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Redefining the Enemy in Contemporary Australian Anzac Cinema

In the words of pioneer historical film scholar Pierre Sorlin, historical cinema is "a reconstruction of the social relationship which, using the pretext of the past, reorganizes the present" (1980: 80). More concisely, Leger Grindon articulated that it "constitutes an address to the present" (1994: 1). Recent scholarship reinforces the idea of historical films addressing the concerns of the era that made them rather than the era in which the films are set (Cyrino 2000). Historical films also have complex interactions with notions of the individual and collective memory, and of national identity (Hughes-Warrington 2007: 81–83). Nowhere are these ideas more evident and applicable than in a study of Australian cinema on the central national narrative and myth of Anzac, built on the achievements of the Australians, as part of the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps (ANZAC), at Gallipoli in Turkey in 1915, and the later participation in France, Belgium and Palestine of the 'diggers,' as the Australians came to be known, throughout the rest of the war. The Anzac story on screen matches Sorlin's observation of historical films as indicators "of a country's basic historical culture, its historical capital" (21). Anzac cinema is embedded within the broad intertextual national processes of the memorialization of Anzac, and the concurrent sociopolitical and global contexts of the films have helped shaped the film representations of these Great War military conflicts, which act "as an apparatus of cultural memory" (Burgoyne 2009: 138).

This chapter examines the portrayal of the enemy in selected Australian film and television programs about World War One made since 1980. It begins by contextualising the representation of enemy with a quick overview of Australian war cinema during the Great War and the inter-war periods, before examining in detail the productions which occurred in two waves: 1980–1990, and 2010–2015. The first wave includes *Gallipoli* (dir. Peter Weir, 1981), *1915* (dir. Chris Thomson and Di Drew, 1982), *Anzacs* (dir. John Dixon, George Miller and Pino Amenta, 1985), *A Fortunate Life* (dir. Marcus Cole and Henri Safran, 1986), *Willesee's Australians: Private John Simpson* (dir. Henri Safran, 1988), *Always Afternoon* (dir. David Stevens, 1988), *The Alien Years* (dir. David Crombie, 1988), and *The Private War of Lucinda Smith* (dir. Ray Alchin, 1990). The second period includes *Beneath Hill 60* (dir. Jeremy Sims, 2010), *An Accidental Soldier* (dir. Rachel Ward, 2013), *Anzac Girls* (dir. Ken Cameron, Ian Watson, 2014), *The Water Diviner* (dir. Russell Crowe, 2015), *Gallipoli* (dir. Glendyn Ivin, 2015) and *Deadline Gallipoli* (dir. Mi-

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chael Rymer, 2015). The themes that emerge revolve around shifting the identified enemy from that of Turk and German in Great War productions to the British in many of the productions of the 1980s, to an increasing empathy for the official enemy, and a problematisation of the whole notion of enemy in the later productions. In many cases, the concept of enemy is muted in Australian war cinema, as the fundamental issues revolve around the nature of the Australian identity and character, for which war is merely the backdrop, hence the enemy can be marginal to the cinematic preoccupations and themes which, as already indicated, reflect contemporary Australian beliefs and concerns.

The representation of the enemy in Australian Great War films follows an interesting and telling trajectory. The first films were made during the Great War itself and formed part of the national discourse in support of the war effort. Unsurprisingly, given the highly emotive propaganda fostered by militant government censorship of anything short of an aggressive pro-war stance, most films unequivocally took a pro-government line on their portrayals of the enemy. Typically, the enemy consisted of two groups, the official external enemy, Turk and German, and a subversive domestic enemy, in the form of spies and fifth columnists. Many of the films featured both. The first successful film was the short recruiting movie *Will They Never Come* (dir. Alfred Rolfe, 1915), where the enemy was not just the Germans but also indifferent stay-at-home young men in Australia gracing the sports fields instead of the battlefield. Two box-office hits in July 1915 dramatizing the Anzac landings which had taken place on 25 April 1915, *The Hero of the Dardanelles* (dir. Alfred Rolfe, 1915) and *Within our Gates* (dir. Frank Harvey, 1915), collectively featured treacherous Turks sniping at Red Cross workers and a villainous German spy who black-mailed a German-Australian into doing the spy's bidding.

