THE APPROPRIATENESS OF HISTORIC COSTUMING OF MALE PROTAGONISTS IN

HISTORIC EPIC MOVIES

by

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(Under the Direction of Patricia Hunt-Hurst)

ABSTRACT

Costuming functions as a tool to nonverbally communicate and manipulate visual identities, especially gender identity; applied to the costuming of characters in movies, the visual identity of a character is broadly amplified to the movie-going audience. The purpose of this study was to examine the costuming of male protagonists in historic epic movies for historical accuracy and how the era in which the movie was produced may have affected the level of accuracy. *The Ten Commandments* (1956) and *Spartacus* (1960) from the Cold War era and *Gladiator* (2000) and *Troy* (2004) from the turn of the millennia were viewed and comparatively analyzed in light of the American social dynamics of each era

INDEX WORDS: historic costume, men's wear, Ancient Egyptian costume, Ancient Greek costume, Ancient Roman costume, historic epic genre, movies, Cold War, post-World War II, America, turn of the millennia, gender dynamics

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Whether by intention, evolution, or accident, human beings have several

distinctive characteristics that set them apart from other mammals, one being the concept

of identity and the means to manipulate it. Clothing and supplementary forms of

adornment are distinguishable from other human-made products because it functions—

not only to shelter the body—but to non-verbally communicate a self image and, thus,

manipulate the individual's concept of identity.[1]

Movies similarly manipulate concepts of identity, for not only is the costuming

used as a tool to shape the characters in a film in order to support the overall story, but

camera techniques, lighting, set design, sound, and actors are utilized as well. Movies

and the use of these cinematic elements in a film communicate an image that

intentionally manipulates the viewer's concept of the characters' identities in relation to

the story and setting of the movie.[2] However, the visual identities of characters in a

movie differ from the visual identities of a single individual in that the nonverbal

communication of identity in movies is amplified to a much larger group of people.

Thus, the connection between costuming and film and their relationship with

society lies in the concept of visual identities, how we want others to view us, and how

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[1]   Penny Storm, *Functions of Dress: Tool of Culture and the Individual* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1987), 6.
[2]   Christopher Breward, *Fashion* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 132.

we seek to be both accepted and provoked by others through our visual identities.[3] This is the very purpose of dress and adornment, with the methods of dress of characters in movies further amplifying a message of identity to large masses of moviegoers, who both influence movies and who are influenced by movies.

This relationship between the communicated visual identities of movies and movie-goers is particularly apparent in the post-World War II era of America. World War II catalyzed an insurmountable change in American society, thereby dramatically changing the society members' notions of self (both individually and communally), their visual identity, and, thus, their methods of dress.[4] Evidence of the rapidly evolving and adjusting American culture manifested in all forms of expression as well, notably, in the movies which were made for the changing culture, by the changing culture.

American society's disillusionment after the end of WWII resulted in social paranoia, the need for status distinction and stability, and a want for vicarious escapism, all of which culminated in the form of grandiose historic epic movies.[5] These movies, set in ancient Greco-Rome, ancient Egypt, or Biblical times, are marked by lavishly impressive action sequences, top of the line film equipment, super studio spending, movie stars, and strong male heroes who conquer the evilness of their time.[6] The latter is juxtaposed with the methods of historic costuming utilized in these movies, the historic dress of the aforementioned eras calling for unbifurcated men's wear, i.e. tunics, togas, wraps, etc.

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[3]   Susan B. Kaiser, *The Social Psychology of Clothing: Symbolic Appearances in Context, 2nd Edition* (New York: Fairchild Publications, 1997), 211.
[4]   Phyllis G. Tortora and Keith Eubank, *Survey of Historic Costume: A History of Western Dress, 3rd Edition* (New York: Fairchild Publications. 1998), 426.
[5]   Maria Wyke, *Projecting the Past: Ancient Rome, Cinema, and History* (London: Routledge, 1997), 11.
[6]   Kristin Thompson and David Bordwell, *Film History: An Introduction, 2nd Edition* (Boston: McGraw-Hill, 2003), 342-343.

The significance of the costuming of these post-WWII historical epics is that for the costuming to be historically accurate, these male heroes must don skirt-like garments in a time when American culture still generally adhered to patriarchal standards in both the public and private domains. Unbifurcated garments, having a strong association with femininity, were once the epitome of masculinity during the eras from which these historic epics were set.[7] Being that male costumes of ancient times were overwhelmingly unbifurcated and that American culture was undergoing a very conservative and gender-rigid social climate after WWII, hyper-masculinization may have been utilized in the costuming of popular historic epics to deter from the feminization of the male hero. The questions for this study then arises: does the costumer's treatment of the historic costumes of the male heroes in post-World War II historic epic movies reflect a historical accuracy to the ancient Greeks, Romans, and Egyptians or does it reflect the cultural mores of the time? Furthermore, is there a connection between the levels of historical accuracy in the costuming of the historic epic male hero with the mindset of post-World War II American society?

Statement of the Problem

It was the purpose of this study to critically examine the costume of the male protagonists in two historic epic movies made in the 1950s and early 1960s, a generally conservative time period in America after World War II. These particular historic epics, *The Ten Commandments* (1956) and *Spartacus* (1960), have been selected because these films were produced in a socially and politically conservative era, the 1950s and early

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[7]   James Laver, *Costume and Fashion: A Concise History, 4*[th] *Edition* (New York: Thames & Hudson, 2002), 7.

3

1960s, and were set in ancient Egypt, Greece, and Rome, time periods of pre-bifurcated dress. Additionally, these historic epics were event movies that were both produced to attract large audiences and which were attended by large audiences; therefore, these movies were viewed by the majority of the 1950s and 1960s moviegoers, regardless of age, region, sex, etc.[8]

Because of the attraction of large audiences, the message of visual identity was more widely communicated. From the analysis of the costuming in *The Ten Commandments* and *Spartacus*, the researcher attempted to gain a greater understanding of the level of egalitarianism in post-World War II America by examining the level of accuracy of the costuming in the historic epics. Levels of accuracy[9] was established by evaluating the elements of costuming of each film and how historically correct the costumes were to the time period and environmental setting of each film.

For the purposes of comparison, an additional two historic epic movies made in the comparatively liberal time period of the 1990s and early 2000s were also analyzed for the level of accuracy in the costuming of the male heroes. These more current films, *Gladiator* (2000) and *Troy* (2004), also set in the ancient times that predate the wide use of bifurcated garments, represent a resurgence of historic epics that were also produced for and attended by large audiences.[10] More specifically, however, the comparison of *The Ten Commandments* and *Spartacus* versus G*ladiator* and *Troy* were examined in light of their individual decade-specific cultural nuances to gain insight on the possible

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[8]   Sheldon Hall, "Tall Revenue Features: The Genealogy of the Modern Blockbuster" in *Genre and Contemporary Hollywood*, ed. Steve Neale, 13 (London: BFI Publishing, 2002).
[9]   The term, "level of accuracy," will be used frequently throughout this study. A clear definition of the researcher's meaning of this term is giving in "Definition of Terms."
[10]   Hall, 23-24.

significance of conservative or liberal societies on costuming accuracies in historic epic films.

Objectives

The following objectives have been established in order to narrow and specify the scope of the research:

1.   To assess the historical accuracy of the costumes of the male hero protagonist in the historical epics *The Ten Commandments* and *Spartacus*, both of which were set in time periods of pre-bifurcated dress, ancient Egyptian and Greco-Roman eras, and which were produced in the 1950s and early 1960s. Several key elements of costuming were analyzed, with an emphasis on the accurate or inaccurate use of bifurcated verses unbifurcated dress. Other major components of costuming such as tunicas, togas, outer wear, etc. were also analyzed; costuming peripherals or accessories were not specifically analyzed.

2.   To gain an understanding of the socio-political climate of the 1950s and early 1960s and how it may have impacted levels of accuracy in the historic epics' methods of costuming.

3.   To assess the historical accuracy of the costumes of the male hero protagonist in the historical epics *Gladiator* and *Troy*, both of which were set in time periods of pre-bifurcated dress, ancient Egyptian and Greco-Roman eras, and which were produced in the 1990s and early 2000s. Several key elements of costuming were analyzed, with an emphasis on the accurate or inaccurate use of bifurcated verses unbifurcated dress. Other major components of costuming

such as tunics, togas, outer wear, etc. were also analyzed; costuming peripherals or accessories were not specifically analyzed.

4.   To gain an understanding of the socio-political climate of the 1990s and early 2000s and how it impacted levels of accuracy in the historic epics' methods of costuming.

5.   To compare the findings from the selected films, *The Ten Commandments*, *Spartacus*, *Gladiator*, and *Troy*, within their relative eras of production to further understand society's ideas of masculinity and the "appropriate" visual manifestations of maleness in relation to the male-female dichotomy.

Justification

This study addressed cinematic costuming and historical dress, as well as the significance of gender identities and social climate in a post-war society. Because movies generally attract a large amount of viewers, movies influenced the modes of interpretation of the audiences, either with or without the filmmakers' intentions. Therefore, the historic epic movies of post-World War II and turn of the millennia America, by nature, impacted and influenced audiences.[11]

Thus, when movies are made for large audiences, the influences of movies are equally large. More specifically, the elaborate production of many historic epics depends on large attendance in order for the film to generate money.[12] Because these big-budget epics were intended for mass appeal, they reflected the attitudes, values, and beliefs of

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[11]   Thompson and Bordwell, 1.
[12]   Ibid., 341.

the audience the filmmakers were working to appeal.[13] While the movies had the power

to influence the audience, the audience, conversely, also had the power to influence the

movie.

       With this duality in influence across movies and audiences, the visual treatment of

the male hero in these historic epics is particularly of importance. The costuming of the

male hero protagonist in the historic epics must be somewhat accurate to the time period

the film portrays in order for the film to achieve time and plot authenticity for the

audiences. However, these films, which are largely dependent on audience attendance,

must simultaneously be as entertaining and inoffensive as possible.[14] This, in turn, may

affect the historical accuracy of the costuming of the male hero, who, in ancient Egyptian

and Greco-Roman times, donned unbifurcated garments. Thus, the level of accuracy in

the male hero's costuming may aid in further understanding the gender dynamics in post-

World War II American culture.

       Ultimately, this research worked towards answering the following: What will the

found levels of accuracy in the costuming of the male hero in the post-World War II

historic epic movies imply about 1950s society, the role of the male hero, and the role of

cinema's influence on audiences, as well as society's influence on filmmaking?

Furthermore, will the analysis and comparison of the costuming in the historic epics

produced in the more liberal time periods of the 1990s and early 2000s suggest that the

level of accurate costuming may be related to the conservative or liberal social modes of

the time? Hence, the study primarily deals with if and how historic costuming transcends

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13   Derek Elley, *The Epic Film: Myth and History* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1984), 1.
14   Maria Wyke, *Projecting the Past: Ancient Rome, Cinema, and History* (London: Routledge, 1997), 9-
10.

the bounds of historical accuracy in the movies and the possibility that the level of accuracy in these movies was due to the dictates of audiences' comfort levels.

Limitations

1.   This study was limited to four movies within the historic epic genre: *The Ten Commandments* (1956) and *Spartacus* (1960), produced by American movie studios during the 1950s and early 1960s, and *Gladiator* (2000) and *Troy* (2004), produced by American movie studios during the 1990s and early 2000s.

2.   The movies examined were limited to historic epic movies that took place in Ancient Greco-Roman and Ancient Egyptian eras (time periods pre-dating bifurcated garments for men).

3.   An assessment of the male hero protagonist, his character, his character development, and his visual identity as portrayed by his methods of dress and adornment was the foci of study within the historical epics.

Definition of Terms

The researcher, for the purpose of clarification, defined the following terms.

- Bifurcated garments: garments worn around the lower body where the fabric encases the legs separately and where the feet have individual bottom openings (i.e. trousers, shorts, stockings, etc.); these garments have generally been connoted as masculine.

- Gender: a social construct of either masculine or feminine identity resulting in gender roles and behavioral codes commanded by culture usually specific to one

sex or the other. Because gender is a cultural product, gender roles change over time with culture.[15]

- Historic epic: a genre of movies that rose during the post-World War II era (1945 – 1960) and then again in the 1990s, often featuring colossal battle scenes, movie stars, big budgets, and grandiose sets and included films dealing with Egyptian pageants, chivalric adventures, and war sagas; these films generally attracted large audiences to balance the movie's high production costs.[16]

- Historical accuracy of costuming: when the dress and adornment worn by the male hero within the historic epics were correct with the film's intended time period and setting, as well as the character's sex, age, and status; "correct" dress and adornment emulated the determined methods of historic costuming of past civilizations as researched and published by costume historians.

- Historical inaccuracy of costuming: when the dress and adornment worn by the male hero within the historic epics were incorrect with the film's intended time period and setting, as well as the character's sex, age, and status; "incorrect" dress and adornment did not emulate the determined methods of historic costuming of past civilizations as researched and published by costume historians.

- Level of accuracy: the relationship between the amounts of accuracies and inaccuracies found in the costuming of the male hero of the historic epics. A high level of accuracy denotes costuming that was more historically accurate,

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[15] Mary Crawford and Rhonda Unger, *Women and Gender: A Feminist Psychology, 3rd Ed* (Boston: McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc., 2000), 22.
[16] Ibid., 342-343.

while a low level of accuracy denotes costuming that was less historically accurate.

- Protagonist: the leading character of the historic epic, generally the hero of the film.

- Sex: the biological sex of a human (male verses female)

- Sex-specific dress: methods of dress and adornment usually worn by one sex or the other, often communicating the wearer's gender identity.

- Unbifurcated garments: garments worn around the lower body where the garment encases both legs and where the feet share the same bottom opening (i.e. tunics, skirts, dress, etc.); these garments have generally been connoted as feminine.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The following areas of emphasis have been examined in order to lay a foundation

of knowledge prior to primary source research: paranoia and conservatism in post-WWII

American culture and cinema, new millennium politics and consumerism in American

culture and cinema, the rise of historic epic movies during the Cold War and the turn of

the millennia, general background of the chosen historic epic movies, the history of

men's unbifurcated costume in ancient Egypt, Greece, and Rome, and fashion and

qualitative semiotic theory. Each area of emphasis, based on previous research of

scholars within each respective field, deals with the interplay between manipulated visual

identities, historical background and true clothing styles of ancient Greece, Rome, and

Egypt, and the significance of cinema as a form of escape and as a means of societal

security.

Cold War Paranoia and Conservatism in Post-WWII American Culture

America and the USSR emerged from World War II as the two dominant political

powers of the world.[17] The bipolarity of both nations, one preaching the glories of

democracy and the other of communism, resulted in the Cold War, evident in America's

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[17]   Kristin Thompson and David Bordwell, *Film History: An Introduction, 2ⁿᵈ Ed* (Boston: McGraw-Hill, 2003), 353.

internal governmental politics,[18] as well as social "politics," or what film scholar Stephen

Prince characterizes as "the realm of collective values and fantasies that underlie and

inform socioeconomic systems and behavior in the real world."[19] Thus, the Cold War

was pervasive in all facets of American society, its impact reaching all avenues of social

interaction within the American culture and with America's actions or reactions to

foreign affairs.

