Spartacus Versus Gladiator: Comparative Essay

The Hellenistic period is characterized by a style in arts where the good tries to conquer the evil in such themes as violence, dialogue, and sexual content. On the other hand, the Hellenic period does not feature violence as the central theme, and it is characterized by more of peace and coexistence. The argument that war and violence are dominant and somehow glorified during the times of war and de-glorified during the periods of peace is evident in the twentieth-century movies that were produced during wars and between wars. Films produced during the war periods are dominated by violence, gore, and realistic human emotions. Violence, therefore, forms the basis of many of the films that were produced during the war periods. On the other hand, movies produced after the wars have dominated in themes of peace as well as de-glorification of war. This can be seen in the comparison of two such films Spartacus (1960) and Gladiator (2000).

Spartacus

The film Spartacus is based on the story of Thracian Gladiator, known as Spartacus, who bloodily protests against the Roman Empire. Disguised as entertainment, the film shows the exploitation of violence and sex Foka, (2015). It shows violent actions of the gladiators who slash each other with swords resulting in bloodsheds that often wash over your screen while human body parts spread on the ground. The film represents an extreme graphic show of violence that gratuitously depicts the battle. Maybe, the question posed by this film is whether modern societies have gone that much in terms of violence.

The way gladiators slash each other is presented entertainingly, and these actions entertain the audience. The audience cannot get enough of gladiators slashing each other with their blood splashing all over. This can be seen as a glorification of violence. Gladiators who emerge victorious by violently killing others are glorified and given a higher status. It could be argued that the audience is seeking to escape from the everyday lifestyle in which such actions are illegal. This could be due to the glorification of violence, as presented by this film.

Gladiator

On the other hand, the film Gladiator is the opposite of what is seen in Spartacus. Instead, Gladiator presents a strong sense of appreciating a simple life. It shows the character Maximus who longs to go back to his countryside home in Spain home and live on his farm. Ridley Scott shows his wish to return to their humble grounds of agrarian lives that were lived by their founding fathers. The portrayal of Maximus as a farming hero can be argued to be a push by the filmmakers to urge the Americans to return to their agrarian beginnings.

The opening scene of this movie begins with a cool narrative about the Roman Empire, which is fused with calm and serene music, which sets the minds of the viewers at peace. The colored lightings in this scene, which incorporate gold, are used to represent not only Roman Empire wealth but also acts as a representative of order. In this scene, the sounds of playing children can be heard, which is also a representation of a peaceful environment.

The idea of violence is condemned and de-glorified in this movie as opposed to Spartacus; for instance, Maximus fights against Commodus as well as the evils committed by the Roman Empire. Maximus takes the responsibility of stopping horrific killings committed by the empire against his family. Maximus is not only committed to stopping these evils but also to restore roman to order. According to Wilson & Connery (2007), Maximus is seeking to redeem the public and revenge against the tyranny power morally.

The comparison of the two films, therefore, show two different ways in which violence has been treated during the peaceful and turbulent times. Violence dominates in the films produced during the periods of war and violence. On the other hand, movies of the peaceful times embrace peace and condemn the actions of violence.