A less xenophobic attitude towards the German as an enemy was evident in the movies *Murphy of Anzac* (dir. J. E. Mathews, 1916) and *The Joan of Arc of Loos* (dir. George Willoughby, 1916) and their reviews (cf. Reynaud 2007: 40 – 51), but any such trend was quickly shut down by the pervasive government censorship. Other films followed approved representations of the Germans as brutish Huns with 'Kaiser Bill' moustaches executing British nurses (*The Martyrdom of Nurse Cavell*, dir. John Gavin and C. Post Mason, 1916; *Nurse Cavell/La Revanche*, dir. W. J. Lincoln, 1916), and as women-ravaging, baby-killing invaders of Australia (*If the Huns Came to Melbourne* dir. George Coates, 1916; *Australia's Peril* dir. Franklyn Barrett, 1917). An oblique reference to the war effort was the spy thriller *The Enemy Within* (dir. Roland Stavely, 1918), which featured action-packed scenes of unidentified spies and a fifth-columnist group that was a thinly-disguised version of the reviled Industrial Workers of the World, an international socialist-anarchist-Marxist labour federation nicknamed the 'Wobblies' accused

of anti-war activities in Australia by Prime Minister Billy Hughes' paranoid government.

Between the wars, Australian war films shifted to a predominantly heroic comic representation, to maximise audiences on the divisive subject of the Anzac legacy, which was contested between conservative and radical digger interest groups, and disliked by many civilians who were sick of the horrors and tragedy it represented (Reynaud 2007: 83 – 87). One Australian film-maker's mantra during the Great Depression was "when times are tough, make comedy" (Hall 1980: 117). Most war films of the inter-war period barely featured the official enemy in the form of Germans and Turks at all; rather, these appeared in imports as the villains whose capture formed the climax of the film. Australian productions were benign stories which emphasised the distinctively Australian character of the digger in contrast to his English counterpart, who was also positively represented. The films served as springboards for celebrating an Imperial Australian patriotism. The tacit enemy was actually radical republican anti-Imperial and anti-war sentiment, but which usually went unrepresented in the films. One amateur production, *The Spirit of Gallipoli* (dir. Keith Gategood and William Green, 1928) made the point more clearly, for "the enemy in the film was not the Turk but rather Australian indifference to the great Anzac achievement, an indifference that threatened to undo all that they have achieved for Australia" (Reynaud 2007: 108). Another adaptation of a German movie, *The Exploits of the Emden* (dir. Louis Ralph and Ken G. Hall, 1928) offered representations of Germans as chivalrous and sportsmanlike, winning praise for its "perfect fairness and impartiality" (*Sydney Morning Herald* 1928: 6). The last important war film of the era was released in 1940, and had its representations of the enemy attuned to the context of a new world war. With Turkey neutral in this war, *Forty Thousand Horsemen* (dir. Charles Chauvel, 1940) portrayed the Turks as honourable and respectful of the Anzacs, while the Germans were a throwback to the First World War, cast as arrogant, buffoonish and cruel villains.

Over the next thirty years, Australian cinema production suffered a serious decline, from which it tentatively began to re-emerge in the 1960s, reaching a full fruition of nationalistic period productions in the 1980s. A resurgence of Australian nationalism was deliberately fostered by successive governments, tapping into the young adult aspirations of a baby boomer generation which, having grown up in an era of peace, prosperity and American media, saw little relevance in the Imperial link. This immature nationalism built its identity on an aggressive differentiation from everything British, for which a repositioned, crudely Australian and anti-British Anzac legend emerged as a handy vehicle. Already, writers had tapped into the nationalistic potential of a distinctive Australian identity in the Anzac story, with one writer arguing that the nationalism born on Gallipoli

"is a sentiment that is attractive to present-day temperaments" (McDonald 1983: 3), though not all writers conformed to the easy mythologising of the Anzacs taking place at the time. A couple of titles which represented the Anzacs in ways that challenged the myth formed the basis of screen adaptations, which preserved the independence of the literary text, thus resisting an overwhelming trend to the glorification of the Anzacs and the denigration of the British – the new enemy in Australian war films of the 1980s. On the whole, best-selling Anzac histories such as Bill Gammage's seminal *The Broken Years* (1974), Patsy Adam-Smith's *The Anzacs* (1978), and the Time-Life series *Australians at War* (1988) offered some discussion of the less savoury aspects of the Australians at war, but still tended towards the glorification of Anzac as a heroic national type. The once-contentious and evolving Anzac legend now entered a period of relative stability and widespread acceptance as a true representation of Australia's Great War participation.