       Many historians argue that the "Cold War," the term coined by Bernard Baruch in

1946, began on August 6, 1945 when the United States released the first atomic bomb on

Japan, thereby initiating the threat of nuclear terror on the world.[20] Lasting longer than

any other "war" in America, the Cold War persisted from the drop of the first atomic

bomb to the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991.[21] However, the "Cold War Culture," what

historians Kuznick and Gilbert have succinctly defined as "the results of long-term social

trends and political habits of mind, revived and refurbished from the past," was most

heightened in American culture in the decade following World War II: the 1950s.[22]

       Kuznick and Gilbert identified four social elements of the Cold War that

dramatically transformed and influenced American politics and culture: the threat of

nuclear annihilation, the rise of covert warfare replacing direct military confrontation, the

opposition to socialists or those supporting a Third World revolution, and the rise of a

military-industry social complex.[23] These four elements, though different, are

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[18]   Ibid.

[19]   Stephen Prince, *Visions of Empire: Political Imagery in Contemporary American Film* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1992), 7.

[20]   Peter J. Kuznick and James Gilbert, "U.S. Culture and the Cold War" in *Rethinking Cold War Culture*, eds. Peter J. Kuznick and James Gilbert, 1 (London: Smithsonian Institution Press, 2001).

[21]   Ibid.

[22]   Ibid., 1-2

[23]   Ibid., 2

interrelated in that each espoused an element of vulnerability that was not prevalent prior to the detonation of the atomic bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.[24]

The threat of nuclear annihilation only served to fuel an urgency to protect the country by holding active nuclear weapons, resulting in the Arms Race between America and the Soviet Union. The first Soviet atomic bomb was tested in August 1949, and was followed by the United State's hydrogen bomb test in 1952, then the Soviet's own hydrogen bomb test in 1953.[25] The Arms Race was coupled with the additional fear of apocalyptical nuclear radiation, which led to the Soviet Union's launch of Sputnik into space in October 1957.[26] Although the Arms Race did not reach the point of actualized nuclear warfare as of yet, nuclear terror peaked between the United States and the Soviet Union with the Cuban Missile Crisis in October 1962.[27]

The horrors of World War II engendered a postwar period of paranoia throughout American culture, the Cold War. As paranoia grew, the Soviet Union became the identified enemy of America's democracy. Kuznick and Gilbert argue that the nature of communism itself was "deemed so diabolical that its defeat warranted the risk of destroying civilization itself" with America's—and, thus, the Soviet Union's—growing armament of nuclear weapons.[28] Ideologically, the communist Soviet Union was committed to equality and socialization, which posed a unique challenge to the capitalistic ideals of America. This resulted in a polarization where the United States

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[24] Ibid.
[25] Ibid.
[26] Ibid.
[27] Ibid.
[28] Ibid.

began to fear the Soviet Union's support of third world revolutionary forces that were against the U.S.[29]

Because communism theoretically involves the economic alignment of people, compared to the stratification of people in the theory of capitalism, the once vibrant American left began to wane into the margins, not wanting to be associated with the communist enemy.[30] Between the years after WWII through the mid-1960s, those who still clung to their more liberal mindsets risked being ostracized or even persecuted, a result of McCarthyism[31] and the political cleansing of the communist enemy.[32] As a result of the paranoia of McCarthyism, respected academicians, scientists, and policy-makers were dismissed from their respective careers, while Hollywood celebrities were blacklisted, all of which resulted in a muted creativity from those persecuted and those who feared persecution.[33]

Simultaneous to McCarthyism and heightened conservatism in the United States was a religious awakening that began in the 1950s and generally persists through today, the longest religious awakening in American history.[34] The need for social stability in the wake of World War II not only caused desperation for and the preservation of wholesome American ideals, but a sense of cynicism also underlined the resulting

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[29] Ibid., 3
[30] Ibid., 4
[31] The term "McCarthyism" was named after Senator McCarthy of Wisconsin who, on February 9, 1950, presented a Republican Party dinner meeting with a list of over 200 members of the state department in West Virginia who were members of the communist party. Although the list was eventually disclosed as fraudulent, his actions onset a four year period where fear of internal communist influence plagued Washington and the nation, and was so intense that the U.S. Attorney General ordered the formation of concentration camps.
    Douglas Brode, *The Films of the Fifties: Sunset Boulevard to On the Beach* (Secaucus, N.J.: The Citadel Press, 1976), 7.
[32] Kuznick and Gilbert, 4.
[33] Ibid., 7
[34] Ibid., 9

superficiality of the 1950s.[35] Notably, the postwar repositioning of the U.S. as a major

global power in the Cold War led to a synonymous connection between American

patriotism and Christianity, which directly contributed to the religion boom[36] and,

subsequently, the rise of the historic epic movies dealing with Biblical texts.[37]

The religious awakening elevated traditionalist attitudes in the public and private

spheres of American society and became a significant hindrance to the once liberated

women of the 1940s. During WWII, women entered the work force in large numbers as

men left America to fight in the war.[38] Women's socioeconomic positions began to ebb

into the public sphere, presenting a practical alternative to the more traditional women's

roles of housewives who were financially dependent on their husbands.[39] However, after

the end of WWII, the returning troops rejoined their families, or began their families, and

catalyzed a tremendous growth in birthrates, the new generation being dubbed the "baby

boomers."[40] Although some women stayed in white-collar or clerical careers after WWII

despite difficulties in reconciling dictates of domesticity, many women dropped out of

college in order to get married, oftentimes selecting partners that they felt would be good

providers for themselves and the many children they would have.[41] Likewise, as the

family grew, so did the need for women to be the caretakers of the children at home and

the men to financially provide for the family outside of the home.

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[35]   Brian Neve, *Film and Politics in America: A Social Tradition* (London: Routledge, 1992), 84.

[36]   The "religion boom" refers to the assumption that Americanism and Christianity were synonymous, a popular idea in 1950s as America struggled with the fear of the Cold War and Communism. The result of this belief was that the more Christian an American citizen was, the more patriotic they were.
    Steven Cohan, *Masked Men: Masculinity and the Movies in the Fifties* (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1997), 126.

[37]   Ibid.

[38]   Kuznick and Gilbert, 9.

[39]   Ibid.

[40]   Thompson and Bordwell, 325.

[41]   Jane Sherron De Hart, "Containment at Home: Gender, Sexuality, and National Identity in Cold War America" in *Rethinking Cold War Culture*, eds. Peter J. Kuznick and James Gilbert, 130 (London: Smithsonian Institution Press, 2001).

Several Cold War historians have linked the Cold War social dynamics with the lack of egalitarianism between men and women in the post-WWII era. The argument ascertains that the Cold War assault on communism was a reinforcement of the subordination and suppression of women and of sexuality.[42] As the fear of communism peaked, the patriarchal household of middle class America became increasingly typified by the masculinized protective force which was thought to more effectively guard the family from the dangers of possible nuclear obliteration.[43]

Furthermore, the Cold War paranoia also reinforced antigay sentiment throughout the nation. The gay community emerged from WWII more cohesive and with more visibility, but was quickly targeted as potential communists or communist sympathizers through the Cold War.[44] It was believed that homosexuals were susceptible to Soviet blackmail in which intelligence on the American government would be compensated with secrecy of one's sexual preference.[45] Thus, the State Department actively purged homosexuals from State offices, the military, and other federal offices, homosexuals being regarded as not only vulnerable of communist blackmail, but also as undesirable citizens, "deficient in character, moral integrity, and real masculinity."[46] Many right-winged conservatives also viewed homosexuality as a tool of the communists, believing that homosexuality was contagious and that one homosexual had the potential to contaminate an entire workforce or governmental office. [47]

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[42]   Joanne Meyerowitz, "Sex, Gender, and the Cold War Language of Reform" in *Rethinking Cold War Culture*, eds. Peter J. Kuznick and James Gilbert, 106 (London: Smithsonian Institution Press, 2001).
[43]   Ibid.
[44]   Sherron De Hart, 125.
[45]   Ibid.
[46]   Ibid.
[47]   Ibid.

Therefore, the majority of American citizens assumed the safe, conventional gender roles of the Cold War with men and women taking their places in the nuclear family. Yet, as nuclear families became larger and more numerous, production and consumption similarly grew rapidly in the years following World War II. This expansion of the American economy, which has been referred to as the American "economic miracle," was marked as "the greatest and most dramatic capitalist expansion in American history, perhaps even in world history," according to historian Alan Brinkley.[48] The prosperity of the 1950s was so beyond the predictions or expectations of Americans of that time that capitalism was a seemingly limitless way of life.[49] Furthermore, fervent supporters of capitalism believed that poverty could be eliminated through sheer growth, production, and investment which will encompass the less wealthy, rather than the equal redistribution of wealth as was the ideology of communism.[50]

In light of the expansion of capitalism and the greater circulation of money throughout America, suburban culture similarly rose as the middle class grew. Yet, one outgrowth of suburbanization was the isolation of Americans from the diversity of urban life. Thus, while suburban life felt safe and stable, it was also exceedingly homogeneous and uniform in the inhabitants' ideals and values. Eventually these ideals and values became so insidious that standardization took place of the lives of those who lived in the suburbs, offering a means for likeminded individuals of a common class, ethic, and religious background to be surrounded by each other, reinforcing their commonalities.[51]

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[48] Alan Brinkley, "The Illusion of Unity in Cold War Culture" in *Rethinking Cold War Culture*, eds. Peter J. Kuznick and James Gilbert, 63 (London: Smithsonian Institution Press, 2001).
[49] Ibid.
[50] Ibid., 63-64.
[51] Ibid., 68-67.

Cold War Paranoia and Conservatism in Post-WWII American Cinema

Internationally, many democratic European countries saw the rise and change of American economic and political power as cultural imperialism, especially in the advertising, fashion, and mass media mediums.[52] This resulted in a post-WWII era in which complex and even tense interplay arose among the national identities of European countries and their alliance or resistance to America.[53] Despite such hesitancies towards America, Europe would still remain Hollywood's major source of foreign revenue.[54] This was due to Hollywood studios' production of movies that intentionally dealt less with social problems and politics and more with entertainment and spectacle as a result of 1950s Cold War social anxieties.[55]

However, the popularity of entertainment and spectacle films in the post-WWII era did not occur immediately after the end of the war. As the war ended in 1945, social themes in Hollywood movies were most prevalent with a renewed interest in the documentary technique in filming.[56] Liberal-minded filmmakers began independent productions with more intimate cooperation between writers and directors, reducing the involvement of producers and heightening the creativity and diversity of movies.[57] Thus, the late 1940s offered comparatively critical film styles and themes as opposed to the more apolitical spectacle blockbuster movies of the 1950s and early 1960s.

This shift into apolitical released movies after the close of the 1940s was largely due to the establishment of HUAC, the House Committee on Un-American Activities,

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[52]   Thompson and Bordwell, 354.
[53]   Ibid.
[54]   Ibid.
[55]   Prince, 2.
[56]   Neve, 85.
[57]   Ibid., 84

activated by the Cold War and commenced under President Truman. It was the duty of

HUAC to investigate Hollywood in 1947, and again in 1952, for the threat of being taken

over by communists who would use the movie media as a means of their own

propaganda.[58] Former President Ronald Reagan[59] succinctly described the purpose for

HUAC in a speech he made to SAG, the Screen Actors Guild, when he was the president

of SAG[60]: "The communist plan for Hollywood was remarkably simple. It was merely to

take over the motion picture business. Not only for its profit . . . but also for a grand

world-wide propaganda base."[61]

Prior to the war, many Hollywood intellectuals of the 1930s were sympathetic to

the Soviet communists, their leftist inclinations only reinforced when America became

allies with the Soviet Union during WWII in their battle against the Axis powers.[62] Thus,

as anticommunism pervaded the country, especially in Hollywood with the formation of

HUAC, turmoil and paranoia grew within the filmmaking community. In 1952 director

Elia Kazan commented on the negative effects of HUAC on the filmmaking industry,

stating that "Actors are afraid to act, writers are afraid to write, and producers are afraid

to produce."[63] Nonetheless, many filmmakers were blacklisted, fled abroad to continue

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[58] Prince, 26.

[59] It is significant to note that Ronald Reagan's presidential policies of increasing arms expenditures and proposing a Strategic Defense Initiative (also called "Star Wars") through the 1980s heralded what historians refer to as a second Cold War. Regan, dubbed the Cold Warrior, also launched a counteroffensive against the communist Soviets by providing aid to anticommunist forces in Afghanistan, Nicaragua, and other Third World groups.
        Sherron De Hart, 140.

[60] Ronald Reagan presided as president of SAG from 1947 – 1952, and then again in 1959 – 1960.
        "SAG History: Screen Actors Guild Presidents, Ronald Reagan," Screen Actors Guild,
        http://www.sag.org/history/presidents/reagan.html (accessed August 29, 2005).

[61] Prince, 26.

[62] Thompson and Bordwell, 326.

[63] Peter Lev, *Transforming the Screen 1950-1959,* vol. 7 of *History of the American Cinema* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 2003), 11.

their work, or served as witnesses to name Hollywood communists.[64] Although HUAC

eventually crumbled as the Cold War moved out of the 1950s, only a tenth of those

blacklisted through HUAC were able to successfully resume their careers in

Hollywood.[65]

The Rise of Historic Epic Movies in the 1950s and Early 1960s

In order to fully understand the impact of the Cold War in cinema and, more

specifically in historic epic movies, a general background must be given for this specific

genre. Historic epics were considered event movies, social events allowing movie goers

to react to the plots, the costumes, the excitement, and the romance of the movie

collectively.[66] Oftentimes these historic epic event movies were also considered

blockbuster movies, which typically represented the world within a simplified dichotic

formula of good verses evil.[67] Furthermore, Stephen Prince suggests that "The

blockbuster structure is amenable to disseminating and expressing the political world in a

reductive frame."[68] Because these films were intended for mass appeal, blockbuster films

were essentially created within the framework of the cultural values of the audience,[69]

although the need for broad appeal among the diverse segments of the public

simultaneously lead to ambiguity of the movies with a muted socio-political position.[70]

Specifically however, the historic epic movie anchored the stories to a ground of

empirical realism through the use of exotic historical replicas of sets, weapons, and

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[64] Thompson and Bordwell, 326.
[65] Ibid. 327.
[66] Neve, 85.
[67] Prince, 28.
[68] Ibid.
[69] Ibid., 7.
[70] Ibid., 2.

costuming.[71] According to "The Moving Image Genre-form Guide" established by The

Library of Congress, genres in movies serve as a short hand method of categorizing

movie and television works into "readily understood classifications."[72] Thus, the

"ancient world" drama, which falls within the realm of historic epic movies, was defined

as the following:

> Fictional work usually set during Roman times, or occasionally during another
> early civilization, such as that of Greece or Egypt. Most often the work
> emphasized the opulence, cruelty, and decadence of ancient political and cultural
> life.[73]

These ancient world drama historic epic movies found their initial popularity

simultaneous to the initial popularity of the motion picture at the dawn of the twentieth

century, for a significant benefit of the new medium of film was that it offered the

possibility of reconstructing the past in ways superior to paintings, theatre, or novels.[74]

Moreover, these movies were considered an advanced form of historical writing in that a

movie had the capacity to transmit historic consciousness to a broad audience, this

knowledge otherwise requiring months of book study by the individual to acquire.[75]

Although movies are merely representations of reality, the early filmmakers whose intent

it was to capture historical knowledge on film, considered early historic movies as true

histories.[76]

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[71]   Bill Nichols, "The Fact of the Realism and the Fiction of Objectivity" in *Post-War Cinema and Modernity: A Film Reader*, eds. John Orr and Olga Taxidou, 193 (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2000).

