

History 111

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Overall how good is the Movie Troy?

Troy is the adaptation of Homer's famous novels The Iliad and The Odyssey, and follows the backlash after Paris, the prince of Troy, steals Helen from Menelaus, the king of Sparta. Menelaus asks his brother to go to war with him, for Menelaus it's to take back his dignity, and for Agamemnon it's a chance to expand his Greek kingdom. With them, they bring one thousand ships and fifty thousand soldiers, including Achilles, the famous, nearly immortal Greek soldier whose only goal is immortality through glory. Paris' brother, Hector, the leader of the Trojan army, decides to protect him and takes Troy to war against the outnumbering Greeks.

This is the greatest story that's ever been told, and now it's one of the most epic films that have ever been made. I don't know if there's been a movie attempted on this scale, not in terms of budget or cast, but in terms of greatness. Troy brings together an ideal director, a perfect cast (even down to the striking resemblance of Bloom and Bana who play Paris and Hector, brothers), a story that's known and loved by anyone who's been to school, and some of the best special effects and cinematography I've ever seen.

Wolfgang Petersen knows how to direct an epic film, and now Troy makes him the undisputed king of epics. Troy is one of the most impressive looking films I've ever seen. It was filmed in Mexico with about five hundred extras, which makes how authentic it looks even grander. Troy has two distinct tones; it's a love story between Paris and Helen (as well as Achilles and Briseis) and a war story. Petersen takes a movie that is so clearly multidimensional, and combines the different stories flawlessly.

Troy really succeeded at entertaining me, and truly curiosity about the time period. In fact, I'd go as far as to say Troy is the best war movie I've ever seen. Most war movies, even the good ones, cut so quickly and are so overwhelmed by the scale that you lose focus of individual characters and are just watching people die. Troy keeps it personal, but with magnificent cinematography and special effects, the scale of the battles isn't understated. In addition, Hector is surly portrayed as we saw him in the excerpt from Homer included in our text in the movie Troy.

Is Troy historically accurate? Troy is the Trojan War for the ADD generation; it sticks to the story enough to not infuriate the historical minded people, and entertains more than it educates. Intrigued by the movie I searched thru the net and found out that is no evidence exists in history to prove the war of Troy and the subsequent demolition of the city as written by Homer in Iliad. Was everyone involved in the Trojan War so darn good looking? No, but that's only the beginning. One of the most noticeable differences between the book and the movie is the absence of the Gods. In Homer's Iliad, the Gods played a major part in the Trojan War. (The Iliad of Homer pgs.78-83) Though the viewers are made aware that the characters believe in the Gods, the only God we see in the movie is Thetis, Achilles' mother. The omission of the Gods from the movie may give the audience a chance to view the characters more believable, however by omitting the Gods, the viewer did not get the full history of the characters. The Greek Gods are barely mentioned, the war seems to take two weeks as opposed to ten years, and so much liberty is taken with dubbing the Greeks as the bad guys to the heroic and loving Trojans. Halfway through the movie, you'll find yourself saying, "Too bad I know who wins, because I'm really rooting for the Trojans!" The movie does not follow the Iliad which is what it was very loosely based on, but scholars don't believe Homer's works to be 100% accurate.

This film is not historically accurate, but is very loosely based on a legend. Whether that legend is based on anything that actually happened is anyone's guess. Like the legend of "King Arthur", there is probably a kernel of truth behind it. But this film does not accurately follow the legend. There are many large differences. In the film, most of the main characters are killed, but in the legend, they mostly survive. (<http://www.timelessmyths.com/classical/trojanwar.html>)