The benchmark Australian film about the Great War remains *Gallipoli*, the best and most influential Australian war film, once even touted as a contender for the title of the best Australian film of any kind ever (Stratton 1990: 22). The film followed closely on the heels of *Breaker Morant* (dir. Bruce Beresford, 1980), which told the story of the execution of two Australian officers for war crimes by the British during the Boer War. *Breaker Morant* aggressively set up a binary between the Australians and the British, with the Australians representing a rough and ready common sense, decency and combat effectiveness and the British representing snobbery, bureaucracy and stupidity, while the Boers themselves, against whom both British and Australians were actually fighting, were almost inconsequential to the plot and barely represented at all. In many ways, the representations established by *Breaker Morant* became the template for Australian films of the 1980s, moving the concept of the enemy away from the combatant nation opposed to the Australians, instead showing them to be the British, the Imperial overlord under whose banner and authority the Australians fought.

Unsurprisingly, the enemy in *Gallipoli* was also essentially the British military hierarchy, while the Turks, ostensibly the enemy, were largely invisible. The movie placed responsibility for the deaths of Australian soldiers not on the Turks who fired the guns, but on the British officers who ordered the frontal attacks conducted with pointless stupidity and incompetence. The British were represented as being the opposite of the Australians, who exhibited all the virtues. British military incompetence did not stop them from exhibiting a patronising condescension, casually sipping their cups of tea at Suvla Bay, while the Australians were butchered in the diversionary attack at The Nek designed to keep Turkish pressure off British divisions supposedly outflanking the Turkish

positions. The film portrayed a Colonel Robinson (a fictional version of the historical Australian Colonel Antill) who, in an upper-crust British-style accent, insisted that the attacks continue in the face of wholesale slaughter, while General Gardner, who ordered a halt to the pointless attacks, spoke in an unmistakeably Australian accent. Later, Weir disclaimed any intention of 'Pom bashing,' and regretted creating the impression that Robinson was British (1982: 42).

The film largely overlooked all other nationalities which might reasonably have been shown: the New Zealanders, who contribute two letters to the acronym Anzac, were absent – as they are from virtually all Australian Anzac cinema, while Egyptians were merely essential stock background figures in scenes set in the markets and brothels of Cairo, and Turks were glimpsed in the trenches at Gallipoli. Even the British rank and file, who formed the support troops to the Australian assault at The Nek, were absent, thus creating a simple dichotomy of the Australian soldier versus the British officer. The film's themes, concerning itself with issues of the Australian identity, meant that only Australians and British were relevant. As one critic perceptively noted, "*Gallipoli* is not so much about Australians in war as it is a celebration of the national ideology. It is largely about what is intrinsically Australian" (Freebury 1987: 7). The role of the British was as anti-type, exemplars of all the Old World failings that Australians had ceased to be in the Antipodes.

The other great popular screen representation of the Anzacs of that era was the miniseries *Anzacs*, which took rather a soap-opera approach to its treatment of the war, with a tendency to melodrama and cartoonish characters. In terms of reach and lasting influence, it was second only to Weir's *Gallipoli*, and DVD sales have continued strongly into the twenty-first century (Reynaud 2015: 194). As with *Gallipoli*, the real enemies in the miniseries were the English, as were the rare Australians who demonstrated un-Australian qualities. Indeed, one critic praised it specifically for advancing an Australian identity and rejecting a British one (Turner 1997: 232, 236–238). On the other hand, the formal enemies, that is to say the Turks and Germans, were rendered less demonic and given more sympathetic qualities, to the extent that they were portrayed at all. In fact one Anzac character was an ethnic German, acting as a window into the heart of the enemy. But, as with *Gallipoli*, the historical enemy was a shadowy figure necessary to make battle scenes functional rather than a source of active plot conflict. In practice, the opposition that the Anzacs faced came from the stupidity of British generals, the hypocrisy of Australian politicians, and the rare Australian soldier who failed to exhibit traditional Anzac values of mateship and a fair go.

The British were again the principal enemy. A critic wrote, "the British staff officers [...] appear incompetent or deliberately sadistic" (Mayer 1986: 64). Field Marshal Haig was an obvious target for British-bashing, especially as he had al-

