

- - [HELLION FOR HIRE 22: ALL GREEK EDITION](http://forum.newsarama.com/showthread.php?t=105349)

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MattBrady

03-16-2007 12:08 PM

HELLION FOR HIRE 22: ALL GREEK EDITION

by *Billy Tucci*

This column would have been completed over the weekend, but I wanted to avoid all the "Captain America Hype" that's been going on. I guess I'm the only one who noticed that **Mighty Avengers #1** came out last week as well – Frank Cho did one amazing job! Too bad this gorgeous-looking book seems forgotten amid all of last week's marvelous mad "Cap". Plus I wanted to see *300* and offer my thoughts on the film and the comic book itself.

I actually started the column at 36,000 feet above the earth while traveling a smart 526 mph in a super sweet Boeing 767. This is why the it might read like it was written in two parts, but without further ado, let's get on with it as I've got a script to write and three commissions before I head out to the Wizard World Los Angeles show in the morning.



On our way to Greece – and a boatload of wife-trouble!

Ten years ago I had the opportunity to go to Greece for a vacation, but unfortunately, I was too busy (or more honestly, too *stupid*) to find the time. It has been one of my greatest regrets, but that all changed last week when my wife Deborah and I made it to New York's JFK Airport without a minute to spare. We blew through customs, even though I had an Exacto knife in my carry-on (oops!) and settled in for a nice 8 hour and 40 minute flight to Athens.

Listening to several passengers and the flight attendants speaking Greek brought back lots of fond memories and the time I was engaged to marry a beautiful Jersey girl who was born in Crete. Little did I know that I was starting down the primrose path of destruction with my also-beautiful, but oh so pissed off, WIFE!

Actually, I *should* have known I'd get in trouble, but that's what's so wonderful about ignorance being bliss -- one part of your brain doesn't realize it, while the other doesn't really give two sh#ts. All I cared about was that I was on my way to Greece with my darling (who was already starting to simmer) and was going to experience the cradle of Democracy, Thermopylae and the last stand of Leonidas' 300!

The flight was just fine and even though I couldn't sleep (never can on planes) was

pretty jazzed about finally being in country – and that’s where I started to slip and get looks from my very pretty little green-eyed monster. In my defense, (if I really have any) I promise I tried not to do it, but couldn’t help myself. For you see, I can speak Greek. Not much mind-you, perhaps 100 words or so (or just enough to make a Greek cringe) but definitely enough to get a size-6 1/2 high-heel to the head. I love the language and find it easy to pick up, but hadn’t spoken a word of it in 10 years (at least not with Deb around). I was pleasantly surprised just how quickly it all came back to me and just how much I had learned. But I was dismayed when my excuse that “When in Rome…” didn’t hold much water with the wife being that we were in Athens. So what started with a simple *Kalimera* (Good Morning), somehow led to me introducing myself as “Vasili” (“VASILI?”) and an extreme case of diarrhea of the mouth which was to much delight from our new Athenian friends and much head trauma from Deb’s shoes!

So enough of my little rant (at least for now) about how stupid a husband who has everything can be and let’s get onto the subject of comics, films and one of the best convention experiences of my life!



Comicon, Athens – The Greatest “Little” Convention in the World!

The con was held at the Hellenic-American Union, a non-profit institution and Hall that focuses on Greek-US relations, projects, political affairs and education. Its awesome café also had the best con food I’ve ever experienced by far! Everyone in attendance was very nice and they made the two-day event very enjoyable. The show ran from about noon to 10pm on Saturday and Sunday, and even though we weren’t used to such long hours, the time blew by. It was a good thing too, as no one in Athens goes out for dinner until at least 10pm on the weekends anyhow!

Our small US /UK guest contingent all got along famously and wondered at the spectacle that was Athens. I had the opportunity to hang out with my pal Scott Lobdell. It’s been 10 years since we’ve actually spent any real time together and as always, it was a thrill since he is one of the funniest and most creative chaps I’ve ever met. Scott’s also written some of the best comics I’ve ever read and has embarked on a very successful screenwriting career with several TV shows presently in production and films (“Man of the House” being the most recent), but he misses comic books and has several things lined up -- of which I’m not allowed to speak of. Also around for some wine and ouzo were Andrew (Transformers) and Leslie Wildman, Fantagraphics’s Gary Groth and Paige Braddock, Creative Director for *Peanuts* licensing worldwide and creator of the Eisner Nominated comic book, *Jane’s World*. Andrew has a wonderful charity “Draw The World Together,” an organization that provides healthcare and education for children living in Third World Nations. All the artists in attendance had a blast illustrating special covers for the charity that raised quite a bit of money for DTWT. For more information on Draw the World

Together please visit www.drawtheworldtogether.com

We also had the pleasure of spending time with Jean Schulz, President of the Charles M. Schulz Museum and “Sparky” Schulz’s widow. Jean is a marvel of a person. She holds a PhD, a commercial pilot’s license and is also a former tennis champ. She and Deb got along like peas and carrots and when Jean wasn’t paying for *everything*, she shared great stories of Sparky, his creative process and overall motherly advice to us all!

Our hotel had an awesome rooftop restaurant and I’ll never forget sharing a drink and conversation on comics with these fine people while experiencing a lunar eclipse by the light of the Acropolis.