Also, it was not convenient to adhere to the clothing of that era of Greek history. (<http://www.timelessmyths.com/classical/trojanwar.html>) The actual clothing of that era covered up the men too much, so more skimpy attire was invented to please the female movie goers. The idea of men fighting and dying for a woman also appeals to female vanity. Hollywood's hunks were put through months of rigorous muscle building work-outs and then put in revealing costumes to please the women. Action, adventure, and half-decent special effects were thrown in to please the male audience. There is something for everybody, so long as everyone realizes that Troy is entertainment not education. The gods are always interfering is just about anything that going on, starting from the very reason the whole war takes place, every major event in the battle, and its ultimate conclusion. (The Iliad of Homer pg.186) The men in the story don't always see all the interference that's going on, but it's quite obvious to the reader. And even if they don't see much, they do see plenty. The main difference between Troy and the Trojan War was the lack of involvement of the gods which were more important to the Greeks than the story of the people. In the movie adaptation 'Troy', the gods are all but absent. Things happen or don't and are credited to the gods, but they are simply not real characters in that story. (The Iliad of Homer pg.184) Without the direct interplay of the gods it's as if half of the plot is sheared off, and some of the events that occur make little sense.

A few things in the movie Troy were actually slightly historically accurate, but not enough to make the movie completely historically accurate. Sometime before 1100 B.C. the supposed date of TROY; there was a group called the Celts that lived in Africa and the Middle East. They started moving north after the collapse of the Egyptian empire and before Rome. They settled in northern Europe and would remain there as Rome began to take over. Around 1100 B.C. they brought about the Bronze Age, and would soon discover tin would help their technology. The problem was that there were few mines in their part of Europe and a large amount in a land called TROAD (hence Troy). In addition, the Celts went to the Troads in the city of Ilium which was also the capitol by the same name as in the movie) asking for access to the mines and the tin. The Troads refused access. The Celts demanding access began raising a very large mercenary army out of parts of unoccupied Europe (what wasn't roman by then), and the Troads did the same with what they could get to.

(<http://www.timelessmyths.com/classical/trojanwar.html>)

On the coast of Spain, even to this day, is a city that in English is translated into Ithaca (don't know where). Ithaca in "The Iliad" is where Odysseus and his army launched from their massive fleet. It is believed they set sail for a place on what is now known as England. Through research the place where Troad once existed, is now called Cornwall. It would go on to say that the Odyssey took place in the Atlantic. (The Iliad of Homer pg.189)

As far as acting goes, I was pleasantly surprised by the trio of cover boys, especially Eric Bana whose performance I believe to be awarded worthy. Casting the face that launched a thousand ships couldn't have been easy, but in Diane Kruger they found not only a pretty face, but an unfound talent. Although her German accent is more evident than one would have

preferred, she captures the conflict between guilt and love that her character feels almost as well as Petersen captures her beauty.

As a result Troy is a movie that can keep its audience entertained for a couple of hours without pretending to be a scholarly reinterpretation of the Iliad. In fact it manages to exist as the exact opposite of Homer's Iliad. Where the original revolves around the complexity of its characters, Troy the movie manages to present each protagonist as a sketchy cartoon, and where the Iliad elevates conflict and values on a universal level, Troy the movie trivializes even the most compelling of human values.

The film portrays Greek values as we learned that Homer portrayed them, particularly through the character of Achilles. While there are a few anti-war lines, mostly uttered by the women in the film, the values reflect a warrior ethic of courage and loyalty to Nation, which for both Trojans and Greeks means loyalty to family and race. (*Western Civilization* pg.55) Achilles represents a warrior who is independent and will take no orders from any man, especially the detested King Agamemnon, but in the end shows he will lay down his life for his people. Achilles does not glorify or glamorize war, but he recognizes that wars are something that will always be fought. No pleas for universal brotherhood or any other kind of Jew-promoted universalism here.

I always pictured Trojans as brutes and little feeling. The movie showed me different. In the movie Troy the Trojans, simply put, are depicted as beautiful losers who went on to found the Roman Empire. Alexander himself was not portrayed as much of a hero that the audience wants to see. Instead, he's portrayed merely as an indecisive, sexually confused, big kid who is suddenly thrust into power and who wants adventure, so he leads his distrusting army across the globe for no other reason than to quench Alexander's weird obsession.

The particular movie Troy/DVD I rented did not have any previews of other films at the beginning of the film.

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