ready been denigrated in British Prime Minister Lloyd George's post-war writings, and his reputation tarnished by historians like Alan Clark, Basil Liddell Hart and John Laffin, and in popular culture (for example in *Oh! What a Lovely War* dir. Richard Attenborough, 1969, and the later *Black Adder Goes Forth*, dir. Richard Doden, 1989). Lloyd George was given the floor in the series, allowing the wily Welshman to fire a few barbs at English incompetence that were pleasing to the Australian national consciousness of the 1980s. Haig was represented as patronisingly labelling the Australians 'colonial hooligans' who, since he could not execute them for crimes (the AIF did not have capital punishment), were sent to the Somme to 'quieten them down,' implying a deliberate use of the Anzacs as pointless cannon-fodder. While admitting they had been resourceful during the Boer War, he alluded to the Breaker Morant incident, saying "we shot a couple of them, as I remember." Other examples of British stupidity were highlighted by a general inspecting the front, exclaiming in wonder at the deep mud through which soldiers had been ordered to advance. Australian General Monash was represented as noting that their officer selection process was detrimentally affected by class considerations, thus affirming Australian egalitarianism over British class-consciousness. Even an otherwise popular Englishman in the Australian ranks, Bill 'the Pom' Harris, was chastised for failing to understand the Australian mindset when he labelled as 'mutiny' the mateship leading to the 60th Battalion's refusal to obey the order to disband. The archetypical larrikin Anzac, Cleary, played by Paul Hogan in the style of his 'Hoges' persona, exclaimed in frustration, "You still don't understand us, do you?," capturing the British-Australian binary at the heart of resurgent Australian nationalism, as exemplified in the Anzac legend of the era.

A few positive remarks were made about the British during the miniseries, sometimes noting their courage, but without restoring a sense of balance. Bill Harris may have been a former non-commissioned officer in the British Army, but he had deserted from it in the best Anzac anti-authoritarian manner. Characterised in advertising as "no whinging pommy bastard: he's a tough mate and a good soldier" (*Anzacs* file, National Film and Sound Archive), Harris clearly was on his way to transformation to a 'true-blue' Australian. Despite this tokenism of a good Englishman, the miniseries presented the British as the chief cause of problems for the Australians. Compared to them, the Germans and Turks appeared to be minor obstacles who would have been swept from the field if only the Australians had been in charge of affairs.

However, the British were not the only enemy of the true Australian. Included in the miniseries were several Australian characters who were negatively portrayed, each threatening to undermine the noble Anzac ideal. Cyril Earnshaw, a self-important windbag Australian politician, and his lacklustre son, Max, characterised the new Anzac legend of the 1980s, whereby the soldiers who fought were glorified while the politicians who brought war about were denigrated. In an era where post-Vietnam anti-war sentiment was still strong, this allowed the Anzac soldier to continue to hold the moral high ground, as a victim of the politicians rather than an agent of war. Earnshaw senior's 'Would to God' speeches marked him out as a figure of political hypocrisy and a target of satire, while his son was an inexperienced regulation-bound officer, commissioned on the strength of his political connections, who made a fool of himself in front of the men and other officers promoted from the ranks on merit. The other major figure of opposition to the Anzacs was the petty criminal soldier, 'Dingo' Gordon, described in promotional material as embodying "a contemptible side to the Australian character" (*Anzacs* file, National Film and Sound Archive). After deserting, Gordon was tracked down by his former mates and killed in a scuffle, thus showing how un-Australian disloyalty and self-interest was eliminated by the Anzac virtue of mateship.

The stereotypical portrayal of both the British and Australian enemy of the true Anzac seriously undermined the merit in doing so. Just as C. E. W. Bean, the official Australian war historian, labelled as untypical any Australian behaviour of which he did not approve, so also *Anzacs* constructed the less pleasant characters as being outside the norm, and thus not truly Australian. A critic noted that the series divided its cast "into 'real' Australians and the rest" (Mayer 1986: 64). To help make the moral issues clear, the reprehensible characters lacked any kind of positive qualities that might have made a viewer identify with them. The Germans and Turks received minimal coverage, but it was mostly positive. The character of Kaiser Schmidt acted as "the window through which we see and feel the German enemy, so that they are not caricatures" (*Anzacs* file, National Film and Sound Archive), which was a gesture towards attitudes to the enemy in the 1980s. More often, the perspectives of the Germans were used as puffs for the reputation of the Anzacs, as reports of German statements of Australian battlefield prowess were circulated among the Allies.

Two other productions of the 1980s tended toward the simplistic representation of the Anzac as virtuous, the enemy as sympathetic and the British as the villains, though both lacked the reach and the competence of *Gallipoli* and *Anzacs*. Simon Wincer's *The Lighthorsemen* (1987) was a less polemic presentation of the Anzac legend, and the portrayal of the English, while mostly conventionally stupid, lacked the venom of earlier productions. Both the Australians and the Germans mocked the British at various points in the film, while a prejudiced British general steadily opposed the Australian Light Horse attack that finally unhinged the stubborn Turkish defences. However, it showed positive qualities in two British officers; firstly General Allenby and secondly the foppish intelli-

gence officer Meinertzhagen, whose upper-class-twit exterior concealed a brilliant military operator. The representation of the Turks and Germans was mixed. While some had the sense to admire the Australians, others demonstrated a British-like adherence to dogmatic stupidity – most evident in the character of Intelligence Captain Reichert, who fell for every one of Meinertzhagen's tricks, always overriding his insightful Turkish counterpart, Colonel Ismet. At the height of the battle, some Turks were represented as opening fire after having surrendered – this breach of military law was met by a justified massacre of the Turkish prisoners.

