Reviewing and comparing three movies focusing on shape of war

War is essentially the absence of peace. But more than the idea of an event or a series of events that compels a nation and a group of people to enter into battle and be able and willing to risk and expend resources in order to win a war, casualty take of various forms and implications. More than the millions and billions of dollars spent as expenses on ventures than does not amount to anything much, there are the people behind these nations that enable any one state to keep on fighting for a cause which it wants to uphold. It is but a common notion that in a war there is no winner yet it never seems to stop. There is not a day in the world where there is no war between clashing ideals and beliefs that fuels men to go against each other at the cost of their lives. War, as a film genre, is easily one of the most pervasive and reoccurring regardless of what generation. These films are most likely to poke at something real and imaginable to every individual because one way or another we have experienced war or knew someone who has gone through it. ' Platoon' is quite perhaps among the three a war movie in every sense of the word. In comparison to ' Saving Private Ryan' and ' Black Hawk Down,' ' Platoon' is the movie which had paved the way to a different way of retelling a war story. The timing of the release of this film was brilliant in such a way that there had been enough time to avoid having to be labelled as insensitive but close enough to the actual events that people still have not yet forgotten. This film by Oliver Stone earned him the Oscar Best Picture Award. The story of Chris Taylor follows an in-depth look on what war can do to a person. It strips him almost bare of his humanity as he is propelled in a situation of violence and atrocity. This setting is by no means normal and the unnatural events that unfold before his very eyes lead

him to do irrational things that he would not otherwise do. Taylor enters

Vietnam with the same bewilderment as any other young and innocent man

who had had no experience with war much else having to take another

human being's life. Here he is confronted with his own notions of himself and

how he deals with what is right and what he must do. The characters in this

film could be somewhat larger than life but it is by no means actually

improbable. Members of the platoon are literally losing their minds and going

berserk in the battlefield. Sgt. Elias had led them to massacre an entire

village and has commanded them into a trap that will be their demise. '

Black Hawk Down,' as compared to the other more known wars in history

takes place in Somalia based on actual events where the United States is

engaged in armed conflict to take Mogadishu's warlord Mohamed Farrah

Aidid out of power and to put an end to the famine that has killed hundreds

of thousands of people. The story gives a bird's eye view of an unexpected

turn of events from what was supposed to be a routine plan that ended up in

disaster when a great number of armed Somalis surprisingly attacked the U.

S. Forces in all angles. The film significantly focuses on the Rangers who had

been abandoned in the streets of Mogadishu left to fend for themselves

while wounded and injured as the crossfire takes place outside of the

meagre shelter they have found. ' Black Hawk Down' more than the other

two gives light to the team effort that binds together a group of people as a

team. It highlights the value of men in battle by the sheer bravery of the

principle that no one must be left behind. As Eversmann puts it, "" Nobody

asks to be a hero. It just sometimes turns out that way" (Black Hawk Down).

' Saving Private Ryan' is a story of hope and of beating the odds. The war in

this movie took place during World War II in the invasion of Normandy. The premise of the story is an interesting fictional characterization of the search of for Pvt. James Francis Ryan whose three other brothers were killed in the battlefield. In order to find him, eight reluctant soldiers led by Capt. John Miller scour the warzone to deliver the bad news and to inform him of his dismissal from the service. At the outset, the theme of this film is poignant and even more emotional in a varied level than that of ' Platoon.' Sgt. Horvath said, " Someday we might look back on this and decide that saving Private Ryan was the one decent thing we were able to pull out of this whole godawful, shitty mess" (Saving Private Ryan). The battle scene, especially in Omaha Beach, was the most revealing of the war theme of this movie. The main idea of war and how it affects people were equally portrayed in an intense dramatization in all of the three films. War movies are in a sense more than the fight scenes and the epic battles that pan out, they are the cultivation of the emotions that come out because of the peculiar circumstances. They reveal different sides to a person. It may bring one man to maturity and to the realization of an enemy within as what Chris Taylor has learned and that the war is somewhat a scar that stays with you for a lifetime. " The enemy was in us. The war is over for me now but it will always be there the rest of my days" (Platoon). This could also bring hope that generates a transcending compassion to give importance to the life of others such as Private Ryan. War can even bring out an unexpected hero that remains to be a comrade until death. War could be many things. It is not necessarily wrong but this does not in itself make it right. Bibliography Black Hawk Down. Dir. Ridley Scott. Revolution Studios, 2001. DVD. Platoon. Dir.

Oliver Stone. MGM Grand, 1986. DVD. Saving Private Ryan. Dir. Steven

Spielberg. Dreamworks SKG, 1998. DVD.