

Forts, Palaces and History

Sent: Wednesday, November 29, 2017 1:43 PM

From: **shashwat shukla** <shashwat80@gmail.com>

Dear Lousie,

Thanks for all the wonderful posts. I would like to bring to the awareness of our members some recent news events in India regarding a film which is based on a famous queen¹. The film is in controversy because of the portrayal of the queen in the movie is not in sync with the legends that are famous in the region where the film is based. This region is that state of Rajasthan in India which is famous for its forts, palaces and cultural heritage. The name of the movie is Padmavati, the story is of the queen Padmini, and the place of where this legend unfolded is Chitorgarh Fort.²

I don't intend to look at the controversy surrounding the whole movie neither is this a news bulletin about current happenings taking place in India. This event is rather a great episode of meaning creation, its context and the sheer beauty of how an event which took place 700 years ago can evoke strong emotions. I don't intend to see this as a case of symbols and their emotional response or behavior based on some beliefs. That would be to capture the episode as a photograph and not as a painting.

Rollo May has written about the sense of history and its importance in personal meaning creation. It is this sense of history which to me is the focal point as an existential scholar. What is this sense of history? One of the answers to this question tends to get built by the elements

of the event. It is the continuity in terms of culture which allows you to connect with the queen. It is the tragic background which makes one poignant, and feel the pain as it would have been there and then in the here and now. It is the merging of visuals of battle, fort and customs which give a surreal feeling.

The event allows so many people to have that sense of history and feel the moment of deep awe who otherwise lack this sense of history. Thus the sense of history may be to deeply feel a historical event and being able to come very close to it. It needs some knowledge about the place and event but it goes beyond that to see the connect of the past and the present and provides a deep intimacy with the self, the place and the time. Such experiences allow us to realize our humanness and aliveness and can be very fulfilling.

Regards,

Shashwat

1. <http://www.timesnownews.com/india/video/padmavati-maharashtra-mulling-ban-padmavati-row-sanjay-leela-bhansali-devendra-fadnavis-deepika-padukone-padmavati-controversy/129948>

2. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chittor_Fort

Sent: Thursday, November 30, 2017 9:14 PM

From: Kiran Kumar Salagame <kikus@gmail.com>

Dear Shashwat and Louise,

As an Indian being aware of the current controversy surrounding the subject I appreciate the brief analysis based on the insights from Existentialism.

But I failed to understand the purpose of this mail in this group because neither it provides an exhaustive understanding of the complex scenario nor it provides a solution. There are many dimensions to the current controversy surrounding Padmavati movie and the write up just highlights what is obvious to an Indian.

Will Shashwat make an attempt in this direction and get into deeper exploration?

Kiran Kumar, Mysuru

From shashwat shukla <shashwat80@gmail.com>

Dear Kiran,

I appreciate your interest in the article and what you say as "obvious". However as per the existentialism traditions it is the obvious which we have to reach (refer <https://web.sonoma.edu/users/d/daniels/gestaltthumbnail.html>). Secondly this post is an attempt to invite the readers to further explore, think reflexively about the whole issue from their perspective. The attempt is an invitation to experience awe which can happen if the self is in action. This was not intended as an insight oriented write up. Finally not all the members are Indians. Though I appreciate your point of view but a post has its limitations in terms of words and depth

regards,

Shashwat

From: **Kiran Kumar Salagame**

Dear Shashwat,

Thanks for the reply. Agreed. Perhaps, being an expert in Existential Psychology, you should get into greater depth and make your analysis more useful academically and also help in solving the conflicting situation in our country to the extent possible. That was the intention of my response.

With regards