Henri Safran's *Willesee's Australians: Private John Simpson* (1987) was a forgettable episode in a television celebration of the bicentenary of European settlement. Conceived with jingoistic intent, its portrayal of the Turks was positive, showing them withholding fire and saluting Simpson for his daring work in rescuing the wounded, while representing the British in the blackest of colours, as wilfully stupid and criminally prejudiced against the Australians. Again, the function of the Turks was to highlight Australian merit and demonstrate by contrast how bad the behaviour of the Australians' ostensible Imperial brothers, the British, were.

Such was the Anzac jingoism of the decade that even critics were blinded, one scholar complaining that the "barrage" of Anzac productions merely "perpetuated the more uncritical, if comforting, myths about Australia's past" (Beaumont 1995: xix). Another chimed in, claiming that "every Anzac film blames arrogant British generals for Australian losses, and exonerates Australian leaders. Australia's egalitarian soldiers and society are contrasted with their class-ridden British counterparts." While conceding that "[t]here are elements of these films that gesture towards more complex and even critical tellings," he argued that "they are worked into the films so that the legend is reaffirmed" (Thomson 1994: 196 – 197). However, such sweeping generalisations overlooked a richer representation that occurred during the 1980s, admittedly in productions that failed to find audiences as large as either *Gallipoli* or *Anzacs*.

The miniseries *1915* featured a nuanced screenplay by Peter Yeldham based on the Roger McDonald novel of the same name. Its construct of the notion of enemy was more complex, and though the Turkish enemy was not featured, neither were they portrayed with any malice. What was more striking was an absence of anti-British sentiment. Instead of blaming the British generals for the suffering of the characters, more often their tribulations stemmed from their own poor choices or from the random mischance of war. For once, the biggest enemies of the Anzacs were the Anzacs themselves, as petty rivalries caused friction among them. As with earlier representations of Gallipoli, the series was more concerned with Australian identity, but for a change, the definition of

this was not dependent on foregrounding an external enemy, either Turkish or British. In a similar vein, *A Fortunate Life* was also based on a book, this time the memoirs of West Australian Bert Facey. It also provided a nuanced representation of the concept of enemy, which was problematized. While British-bashing occurred in the miniseries, so also was there bashing of Australians, a point rarely made in other Anzac productions. The enemy was stupidity, from both British and Australian officers, and from civilians at home. In one scene set in Egypt, Australian officers left a unit to the devices of a drunken sergeant on an overland march, displaying professional neglect and incompetence. The British also came in for mockery, for their petty regimented ways and overbearing condescension, such as with an officer who would not help Facey even when it was in his power to do so and the need very evident, or the pointless bayonet drills conducted by petty-minded British sergeants. Once repatriated with war injuries, Facey ran the gauntlet of a series of exploitative, hostile, dismissive, and indifferent responses from Australian civilians, a new enemy in Anzac representation. On the other hand, in representing the Turks, the Australians were shown to refuse shooting at retreating Turkish soldiers after a failed attack, and during a burial truce a Turk offered Facey an orange. These incidents constructed the Turkish enemy as human, in many ways more sympathetic than elements of the British or Australian armies, or many Australian civilians.

The bicentennial year of 1988 also saw two miniseries screened which challenged the notion of friend and foe in Australian war cinema, *Always Afternoon* and *The Alien Years*. They shared a similar theme, being concerned with the treatment of Germans in Australia during the war years. Both represented the Germans in positive terms; technically, the enemy were German aliens (and even citizens) living in Australia, but actually the enemy was jingoistic Australian society in general and the Federal Government in particular. By shifting the focus from the battle front to the home front, both miniseries interrogated the national narrative of Anzac, and the new perspective made for uncomfortable viewing.

The Alien Years portrayed anti-German sentiment in Australia as having been deliberately cultivated by politicians keen to create a sense of fear to motivate civilians to support the war effort. One argued, "If we're to have recruits this country needs to feel threatened." But it was not merely politicians; policemen, camp officers and guards used petty bullying tactics, and civilians were shown treating the internees with crude racism. The miniseries juxtaposed the vindictive behaviour of Australians with that of the peace-loving German immigrants, many of them refugees from religious persecution in Europe. A good number were naturalised or married to Australians. One case was featured in the narrative: the eldest son of a German father and Australian mother joined the AIF, while his younger brother joined the German army, witnessing his brother kill

two of his comrades in battle. Similarly, *Always Afternoon* explored the divided national loyalties of German-Australians. One character lamented, "My loving, lovely brother, who was Australian, was killed by Germans. My honest, gentle father, who was German, was killed by Australians. What language should I speak?" The sympathetic treatment of the Germans was helped by significant German funding but nevertheless was in keeping with a more tolerant age which did not see a wartime enemy as necessarily evil.