Speaking of the Acropolis, we all went there on Monday (thank you Jean for paying *again*) to marvel at this incredible piece of history. Some of you might know just why the Parthenon is its present ruinous shape. It’s not because of time or earthquakes but the fact that on September 28, 1687, the marble treasure was blown to smithereens by a Venetian cannon bombardment. It seems that the Turks actually used their “peaceful Mosque” as an ammunition dump as well and thank goodness they don’t do such things today. Regardless, it was still one of the most exciting (and dare I say “spiritual”) experiences of my life and one that everyone should see before they die –seriously!

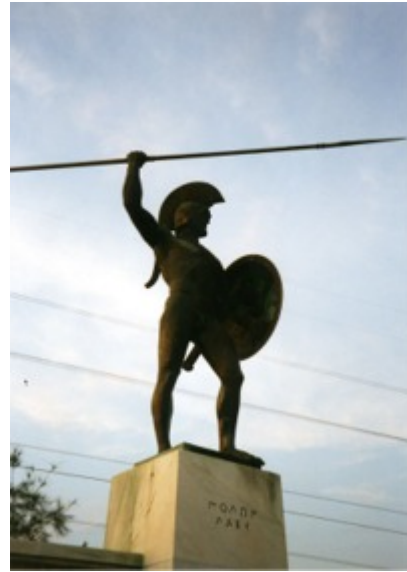
For all North Americans looking to attend a great show abroad next year and could be coupled with a vacation, I *highly* recommend getting in touch with the fine folks over at Comicdom (<http://www.comicdom.gr/convention>). Led by indefatigable Dimitris Potamianos, a Professor at Panteion University and the incredibly lovely and brilliant PhD researcher Lida Tsene also of Panteion University, the convention (run entirely by volunteers) went off without a hitch. They continuously kept asking if there was anything we needed and I am deeply honored to now call them all friends (or *filos*)! Any pros interested should email Scott Lamky at sll01@comcast.net.

The most endearing part of the show however was to learn that the promoters and staff don’t charge any admission and don’t make one dime from the show. They do it for the love of comic books and wanting a place for comic fans from all of Greece to gather once a year.

My special thanks to my buddy Scott Lamky who along with our new friends Stavros Avgenakis and beautiful fiancée’ Vasiliki was really responsible for bringing Deb and I over for an experience we’ll never forget.

Onto Thermopylae – and the Disappointment of a Lifetime!

All my life I've dreamt of going to Thermopylae. To be honest there isn't any other place I want to see first. It was always Thermopylae first, Normandy second. Since childhood I've been obsessed with the battle that took place August 11-13th (calculated to today's calendar) 480 BC. What made it more intriguing to an 11 year-old kid from Long Island, NY was the fact that the last of the 300 Spartans fell on his birthday. Now, almost 30 years later, everything was finally coming together. We did the Con on the weekend, saw the Acropolis and greater Athens on Monday, rented a car Monday night and was all ready to head the 2 1/2 hours north Tuesday morning when suddenly all roads to this hallowed ground were *closed*. Apparently the Government screwed over their fellow countrymen and now the farmers had put on a general strike. There was no way to get anywhere near or even around it. Deb, (who had no desire to go in the first place) was really sad for me and the fact that my life-long dream of standing in the footsteps of my heroes wasn't going to happen. I know I'll return to Greece and will see the statue of Leonidas someday, but not in 2007. Scott, Stavros and Vasiliki did come to the rescue and we all enjoyed a great day in Athens shopping, eating, drinking and sightseeing.



I guess I'll never know why the Greeks went to war with Troy over Helen, because I gotta tell you, that country gives the world the most beautiful women I've ever seen in my life. I had a lot of fun asking the guys from various parts of Greece just what region produced the most hotties (especially in front of their girl friends), but the consensus seems that they hail Crete, (I won't argue) but as several of the guys informed me the Cretan women apparently "all know this." My friend Pauline, who is Spartan, Macedonian and a beauty herself will digress – and being from Sparta, it really isn't smart to disagree with her – especially if you value your life!

Overall, Deborah and I got to share some wonderful R&R with each other for the first time in long time and though it was sad to leave our new friends and this amazing country I hold so close to my heart behind, it was great being back to our boys whom we miss very, very much. But my head still aches from her shoe!

300 - One Huge Victory for Comics and us all!

Let's be honest, aside from Cap getting whacked, the real talk of the industry is obviously the film adaptation of Frank Miller and Lynn Varley's *300*. A few months ago, I was having lunch with my dear friend Heidi MacDonald. She had just seen an advanced screening of *300* and wasn't sure how she felt about the film. Now if you place two people on opposite ends of the political spectrum that would be Heidi and I. Even though I think she's nuts we *still* love each other and always have a great time together. So (and I quote my dear friend) Heidi proclaims that "you would love it," for as one critic put it, the film is "a Fascist's dream." The critic's statement has since been repeated by many of his peers, but I don't see the connection. What does defending your homes, ideals and family have anything to do with Fascism? It doesn't. The simple fact of the matter is that the entire army of the Xerxes' Persian empire invaded Greece with a force that comprised of Libyan, Egyptian, Ethiopian, Babylonian, Chaldean, Phoenician, Syrian, Assyrian, Palestinian, Armenian, Cilician, Cappadocian, Thracian, Parthian, Bactrian, Caspian, and even Indian warrior/slaves. An army of over 2 million men -- more men than in all of Greece for God Sakes!



Leonidas saw the danger, and knew of the coming the destruction, so he gathered a force of 300 Spartans and several hundred Thespians and, as most of the city-states' politicians were busy debating whether or not to surrender, led them north to imminent slaughter but more importantly, *immortality* at the "Gates of Hell." For it was to honor the sacrifice of this tiny fellowship that all of Greece mobilized and as I believe, saved the world. The war would continue for another year, but the battle cry of "no retreat, no surrender" pushed the now united Greeks to win the naval battle of Salamis and (as seen at film's end) the ultimate defeat of Xerxes' Army at Plataea, which was again led by the Spartans.