[72]   Brian Taves, Judi Hoffman, and Karen Lund, "The Moving Image Genre-form Guide," Motion Picture & Television Reading Room, Library of Congress, http.//www.loc.gov/rr/mopic/migintro.html (accessed February 2, 2005).

[73]   Brian Taves, Judi Hoffman, and Karen Lund, "Ancient World," Motion Picture & Television Reading Room, Library of Congress, http.//www.loc.gov/rr/mopic/miggen.html (accessed February 2, 2005).

[74]   Maria Wyke, *Projecting the Past: Ancient Rome, Cinema, and History* (New York: Routledge, 1997), 9.

[75]   Ibid.

[76]   Ibid.

However, all movies, including historic movies, cannot escape narration

inseparable from some level of subjectivity. Film scholar Maria Wyke explained this

nature of historic films by stating,

> Whatever the attention paid to accurate reconstruction in a historical film's
> surface texture—the antiquarian aesthetic, for example, manifest in the set
> designs, costumes, and props of epics set in the classical world—all such films
> partake of fiction.[77]

Nevertheless, historic movies increased in popularity, peaking in the 1930s and then

again in the 1950s with the United States dominating the international market of historic

movies.[78]

The 1950s prove a fertile time for the popularity for historic movies, especially

historic epic movies. Technological advancements of the time were a major factor to the

catalyzed popularity of historic epics for a number of reasons succinctly outlined by Peter

Lev, American cinema historian: "the challenge from television, the decline of the studio

system, the rise of independent production, the introduction of new technologies, the

importance of overseas production."[79] Although each of these elements ultimately

culminated to form the cinematic climate of the 1950s, the new competition of television

was a primary catalyst to the extravagant movies often associated with this era. With the

introduction of television in the household, the typical suburban family spent more time

with domestic activities such as watching television rather than leaving the home to see a

movies as they had prior to the introduction of television.[80] Movie-going audiences

steadily dwindled through the decade while commercial VHF television stations in the

United States rose from 98 in 1950 to 233 television stations in 1954 to 440 stations in

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[77]   Ibid., 10.
[78]   Ibid., 11
[79]   Lev, 3.
[80]   Thompson and Bordwell, 328.

1960.[81] According to polls conducted by Paramount Studios in 1950, families with televisions in their homes decreased their movie attendance by 20 to 30 percent.[82] A change was also taking place in the lifestyle of many Americans through the 1950s due to Cold War paranoia, the rise of suburbia, and the popularity of other leisure activities such as travel and sports, all of which were contributing factors to the decline of movie attendance.[83] Thus, the film industry found itself ardently competing against the popularity of the television and used historic epic movies to combat this.

In order to compete with television, studios began producing elaborate historic movies that offered the audience visual stimulus that television could not convey, namely color, grandiose picture presentation, intense battle sequences, and a collective audience to share the excitement.[84] Hollywood also began to emphasize movies as a spectacle, compared with the small screens, poor visual definition, black and white color, and pedestrian sound quality of television.[85] Considerable advancements were made in color filming in particular, a key aspect of the movie as a spectacle, with the rise of several methods of color filming and developing.[86] However, color movies of the early 1950s were considered by many film historians as being over-zealous with the use of color, some movies better suited in black and white.[87]

Aside from the effects of technological advancements, thematically many movies produced and released in the 1950s and early 1960s were heavily influenced by post-

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[81]   Lev, 9.
[82]   Ibid.
[83]   Ibid.
[84]   As historic epics gained popularity as a means to attract audiences away from television and home entertainment in the 1950s and 1960s, epics conversely gained popularity again in the 1990s because of the advancements made in home theatre and in DVDs.
          Thompson and Bordwell, 683.
[85]   Lev, 107.
[86]   Ibid.
[87]   Ibid., 108

WWII and the social and political changes it engendered. Film historian Derek Elley

remarked on the impression the social climate of this post-war/Cold War era had on

movies, explaining that within the historic epic genre in particular, "the religious works . .

. [were] symbolized by Christianity, and the secular works by a less escapist

resolution."[88] Elley furthermore listed other themes within the movies made during this

era, echoing the Cold War social mentality:

> . . . the feeling or reconstruction, the fear that military and political tyranny might
> rear its head again, the growing and changed role of youth and the widespread
> questioning of automatic and misplaced privilege.[89]

Hollywood of the 1950s was generally conservative, studios dominating movie

production much like they had in the classic Hollywood era of the 1920s.[90] Because of

this conservative malaise, the Production Code Administration, which was run by the

movie industry themselves, and the Legion of Decency, which was affiliated with the

Catholic Church, worked together to control "screen morality" through the decade[91].[92]

However, the violence and body exposure in the historic epics released at this time were

less restrained from this screen morality than other films because of the "historic" or

"Biblical" contexts of the movie.[93] Through the familiar, culturally sanctioned stories of

ancient Egypt, Greece, and Rome, violent and complex action sequences were easily

admitted into the movies, as were more bare skin and scantily clad men and women.[94]

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[88]   Derek Elley, *The Epic Film: Myth and History*, (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1984), 89.
[89]   Ibid.
[90]   Lev, 3.
[91]   It was not until the rise of independent film production companies towards the latter portion of the
1950s that conservative mindsets in Hollywood began to change.
        Ibid.
[92]   Ibid.
[93]   Leon Hunt, "What are Big Boys Made of? *Spartacus*, *El Cid* and the Male Epic" in *You Tarzan:
Masculinity, Movies and Men*, eds. Pat Kirkham and Janet Thumim, 67 (New York: St. Martin's Press,
1993).
[94]   Lev, 162.

New Millennium Politics and Society in America, 1990s to 2000s

The two-term Ronald Reagan administration, lasting from 1980 to 1988,

represented a reemergence of the right wing politics of the 1950s and early 1960s that

had waned at the hands of the more liberal civil and women's rights movements of the

1960s and 1970s.[95] Reagan's political agenda was, as Stephen Price suggests, "an

activist one," due to his reduction of governmentally funded social services, deregulation

of businesses, and promotion of the idea that less government was a better government.[96]

And yet, conversely, Reagan employed governmental aid to furnish a counter offense to

the expanding Soviet Union in the second Cold War period.[97]

After only a single term in office as Reagan's similarly conservative successor,

George Bush's presidential term at the helm of the White House was defined by a

recession[98] which encouraged voters to elect democrat Bill Clinton into office in 1992.[99]

Clinton was considered an enthusiastic movie fan, enjoying a celebrity status analogous

to the likewise predominately liberal movie stars in Hollywood.[100] Film historians

Kristin Thompson and David Bordwell observe that Clinton "typified the self-absorption

of baby boomers who had once criticized the 'system' but were now enjoying its fruits

without guilt."[101] Thus, the Clinton administration spawned a new liberal era in America

that was also connected to the ideals of capitalism.

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[95]   Thompson and Bordwell, 679.
[96]   Prince, 3.
[97]   Sherron De Hart, 140.
[98]   Bush's end of term as president was due to the economic recession, despite his popularity at the end of the Persian Gulf War where he deployed American troops to oil-rich Kuwait in order to force Iraq's withdrawal.
        Marc Oxoby, *American Popular Culture Through History: The 1990s*, ser. ed. Ray B. Browne (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 2003), 9.
[99]   Thompson and Bordwell, 679.
[100]   Ibid.
[101]   Ibid.

As the Clinton era continued with his reelection in 1996, the year also saw the passing of the welfare reform bill, as well as the grand exhibition of the NAMES project AIDS quilt in Washington D.C.[102] Yet, along with a renewed social liberal attitude unapologetically married to heightened consumption, the prospect of the end of one millennium and the coming of another created "the apocalyptic" social attitude, which Christopher Sharrett refers to as preferring "conflagration and self-immolation to radical transformation."[103] Social change began to slow and Clinton's liberal agenda for America was often combated by White House conservatives. Marc Oxoby provided an example of this with Clinton's "don't ask don't tell" policy in the military where "his efforts to eliminate the ban on gays in the military was countered so strongly by conservatives and military leaders," that he could only compromise.[104]

Confrontations with such issues as gay rights and redefined gender norms came into great social consciousness in 1990s and early 2000s popular culture thus engendering a reevaluation of morals in America.[105] This was a period where "an ongoing cultural negotiation over what the dominant meanings of gender, sex, and sexuality should be" took place, according to John M. Sloop.[106] Men and women's roles in the family were increasingly reevaluated with fewer men solely responsible for the income of the family

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[102] Oxoby, xx.

[103] Christopher Sharrett, "End of Story: The Collapse of Myth in Postmodern Narrative Film" in *The End of Cinema as We Know it: American Film in the Nineties*, ed. Jon Lewis, 320 (New York: New York University Press, 2001).

[104] Oxoby, 10.

[105] John M. Sloop, *Disciplining Gender: Rhetorics of Sex Identity in Contemporary U.S. Culture* (Boston: University of Massachusetts Press, 2004), 1.

[106] Ibid.

and with more women working, leaving the woman's traditional role of homemaker and nurturer for the children less static.[107]

Additionally, many social movements relating to the second wave of feminism in the 1970s continued to gain both momentum and criticism, such as the pro-choice movement. Although the social climate was conducive for the pro-choice agenda, many political conservatives still fought to outlaw abortion.[108] Furthermore, the issue of legalized abortion came to represent "numerous social changes affecting family and general relations, such as rising divorce rates, the entry of women into the labor force, and increases in premarital sex," according to Staggenborg, and lead to the reshaping of gender norms at the close of the twentieth century.[109]

Thus, a deep divide concerning traditional verses progressive morals within society manifested in the bipolarity of the two-party system of America. Yet, this bipolarity between the democrats and the republicans created a distain for party politics by many Americans, which was only heightened with the republican majority in both houses by the mid-1990s, what some acclaimed as the "Republican Revolution."[110] Tension continued between the liberal presidency and the conservative congress as Newt Gingrich, known for his more conservative ideals, became the House speaker.[111] Gingrich then unveiled his Contract with America, a set of promises concerned with fiscal issues, but also opened windows for anti-abortion legislation and federal social programs established in previous liberal eras.[112] In 1998 Clinton's affair with Monica

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[107]   Suzanne Staggenborg, *Gender, Family, and Social Movements*, (Thousand Oaks: Pine Forge Press, 1998), 130-131.
[108]   Ibid., 95-96.
[109]   Ibid., 96.
[110]   Oxoby, 11.
[111]   Ibid.
[112]   Ibid., 10-11.

Lewinsky erupted, resulting in his impeachment (although later acquitted by the Senate) led by the Republican Party.[113] The following year republican George W. Bush Jr., continuing his father's legacy, assumed presidency of the United States.[114]

As the 1990s came to its close and political polarization became more pronounced, the new millennium bourgeoned an interest in both "eschatology and spiritualism," as well as an anxiety for the Y2K "technological meltdown."[115] Thus, as the 2000s began, studies found more young adults demonstrating a renewed interest in spirituality and religious engagement, exemplified with higher religious service attendance throughout the nation.[116] However, unlike the homogenous religious awakening of the Cold War, new church-goers began to empower themselves with what Coomes refers to as a "pick and choose" approach to faith where people began to "borrow the most useful doctrines and practices from a range of faith traditions."[117] This piqued interest in spirituality was coupled with a growing nationalistic attitude heighten after the September 11th terrorist attacks in New York City and Washington D.C.[118]

Opulence in 1990s Movies: Megapictures, Mega Spending, and the Come Back of Historic Epic Movies

Analogous to the 1950s, the dawn of the 1990s ushered in a wave of easily obtainable technological advancements for the middle class American, namely

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[113] Ibid., 12.
[114] Ibid., xx-xxi.
[115] Michael D. Coomes, "Understanding the Historical and Cultural Influences that Shape Generations," *New Directions for Student Services*, 17-31, no. 106 (Sum 2004). Art Index, via Galileo, http://www.galileo.usg.edu
[116] Ibid.
[117] Ibid.
[118] Ibid.

electronics for the home theatre.[119] This included digital cable, flat screen televisions,

wide screen televisions, surround sound units, and the DVD (Digital Video Disc, or

Digital Versatile Disc). The latter virtually transformed the movie industry. With its

introduction in 1997, consumers were guaranteed optimized digital picture and sound

quality.[120] Moreover, the new technology spurred a tremendous cycle of consumption in

movie purchases, as well as home theatre peripherals.[121] By 2000 the home video yielded

three times the box-office income in North America, the studios pocketing $20 million

worldwide in DVD sales alone.[122]

Thus, as DVD sales rose so did the solidification of the "megapicture

mentality"[123] where the success of the movie no longer concentrated on box office

revenues for profits, but also home video, cable, broadcast television, sound-track CDs,

and tie-in merchandise.[124] Like event movies, megapictures employed top of the line

writers, movie stars and notable directors, which in turn made any megapicture extremely

expensive.[125] As a result of the high cost of producing and promoting a megapicture,

corporate merging between major studios began to take place in order to enhance profit

potential.[126] Yet, with the additional financial support of joining studios and production

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[119] Thompson and Bordwell, 680.

[120] Ibid.

[121] Ibid.

[122] Ibid., 681.

[123] The megapicture mentality began in the early 1980s with the common use of VCRs and video tapes, expanding the movie market into the home. However, the popularity of DVD and the special features and movie quality that this particular format had over video tapes only strengthened the multi-faceted quality of movie promotion and sales.
         Ibid., 683.

[124] Ibid., 683.

[125] Ibid., 684.

[126] Steve Neale and Murray Smith, introduction to *Contemporary Hollywood Cinema* (London: Routledge, 1998), xvii.

companies, these mergers garnered even larger budgets, competition for movie sales between studios, and more megapictures.[127]

These events, in addition to the use of digital manipulation aggrandizing movie settings and action sequences, led to a renewal of opulence in movies that was similar to the opulence found in the historic epic of the 1950s and 1960s. The return to popularity of the historic epic was due to two things: the populace's weariness towards this genre from the 1960s had finally worn off, and the prohibitive costs of creating the ancient spectacles for the screen was reduced significantly due to today's realistic computerized animation.[128] Rather than reconstructing monumental sets in several foreign locales, special effects specialists and set designers were able to recreate such settings at a comparatively low cost.[129] Additionally, historic epics were easily made into successful blockbuster films for they fit the formulaic mold of "a big subject and a big budget . . . [and] a young male hero, usually with lots of firepower, or secret knowledge, or an impossibly difficult mission" which ultimately culminates in a "movie that promises to be an event."[130] The visuals required for historic epics and the technological advancements in cinematography and computer-generated images allowed for 1990s and 2000s new cinema to become "essentially visual entertainment, the eye candy of image culture."[131]

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[127] Tino Balio, "A Major Presence in All of the World's Important Markets: The Globalization of Hollywood in the 1990s" in *Contemporary Hollywood Cinema*, eds. Steven Neale and Murray Smith, 69 (London: Routledge, 1998).
[128] Jon Solomon, *The Ancient World in the Cinema* (London: Yale University Press, 2001), 21.
[129] Ibid.
[130] Thomas Elsaesser, "The Blockbuster: Everything Connects, but Not Everything Goes" in *The End of Cinema as We Know It: American Film in the Nineties*, ed. Jon Lewis, 16 (New York: New York University Press, 2001).
[131] Sharrett, 320.