Both mini-series offer dramatically different constructs of the Anzac legend than had been conventionally told. *The Alien Years* director Donald Crombie described it as "a period in [Australia's] history of which many may be unaware – a period Australia should be quite ashamed of" (*The Alien Years* file, Promotional material, NFSA). Gone in these productions were the laconic, easy-going good-natured larrikins of the Anzac legend and in their place stood parochial and vicious Australians, imprisoning and even killing sober, hard-working fellow citizens at the behest of their own government, all in the name of fighting a just war. This unholy alliance of soldiers and civilians targeting peaceful aliens turned the Anzac legend upside down, portraying the Australians as the villains and the Germans as virtuous victims.

Ray Alchin's *The Private War of Lucinda Smith* (1991) took yet another turn in its portrayal of the enemy. While comedies of the war were produced between the wars, none had been attempted since. This miniseries came at a time when Australian audiences were tiring of a decade-long era of reverential period pieces, and it constructed the war as a bawdy comedy. Its unusual setting of the backwater theatre of German New Guinea offered a love triangle between an Australian chorus girl pursued by a German and a Britisher. While the German love interest was benignly represented, other Germans were stereotypically rigid. On the other hand, the miniseries poked fun at Australian prejudices, showing an Australian bar girl convinced that the amiable German lover would naturally be a rapist as portrayed in Allied propaganda. Uncharacteristically, Australian soldiers were portrayed more as 'Dad's Army' figures of fun, with a buffoonish officer, portly sergeant and incompetent men. Designed as a very unhistorical romp through the swamps of Melanesian New Guinea (and unmistakeably shot in Polynesian Samoa), the miniseries let some of the air out of the earnestness of the portrayal of both enemy and friend.

What followed was a twenty-year absence of Anzac from both the big and small screen – surprising in many ways, given the increasing popularisation of Anzac, with growing media coverage and political support, and ever-improving attendances at Anzac Day marches and at various pilgrimage sites around the world (particularly Gallipoli, Villers-Bretonneux and Kokoda), but this was perhaps reflective of the fact that the Anzac legend had stabilised, leaving little

new to say about it on film. However, the Great War featured again in a new wave of Anzac productions from 2010, culminating in several releases to mark the 2015 centenary of the Gallipoli landings. In a search for audiences, most attempted tellings of the Anzac story that had escaped the public eye to date, selecting obscure units, such as miners, or under-represented figures such as nurses and deserters. These attempts largely failed. The reasons were variously attributed to a continuing national inferiority complex (Mathieson 2015), or a combination of a surfeit of Anzac programming, poor production values and television programming, and a national indifference to an overblown mythology (Phillips 2015). While none managed the impact of the earlier releases, these new productions demonstrated yet another subtle shift in how the enemy was represented.

The movie *Beneath Hill 60* heralded the return of Anzac to the big screen, the first since 1987. It told the story of an Australian tunnelling unit in Flanders, and while working in the traditions of the productions of the 1980s, it offered more subdued national stereotypes and projected a less polemic outlook than the classic productions of the golden era. It still managed to feature three officers as its key villains: one each of German, British and Australian origin, although it was possible to mistake the latter for an Englishman. Certainly, some critics did. The German and Australian colonels were characterised by a stubborn determination to stick to decisions made without the facts, while the British officer was patronising towards the colonials. On the other hand, another British officer somehow managed to stay pristinely clean while working around the diggings, and yet avoided the priggishness usually associated with a man who never seemed to get his hands dirty. As the representation of the British lost some of its condemnatory edge, a new common enemy emerged in Australian war film, in keeping with popular constructs of the Great War from Europe: that of the callous and incompetent Australian officer who placed his own decisions and comfort over that of military effectiveness and even the lives of his men.

In the claustrophobic settings of the tunnels, the enemy was a rarely-seen but constantly threatening presence. German tunnellers could be heard digging and even talking, and there was the constant threat of being blown up by counter-miners. Occasionally, German soldiers were portrayed, especially in scenes of raids on trenches. However, the film had one moment where it gave insight into the lives of the men on the other side, eavesdropping on a couple of German miners discussing home and loved ones. Soon after, they were trapped in an Australian counter-mining operation, setting up one of the most effective scenes of the film. One Australian, delighted at the success of their little explosion, flippantly joked that he had blasted the Germans all the way back to Berlin. Unlike the Australian characters in the film, the audience had come to know the unfortunate men, resulting in a poignant juxtaposition of the celebrations of one

group over the death of another. While the Australian characters could rejoice in their work, the audience was set up to feel empathy (Reynaud 2010: 40.1–40.2).