Now imagine if all of Greece had fallen to Xerxes in 480 BC. Imagine the destruction of all Greek culture, their ideals and their way of life. There would never be an Alexander, or a Roman Empire either wouldn't there? I'm a Christian and strong in my faith, but wonder that if there were no Roman Empire, is it fair to say there would be no Jesus Christ, at least as we know him today? I know that's a lot to swallow, but it is a theory. At least one can surely argue that there would be no democracy. Remember, Xerxes was a king who sacked, pillaged and destroyed all native culture to the lands he conquered. So is it possible that had Leonidas stayed behind and the Greeks surrendered, that there would be no United States of America? If so and I don't care how you feel about the US one way or another, I dare you to name one nation that has done more for greater-good of mankind.

That is why the film is breaking box-office records around the world – people do

believe in the fighting oppression, conquest and slavery. Scott Lamky had the incredible opportunity to see the film premiere in Athens where the entire theatre repeatedly cheered out loud at all the great historical quotes ("Spartan, come back with your shield... Or on it!") and the courage laid down by their forefathers. Man I wish I were there to experience that!

And so I believe that *all* comics owe a great debt to Leonidas' Spartans. I know some of you might wish there never was a Shi, or even this column, but what about Superman? Mutants? Wonder Woman, Spider-man? Heaven forbid but there'd be no Jack Kirby, Stan Lee, Robert Crumb or even Beau Smith!

So you see, aside from proving to Hollywood, that you don't need to change something great or big "stars" to have a successful movie, *300* is much, much more. Leonidas didn't just save the real world, but the fantasy as well and I want to send a heartfelt thank you to Mr. Miller and Ms. Varley for giving us a beautiful book that not only heralds the greatest last stand in history, but one that should make us all think of just how much we truly owe those immortal few.

Well I've got to get back to the drawing board and finish **Fallen Angel #17** and prepare my questions for next week's guest interviewees Peter David and Darren Davis and to keep the whole ball rolling on *300* we'll showcase a true Spartan living among us today!

So, until next week, *Molon Lavae* – Come and Get Them!

joshdahl

03-16-2007 12:21 PM

Wow, it is too bad you didn't make it out to Thermopolis (as it is now called). I visited there a few years ago and it was just breath-taking. I can honestly say it was the single strangest environment I have ever seen....much less stood in.

We were there on a very dreary and gray day, and you could see the steam rising up off of the hot spring water as it wound its way down the steep hillside. Then, when the water made its way to our level, it was crystal clear and the bottom was covered with radiant green algae. And, man, that was just the start of it.

If you want, I will find a link to my Livejournal form then so you can read about it and see some pictures.

Josh Dahl

The Guvnor

03-16-2007 12:39 PM

Great column again Billy, thanks. Glad to hear you had a cracking time in Greece, it's one of the places I want to visit someday as it just seems to be full of history and interesting sights and places to see. Personally I can't wait to see *300*, I've heard nothing but good reviews about it.

TonyBedard

03-16-2007 12:41 PM

"Remember, Xerxes was a king who sacked, pillaged and destroyed all native culture to the lands he conquered."

Billy, I don't think that's quite right. A quick check of wikipedia reveals that "The Persians allowed local cultures to survive, following the precedent set by Cyrus the Great. This was not only good for the empire's subjects, but ultimately benefited the Achaemenids, since the conquered peoples felt no need to revolt."

Yeah, wikipedia isn't exactly holy writ, but the fact that most of the conquered peoples you listed survived the Persian empire as distinct cultures is evidence that their native culture was not destroyed by Xerxes or his predecessors.

It's also useful to remember that Spartan ideas of personal freedom bore little resemblance to the modern American concept. Spartans lived for their state, their families culled and separated for the sake of the state, their individual identities suppressed to the extent that only soldiers who died in battle or mothers who died in childbirth were allowed to have their name on their gravestone. This slavish devotion of one's life to the state certainly bears closer resemblance to Fascism than to our way of life.

That said, I'm still itchin to see these guys chop each other to bits. That's entertainment!

PS, Billy: I'd rather take on Xerxes army than piss off Debbie!

Your Commie Pal,

Tony B. ;)

ANGELDOGGIE

03-16-2007 12:51 PM

Awesome history lesson Billy! This sounds like a future vacation for me and the wife. To couple it with a comic convention would be a thrill. (perhaps with my brother and his wife) Glad you and your wife had a great time and made it back to the states safe and sound! Keep up the good work. By the way the sketch with coloring looks beautiful.....this is a great style that really showcases your talent.....I like it :D :D

theodoros2

03-16-2007 01:00 PM

Bill Tucci, thank you for making this convention great. That permanent smile makes you one of the warmest persons I met. Are you sure you are not Greek?

The fields of Thermopylae are very different now. They don't look like they used to be 2500 years ago. The field has been widening, due to the river's mouth on the sea. But still it makes it a place to bring chills.

About the war in Troy, Agamemnon tried to unite the Greek cities, and so he used this opportunity to become king among kings (it's part mythology part history, for the ancient Greeks these books were the actual history). Just like king Arthur tried to unite G. Brittan, like the German miniature states were united as a nation in the 18th century, the Italian states in the same century et cetera...

Some historians support the idea that the Greeks were just interested in controlling Bosphorus, so that trading with the people in that particular sea could be easier.