General Background of Chosen Historic Epic Movies

Prior to the screening and data collection of the selected historic epics, preliminary research was conducted on each film in order to ensure that these films comply with the aforementioned movie selection limitations.

The Ten Commandments

Released by Paramount Studios in 1956, Cecil B. DeMille's aggrandized historic epic *The Ten Commandments*, based on the life and death of paramount biblical figure Moses, is considered one of the most enduringly successful films within the genre.[132] In what critics call "a pilgrimage over the very ground that Moses trod more than 3,000 years ago," $13 million dollars was budgeted for the film, an astounding amount for the 1950s.[133] Charlton Heston stars as Moses with his antithesis, Yul Brynner, as Rameses the Egyptian prince who ultimately takes the throne. Known for his meticulous detail, DeMille's epic endures for three hours and thirty-eight minutes, encompassing mammoth sets, a Golden Calf, a burning bush, and the parting of the Red Sea.[134]

The Ten Commandments was a remake of a 1923 version also directed by Cecil B. DeMille. Because the 1923 version of *The Ten Commandments* was a silent film, DeMille heavily relied on visual excitement and viewed hundreds of ancient works of art in order to inspire the most appropriate and attractive costuming.[135] Additionally, he was reported to have sent his assistant on a twenty thousand mile trip through North Africa, West Asia, China, and Japan to collect oriental jewelry, costumes, tapestries, and other

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[132] Thompson and Bordwell, 342.
[133] Ibid.
[134] Pauline Kael, *5001 Nights at the Movies: A Guide from A to Z* (New York: Holt, Kinehart and Winston, 1982), 583.
[135] Solomon, 142-143.

props such as swords.[136] Thus, when DeMille began his 1956 version of *The Ten Commandments*, this time in sound and in full-color VistaVision, he employed even more opulence in the film's production.[137] Unlike his former version, DeMille shot on location in Egypt and on Mount Sinai, used 20,000 Egyptian extras, and spent more than four years completing the film.[138] DeMille believed that he could not properly retell the story of Moses and the Ten Commandments on a small scale, remarking, "I use a big canvas."[139]

Interestingly, key scenes of *The Ten Commandments* did not occur in the Biblical text of Exodus. Film historian Douglas Brode comments that the film was DeMille's "ultimate extravaganza," that was "a hybrid of scripture and soap opera."[140] Thus, while audiences delighted in the grandiose scale of the film, including Pope Pius XII, West German President Theodor Heuss, Winston Churchill, and Queen Elizabeth, movie critics were unimpressed. [141] One such critic for *Films and Review*, Henrietta Lehman, stated in the November 1956 issue that,

> I do not think that very considerable cinematic effort accomplishes anything.
> Even when considered exclusively within the framework of DeMille spectacle. . .
> . There has to be some meaning, and the unhappy truth is this film isn't about the
> Ten Commandments at all. . . . And how ridiculous Edward G. Robinson and
> Vincent Price are in Egyptian costuming![142]

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136   Ibid., 143.
137   Ibid., 146.
138   Ibid.
139   Ibid.
140   Brode, 191.
141   Solomon, 157.
142   Henrietta Lehman, "The Ten Commandments," in *Selected Film Criticism, 1951-1960*, ed. Anthony Slide, 136-137 (London: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 1985).

Furthermore, fashion writer Bronwyn Cosgrave analyzed the Egyptian costuming within the film noting, "The lavish costumes in these lush epics have overshadowed the actual simplicity involved in Ancient Egyptian dress."[143]

Despite the lack of "meaning" in the storyline of the film that poses as a significant qualm to film critics, the culturally sanctioned Biblical inspirations allowed for a large level of sexual display, such as scanty costuming and suggestive scenes, which would have otherwise been more heavily censored in the United States.[144] The *Time Out Film Guide* reports that DeMille's attention to detail and understanding of the film spectacle led him to spend three weeks alone on filming the orgy scene around the golden calf.[145]

Spartacus

Under the direction of Stanley Kubric, *Spartacus*, released in 1960 by Bryna Productions and Universal-International, was heralded by numerous sources as an exemplary specimen within the historic epic genre. Kirk Douglas plays Spartacus, a slave gladiator who leaded an abortive slave revolt in Ancient Rome, with Laurence Olivier as Spartacus' antagonist Crassus. Noted for intense battle and gladiatorial contest scenes in which blood feverishly spills, Kubric also treats the film in a manner in which the plot was "harmlessly unbelievable."[146]

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[143]   Bronwyn Cosgrave, *The Complete History of Costume & Fashion from Ancient Egypt to the Present Day* (London: Checkmark Books, 2000), 15.
[144]   Lev, 162.
[145]   John Pym, ed., *Time Out Film Guide*, 6th Ed. (London: Penguin, 1995), 1041.
[146]   Brendan Gill, "Spartacus" in *Selected Film Criticism, 1951-1960*, ed. Anthony Slide, 128-129 (London: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 1985).

Set in 73 B.C.E., *Spartacus*[147] was based on the historical facts of three leaders of

a group of fifty[148] gladiators who escaped from a training school at Capua.[149] Composed

of Gauls and Thracians, the three leaders, Spartacus, Crizus, and Oenomaus, pushed

northwards towards their homelands.[150] As the rebels traveled towards the Alps, other

runaway slaves and sympathizers joined the anti-Roman band, causing their numbers to

swell to 10,000 or 14,000.[151] Ultimately, Spartacus became the only surviving leader

after two years of the Romans trying to crush the rebellion of non-citizens. Spartacus

died in a battle led by Marcus Licinius Crassus in 71 B.C.E.[152]

Elley comments that the film based on the true story of Spartacus "is the perfect

example of epic transformation of material to suit contemporary taste."[153] Credited for

this, according to Elley, was Kirk Douglas, who not only plays the leading role of

Spartacus but who owned Bryna Productions. Douglas "saw *Spartacus* as an opportunity

to make a large-scale Zionist statement . . . and reinterpreted the slave-rebel's story as a

Roman variation on the let-my-people-go theme."[154]

The film, which was approximately three hours long, took two years to complete

and cost 12 million dollars to produce.[155] Kubrick, who was hired as director after

Douglas retired original director Anthony Man, directed *Spartacus* at the youthful age of

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[147] The screenplay of *Spartacus* was based on the historic fictional telling of Spartacus (rather than historic non-fiction) by novelist Howard Fast who used historical facts to propel his story of the anti-Roman rebellion led by an illiterate peasant.
David Hofstede, *Hollywood Heroes* (New York: Madison Books, 1994), 201.

[148] Other sources believe that seventy fellow gladiators escaped with Spartacus from Capua.
Ibid., 201.

[149] Elley,109.

[150] Ibid.

[151] Hofstede, 201.

[152] Elley, 109.

[153] Ibid., 110.

[154] Ibid.

[155] Hofstede, 202-203.

31.[156] When describing his vision for *Spartacus*, Kubrick remarked that "It concerns the outsider who is passionately committed to action against the social order."[157] Kubrick, when being questioned about the previously popular historic epics, felt that "he has a film to be taken seriously by even his avant-garde admirers—unlike the usual 'costume epics,' none of which he has particularly admired."[158] Kubrick, in an interview with Eugene Archer, admits, "I was more influenced by Eisenstein's 'Alexander Nevsky' than by 'Ben-Hur' or anything by Cecil B. DeMille."[159]

Unlike *The Ten Commandments*, film critics applauded *Spartacus*, citing an exceptional cast, Kubric's direction, and the screenplay. The film guide *5001 Nights at the Movies: A Guide from A to Z* opened its synopsis of the film with a positive comment, stating, "This may be the best-paced and most slyly entertaining of all the decadent-ancient-Rome spectacular films."[160] Hofstede contended, "*Spartacus* is an incredible piece of work, a three hour film that does not feel like one, and an epic that succeeds not only through sheer scope and spectacle but also in its most intimate moments."[161] The merit of *Spartacus* earned the historic epic movie several Oscars, including best supporting actor to Peter Ustinov, costume design, cinematography, and art direction.[162]

Spartacus was also the first film to credit blacklisted figures; screenwriter Dalton Trumbo and actor Peter Bracco, with Douglas insisting their credits were included in an

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[156]   Eugene Archer, "*Spartacus*: Hailed in Farewell," *New York Times*, October 2, 1960. http://www.nytimes.com/library/film/100260kubrick-spartacus.html (accessed August 29, 2005).
[157]   Ibid.
[158]   Ibid.
[159]   Ibid.
[160]   Kael, 547.
[161]   Hofstede, 202.
[162]   Ibid., 204.

effort to break the Hollywood blacklist.[163] Additionally, the Legion of Decency had

several scenes removed from the original movie due to graphic violence and sexuality.[164]

Gladiator

Released in 2000 by Dreamworks Pictures, directed by Ridley Scott, and starring

Russell Crowe as protagonist Maximus, this one-hundred and fifty minute historic epic[165]

did extremely well at the box office, harkening back to the trend decades prior of historic

epics in the 1950s. A large part of *Gladiator*'s success was indebted to grandiose scenes

of the four-tiered crowded Roman Coliseum, a scene that computers could generate

easily and would not have been as easily carried out in the 1950s and 1960s.[166] However,

despite the aid of computerized enhancements, Ridley Scott ordered four hundred acres

of forest to be burned, two thousand sets of amour to be made, and twenty-six thousand

arrows to be constructed for the film, actions analogous to the orders of previous historic

epic directors such as DeMille.[167]

This fictional storyline was set in Rome 180 AD and utilized actual historical

figures and events to ground the plot, blending the fictional story with well known facts

about ancient Roman society.[168] Crowe played a Roman general, Maximus, who was

betrayed by his country with the slaying of his family at the hands of Commodus, played

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[163]   "Synopsis: Spartacus," Rotten Tomatoes, http://www.rottentomatoes.com/m/1019544-spartacus/about.php (accessed August 29, 2005).

[164]   Ibid.

[165]   Although *Gladiator* falls into the historic epic genre by definition, the film was released under the genre "action, drama."
        "Gladiator (2000)," IMDb, http://us.imdb.com/title/tt0172495 (accessed November 29, 2004).

[166]   Solomon, 93.

[167]   Ibid.

[168]   James Bernardinelli, "Gladiator," *Reelviews*, http://movie-reviews.coloccus.net/movies/g/gladiator.html (accessed October 29, 2005).

by Joaquin Phoenix.[169] Maxiumus was then reduced to a slave but then bought by

Proximo, played by Oliver Reed, to be a gladiator who must fight to the death in the ring

as thousands of spectators look on.[170]

Gladiator was considered the first major film in the historic epic genre since the

popularity of Spartacus. One critic noted, "Like many of the great Hollywood historical

epics, Gladiator is the story of the triumph of a heroic figure over seemingly-

insurmountable odds. . . . As spectacles go, Gladiator has a great deal to recommend."[171]

Scott commented on this first major production of a historic epic movie in decades:

> These movies were part of my cinema-going youth. But at the dawn of a new
> millennium, I thought this might be the ideal time to revisit what may have been
> the most important period of the last two thousand years, if not in all of recoded
> history: the apex and the beginning of the decline of the greatest military and
> political power the world has even known.[172]

Scott's undertaking was greeted with enthusiasm, for Gladiator proved to be a success

with audiences and with critics alike. Several critics named the film one of the 10 best

films of 2000, and it won the 2001 Golden Globe for Best Motion Picture—Drama.[173]

Additionally, Gladiator made over $187 million at the box office alone and $83 million

in VHS rentals.[174] One critic, James Berardinelli, commented that director Ridley Scott's

greatest achievement in making Gladiator was "creating a second-century Rome that is

entirely credible and stunning in its detail. Ancient Rome is one of the most romanticized

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[169]   "Gladiator (2000)."
[170]   "Synopsis: Gladiator," Rotten Tomatoes, http://www.rottentomatoes.com/m/gladiator/about.php
(accessed August 29, 2005).
[171]   Bernardinelli, "Gladiator."
[172]   "Synopsis: Gladiator."
[173]   Ibid.
[174]   "Box Office and Rental History for Gladiator," Rotten Tomatoes,
http://www.rottentomatoes.com/m/gladiator/numbers.php (accessed August 29, 2005).

civilizations in the history of humanity, and rarely has it been brought to life with the grandeur of this film."[175]

Troy

Based on Homer's account of the Trojan War in *Iliad*, *Troy* was director Wolfgang Petersen's attempt to tell the story of the love affair between Paris and Helen of Troy that resulted in the ten year Trojan War.[176] A love affair between Paris, Prince of Troy, played by Orlando Bloom, and Helen, Queen of Sparta, played by Diane Kruger, catalyzed an epic war with the Spartans and the Mycenaeans vying to steal Helen from Troy.[177] The Trojan War was made more complicated with the involvement of the impenetrable walled city defended by Prince Hector, played by Eric Bana, and the half-god Achilles, played by Brad Pitt, who tried to penetrate it.[178]

Like *Gladiator*, *Troy* also employed computer-generated imagery to conjure the ancient world settings of Greece, such as the walled city of Troy and large, complex battle scenes with thousands of warring soldiers.[179] Production designer Nigel Phelps had the task of making director Petersen's vision of 1200 B.C.E. ancient Greece believable; Phelps did so by combining "the art and forms of the Mycenaeans with the grand scale of the Egyptians, in order to come up with a very different vocabulary that was both authentic to the period and met the criteria of an epic film."[180] Additionally, the

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[175] Bernardinelli, "Gladiator."
[176] Michael Wilmington, "Movie Review: *Troy*," *Chicago Tribune*, http://metromix.chicagotribune.com/movies/mmx-040512-movies-review-mw-troy (accessed November 29, 2004).
[177] "Synopsis: Troy," Rotten Tomatoes, http://www.rottentomatoes.com/m/troy/about.php (accessed August 29, 2005).
[178] Ibid.
[179] Wilmington.
[180] "Synopsis: Troy."

production research team used artifacts from the British Museum of archeological

excavations in Turkey, where the city of Troy was widely considered to have been.[181]

This Warner Brothers picture, released in 2004, cost the studio upwards to $175

million, exceeding the total U.S. gross of the film's theatrical release of $133 million.[182]

Despite the movie's handsome visuals, enormous budget, and leading men, the movie

was welcomed with mixed reviews being less of a box office success than *Gladiator.*

Film critic Roger Ebert commented in his review of *Troy*, "The movie sidesteps the

existence of the Greek gods, turns its heroes into action movie clichés and demonstrates

that we're getting tired of computer-generated armies."[183] Further connecting the old

Hollywood clichés of historic epic movies, film critic John Anderson remarked, "like so

many old 'historical' films, 'Troy' takes great liberties with its source material (which is

purely literary anyway) and is really about the juxtaposition of gorgeous bodies and

glorious battle."[184] When comparing successful historic epics with less successful

historic epics, film critic James Berardinelli contended, "The best epics work because

they provide both visual spectacle and emotional resonance, and the second part of that

equation is where *Troy* falls short."[185]

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[181]   Ibid.
[182]   "Troy Box Office Details," MovieWeb,
http://movieweb.com/movies/box_office/daily/film_daily.php?id=569&ym=200405 (accessed November
28, 2004).
[183]   Roger Ebert, "Troy," rogerebert.com, http://rogerebert.suntimes.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID . . .
(accessed August 29, 2005).
[184]   John Anderson, "Troy," Newsday.com, http://www.newsday.com/entertainment/movies/ny-
troyreview- . . . (accessed August 29, 2005).
[185]   James Berardinelli, "Troy," *Reelviews*, http://movie-reviews.colossus.net/movies/t/troy.html
(accessed August 29, 2005).

