

Mangal pandey the indian movie essay sample

[Entertainment](#), [Movie](#)



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Plot

The movie Mangal Pandey is partly based on the story of an Indian soldier, Mangal Pandey, in the army of the British East India Company who is said to have initiated the Indian movement for independence from British rule with what is known as the Sepoy Mutiny of 1957. The British called their Indian soldiers 'sepoys'. The movie is however not a historical account by any means, and is embellished by many fictional characters and incidents to make it more attractive to viewers.

At the beginning, the movie portrays Mangal Pandey as a dedicated soldier in service of the British Empire. In the Afghan War, he saves the life of his British commanding officer Captain William Gordon, and they become good friends irrespective of their rank and race.

Things however go wrong very soon. Mangal Pandey's religion, he is a Brahmin, forbids him to eat beef. He is therefore incensed when he learns that the covering of the new cartridge introduced by the British, which he has to bite through to load it in the gun, is made of cow fat. He is further disillusioned when his friend Gordon keeps a Indian mistress after saving her from burning herself in the funeral pyre of her husband according to Indian customs.

Mangal Pandey teams up with the last Mughal emperor of India Bahadur Shah Jaffrar, and other Indian leaders such as Tantia Tope and Nanasaheb to revolt against the British, overthrow them, and establish Indian independence. However, events take such a turn that Mangal Pandey

ultimately has to fight against a regiment of British soldiers alone. He is ultimately captured, put on trial and hanged. The trial and hanging of Mangal Pandey is shown to have instigated the Sepoy Mutiny which is depicted as the first step in the Indian Independence Movement.

Analysis

Though Mangal Pandey is based on a historical incident and is classified in the genre of 'Epics', the movie diverts from historical facts and introduces many fictional characters and incidences. This leads to what could be interpreted as distortion of history for the sake of gaining commercial advantages.

The fictional additions that have been made to the movie do not suit the context of the story. In fact, British historian Saul David has protested that the movie's accusation of the British East India Company murdering civilians and flouting a slavery ban were completely unfounded. "I have never come across any evidence which supports either of these assertions," he commented (BBC News).

The treatment of the movie is very different from American movies in the sense that there is more emphasis on entertainment than on presenting a historical account. The movie includes a number of song-and-dance sequences in which the main character participates along with the lead female characters. Very few American movies, if any, will depict its central character, that too a rebel patriot as a dancing and singing figure.

Every aspect of the movie is over dramatized and there is no effort at all to maintain a broad factual approach. Though the movie attempts to portray the socio-economic feel of the country at that period in history, the fictional incidences that it utilizes to do so, derail the central theme of the story. The focus of the film is diverted by these embellishments. The attention of the viewer is diverted away from the central theme in an attempt to introduce entertainment elements in the form of songs, dances and sensual episodes. All of these entertainment elements do not have any direct bearing on the main story of the movie.

A study of Indian history also does not reveal that the extent and range of the sepoy mutiny was anywhere near to what has been projected in the movie. The association of Mangal Pandey with the Mughal emperor and other Indian leaders is also largely unsupported. This amounts to deliberate distortion of history. No decent American epic movie would attempt anything of the kind.

Works Cited

-01

1. BBC News, “ Historian doubts mutiny film plot”, 14 August 2005, BBC News Service, November 15, 2007, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/entertainment/film/4151152.stm>>