The best thing is that Iliad, the ancient book about the events of Troy, is one very objective book. The writer, Homer, does not support the Greeks or the Trojans. He just presents the "facts".

I said enough. You see, due to my very ex-girlfriend who happened to be historian I know a lot about these things.

There was another movie about the 300 Spartans. It was made in 1967 I think, here in the Greek fields. The Greek army helped making it. My father was one of the 300 soldiers that played on the film. He could never find which one!

Thank you again for the memories.

AraqnidM

03-16-2007 01:09 PM

I'm glad to hear that you liked 300. I think it was incredible; I've seen it 3 times already. That's like 900 spartans. Really, it's like 90,000 abdominal muscles.

The movie I don't think is a Fascist's dream as much as a Patriot's dream, especially in this day and age, where our next war may very well be fought against the descendents of Xerxes' empire.

But I thought the movie held more value to me, a pacifist, as just a really good epic war movie with breakthrough special effects and actors whose skill and passion perpetuated the illusion of the drama so well that I had no idea that they were really just walking around on a green sound stage somewhere. It was good as an adult fable, a war film, a tribute to history, and just an all around well done movie.

Instead of letting the overtly patriotic themes turn me off to the movie, I just appreciated the art for what it was and let it be. I don't mind people being patriotic as long as it isn't done with the intentions of dividing people or conforming to authority. Captain America is one of my favorite heroes for that very reason.

I don't believe that the movie was done as propaganda, I think it's just another comic book adaptation, like V for Vendetta or Sin City.

ANGELDOGGIE

03-16-2007 01:12 PM

Quote:

Originally Posted by **theodoros2**

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Thank you again for the memories.

WOW!!!! Two history lessons!!! Absolutely no sarcasm intended, I am REALLY glad that I got on to Newsarama before heading off to work this afternoon!!!
Theodoros2...you know your stuff!!! You and Billy must be history buffs of a high degree!!! Well done both of you!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!:D :D :D

theodoros2

03-16-2007 01:14 PM

Tony Bedard is partly right. The Spartans had nothing to do with Democracy. The Athenians did. Then again it was more than an introduction of the idea of Democracy. Nothing to compare with the 21 century Democracy.

Xerxes was planning to invade Greece 2 years before the events of Thermopylae. He was delayed due to the revolution of the Egyptians. He stopped them, enslaved them with an iron fist. He was so cruel to the other nations that he was well known of his insanity.

theodoros2

03-16-2007 01:15 PM

Quote:

Originally Posted by **ANGELDOGGIE**

WOW!!!! Two history lessons!!! Absolutely no sarcasm intended, I am REALLY glad that I got on to Newsarama before heading off to work this afternoon!!!

Theodoros2...you know your stuff!!! You and Billy must be history buffs of a high degree!!! Well done both of you!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!:D :D :D

Thank you very much!! You know, "having historian girlfriend"

RichJohnston

03-16-2007 01:18 PM

Turkey and Greece are wonderful countries to visit, couldn't choose between them...

Saw the film at the UK premiere last night and will talk about it on LITG. There are definitely fascist overtones around using the iconography and pornography of violence, and the glorious death. But it's a lot more complex than that, and it preserves the complexity of the graphic novel.

Certainly for anyone trying to present it as pure American jingoism, using the freedom and justice buzzwords, take another look. A foreign league of nations invading a small country using the latest technology against a fierce band of soldiers who gives their lives to make such an invasion as difficult as possible... well...

More on Monday.

longshot7

03-16-2007 01:47 PM

good column, but man was 300 boring.

iyamwhatiyam

03-16-2007 02:05 PM

Sparta was in no way, shape or form a proponent of democracy. Even Athens' democracy only applied to the people they considered citizens...male Athenian landowners. Everybody else wasn't a citizen. And both societies wouldn't were based on the exploitation of their slave class. The only defenses you can give on behalf of their slavery is that everybody in the ancient world practiced it, and it wasn't based on race.

I say these things as a Greek who has grown up on Greek history (as well as the occasional nationalistic propaganda). Part of my family traces back to a Maniot town in what was Spartan land. The other part is Macedonian.

The glorification of Sparta through the ages is ridiculous. They were a totalitarian, fundamentalist regime that performed mass slavery and murder. They were sexually disfunctional. They were also the world's greatest warriors, sure. But let's put things in perspective...defenders of freedom they were not, unless it was the

freedom of their own ruling class to keep on operating as a ruling class. Yes, women were able to grow up exercising naked along the men so they could be strong in order to birth stronger boys. But there is absolutely no proof that they were truly influenced Spartan policy any more than their Athenian counterparts, who had to stay closed inside their houses because of the insecurity of Athenian men.

The fact is that the naval battle of Salamis, where the Athenians drew the massively greater Persian forces into a tiny straight then turned and decimated them, was far more integral to driving Persia out of Greece. But to the Romans and then the medieval Europeans, that wasn't as glorious as dying in land combat like the 300 did, so guess which one was mythologized? Despite the fact that they had almost no ships of their own, the Spartans' arrogance meant that they demanded to have a general in charge of this naval battle as well. Thankfully, Themistocles, an Athenian, fought down Spartan demands to fight the battle elsewhere and kept it at Salamis. He even stayed calm through Spartan threats to injure him, which puts the lie to 300 the movie's claims that all the non-Spartans were half-wit cowards when it came to war.