Unbifurcated Men's Costume: Historic Accuracies of Ancient Egyptian, Greco-Roman, and Biblical Dress

Ancient Egypt

Rising from the fertile lands of the Nile valley, the Egyptian civilization came to power circa 3100 B.C.E. under the rule of the pharaoh, who was not only considered a king, but a deity.[186] Under this governmental system lasting 3,000 years, the pharaoh had absolute authority on all facets of society, including methods of adornment.[187] Thus, a strict hierarchy in dress remained largely unchanged during the majority of the Egyptian empire.[188] Likewise, Fairservis asserts the lack of foreign influence on Egyptian civilization, stating,

> Between the Egypt of the Pyramid Age and that of Cleopatra were many differences, but many of these seem superficial, for much of the hard core of Egyptian thought and institutions was comparatively unchanged after some twenty-five centuries.[189]

The ancient Egyptians employed the method of wrapping or draping rectangular pieces of woven cloth around the body as clothing, considering this method of dress as a mark of civilization.[190] Such draped clothing of the Egyptians includes the *schenti*, a piece of woven cloth worn wrapped and belted, and the *kalasiris*, a long, fitted tunic that was semi-transparent exposing the schenti.[191] Although the schenti primarily developed for men and the kalasiris primarily developed for women, by the New Kingdom, men

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[186]   Bronwyn Cosgrave, *The Complete History of Costume History from Ancient Egypt to the Present* (New York: Checkmark Books, 2000), 13.
[187]   Ibid.
[188]   Ibid.
[189]   W.A.Fairservis, Jr., *The Ancient Kingdoms of the Nile* (New York: New American Library, 1962), 84-85.
[190]   James Laver, *Costume and Fashion: A Concise History, 4th Ed.* (London: Thames & Hudson Inc., 2002), 13-14.
[191]   Ibid., 18.

adapted the kalasiris as well.[192] These garments were also worn with wide, jeweled

collars and an assortment of headdresses in accordance with the status of the wearer.[193]

Greater variety was also achieved by the combination of fabrics of different lengths and

weights, i.e. a long pleated light linen skirt over a plain heavier linen skirt.[194]

Clothing was also used to define the status of religious individuals within the

Egyptian civilization. What Davenport refers to as the "lay costume" of Egyptian

religion was characterized by being extremely colorful and elaborate.[195] Egyptian priests,

different from the lay position of Egyptian religion, continued their more humble dress of

the white linen loin cloth and leopard skins.[196] Furthermore, as the priestly functions of

the pharaoh grew, the leopard skin garment became increasingly honorific.[197]

Highly concerned with hygiene, the Egyptians wore fine linen garments, believing

that animal fibers were impure.[198] Conversely, however, Tortora and Eubank assert that

wool, an animal fiber, was a chief product, and was produced for domestic use as well as

trade.[199] Furthermore, Tortora and Eubank's research indicates that flax was only

occasionally mentioned in ancient records while wool was mentioned much more

frequently.[200] Regardless, of the prominent textile of the Ancient Egyptians, many

researchers have similarly established that the ancient Egyptians had an obsession with

cleanliness. This went so far that men, as well as women, shaved their entire bodies,

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[192]   Millia Davenport, *The Book of Costume, Volume I* (New York: Crown Publishers, 1948), 15.
[193]   Laver, 18.
[194]   Davenport, 15.
[195]   Ibid.
[196]   Ibid.
[197]   Ibid.
[198]   Laver, 18.
[199]   Tortora and Eubank, 18.
[200]   Ibid.

including their heads, their hair being replaced with headdresses or wigs.[201] These wigs were often constructed of wool or human hair, and even artificial beards fashioned of these materials were worn.[202]

The white linen used by the Ancient Egyptians is found to be half as fine as the linen manufactured today. A discovered document regarding the apprenticeship of a weaver describes a five year period of learning, a comparatively long amount of time for apprenticing to other artisans.[203] Oftentimes, the fringed edges of the woven linen were knotted and tasseled.[204] Other textile treatments include starching and pleating the linen in complex horizontal and vertical patterns such as the herringbone pleat, weaving cords into the fabric from line patterns, and weaving long "furry loops" within the cloth to produce more variety.[205] It was not until the late dynasties that a limited amount of silk and cotton were introduced in Ancient Egyptian dress.[206]

Although Egyptian clothes were often void of color, the dominance of white was due to the lack of mordents that would stabilize dyes onto the fabrics. Yet, color was used in both the earliest and latest parts of Ancient Egypt for the dress of royalty, gods, and the dead. Natural dyes such as safflower for yellow, orange, and reds, woad for blue, and madder or cochineal for red were utilized, with yellow designated for entertainers and dark blue to commemorate the dead. Color use was not only confined to dyed fabrics, but netter or zig-zag patterns of sewn beads were used, as were feathers. Because

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[201]   Laver, 18.
[202]   Davenport, 15.
[203]   Tortora and Eubank, 18.
[204]   Davenport, 15.
[205]   Ibid.
[206]   Ibid.

wool dyes easily, dyed wool was sometimes woven into patterns in fabrics towards the

Eighteenth Dynasty as well.[207]

More specifically, the New Empire in Ancient Egypt, spanning the years 1550-

1070 B.C.E. and encompassing the 18th, 19th, and 20th dynasties, was examined in greater

detail for the antagonist of *The Ten Commandments*, Pharaoh Ramses II, reigned from

1290-1224 B.C.E.[208] Generally, both plain and pleated sheer fabrics were widely used in

dress, and were draped in various methods more ornate than in former periods. With the

New Empire the beaded collar was almost universally adopted as an accessory for both

men and woman of the upper class, while the lower class dress remained static.[209] Such

dress for lower class men included a workman's leather loincloth, worn like a diaper but

with lattice slashing which most likely aided in flexibility and ventilation.[210]

A primary men's garment throughout Ancient Egypt was the *schenti*, also named

shent, skent, or schent by other costume historians (Figure 1).[211] By the New Empire the

schenti, a wrapped skirt, was characterized as being pleated, both at shorter and longer

lengths. The shorter lengths tended to be more fitted to the body while the longer lengths

were loose and full.[212] Often accompanying the schenti were decorative triangular panels

located at the center front (Figure 2).[213] A cape-like garment was often worn in addition

to the schenti, and was a short fabric shoulder cape which fastened at the center front.[214]

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[207]   Ibid.
[208]   Blanche Payne, Geitel Winakor, and Jane Farrell-Beck, *The History of Costume: From Ancient Mesopotamia Through the Twentieth Century, 2nd Ed* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers Inc., 1992), 44.
[209]   Ibid., 46
[210]   Ibid.
[211]   Tortora and Eubank. 29.
[212]   Ibid.
[213]   Ibid.
[214]   Ibid.

Figure 1. (Left) A rendering illustrating one style of a draped and pleated short schenti worn circa 1500 B.C.E.

Figure 2. (Right) A rendering illustrating a decorative triangular panel worn at the center front of a short, wrapped schenti, circa 1490 B.C.E.

Peacock, John. *The Chronicle of Western Costume: From the Ancient World to the Late Twentieth Century*. London: Thames & Hudson, Ltd., 2003.

Men of the New Empire adopted more cover over their torsos than before,

although the finely woven clothes were extremely sheer, nearly transparent.[215] Tortora

and Eubank refer to this garment as a *tunic*[216], noting that its origins came from cross-

cultural contact with the Near East during the New Empire.[217] Ancient depictions of this

tunic illustrate the sheerness of the garment, with the loincloths or short skirts

underneath, or skirts wrapped over the tunic.[218] This garment came in three different

variations, as explained by costume historians Blanche Payne et al. (Figures 3 and 4):

> . . . the draped, rectangular garment without a hole for the head; the draped
> garment with a hole for the head; and the closed, tubular, sleeveless garment that
> pulled over the head.[219]

Usually the neckline and armholes of these garments were piped in self fabric, the piping

at the neckline extending into fine tubing used as ties to close the neckline with a bow.[220]

Adding to the various methods of wearing this garment, the tunic was also pleated or

worn full and belted.[221]

Another popular garment in the New Empire was a large, rectangular piece of

plain or pleated sheer cloth with an opening for the head at the center and a slit at the

center front neckline; when draped over the shoulders, this garment was calf-length and

wide at the shoulders (Figure 4). This article of clothing was held together in various

ways. These include where the edges of the back panel were brought forward over the

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[215] Payne, Winakor and Farrell-Beck, 35.
[216] The tunic is also referred to as a kalasiris, both terms used by costume historians to describe the same garment during Ancient Egypt.
[217] Tortora and Eubank, 30.
[218] Ibid.
[219] Payne, Winakor and Farrell-Beck, 46-47.
[220] Ibid.
[221] Tortora and Eubank, 30.
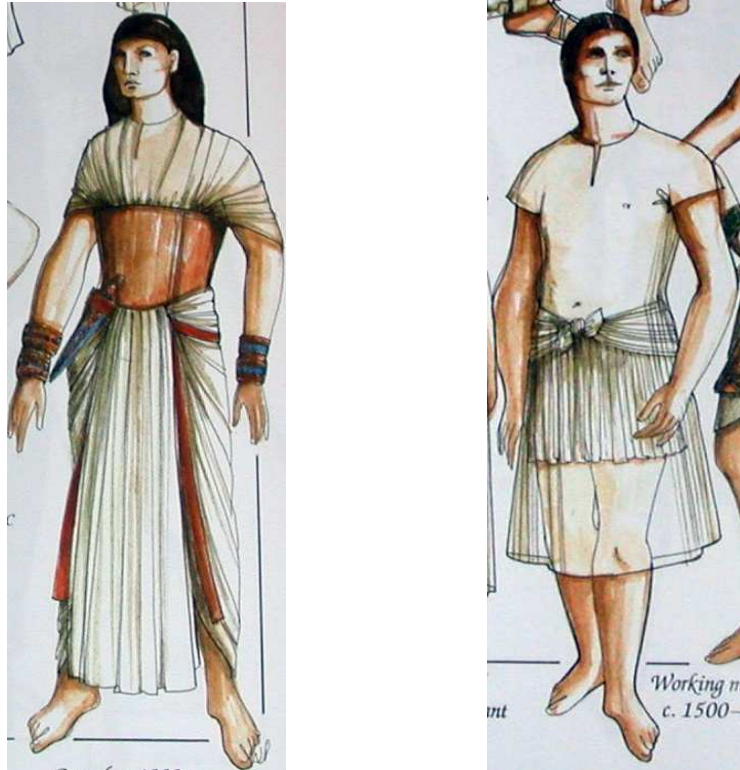
Figure 3. (Left) An example of a draped kalasiris style fashioned from a rectangular fabric without a hole for the head and held in place by a corset.

Figure 4. (Right) An example of a tunic-like kalasiris style with a hole for the head; this rendering illustrates a center front slit at the neckline with the sheer kalasiris worn over an opaque pleated schenti.

Peacock, John. *The Chronicle of Western Costume: From the Ancient World to the Late Twentieth Century*. London: Thames & Hudson, Ltd., 2003.

front panel and held in place with a belt, or when the selvage edges of the back panel were rolled at the waistline, the ends tied together at the center front.[222]

Other variations of draped and pleated garments for men in this period were the use of elaborately looped and wrapped fabrics which usually formed a puffed apron-like section below the waist at the center front (Figure 5). Additionally, these upper class men wore shorter tops separate from wrapped skirts that varied in length, the skirts either transparent or opaque. Another popular style worn was a long sheer skirt, pleated or plain, worn over an opaque short skirt; Payne et al. notes that if the outer skirt was pleated, it was "often pulled up in a sharply slanting line in front."[223]

According to Payne et al., high-ranking military officials typically wore a short, pullover garment with wide bands that extended at the front and were wrapped in a crossed fashion that tied at the center front (Figure 6). These bands were ornate with religious symbols or patterns, the shape of the bands analogous to the folded wings of a sacred bird, such as a hawk or a vulture. This top was worn with a short unbifurcated skirt and a royal apron that was also patterned similar to the top, the decoration most likely serving as protective signs.[224] Tortora and Eubank additionally explain the dress of soldiers, asserting that in some instances a sleeveless corset was worn, supported with straps, and was used to protect the torso with its construction of small plates of bone, metal, or leather. When in war, the pharaoh also dressed in this military regalia, with the addition of the *blue war crown*[225] and false beard.[226]

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[222]   Payne, Winakor, and Farrell-Beck, 47.

[223]   Ibid., 47-48.

[224]   Ibid., 49.

[225]   The blue war crown was constructed of leather molded spherically around the head, coming to a point at the top, and was decorated with gold sequins and a uraeus at the center front.
        Tortora and Eubank, 36.

[226]   Ibid., 38.

Figure 5. An example of elaborate looping, draping, and fine pleating of fabric to form an apron-like center front panel, popular in men's wear in Ancient Egypt. The image is from a relief from a tomb of the Eighteenth Dynasty, 1570 – 1350 B.C.E.

Payne, Blanche, Geitel Winakor, and Jane Farrell-Beck. *The History of Costume: From Ancient Mesopotamia Through the Twentieth Century, 2nd Ed.* New York: HarperCollins Publishers Inc., 1992.

Worn with these garments were royal accessories, such as the ornate royal apron worn around the waist and falling longer at the center front, which came to symbolize authority during the New Empire (Figure 6). The front consisted of numerous narrow, patterned panels with tassels at the edges and was often bordered at the lower edge, sometimes with the sacred cobra. To further the symbols of power, the pharaoh carried the shepherd's crook and the grain flail, representing his authority over animal husbandry and agriculture in Egypt.[227] Another royal headdress worn was the *Nemes headdress*, which was scarf-like and completely covered the head; it was fitted across the forehead and hung to the shoulders behind the ears and extended longer in the back, symbolizing the lion's tail.[228] When the royal headdress was not worn, wigs were used. The shape of the wig in the New Empire changed to an angular cut where the front was longer than the back and was also trimmer in size.

Also characteristic of the New Empire was the use of more ostentatious jewelry for both men and the women of royalty or upper class.[229] Jewelry also was a great source of color, including collars (as aforementioned), necklaces, arm and leg bands, bracelets, earrings, fillets, diadems, and rings.[230] Both beads and colored pebbles were used, as well as semi-precious stones such as turquoise, lapis-lazuli, and carnelian. Gold was utilized in granular and filigree jewelry techniques on scarabs and seals.[231]

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[227]   Payne, Winakor, and Farrell-Beck, 49-50
[228]   Tortora and Eubank, 37.
[229]   Payne, Winakor, and Farrell-Beck, 49-50.
[230]   Davenport, 15.
[231]   Ibid.