The tele-feature *An Accidental Soldier* offered quite a radical redefinition of the enemy. Taking as its subject a pacifist baker who reluctantly enlisted in 1918 in the face of a shaming campaign in his West Australian hometown, its hero deserted during a battle, finding refuge with an older French woman before both were betrayed to the authorities. The enemy in this film was not the Germans, but the French authorities and French and Australian societies that forced men to war and hunted them down when they evaded it. Making an Anzac deserter the hero of a film flew in the face of the Anzac legend, where mateship ensured that a man did not let down the others in his unit. On the other hand, close news media coverage of the tragedies of war in recent Middle Eastern conflicts ensured that contemporary audiences were much more sympathetic to the hero's plight than might have been the case even during the immediate post-Vietnam era. The film successfully positioned the authorities searching for his whereabouts and the gossiping neighbours as the enemy, heightened by their suspicions over the French woman, whose husband was of German Alsatian origin. As with *Always Afternoon* and *The Alien Years*, the enemy in this film was this Anzac soldier's own culture. The war was not one between the rival empires of Britain and France on the one hand and Germany on the other, but rather between the ideologies of nationalistic hate versus humanistic pacifism and love.

The miniseries *Anzac Girls* followed the lives of five Anzac nurses, based on historical nurses who served in the war. With the nurses stationed behind the front, little was seen of the enemy, whose presence was manifested mainly through the stream of wounded men the nurses had to treat, although an occasional bombardment or aerial attack brought the enemy close. The enemies constructed by the miniseries consisted of the layers of hierarchy that constantly interfered with the capacity of the Australian nurses to perform to their potential. These hierarchies were the interlocking powers of Imperialism, sexism and militarism, meeting in the persons of various male British officers who had scant regard for Australian women nurses from a civilian background. Often the snobbery was exhibited by subsets of these powers, such as British hospital Matrons, or Australian officers. The episodes featured plenty of British-bashing, as the virtuous Anzac nurses battled snobbery, incompetence and condescension before triumphing in their roles.

While *The Water Diviner* fell rather short of an attempt to create a big-impact Anzac film capitalising on the name of its director and star, Russell Crowe, it also managed a significant reworking of the notion of enemy. Joshua Connor, the main character, travelled to post-war Turkey to find what had happened to his three sons, who went missing during the Gallipoli campaign. It was by far the

most empathetic rendering of the Turks in Australian war cinema to that time, allowing audiences to engage positively with several key Turkish figures. One was the war widow Ayshe, the other half of the rather unconvincing love story, while the other two were Major Hassan and Sergeant Jemal, who helped Connor with his search for both the dead and living sons. Flashbacks of Gallipoli battles were shown, but the chief conflicts came from the Greeks in the Greco-Turkish War for Anatolia. In something of a throwback to Great War propaganda films, they served as typically villainous enemies, being represented more like atrocity-committing banditti than regular soldiers, and were not shown in any depth or with any sympathy. The Turks, on the other hand, were positively represented and worked as friends and emotional allies to Connor in his quest. The film created a sense of interdependence between the key Turkish and Australian characters.

If *The Water Diviner* was a box-office disappointment, then the miniseries *Gallipoli* was close to a disaster. Ratings fell so swiftly that the last few episodes of the seven-part series were hastily screened as double episodes. It trod such familiar territory that too few viewers were engaged as a result. Ironically, the series seemed to have pleased critics more than it did the general public. It combined the usual portrayal of British generals in comfortable circumstances sending men to their deaths (though to be fair, its British generals grew more human and sympathetic as the series progressed), with the newer version of Anzac, which portrayed the Turks quite sympathetically. When Mustafa Kemal ordered his men to die, the narrative framed it in a way that invited admiration; the same words in the mouth of a British general traditionally has been held up as typical British callousness towards the lives of colonials. In particular, the representation of the May 24 burial truce offered opportunities for Turks and Australians to interact. In virtually every case, it was the Turks who initiated friendship, offering gifts and sharing family photos, with the sometimes wary Australians warming up and responding positively. The net result was the creation of a bond of humanity between them. As the lead character 'Tolly' Johnson intoned in voice-over, "They were fathers, sons and brothers just like us. I didn't hate them anymore."