If any one leader in Greece was responsible for the defeat of Persia, it was Themistocles, who was definitely a greater leader for his people than Leonidas for his. Themistocles decided to blow the Athenian bank on a fleet of ships, which was strongly argued against. He even used subterfuge via spies to fool Xerxes into thinking the Greeks were doing things they weren't, keeping the Persians on track at Salamis. He was, more than any other single guy, The Man in Ancient Greece vs. Persia II.

Lest anyone think that this was "just naval warfare" and thus not necessitating the same bravery as Thermopylae, remember that the Greek tactic was to ram the Persian ships, at which point the Greek marines/hoplites would jump aboard and fight hand to hand. Only they had to face drowning on top of everything else.

The only Persian general who Xerxes considered to have done a decent job at all was actually a Greek and a woman, Queen Artemisia of Hellicarnassus, who took down nine Athenian ships with her own.

And then Plataea, bringing together forces from across the Greek states (and I just need to point out that none of the city states believed in any kind of greater Greece), drove the nail into the coffin. The Elgin Marbles, currently in the British Museum where they were placed after being stolen, actually graphically record the Athenians who fell in that battle. It's worth noting that even at Plataea, Xerxes had already fled back to Persia with much of his forces, leaving a general.

The actual Spartan breakdown at Plataea was only 5,000 Spartiates. There were another 5,000 perioeci (free, non-citizens who importantly fulfilled many non-soldier professions in Spartan society) and then 35,000 helots, who were slaves. The Spartans get the rep, but their slaves and servants did much of their fighting. That never gets mentioned.

As for the Comic-Con, glad it was so good. I think that there a far better comic expo in Athens, however, in the form of the annual Babel Festival at the gorgeous Gazi cultural center every September. Small, free and full of incredible comics, guest

artists and live bands. Plus, Babel is one of the two longest-continuously-printed periodicals in Greece. Great stuff all around. September is also a much nicer time to visit Greece than early March.

johnchrist

03-16-2007 02:11 PM

Greece is definitely top 5 in my travel list.

I think it goes as such: Rome, Greece, Turkey (Troy's ruins), Alaska, and New Zealand, + Tokyo for honorable mention. (Egypt and Israel would be there too but I'm in no mood to get shot)

It's real shame missing Thermopylae, I'd be bummed too, because in my case any trip to Greece will prob be a once in a life time (though I'm taking a second trip to Munich for a lil festival in October)

About the "politics of 300;" first of all, I just loved that movie and can't wait to own it, secondly, maybe I am a poor excuse for a liberal but I was right behind them the whole way. But then, I guess I am a crappy liberal, hell the only reason I support the Democrats (I'm registered as a Libertarian) is because I support right to privacy, freedom of thought, freedom of religion, due process, and nonviolent solutions to our problems (to paraphrase Steinbeck : It is true that man is a rational creature and war is the failure of that rationale) Pretty much, the Spartans were fighting for all but that last one, and really, there wasn't much choice in that situation, unlike in ours.

jaredgood1

03-16-2007 02:19 PM

All 300 is...

is a leftist propaganda piece designed to embolden Iraqi insurgents and weaken the resolve of the American people. Think about it. A small group of people using their environment in an attempt to fend off a large and better equipped army that runs on money and defends sexual debauchery. A small group of people who's sacrifice serves as a wake-up call that the larger army is not invincible and can be defeated when others unite to defeat it.

Do I actually believe that? Not in the slightest. However, it does show that you can interpret the movie in any number of ways.

johnchrist

03-16-2007 02:33 PM

Quote:

Originally Posted by **jaredgood1**

Do I actually believe that? Not in the slightest. However, it does show that you can interpret the movie in any number of ways.

Heh yeah, and there's always that deal about the movie being derived from a comic based in many respects from fantasy and less from fact that comes to play I

supposed :)

jaredgood1

03-16-2007 02:53 PM

Quote:

Originally Posted by **johnchrist**

Heh yeah, and there's always that deal about the movie being derived from a comic based in many respects from fantasy and less from fact that comes to play I supposed :)

You mean a movie derived from a book derived from a book derived from a historical anecdotes derived from oral tradition? The whole hub-bub about "what the movie means" is just silly. It's a fun action movie that looks pretty, but that's about all it has going for it.

Billy Tucci

03-16-2007 03:02 PM

Quote:

Originally Posted by **jaredgood1**

is a leftist propaganda piece designed to embolden Iraqi insurgents and weaken the resolve of the American people. Think about it. A small group of people using their environment in an attempt to fend off a large and better equipped army that runs on money and defends sexual debauchery. A small group of people who's sacrifice serves as a wake-up call that the larger army is not invincible and can be defeated when others unite to defeat it.

Do I actually believe that? Not in the slightest. However, it does show that you can interpret the movie in any number of ways.

So true!

Now I've got to read all these posts...

johnchrist

03-16-2007 03:07 PM

Quote:

Originally Posted by **jaredgood1**

It's a fun action movie that looks pretty, but that's about all it has going for it.

Ahem, you forgot the hot naked chicks, sir. ;)

iyamwhatiyam

03-16-2007 03:27 PM

Quote:

Originally Posted by **johnchrist**
Ahem, you forgot the hot naked chicks, sir. ;)

Dude, I hate to break it to you, and I can kinda understand the confusion due to the long hair and the leather g-strings, but **those weren't chicks!**;))

Billy Tucci

03-16-2007 03:33 PM

A formal apology to Dimitri Sakaridis --

I don't know how I left you out good sir for all your work. In trying to get the correct spelling of names I must have cut and pasted Mr. Potamianos' name and credentials instead of yours. I'm so, so sorry and appreciate all that you did for me!