Figure 6. An illustration of a high-ranking military official donning a royal apron and a pullover garment with wide crossing bands extending over the torso (right), and a pharaoh donning a long schenti with a decorative triangular projection panel at the center front (left) from the New Empire period.

Cosgrave, Bronwyn. *The Complete History of Costume History from Ancient Egypt to the Present*. New York: Checkmark Books, 2000.

Ancient Greece

The Iliad, the Homeric epic poem recounting the events of the Trojan War in which the historic epic *Troy* was based, was written during Homer's time in c. 700 B.C.E. However, while Homer related his tales, heroes, and descriptions of daily life and customs to his own time, the Trojan War occurred in c. 1200 B.C.E. during the time of the Mycenaeans who predate the ancient Greeks.[232] Thus, both civilizations will be researched for information of historic dress.

The Mycenaeans came into power over Crete and the Minoan people in c. 1400 B.C.E.,[233] their civilization extending throughout Greece.[234] The Mycenae society, believed to have been Greek-speaking, was warriors that both traded and practiced "mercenary soldiering."[235] Wall paintings of the time period depict a brightly colored and extensively patterned preference in dress, the depictions of the textiles showing patterns that can be easily woven.[236] Because color was used so lavishly, the Mycenaeans may have being highly advanced in their dyeing techniques.[237]

Information on Mycenaean costume is fragmented partially because of a lack of literature on their costume with only highly subjective and divergent illustrations of their dress available from remaining frescos. Thus, historical accuracy of their dress remains somewhat tentative. It is known, however, that Mycenaean dress, unlike other ancient civilizations, was tailored, cut, and sewn to fit rather than woven and draped on the body.

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[232]   Tortora and Eubank, 50.
[233]   Payne et al. date the Mycenaean civilization from 1600 – 1100 B.C.E.
          Payne, Winakor, and Farrell-Beck, 64.
[234]   Tortora and Eubank, 46.
[235]   Payne, Winakor, and Farrell-Beck, 64.
[236]   Tortora and Eubank, 46.
[237]   Ibid.

This method of clothing production may have derived from the early use of leather as clothing.[238]

Mycenaean men's costume was mostly comprised of skirts which varied in length. A short skirt, which ended at the thigh and was made of an elaborately patterned fabric, was wrapped around the hips with a longer point of fabric weighted by a tassel hanging at the center front or the center back (Figure 7).[239] The longer lengths of skirts ended between the knee and ankle (Figure 8).[240] Also worn were fitted *perizoma* or briefs with a *codpiece* which covered the genitals (Figure 10).[241] Usually accompanying the skirt, men also wore a poncho-like cape which covered the upper body and was made from a rectangular piece of fabric folded over the top of the body with an opening for the head (Figure 9). Also worn were t-shaped tunics with either long or short sleeves which varied in length (Figures 11 and 12). These tunics were embellished in patterned designs at the hem, sides, and shoulder lines with decorative selvages, embroidery, or woven tapes. Belts were also worn by men and boys, and were made of fabric or leather and embellished with metal.[242]

Men wore beards and hair that was curly and either long or short and cut close to the head.[243] The longer hair was braided or held back with a *fillet*[244]. Hats were also

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[238]   Ibid., 47.
[239]   Ibid.
[240]   Ibid.
[241]   Payne, Winakor, and Farrell-Beck, 60.
[242]   Tortora and Eubank, 48.
[243]   Payne, Winakor, and Farrell-Beck, 66.
[244]   A *fillet* is defined as a headband used to hold back as well as adorn hair.
         Tortora and Eubank, 19.

Figure 7. An illustration of the weighted center front point of the skirts of the

Mycenaean men. Image from a fresco of Minos, Knossos, 1450 – 1375 B.C.E.

Payne, Blanche, Geitel Winakor, and Jane Farrell-Beck. *The History of Costume: From*

Ancient Mesopotamia Through the Twentieth Century, 2ⁿᵈ Ed. New York:

HarperCollins Publishers Inc., 1992.

Figure 8. (Left) An illustration of a long skirt worn by the Mycenaean, the bottom hem falling to between the knee and ankle.

Figure 9. (Right) An illustration of a poncho-like cape, covering the upper body with an opening for the head.

Line drawings by C. Esguerra.

Figure 10. A depiction of a Mycenaean man adorning a perizoma and codpiece.

Payne, Blanche, Geitel Winakor, and Jane Farrell-Beck. *The History of Costume: From Ancient Mesopotamia Through the Twentieth Century, 2nd Ed.* New York: HarperCollins Publishers Inc., 1992.
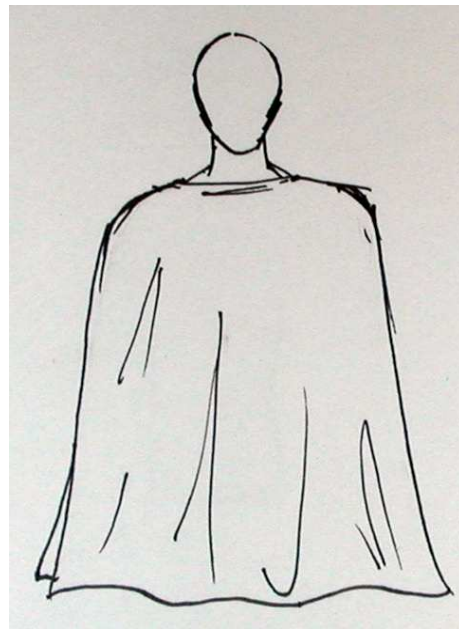
worn, such as turbans, rounded and crown-like with a plume, or wide-brimmed hats.[245]

Other adornment includes the use of jewelry such as rings, bracelets, and armlets.[246]

On their feet, men wore sandals or pointed-toe shoes; athletes wore a soft leather shoe that resembles a short sock or ankle support.[247] *Greaves*, or shin guards made of either bronze or leather, were worn when in battle or when traveling to protect their lower legs from the thorny terrain. *Leggings* were also worn which, unlike *greaves* that covered the front of the lower leg, covered both the front and back of the lower leg (Figure 11). In battle, the Mycenaean typically donned helmets, made of felted wool or leather covered in metal disks and embellished by horns, feathers, or strips of cloth, leggings, and carried a circular or figure-eight shields (Figure 13).[248]

Following the Mycenaean civilization was a Dark Age, an era that little is known about; emerging from this Dark Age was ancient Greece.[249] Common textiles were wool and linen, as well as imported silk for the wealthy, and was dyed into different colors or decorated with a woven or embroidered design. Greek costume was primarily woven into the appropriate size and then draped and pleated over the body rather than cut and sewn.[250]

During the Archaic period, lasting c. 800 – 300 B.C.E.[251], the era in Grecian history that Homer lived and wrote *The Iliad*, the *chiton* or tunic was the primary garment. The chiton was created by taking a single rectangular piece of fabric, wrapping it around the body, and then securing it in place with pins at the shoulders. Variations of

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[245]   Ibid., 48.
[246]   Ibid., 49.
[247]   Ibid.
[248]   Payne, Winakor, and Farrell-Beck, 66.
[249]   Tortora and Eubank, 50.
[250]   Ibid., 52.
[251]   Payne et al. date the Archaic Greek civilization from 750 – 480 B.C.E.
        Payne, Winakor, and Farrell-Beck, 69.

Figure 11. (Left) An illustration of a Mycenaean soldier donning a long-sleeved version of the tunic as well as leggings.

Figure 12. (Right) An illustration of a Mycenaean servant donning a short-sleeved version of the tunic.

Peacock, John. *The Chronicle of Western Costume: From the Ancient World to the Late Twentieth Century*. London: Thames & Hudson, Ltd., 2003.

Figure 13. An illustration of the military dress of Mycenaean men, outfitted in short skirts with tassels. Depiction taken from a surviving ceramic artifact.

Davenport, Millia. *The Book of Costume, Volume I*. New York: Crown Publishers, 1948.

styles were achieved by different methods of belting, pinning, and folding the fabric.[252]

During the Archaic period the *chitoniskos* style dominated men's chitons. This style was frequently short, ending at the hip or thigh, was worn close to the body, and made of patterned wool. Also worn throughout ancient Greek history was the *exomis chiton*, which was worn by working-class men and slaves. This garment was short, fastened over one shoulder, and was made of a durable wool fabric.[253] Also worn was the *kolobus*, made of two rectangles of fabric joined at the shoulders and sides with openings for the head and arms.[254]

The *himation* was also adorned, and was a large rectangular piece of fabric wrapped around the body in a shawl-like manner. This garment was usually depicted as being worn with the left shoulder being covered and the bulk of the fabric wrapped across the back, under the right arm, and draped again over the left shoulder or arm. Speculation exists regarding whether or not it was more frequently worn with or without a chiton underneath.[255] However, because the himation was considered a more formal garment, it is believed that it was worn by politicians and philosophers without a chiton underneath.[256] A *chlamys*, or a rectangular cloak worn over the chiton and pinned over the left or right shoulder, was worn during cool weather or traveling, and could be used as a blanket at night. Also frequently worn with the chlamys was a wide brimmed hat, called a *petasos*, that provided shade in the summer and cover during rain.[257]

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[252] Tortora and Eubank. 53.
[253] Ibid., 55.
[254] Payne, Winakor, and Farrell-Beck, 69.
[255] Tortora and Eubank, 53.
[256] Payne, Winakor, and Farrell-Beck, 70.
[257] Tortora and Eubank, 53.

Like the Mycenaeans, the *perizoma* was worn by the Greeks, either as an undergarment or during athletic contests. Also similar to the Mycenaeans, the Archaic Greeks wore their hair long or medium in length and with beards. Hats such as the *Phrygian bonnet*, a brimless cap with a high padded peak which fell towards the front, and the *pilos*, a short-brimmed or brimless hat with a pointed crown, were also worn. On their feet, men wore sandals, fitted ankle or mid-calf length shoes, or leather boots that laced at the front, the latter worn for travel or warfare.[258] During the Archaic period, it was customary to be barefoot indoors.[259]

Military costume for Archaic Greek men often varied from city to city, although all similarly wore protective clothing over a tunic. Such protective clothing includes breast plates made of metal or fabric *corselets* covered in mounted metal disks, helmets made of leather or bronze with high crests and chin straps, and greaves, similar to the Mycenaeans. Also worn were wide metal belts and shields.[260] Although Tortora and Eubank believe that the *cuirass*, a protective laminated linen garment, was not worn until after the archaic period, Payne et al. assert that the garment was worn contemporary to the corselet in battle.[261]

Ancient Rome

Ancient Rome is broken into two eras: the Roman Republic (509 B.C.E. – 27 B.C.E.) in which the government was comprised of two elected consuls, a senate, and a

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[258]   Ibid., 53 – 54.
[259]   Payne, Winakor, and Farrell-Beck, 72.
[260]   Tortora and Eubank, 59.
[261]   Payne, Winakor, and Farrell-Beck, 71 – 72.

popular assembly,[262] and the Roman Empire (27 B.C.E. – 478 A.D.), where the government shifted to the control of a single emperor.[263] Because the historic epic *Spartacus* takes place in 73 B.C.E., during the Roman Republic, and *Gladiator* takes place in 180 A.D., during the Roman Empire, both time periods will be examined for their history of dress. Although the *toga* was worn by men in both eras, there were several differences in other forms of men's costume.

Over time with the decline of Ancient Greece and the rise of Ancient Rome, the symbolism behind the *toga*, an elliptically shaped draped garment, became so important to the increasing distinction between citizens, non-citizens, men, and women that laws were passed allowing only male citizens to wear togas.[264] During the reign of Emperor Augustus, any woman seen in a toga was automatically considered a prostitute or divorced due to her alleged infidelity.[265] Thus, ancient Roman dress "often, if not primarily, signified rank, office, or authority."[266]

The toga was the primary garment of upper class men and came in various styles in accordance to one's class or social status:

- *Toga pura* or *toga viriles*: plain white and unembellished; worn after one became sixteen and worn by ordinary citizen males

- *Toga candida*: similar to *toga pura* but bleached to an extreme white; worn by candidates for political office

262 Tortora and Eubank, 69.
263 Payne, Winakor, and Farrell-Beck, 106.
264 Tortora and Eubank, 72.
265 Ibid.
266 Ibid., 70.

- *Toga praetexta*: with a purple two to three inch wide border; worn by sons (until sixteen) and daughters (until twelve) of nobility, as well as adult magistrates and high priests

- *Toga pulla*: black or dark toga; worn for mourning

- *Toga picta*: purple with gold embroidery; worn on special occasions by victorious generals or other distinguished men

- *Toga trabea*: multi-colored and striped; worn by augurs ("religious officials who prophesied the future") and important officials[267]

Dyes were employed in an array of colors which further identified the hierarchy of power when applied to men's tunics and togas. Bands of purple color which extended from hem to hem and over the shoulders called *clavi* (or *clavas* when singular) were applied to the tunics of senators and of emperors. Clavi on the tunics of knights were narrower, signifying their rank, and by the 1st century A.D. all male nobility wore clavi on their tunics. All garments were primarily made of wool or flax, although silk was used by only the wealthy and was often blended with linen.[268]

During the Roman Republic, men's costume was heavily influenced by Greek and Etruscan dress. It is believed that the *toga* derived from the Etruscan *tebenna*[269], while the use of clavi and additional bulkiness in dress derived from Greek dress. Yet, unlike Greek men, Roman men wore several layers and never appeared publicly with an exposed bare chest under their wrap.[270] Men in this period wore the *colobium* alone or in

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[267] Ibid., 71.
[268] Ibid., 70 – 71.
[269] A *tebenna* was an elliptical shaped woven mantle that was worn by both men and women and was worn draped over the body in various ways.
      Ibid., 67.
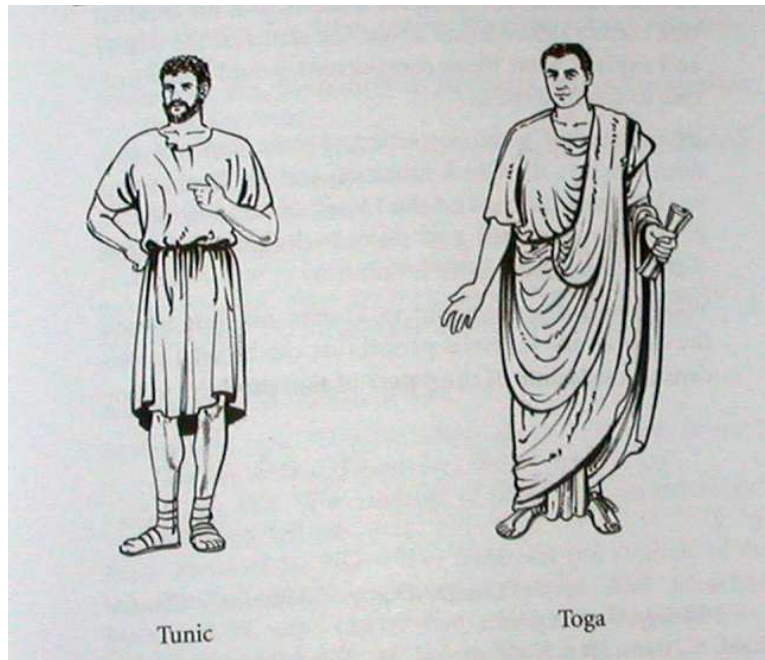[270] Payne, Winakor, and Farrell-Beck, 101.