Deadline Gallipoli was the most recent representation of the First World War on Australian screens. It constructed a view of the war through the eyes of several historical war correspondents at Gallipoli, in particular Charles Bean. It overtly displaced the notion of the Turk as the enemy. One journalist opined, 'The enemy in the war is not the honourable Turk, but our incompetent leadership.' The miniseries followed the recent trend of showing the Turk in human colours, and giving them a voice. In one scene, a captured Turkish soldier confronted Bean while translating a Turkish news story which described the Allied

invasion of Turkey. Queried by Bean over the term 'invasion,' the Turk tellingly replied, "What would you call it?" A closing scene of war museum relics showed a flute, which had featured earlier in the drama when a captured Turkish soldier was released after playing it. Poignantly, the Turk was shot by other Australians as he left the Anzac lines. The miniseries also positioned the enemy as consisting of any resistance to recounting the truth about the war. Often this resistance came about from senior military figures who did not want the truth reported; on other occasions a desire to smooth over awkward truths came from soldiers or even the journalists themselves, often prompted by a desire to save families from anguish.

Several interconnected issues emerge from a review of how contemporary Australian war films have represented the enemy. Firstly, there has been a significant shift away from the war films of the Great War and inter-war periods in how the Turks and Germans have been represented. They have evolved from villains, war criminals and subversives through a relatively neutral portrayal in the 1980s to the status of honourable combatants with a shared humanity in the most recent productions of the 2010s. Often, the enemy's words were appropriated to serve as encomium for Australian deeds, embroidering the Anzac legend with a more significant form of praise than any from an ally, and forming a most striking contrast with representations of British opinions of the Anzacs. In particular, the most recent productions reflected a populist sense of solidarity with the Turks, picking up on the widespread Australian perception of modern Turks being pro-Australian (Stanley 2013).

Secondly, while the Turks and Germans have remained the ostensible enemy in the films, the productions have tended to construct actual enemies who were not Turk or German. In the most popular productions of the 1980s, this enemy was most often the British, especially their high command, whose condescension, incompetence and downright wilful callousness was positioned as being the cause of most of the problems for the Anzacs. Occasionally, another populist whipping boy was added – that of politicians at home and abroad. A few productions problematized these simplistic representations, suggesting that Australians, military and civilian, government and non-government, officer and ranker, also contributed to the issues faced by the Anzacs, with behaviour that marked them as the enemies of the virtues of the Anzac soldier embodied by the myth. But these tended to be productions that failed to gain a mainstream audience, and in any case were often interpreted as being part of the mainstream. Reading all Anzac films as presenting stereotypes demonstrated the strength of the clichés in the Anzac legend. As we have seen, the more nuanced productions of the 1980s were often lumped together with their less subtle cousins by both critics and audiences, suggesting that dominant national narratives were key determinants in how individual representations were read. Productions that went against the grain suffered a double silencing of their reinterpretations: being overlooked by large audiences in the first place, and then being decoded as if they were more of the 'same old, same old,' and thus marginalised in value.

The more recent Anzac productions problematized the notion of enemy far more successfully than those of the 1980s, largely due to the fact that they spoke to an Australian audience that had moved on from the simplistic jingoism of three decades earlier. While there were still examples of blaming the British for problems, the nature of the enemy faced by the Anzacs was made more complex, and encompassed greater internal divisions and resistances. Not only were British and Australian hierarchies represented as the enemy, so also were the Anzacs themselves and the civilian societies of Australia and allied countries.

The third issue is the extent to which the ostensible enemy mattered. The productions of the 1980s hardly needed Turks or Germans, as their primary concern was rarely the war. They were statements about national identity, hence why the British were more often the enemy than Turks or Germans, as Australian nationalism of the era was focussed on cutting its family ties with Mother England. While this perspective did not completely die out, it was less dominant in the productions of the 2010s. 'Pommy-bashing' was replaced to some extent with a new need to construct the Turk as a friend and fellow human in the Anzac narrative, and to recognise alternative narratives in the Anzac story.

Contemporary Australian Anzac cinema has continued to wrestle with its representations of a central national narrative, continuing its ongoing "address to the present" (Grindon 1994: 1) on key matters of its "historical capital" (Sorlin 1980: 21). While the enemy is no longer presented in simplistic and antagonistic terms, the notion of enemy still retains strongly mythic elements which form part of the national construct of Anzac, including notions that the Australians preferred Turks to British generals, that the British were often butchers, and that because of Anzac, the Turks now have a high regard for Australians. In face of a national legend that continues to evolve, the next generation of Anzac cinematic representations will be interesting to observe.

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