Again, much apologies,
Billy

johnchrist

03-16-2007 04:12 PM

Quote:

Originally Posted by **iyamwhatiyam**
*Dude, I hate to break it to you, and I can kinda understand the confusion due to the long hair and the leather g-strings, but **those weren't chicks!**;))*

Wha?! Wha... Aaa.. Aaaaah man!

Ares

03-16-2007 04:23 PM

Where can we get those 300 posters in Greek..

I need one.

Can someone PM Me the Info

kikuchiyo

03-16-2007 05:57 PM

Great column once again Billy. It is too bad that things didn't go as planned, but am happy for you to know that the convention was a success and that you no doubt will

go back to live your dream. It is amazing that you can translate into written word the excitement that you experienced. I feel as if I'm in your booth and you're just going on about your trip. I hope your head gets better soon :D , and that you buy Debra something nice for putting up with you.

I, myself, enjoyed 300 immensely, though I had to sit in the second row when I saw it. I will definately wear out the DVD when it comes out. The success of 300 kinda opens up the possibility of a Shi movie with a not so well known star in Shi's role.

reth

03-16-2007 06:03 PM

Yassou Vassili Tucci!

great report from our country, I'm from Rethimno of Crete and I invite you to visit the island whenever you like. You'll love it!

Keep up the good work :cool:

All times are GMT -4. The time now is 04:40 PM.

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(<http://forum.newsarama.com/showthread.php?t=105349>)

slI01

03-16-2007 06:10 PM

Well I must say I have to Agree with Billy this has to be the best convention I have ever been to. It was very special for me In a lot of different ways. I had the greatest time And the people that put the convention on are the best. A big thank you from me.

Now about the movie I was invited to attend the Greek premier of 300 in Athens with a large group of comic book and gaming fans. To say they were excited about the movie would be an understatement. There was so much pride floating around the place. It was very cool to feel all the energy that was there. It was truly electrifying.

The point of the movie where the Persians told the Spartans to put down their weapons and King Leonidas told them to come and get them. Wow the ROAR that was let out shook the floor of the theater. This was a really cool way to bring my trip to an end.

sll01

03-16-2007 06:14 PM

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Ares**

Where can we get those 300 posters in Greek..

I need one.

Can someone PM Me the Info

those posters were at the convention so my guess the best place to find one would be on Ebay do a search for 300 - poster - Greek and you will find them.

BlackCatGuy

03-16-2007 06:17 PM

Hey Billy! Well it sounds like Greece was a blast! I'm sorry to hear that you couldn't make it to Thermopylae, but since it is one of your lifelong dreams, I'm sure you'll get there! I was going to go to Greece while I was stationed in England, but because of my security clearance, I was not allowed to go! I'll get there someday (along with Egypt and Italy)!

Enjoy L.A.! And, if you need it, I have a Korean War era Army steel helmet you can borrow! Great for protecting one's head from women's footwear!:rolleyes:

The Good Doctor

03-16-2007 07:26 PM

Fascism and 300

"What does defending your homes, ideals and family have anything to do with Fascism? It doesn't. "

You're telling me you can't imagine a single Italian during WW2 who both support fascism AND fighting for his family, for honor, and his home?

A single member of Nazi Germany who fought during WW2 who performed similarly?

Or how about a white police officer during the Jim Crow South who is fighting for southern independence, for freedom, AND for white supremacy?

Not only is it possible to fight for the side of fascism/racism and still support a whole

range of ideals that we value, PEOPLE DO THIS ROUTINELY.

You and your loved one may disagree on a whole bunch of things. But here I think it very likely that your loved one is right. I don't use the term that often, but fascism was the first word I thought of when I saw the genetically/racially pure Spartan army fight for the right to kill newborn children in their pursuit of purity against the impure Persians.

I'm glad you had a chance to go to Greece, and didn't feel as if the movie was a waste of time. But before you throw out your partner's claims...check them out carefully.

Billy Tucci

03-16-2007 07:37 PM

Quote:

Originally Posted by **kikuchiyo**

Great column once again Billy. It is too bad that things didn't go as planned, but am happy for you to know that the convention was a success and that you no doubt will go back to live your dream. It is amazing that you can translate into written word the excitement that you experienced. I feel as if I'm in your booth and you're just going on about your trip. I hope your head gets better soon :D , and that you buy Debra something nice for putting up with you.

I, myself, enjoyed 300 immensely, though I had to sit in the second row when I saw it. I will definitely wear out the DVD when it comes out. The success of 300 kinda opens up the possibility of a Shi movie with a not so well known star in Shi's role.

Thank you Kiki,

And yes, I can't wait to meet with Shi film producer Mimi Gitlin in L.A. for our Monday meeting. I've got lots of new ammunition now!

Billy Tucci

03-16-2007 07:39 PM

Quote:

Originally Posted by **reth**

Yassou Vassili Tucci!

great report from our country, I'm from Rethimno of Crete and I invite you to visit the island whenever you like. You'll love it!

Keep up the good work :cool:

Efcharisto Rethi!

I can't wait to come back. Again I must apologize to the cons true organizers and

directors Dimitris Sakaridis and Elias Katirtzigianoglou!

B

JLAJRC

03-16-2007 07:41 PM

I liked 300, but didn't love it. Yea, the special effects, costumes, and fights were cool. But for some reason I just didn't feel the connection to it like many people seem to have with it.

Billy Tucci

03-16-2007 07:44 PM

Quote:

Originally Posted by **The Good Doctor**

"What does defending your homes, ideals and family have anything to do with Fascism? It doesn't. "

You're telling me you can't imagine a single Italian during WW2 who both support fascism AND fighting for his family, for honor, and his home?

