli has reached manhood and now must leave the family of wolves that raised him.   
  
Actor Mel Gibson commented, “Gallipoli was the birth of a nation. It was the shattering of a dream for Australia. They had banded together to fight the Hun and died by the thousands in a dirty little trench war.”  
  
The film draws a parallel between sport and warfare, with a recruiter for the Light Horse at the Kimberley Gift race calling war "the greatest game of them all."  
  
***Duty***  
Initially, Archie is excited by the prospect of going overseas and fighting for his homeland and empire. In this sense he represents the wider stereotype of the time. Many young Australian men from all over Australia rushed to join up to the newly formed AIF. Archie expresses the idea that “I'd be ashamed if I didn't fight.” This sense of duty to the mother country and to Australia is represented throughout the film. However, the experience of war is very different to the general expectations of Young Australian soldiers. Weir uses the theme of duty throughout the film through a number of different characters and events: Archie is adamant about joining the war effort - "If we don't stop them there, they might come here!"

Snow is bound by emotional and religious duty when in Cairo. “What are you gonna tell your wives on your wedding day?"

Frank is pressured by his father regarding his Irish heritage: "The English killed your grandfather!"

Major Barton is duty bound to honour his wedding anniversary. Major Barton is bound by his duty to follow orders, even in the face of certain carnage – “I won't ask the men to do something I wouldn't do myself"  
The men of the Australian military are bound by their patriotic duty to die for their nation - "They're not gonna make us go are they?"

***Mateship***  
The relationship between Frank and Archie is important to the action of the film. However, while the two develop a close relationship as the film progresses, they are often heavily contrasted in their attitudes and behaviour. This is demonstrated clearly when they first meet at The Kimberley Gift. Archie's modesty and eagerness to join the war effort contrast heavily with Frank's arrogance and avoidance of the crowd as the light horse representatives roll into the showground.  
Mateship is an important theme in the text and it is represented through a number of different relationships and on a number of different levels. As the   
'Anzac Legend' grew in Australia in the post-war years, the quality of mateship became a significant part of the Australian psyche. Australians were considered a friendly people who, whilst poking fun at the British establishment, would lay down their lives for those around them. When Frank and Archie arrive on the shores of the Gallipoli peninsula, they encounter Australian soldiers who seem almost deaf to the Turkish shells that explode on the beach around them. In order to emphasise this particular theme, Weir uses a series of vignettes that demonstrate the Australian experience at Gallipoli.

The Gallipoli sequence begins directly after the ballroom scene, in which Frank and Archie are given leave by Major Barton to enjoy themselves. The landing itself is presented in dark blue hues alongside Albioni's orchestral score 'Adagio in G minor For Strings and Organ'.  Silhouetted figures are shown aboard army row boats via long shots and close-ups of Frank and Archie serve to set a sombre mood for the scene.

Humour is a key feature of the film in general and is used to emphasise the theme of mateship in the film and is evident throughout. However, when the protagonists arrive in Gallipoli, the tone shifts and the humour becomes much darker. This is called black humour. Because the situation being depicted is bleak but amusing. At one point, Frank and Archie trail a group of soldiers through the trenches and are shocked when they each shake the hand of a dead soldier that is sticking out of the earth. There is a lack of dignity in this image and it demonstrates to the audience the fate that may await Archie and Frank.

There is another important relationship in the text and that is the friendship that exists between Frank, Barney, Snow and Billy. These men are together at the beginning and eventually join up in the infantry together. They represent the Australian stereotype that emerged from this campaign, particularly during the scenes in Cairo. At one point, Frank refuses to salute British officers and also stops Barney from doing so. Beyond that, the four friends hire donkeys and openly mock the British officers, singing patriotic Australian enlistment songs. This sets up the division between the Australian soldiers and the British command which comes to a head at the end of the film when the men are ordered to charge in the face of certain death.

However, when Frank transfers to the Light Horse to serve with Archie, Snowy is very disappointed. He comments that "It's just bad luck for mates to split up!"   
This off-hand comment comes to significance when Barney and Snowy lose their lives at the battle of Lone Pine before Frank and Archie also split up, leading to the death of Archie at The Nek.

***THE FUTILITY OF WAR***  
This theme ties in with the concept of innocence but is communicated most effectively through the repeated motif of clocks and watches. From the film's opening, film establishes the idea that time is important. As the film progresses we begin to understand that Archie's time on earth is beginning to run out. As we see Archie preparing for his final race in the trenches, we are shown a number of emotive images as soldiers say their final prayers. The watch is significant here as not only is it counting down to Archie's final race, but it is timing Frank. The solemn tone in the attacking trench is contrasted by the series of long and mid shots of Frank sprinting to get back to Barton before the raid is ordered ahead.  
The first time we get a real understanding of the nature f combat in Gallipoli is when Frank discusses the looming battle for one Pine with his friends, Billy, Barney and Snow. The men are eager but clearly nervous. Archie and Frank sit in the light of the dawn as the whistle blows, followed by machine gun fire. The next scene depicts the fallout from the battle and as Frank searches for his friends, he larns about Barney's death and Snow's injuries. This interaction with Snow is very important as we understand the futility of war for the first time. Snow speaks proudly of capturing the Turkish trench and asks Frank to pass on his diary to his parents   
"I just want them to know what I did"

As Frank leaves the field hospital, a close-up shows the emotional impact of these deaths on him. The humour between Frank and Archie becomes less genuine and when Frank is given the opportunity to act as a runner, he accepts gratefully.