Figure 14. Illustrations of the colobium tunic (on the left) and the toga draped over the colobium (right) as worn by men in the Roman Republic period.

Tortora, Phyllis G. and Keith Eubank. *Survey of Historic Costume: A History of Western Dress, 3rd Ed.* New York: Fairchild Publications. 1998.

addition to the toga, the garment deriving from the Greek *kolobum* and worn wider and less fitted than the Greeks (Figure 14).[271] Towards the latter portion of the Republic period, the toga became larger and bulkier while still retaining its basic elliptical shape.

While the toga was worn in ceremonial, state, and religious occasions, the *pallium*, similar to the Greek *himation*, was worn on less formal occasions. The distinguishing difference between the pallium and the toga was that the former was based on a rectangular textile and had straight corners when draped on the body, whereas the latter was a semi-circular textile and had curved edges when draped on the body.[272] Typically worn beneath was a *subligar*, or a loincloth for middle and upper class, most likely derived from the Greek perizoma (Figure 15). The subligar was also worn by the lower classes as a working garment.[273]

The *paludamentum*, similar to the Greek *chlamys*, was worn pinned at the right shoulder by generals as a military cloak and by emperors during the Empire period (Figure 17). The *sagum* was also adopted by Roman soldiers, a small, blanket-like textile used as a wrap, also similar to the Greek chlamys (Figure 18). Also worn as outerwear was the *laena* (Figure 20), a large semicircular wrap that was heavy and brightly colored that pinned at the right shoulder like a *paludamentum*, and the *lacerna*, a semicircular wrap similar to the *laena* but was made of a lighter, finer fabric. Both the laena and the lacerna were worn by all classes and varied in length, the longer lengths worn by the upper class. For especially bad weather the *paenula* was worn, a cape with a center front opening with a pointed hood and made of homespun material; when worn by dignitaries

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[271]   Ibid., 102.
[272]   Ibid., 103.
[273]   Tortora and Eubank, 74.
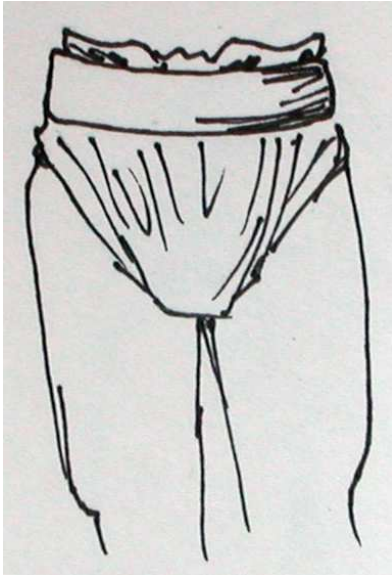
Figure 15. (Left) A line drawing of a draped and belted subligar from Ancient Rome.

Figure 16. (Right) A line drawing of a paenula, with the pointed hood drawn over the head.

Line drawings by C. Esguerra.

Figure 17. (Left) An illustration of a Roman soldier in military regalia adorning a red paludamentum and lorica.

Figure 18. (Right) An illustration of a Roman shepherd donning the rectangular sagum wrap.

Peacock, John. *The Chronicle of Western Costume: From the Ancient World to the Late Twentieth Century*. London: Thames & Hudson, Ltd., 2003.

the paenula was made of finer fabrics (Figure 16). Additionally, the *casula* was worn,

meaning "little house," and slipped over the head similar to a poncho (Figure 21). The

cucullus was usually worn with the casula or the laena or lacerna, and was a hood

attached to a small shoulder cape.[274]

Men of the Republic wore their hair short, sometimes cut straight around the ears

in a "bowl-style." Additionally, beards were seldom worn. Adornments worn were

fibulae, pins used to fasten their draped garments, and rings sometimes used to emboss

sealed letters and documents.[275]

As the Roman Republic waned in power and the Roman Empire began, changes

in men's costume were initially less drastic with the continuance of the *colobium* and

toga as common dress. Eventually, however, the colobium grew even wider than its form

during the Republic, so wide that the shoulders of the garment fell to the forearm. The

toga similarly went through changes, primarily the addition of the *sinus* and the *umbo*.[276]

Both of these additions in the toga mark an evolution towards a more complicated

draped garment (Figure 19). The sinus of the toga was formed using the overfold of the

wrapped toga and rolling it into loose folds that crossed behind the body and under the

right arm, at which time the folds were loose causing a draped apron effect.[277] This was

also used as a pocket. The umbo, meaning "the knob," was created by pulling fabric

from the fabric formally placed on the shoulder to the floor, creating a clump of fabric

and a draping effect across the body. Unlike the *sinus* which had some functional use,

the umbo was primarily decorative, although at times men would use the excess overfold

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[274]   Payne, Winakor, and Farrell-Beck, 103-104.
[275]   Ibid., 104-105.
[276]   Ibid., 107.
[277]   Tortora and Eubank, 72.

Figure 19. An example of the increased complication of the draped toga in the Roman Empire with the addition of the umbo and sinus. The statue was of Augustus Caesar, 27 B.C.E. – 14 A.D., wearing the toga over a colobium.

Payne, Blanche, Geitel Winakor, & Jane Farrell-Beck. *The History of Costume: From Ancient Mesopotamia Through the Twentieth Century, 2ⁿᵈ Ed.* New York: HarperCollins Publishers Inc., 1992.

fabric of the umbo to pull over their heads in a hood-like fashion when entering a sacred area.[278]

By the late Republic period through the Empire, the *"toga with the folded bands"* developed, where the overfold was essentially pleated rather than hanging freely when draped, creating a smooth diagonal band across the chest from the shoulder when worn. Eventually the *toga* became very cumbersome and may have lead to the heightened popularity of the *pallium*, a more comfortable garment similar to the Greek himation and belted.[279]

A new garment, the *feminalia*, was adopted by men in the Republic period as dress restrictions became more lax. Feminalia were fitted, knee-length breeches which covered the upper legs (Figure 20). This adoption was significant because during the Republic and early Empire periods, leg coverings or trousers were considered to be "unmasculine and barbarous" because of their affiliation with enemies of Rome, the Gauls. However, this adoption became necessary as soldiers traveled northward through Europe and in colder weather. Eventually generals and emperors appeared publicly wearing feminalia.[280]

Another new adoption by men in the Empire was the *tunica talaris*, a long sleeved tunic that came to the mid-calf (Figure 22). Additionally, the *dalmatica* was introduced shortly after the talaris, and was a shorter and wider version of the tunica with wider sleeves. Both of these garments were tubular and were pulled over the head rather than draped.[281] Also more commonly worn was a beard, although the clean shaven look was

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278   Ibid., 73-74.
279   Ibid.
280   Payne, Winakor, andFarrell-Beck, 107 – 108.
281   Ibid., 109.

Figure 20. A relief of Roman men donning colobiums and laenas. The Roman to the most right dons feminalia beneath his colobium. Relief from 130 – 138 A.D.

Payne, Blanche, Geitel Winakor, & Jane Farrell-Beck. *The History of Costume: From Ancient Mesopotamia Through the Twentieth Century, 2nd Ed.* New York: HarperCollins Publishers Inc., 1992.
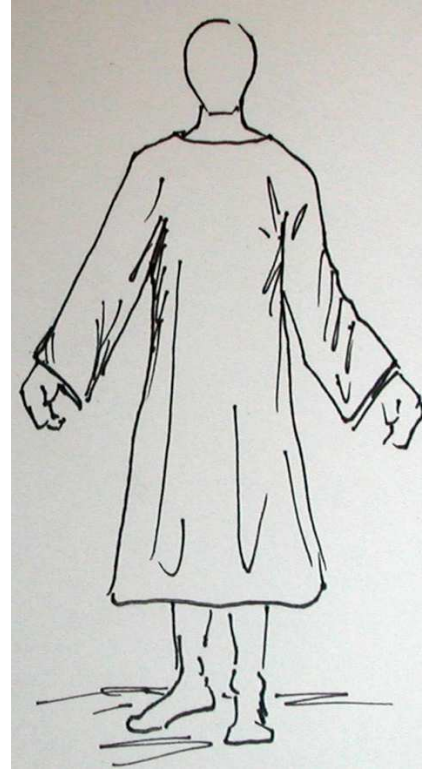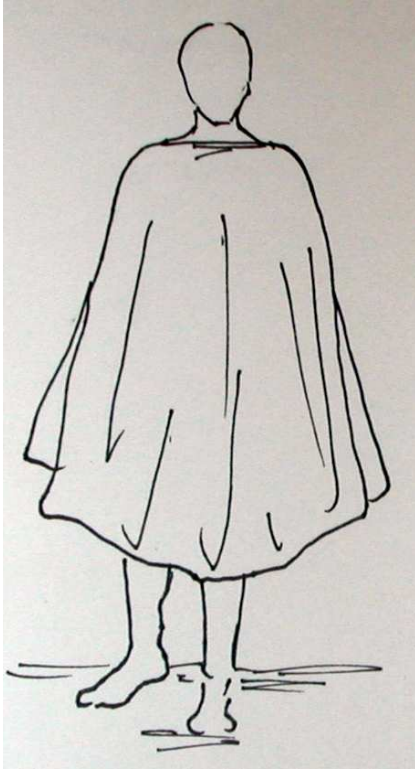
Figure 21. (Left) An illustration of the casula, or "little-house" worn by Roman men.

Figure 22. (Right) An illustration of the tunica talaris, which gained popularity in the Roman Empire when favored over the cumbersome togas.

Line drawings by C. Esguerra.

still widespread, and the use of opulent jewelry, particularly rings, bracelets, and crowns made of gold and pearls.[282]

Garments worn in the military were specified by rank, and armor, which was made of high quality, was taken seriously. The *lorica*, or breastplate, was often worn for parades or official occasions, but not in battle because they were too heavy (Figure 17). Red was also frequently worn, as it was the official color of the Roman army; thus, soldiers wore wraps of red.[283]

Understanding Visual Culture

Due to the visual nature of the primary sources used in this study, the researcher must be mindful in the method of analysis and data collection of the movies. Viewing movies for historical accuracy in costuming faces the challenge of the researcher's biases, and thus required a thorough understanding of the impact of visual culture, how to read visual cues and information from the movies and the costuming within the movies, and how to utilize appropriate qualitative research methods in order to gather data and to analyze it. Marita Sturken and Lisa Cartwright succinctly explained the complexities of analyzing visual culture, stating,

> Through looking we negotiate social relationships and meanings. . . . Looking involves learning to interpret and, like other practices, looking involves relationships of power. To willfully look or not is to exercise choice and influence.[284]

Invariably, biases in looking and interpreting what was seen cannot completely be avoided due to the personal interpretation of visual data. However, by understanding the

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[282]   Ibid., 111.
[283]   Ibid., 110.
[284]   Marita Sturken and Lisa Cartwright, *Practices of Looking: An Introduction to Visual Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 10.

relationship between the viewer and the visual data, biases in data collection from the

historic epic movies was anticipated to be lessened.

Theory of Visual Culture

Malcolm Barnard defined *visual culture* as "the enormous variety of visible two-

and three-dimensional things that human beings produce and consume as part of their

cultural and social lives.[285] Barnard continued this definition by commenting on the

encompassing nature of visual culture, stating, "Visual culture . . . is an inclusive

conception. It makes possible the inclusion of all forms of art and design, as well as

personal or body-related visual phenomena, under a single term."[286] Sturken and

Cartwright concurred, explaining that visual culture was a manifestation of culture in a

visual form, including paintings, prints, photographs, television, advertisements, and

film.[287] Because movies and dress are part of our visual culture, it was necessary to

understand the basic concepts of visual culture.

One such important concept in understanding visual culture was the framework in

which movies were laid; it must be recognized that movies are created within "dynamics

of social power and ideology" which project itself through the viewed movie.[288] These

ideologies were significant because movies oftentimes reinforce aspects of social

ideologies, which lead to the perceived images appearing natural rather than part of a

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[285] Malcolm Barnard, *Approaches to Understanding Visual Culture* (London: Palgrave, 2001), 2.
[286] Ibid.
[287] Sturken and Cartwright, 4.
[288] Ibid., 21.

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cultural construct.[289] Being aware of these cultural nuances that abided by a society's

ideology was the first step in deconstructing visual images in movies.

Dress as Visual Culture: A Means of Silent, Salient Communication

Because the costuming of the male protagonists per historic epic movie were the

visual images subject to the researcher's deconstruction and analysis, clothing as a visual

means of communicating identity must be addressed.

Theories surrounding dress and adornment as a means to convey a visual message

about the wearer were significant to deconstructing the visual images in movies. Visual

images of the characters as portrayed by their costuming played an important role in the

plot and character development of every movie, as well as the social era the movie was

produced and released. Within the social context, the functions of dress served the

purposes of differentiating the sexes, age, occupation, marital and socioeconomic status,

and one's group membership.[290] Furthermore, in Patricia Cunningham and Susan Voso

Lab's essay, "Understanding Dress and Popular Culture," they stated that "clothing

serves as a medium for the expression of popular culture."[291] Thus, what one wears

inescapably symbolized cultural influences. These influences—society, self-perception,

the need to conform, practicality, gender—were signatures of every culture.

Social scientist Susan Kaiser affirmed that "Cues such as clothing and appearance

are often used to simplify and make sense of social interactions . . . based on the idea that

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[289]   Ibid.

[290]   Tortora and Eubank, 2.

[291]   Patricia A. Cunningham and Susan Voso Lab, "Understanding Dress and Popular Culture" in *Dress and Popular Culture*, eds. Patricia A. Cunningham and Susan Voso Lab, 5 (Bowling Green, Ohio: Bowling Green State University Press, 1991).

reality is too complex to be comprehended in its entirety."[292] The individual's choice of

clothing was their expression of how they wish to be perceived, whether conscious of it

or not. People used clothing to communicate to others that they belong to a certain

community through adhering to that community's unofficial or official dress codes

because, in large scale cultures where society members were too numerous to identify

and understand on a personal level, anonymity of one's concept of self as a community

member and as an individual was lessened by the visual cues of clothing.[293]

Cunningham and Voso Lab furthermore stated, "More than any other material

product, clothing plays a symbolic role in mediating the relationship between nature,

people and their socio-cultural environment."[294] This "symbolic role" of mediating the

relationships between people with nature and their socio-cultural environment was

essentially the social processes involved in the social-interactionist perspective. Because

clothing basically was a form of visual socialization, the symbolic-interactionist

perspective was, as Susan Kaiser states, a "process of negotiation, and individuals are

said to have communicated meaningfully when the same response is evoked in an

observer as in the self."[295] This indicated that we can interpret symbols (in this case,

methods of dress) to anticipate one's actions, thus, giving us the capacity to be conscious

of ourselves and ultimately driving the fashion cycle. The individual pieced together

symbols of what they perceive themselves to be (or, conversely, how they wish to be

perceived) with every article of clothing they decided to wear.