A single member of Nazi Germany who fought during WW2 who performed similarly?

Or how about a white police officer during the Jim Crow South who is fighting for southern independence, for freedom, AND for white supremacy?

Not only is it possible to fight for the side of fascism/racism and still support a whole range of ideals that we value, PEOPLE DO THIS ROUTINELY.

You and your loved one may disagree on a whole bunch of things. But here I think it very likely that your loved one is right. I don't use the term that often, but fascism was the first word I thought of when I saw the genetically/racially pure Spartan army fight for the right to kill newborn children in their pursuit of purity against the impure Persians.

I'm glad you had a chance to go to Greece, and didn't feel as if the movie was a waste of time. But before you throw out your partner's claims...check them out carefully.

Of course Good Doctor, one can say that about the Communist Chinese and Soviets. It's a generalization that can be used to describe the Union soldiers during the American Civil War and the RAF pilots who won the Battle of Britain.

So should all freedom loving people pull a Neville Chamberlain and appease an aggressor?

Remember, the Spartans didn't invade Iran. It was the other way around.

And Heidi is wrong. She's always wrong but very nice so it's quite endearing.

The Skull

03-16-2007 08:18 PM

Quote:

Originally Posted by **RichJohnston**

Turkey and Greece are wonderful countries to visit, couldn't choose between them...

Saw the film at the UK premiere last night and will talk about it on LITG. There are definitely fascist overtones around using the iconography and pornography of violence, and the glorious death. But it's a lot more complex than that, and it preserves the complexity of the graphic novel.

Certainly for anyone trying to present it as pure American jingoism, using the freedom and justice buzzwords, take another look. A foreign league of nations invading a small country using the latest technology against a fierce band of soldiers who gives their lives to make such an invasion as difficult as possible... well...

More on Monday.

More what on Monday? America-bashing?

Why don't you keep your hatred of our country confined to your little gossip rag on CBR? It's just that man, I'm sick of you and Mark Millar's constant bashing of our little country that could--and did--detach ourselves from your hides 231 years ago.

Why not just stick to warming yourselves around your fireplaces, no doubt fuelled by American flags? We'll do just fine without you.

O O

III

Billy Tucci

03-16-2007 10:00 PM

Quote:

Originally Posted by **TonyBedard**

"Remember, Xerxes was a king who sacked, pillaged and destroyed all native culture to the lands he conquered."

Billy, I don't think that's quite right. A quick check of wikipedia reveals that "The Persians allowed local cultures to survive, following the precedent set by Cyrus the Great. This was not only good for the empire's subjects, but ultimately benefited the Achaemenids, since the conquered peoples felt no need to revolt."

Yeah, wikipedia isn't exactly holy writ, but the fact that most of the conquered peoples you listed survived the Persian empire as distinct cultures is evidence that their native culture was not destroyed by Xerxes or his predecessors.

It's also useful to remember that Spartan ideas of personal freedom bore little resemblance to the modern American concept. Spartans lived for their state, their families culled and separated for the sake of the state, their individual identities suppressed to the extent that only soldiers who died in battle or mothers who died in childbirth were allowed to have their name on their gravestone. This slavish devotion of one's life to the state certainly bears closer resemblance to Fascism than to our way of life.

That said, I'm still itchin to see these guys chop each other to bits. That's entertainment!

PS, Billy: I'd rather take on Xerxes army than piss off Debbie!

Your Commie Pal,

Tony B. ;)

Of course Tony, Xerxes was great guy (as is Hugo Chavez) and Sindbad died on Wednesday according to Wikipedia. As for ancient Spartans killing their babies, hey... no one is perfect. :)

Congrats on the great exclusive deal -- you're one terrific talent my friend!

But you are killing me!

AlextheGreek

03-16-2007 10:32 PM

Go, tell the Spartans, stranger passing by, That here, obedient to their laws, we lie

"Go, tell the Spartans, stranger passing by, That here, obedient to their laws, we lie."

Hey,

I was in Thermopylae in 1999. It was a dream of mine for years. So when I got a chance to finally go, I did. It was nice, but it was not what I expected. There is a big monument to the Spartans with a grand statue of King Leonidas on the top. A smaller(very must smaller) monument to the rest of the Greeks who died fighting there. And another monument with a plaque donated by Greek/Americans on the presumed spot where the 300 made there last stand. But, not much else. No guides

to walk you through the area; no markers where the battle took place; And nothing to really give you a picture of what took place where. You see, the whole landscape has change over the years. And not much is known as to the exact locations of the fighting. It was never documented back then nor has there been much excavation or anything to that nature up to date. There is only speculation to what and where things happened. For example, years ago, some arrow head were found and it was believed that was the spot of the last stand(from what I was told--and that is where the Greek/Americans laid there plaque) but that is only speculation. Also, Thermopylae is still used as a major thoroughfare. And a road runs right through the area. Which I didn't expect for one of the most historically significant places in history. It is not like a Gettysburgh, where one can see the exact locations of the battle. Or be instructed by a guide to take you step-by-step through the battlefield, etc. It was more like a really nice roadside attraction. And you really have to use your imagination to get a picture of what it was like. However, I am still glad I went. And even though it was not what I expected, I would (and will) go back again.

Lukecash

03-16-2007 10:47 PM

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Billy Tucci**

Of course Good Doctor, one can say that about the Communist Chinese and Soviets. It's a generalization that can be used to describe the Union soldiers during the American Civil War and the RAF pilots who won the Battle of Britain.

So should all freedom loving people pull a Neville Chamberlain and appease an agressor?

Remember, the Spartans didn't invade Iran. It was the other way around.

And Heidi is wrong. She's always wrong but very nice so it's quite endearing.

"History will be kind to me, because I will write it"-Wiston Churchill.

Neville Chamberlain gets a bum rap for a lot of things...especially for "appeasing" Hitler.

What many people don't realize is that the British Command told Chamberlain that England was in no shape to take on Hitler yet.

Chamberlain, realizing it was political suicide, bought Egnland some time to build up her forces. And to keep one thing in mind, Hitler TOTALLY hated the treaty.

Churchhill took advantage of this politically and used his writing to drag CHamberlains name through the mud.

That being said: Martyrs make potent symbols. Clearly a group of men who stood bravely against an vast force will be better remembered, especially if their deaths

were not in vain.

Korg

03-17-2007 05:31 AM

AMAZING! THANK YOU.

RichJohnston

03-17-2007 05:58 AM

Quote:

Originally Posted by **The Skull**
More what on Monday? America-bashing?

And when did you stop beating your wife?

Quote:

Originally Posted by **The Skull**
Why don't you keep your hatred of our country confined to your little gossip rag on CBR?

What hatred of your country? What are you on about?

Quote:

Originally Posted by **The Skull**
It's just that man, I'm sick of you and Mark Millar's constant bashing of our little country that could--and did--detach ourselves from your hides 231 years ago.

Millar loves America. So do I. What on earth are you talking about?

Quote:

Originally Posted by **The Skull**
Why not just stick to warming yourselves around your fireplaces, no doubt fuelled by American flags? We'll do just fine without you.

Gas central heating, mate.

What are you talking about? Where does this even come from?

handrios

03-17-2007 08:32 AM

Hey there Bill

I told you i read your column...

I must only agree with my fellow countrymen that enjoyed your company in our two day convention!.

As all the other people that have visited said Thermopiles is not something that you can exactly see what happened. Mr. Miller when he came experienced the exact same thing... (he told himself last year in San Diego) he had to imagine the whole thing.

I can only tell you that if you came another time... we can take you to the actual hot springs (mentioned from in another person that the Spartans bathe and relaxed during the breaks from the battle. Its a "special" feeling to wash or sit in that same spot that Leonidas and the 300 hundred men (fathers and first borns) from the noblest families of Sparta did the same.

On 300 the movie... i saw it two times already and going for a third. I fail to see where some people say that is a political propaganda. I read the comic and im glad that it was done in this way by Snyder and mr. Miller.

Anyway catch you in San Diego in a few months.

ohh did your nephew like your present? Regards to Deb.]

Andreas Pefanis.
Comicworld.gr

ootah

03-17-2007 11:05 AM

yeah, right, Leonidas was this paradigm of virtue, liberty and democracy. Only on your head and Miller's, buddy!

Spartans were cold-hearted s.o.b's that killed their own infants if they had deficiencies. Children were enlisted into the military at age seven. Hardly a role-model for democracy, the "free-world" or classic super-heroes, I think.

Then again looking at how superheroes are handled in current comic books... perhaps you are right, after all :rolleyes:

foolretailer

03-17-2007 02:16 PM

Great article Billy! I just want to say that it is very refreshing to see a comic creator who is not an America basher!

theodoros2

03-18-2007 11:21 AM

1. Democracy was an unknown word for Sparta. It was an unknown word for GREECE!! Only Athens used it (then again for less than 100 years) NOT in the way WE use it nowadays.

2. If someone parallels Sparta with USA or IRAQ or VIETNAM or KONGO or ANY OTHER COUNTRY is so pointless.

You have to parallel Sparta of 480 BC. only with Sparta of 480 BC.

3. Sometimes it's all Greek to many people...

RichJohnston

03-18-2007 03:07 PM

Quote:

Originally Posted by **foolretailer**

Great article Billy! I just want to say that it is very refreshing to see a comic creator who is not an America basher!

I can't think of a comics creator who IS an America basher.

Billy Tucci

03-18-2007 05:41 PM

Quote:

Originally Posted by **handrios**

Hey there Bill

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I must only agree with my fellow countrymen that enjoyed your company in our two day convention!

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Anyway catch you in San Diego in a few months.

ohh did your nephew like your present? Regards to Deb.]

*Andreas Pefanis.
Comicworld.gr*

Giassou Andreas!

Again, we had a great tme. My nephew LOVES the present and it's greatly appreciated. Of course "300" is just a film based on a comic book. The message should be clear to stand up for oneself, your family and way of life. Everyone can get something out of that. And yes I'll see you in San Diego.1

Billy Tucci

03-18-2007 05:44 PM

Quote:

Originally Posted by **theodoros2**

2. If someone parallels Sparta with USA or IRAQ or VIETNAM or KONGO or ANY OTHER COUNTRY is so pointless.

I hope I wasn't making any parallel to any countries or conflicts happening today. I guess I should go back and re-read it... I hope to get people talking with my columns and hope you all enjoy them. I know I love writing them!

theodoros2

03-18-2007 06:17 PM

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Billy Tucci**

I hope I wasn't making any parallel to any countries or conflicts happening today. I guess I should go back and re-read it... I hope to get people talking with my columns and hope you all enjoy them. I know I love writing them!

No, no!! Nothing like that was mentioned in **YOUR** coloumn! It was mentioned in few threads.

All times are GMT -4. The time now is 04:41 PM.

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