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[292]   Ibid., 34.
[293]   John H. Bodley, *Cultural Anthropology: Tribes, States, and the Global System* (Mountain View, CA: Mayfield Publishing Company, 1994), 16.
[294]   Cunningham and Voso Lab, 6.
[295]   Susan B. Kaiser, *The Social Psychology of Clothing: Symbolic Appearances in Context, 2nd Ed* (New York: Fairchild Publications, 1997), 41.

Gender differentiation and perception through dress was considered one of the most fundamental aspects of dress in many societies, reflecting the culture's gender norms and appropriate gender roles per sex.[296] Men and women use dress as a tool to distinguish their gender, the methods of adornment evolving in accordance with the similarly evolving society. Alison Lurie observed this connection between the separations of dress between the sexes, furthermore remarking,

> In some periods this separation is absolute: what is properly worn by a man cannot be worn by a woman, and vice versa. As might be expected, at such times the birth rate is usually high. In other periods, such as our own, many items of clothing are sexually interchangeable, and the birth rate is lower.[297]

Thus, the disparity between equality between genders was manifested in the disparity between gender dressing. Yet, these dictations of gender specific dress differed from one culture to another and from one period of time to another. The example provided of this paradigm given by costume historians Phyllis Tortora and Keith Eubank was that,

> From the last Middle Ages until the 20th century in western Europe, . . . skirted garments (with a few exceptions such as kilts) were designated as feminine dress; breeches or trousers as male dress.[298]

Fashions and norms of dress per sex, therefore, evolved along with the natural progression of society.

Reading Visual Cues

The next step in deconstructing visual images in film and in costuming was to understand *semiotics*, the process of interpreting an image's significance.[299] Semiotics, or the study of signs, emphasized the unraveling of "the author's assumptions, motives,
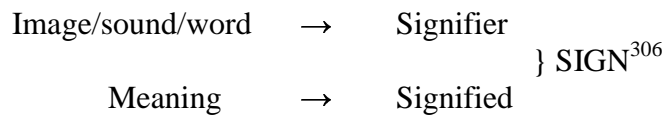
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[296]   Tortora and Eubank, 2-3.
[297]   Alison Lurie, *The Language of Clothes* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 2000), 213-124.
[298]   Tortora and Eubank, 3.
[299]   Sturken and Cartwright, 28.

and intended consequences as revealed by analysis of the document[300]."[301] The objective

of semiotics was to understand the author's intent within the social context their work

was created, seek past stylizations and obfuscations, and find a "deeper" meaning behind

the analyzed signs.[302] The theories surrounding semiotics were based on the theories of

philosopher Charles Piece and linguist Ferdinand de Sassure.[303] While both intellectuals

formulated prevalent ideas in semiotics, Sassure's writings were utilized by film scholars

more frequently; one such disciple of Sassure whose method of understanding visual

representation and signs that was particularly relevant to this study was scholar Roland

Barthes.[304] One of Barthes' contributions to semiotics was his development of a model[305]

which broke down a sign into the signifier (images, sounds, or words) and the signified

(an appended meaning):

$$\left.\begin{array}{lll} \text{Image/sound/word} & \rightarrow & \text{Signifier} \\ \text{Meaning} & \rightarrow & \text{Signified} \end{array}\right\} \text{SIGN}[306]$$

For example, the image of a yellow ribbon as a signifier may derive the meaning of

patriotism as signified.[307] Together, these elements create the sign which symbolizes

both a meaning and an image.

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[300]   The "document" of this study was the chosen historic epics analyzed for their historic costuming.
[301]   David L. Altheide, *Qualitative Media Analysis* (London: SAGE Publications, 1996), 7.
[302]   Ibid., 8.
[303]   Sturken and Cartwright, 28.
[304]   Ibid.
[305]   Malcolm Barnard noted that Barthes' work was produced to appear mathematical, Barthes often utilizing diagrams, matrices, and other such systematic and objective appearances in order to establish semiotics as more of a scientific field. His methods of conveying his ideas in such a matter led him to eventually state that "he had been misled by a 'euphoric dream of scientificity.'"
        Barnard, 25.
[306]   Sturken and Cartwright, 29.
[307]   This example was taken from the general point of view of an American.

When attempting to understand a sign and its image, it must be noted that there were two ways in which a meaning can be extracted from an image. The image was simultaneously *encoded*, or created with meanings intended by the producer of the image, and *decoded*, or understood according to a viewer's cultural context and societal assumptions.[308] All images were both encoded and decoded, with the latter being the stance of the researcher of this study, for the images of the epic movies were decoded of their meanings within the current social setting rather than the original social setting of the era in which these films were made.

As a decoder viewer of the films, there were three different positions that can be taken, according the theorist Stuart Hall.[309] The first of these was the *dominant-hegemonic reading* where the viewer assumed a relatively passive decoding of the image and could receive a dominant message without inquisition.[310] This particular position of viewing, where the decoder was essentially receiving the meanings intended by the encoder, was generally seen as analytically the least useful[311] of the three positions.[312] The second position, the *negotiated reading*, assumed a more active reading where the viewer deciphered an image both by the dominate dictates of society and by the personal experiences and emotions that were appended to certain images through the course of one's life.[313] Because culturally and personally appended meanings differ from one viewer to another, the decoded message was typically unaligned with the intended

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[308] Sturken and Cartwright, 56.
[309] Ibid., 57.
[310] Ibid.
[311] Socio-cultural anthropologist Marcus Banks strengthens Sturken and Cartwright's assertion that the dominant-hegemonic reading of images is the least useful of the three positions because "In order to do good research, a researcher has to enter into that process self-consciously, not pretend that they can somehow transcend their humanity and stand outside, merely observing."

  Marcus Banks, *Visual Methods in Social Research* (London: SAGE Publications, 2001), 112.
[312] Sturken and Cartwright, 57.
[313] Ibid.

encoded message.[314] The final position was the *oppositional reading*. This reading was

the most aggressive in that the viewer was more critical of the dominant meaning of an

image and usually decoded an image subversively, reading underlying meanings that

were not inherent or intentional to the original encoder within the original context of the

image's production.[315]

John Van Maanen has also distinguished three modes of decoding and analysis,

what he referred to as "ethnographic writing and their conventions."[316] The first of these

was the *realist tales* where the focus of the study was on the people viewed, this being the

usual form of ethnographic reportage.[317] The second and third were *confessional tales*

and *impressionist tales*. Confessional tales tend to be a researcher's more personalized

accounts of the images viewed, while impressionist tales was described as "dramatic

recall" of the "fieldwork experience."[318] The latter two of John Van Maanen's decoding

strategies were of little relevance to this research; however, the realist tale strategy was

beneficial during the recording of accuracy in historic costuming because it was the least

biased of the three.

Utilization of Appropriate Qualitative Research Methods

The processes of qualitative research and analysis that were utilized to gather data

and then interpret the semiotics of it in this study generally follow an outline entitled

"Process of Qualitative Document Analysis" provided by media research scholar David

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[314] Ibid.
[315] Ibid., 58.
[316] Michael Owens Jones, *Studying Organizational Symbolism: What, How, Why?* (Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications, 1996), 60.
[317] Ibid.
[318] Ibid.

L. Altheide. Based on his assertion that content analysis was the most basic part of qualitative research, Altheide developed a model outlining the process of gathering and analyzing visual data qualitatively.[319]   Although his model was used for the qualitative media analysis of television news reports, a revised model appropriated for movies was developed for this research due to the visual decoding used when gathering and analyzing the data.[320] The original steps of Altheide's "Process of Qualitative Document Analysis" were as follows:

1. *Topic* – identify a problem to be the subject of research

2. *Ethno-graphic study/literature* – essentially a review of literature to gain a thorough understanding of the data intended to be collected

3. *A few documents* – become familiar with the visual sources analogous to the sources subject to research

4. *Draft protocol* – create a draft of a data collection sheet

5. *Examine documents* – test the protocol data collection sheet using several documents

6. *Revise protocol* – refine the protocol to be the standard data collection sheet used in the research

7. *Theoretical sample* – choose a sampling rational strategy, i.e. theoretical, cluster, stratified, comparative, etc.

8. *Collect data* – using the data collection sheet, collect data from documents subject to study

9. *Code data* – analyze and decode the collected data

[319]   David L. Altheide, *Qualitative Media Analysis* (London: SAGE Publications, 1996), 23-44.
[320]   The readjusted and appropriated steps based on Altheide's "Process of Qualitative Document Analysis" used by the researcher are available in Chapter 3 Methodology on page 87.

10. *Compare items* – contrast and note key differences within categories of data collected

11. *Case studies* – create brief summaries and examples of found data

12. *Report* – integrate findings, key concepts of its particular field of research, and the researcher's interpretations[321]

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[321] Altheide, 13.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

The implications of American post-WWII Cold War gender dynamics in the

historic epic movies of the relatively conservative 1950s and early 1960s[322] required a

thorough understanding of gender studies, ancient Greco-Roman and Egyptian culture

and dress, clothing as a means of non-verbal identity-shaping, and popular culture of

post-WWII America[323]. Furthermore, an understanding of post-WWII cinema and the

impact of historic epics on the film industry and society was equally essential in reaching

the objectives of this research due to the cinematic nature of the primary sources utilized

in this study.

Similar to the analysis of the post-WWII historic epic movies, the implications of

the 1990s and early 2000s gender dynamics in the historic epic movies of this relatively

liberal era[324] required a thorough understanding of gender studies, ancient Greco-Roman

and Egyptian culture and dress, clothing as a means of non-verbal identity-shaping, and

popular culture of late twentieth century America. In this case, the time period of the

1990s and early 2000s fulfilled this need, for this era was relatively liberal in comparison

to the 1950s and early 1960s and produced a second wave of historic epic movies. This

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[322]   The term "conservative" was appropriated to the 1950s and early 1960s as determined by previous
research outlined in the Chapter 2 Review of Literature.
[323]   The researcher used the term "post-WWII" generally, encompassing the Cold War social
phenomenon in American culture following and resulting from America's roles in WWII. All references to
post-WWII assume the inclusion of the Cold War social dynamics as well.
[324]   The term "liberal" was appropriated to the 1990s and early 2000s as determined by previous research
outlined in the Chapter 2 Review of Literature.

comparison of differing eras in which historic epics were produced was necessary in order to gain a greater understanding of the relationships between genders, clothing, cinema, and history with post-WWII historic epics compared with these same relationships from a relatively liberal era in America's history.

The complexity and integrality of this study required a strict adherence to a pre-determined procedure of interpretation of the selected films, *The Ten Commandments* (1956), *Spartacus* (1960), *Gladiator* (2000), and *Troy* (2004). The costuming of the male protagonist of each film was first decoded for its historical level of accuracy, and then was analyzed for how costuming may reflect the societal tide of post-WWII or 1990s America. This endeavor was potentially influenced by subjectivity and biases. To lessen such biases preliminary research on appropriate methods of qualitative research concerning the visual medium of cinema was conducted and reported in the Review of Literature. This information was then applied to the researcher's method of data collection and data analysis.

Application of Qualitative Research to the Collection of Data

Movies utilize a combination of visual and audio signs to relay a story. The produced images comprising a film are merely representations of an event or a social history, created by the "narrators," or the film producers, and the audience through communication, interaction, and feedback.[325] Because a movie is composed of a series of intentional and well planned images and sounds, Barthes' semiotic model was specifically relevant to this study of costuming in films. This was primarily because the

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[325]   Michael Owens Jones, *Studying Organizational Symbolism: What, How, Why?* (Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications, 1996), 2.

researcher sought to fully understand (sign) the socio-cultural implications (signified) of the level of accuracy of the costuming (signifier) of the chosen historic epic movies.

Level of accuracy of the costuming   →   Signifier

} Costume →   SIGN

Socio-cultural implications   →   Signified

Through the course of decoding the sign or costuming of the male protagonist, the researcher assumed the position of Maanen's realist tale and both Hall's dominant-hegemonic reader and oppositional reader at various steps of the research. The *dominant-hegemonic* and *reading realist tale* positions were assumed when first viewing the images subject to research, the historic costuming of the epic movies. The dominant-hegemonic reading position, where the viewer assumed a relatively passive decoding of the image without inquisition, was used in order to objectively assess the accuracy of the costumes worn by the chosen male protagonist character per movie.

The dominant-hegemonic position of decoding was done with the aid of a checklist, constructed using the information of historical dress gathered in the Review of Literature. A separate checklist was created per historic epic movie based on the civilization and time period in which the movie was set prior to the viewing of the movies.[326] Furthermore, all checklists were constructed prior to the viewing of all movies subject to research. The checklist identified the movie viewed, the time period the movie took place, and the male protagonist. Additionally, a table with a list of garments, brief descriptions of each garment, and the frequency[327] of the amount of times the costume was worn through the movie was included. The listed garments were limited to men's wear and basic components of dress which excluded accessories, shoes, hats, and

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[326] See Appendices A through D for completed checklists.
[327] The frequency of each garment was checked for each change in costume rather than for each change in scene, for the same costume may be worn through several scene changes.

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textile specifics. Particular attention was given to unbifurcated, skirt-like garments.

Columns were also provided in the table on the amount of times the costume was

accurately worn by the protagonist, as well as a column providing an area for

explanations of circumstances where the garment was inaccurately portrayed. Further, a

column of any additional observations on peculiarities of the costuming was provided.[328]

The elements of costume and definitions of each costume chosen by the

researcher for the checklist were primarily based on the previous research of three

sources of historic costume: Blanche Payne, Geitle Winakor, and Jane Ferrell-Beck's *The*

History of Costume: From Ancient Mesopotamia Through the Twentieth Century, Phyllis

G. Tortora and Keith Eubank's *Survey of Historic Costume: A History of Western Dress,*

3ʳᵈ Ed., and Millia Davenport's *The Book of Costume, Volume I*. However, due to the

nature of ancient civilizations and limited survival of authentic artifacts, many

discrepancies on ancient historic dress between costume historians were encountered by

the researcher. In such cases, information provided by Payne et al. was given precedence

due to the source's more thorough and consistent reporting on ancient historic dress. The

garments listed on the checklist were an amalgamation of the information provided by the

aforementioned costume historians.

Following the dominant-hegemonic checklist, the realist tale mode of decoding

where the focus of the study was on the people viewed was included. The realist tales

portion provided an area where the researcher was able to record any observations on the

protagonist character's interaction and development through the movie as a whole. This

data involved the recording of character interaction, development, and gender dynamic,

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[328]   The addition of accurate check marks and inaccurate check marks with explanations should equal the total number of check marks for costume frequency.

as well as the male protagonist's portrayal as the leading male hero figure. These character observations were recorded simultaneous to the recording of historical accuracy of costuming with the dominant-hegemonic checklist as the researcher viewed the historic epics, each movie being viewed by the researcher only a single time. This more anthropologic assessment was included to aid in the researcher's oppositional reading during the ultimate analysis of the level of accuracy of the costuming and its relationship with the era in which the historic epic was produced.

Once the researcher gathered the data and determined the level of historical accuracy of costuming for each movie using the dominant-hegemonic reading and the realist tales mode of decoding, the *oppositional reading* position was then assumed. The image-based findings were analyzed in an aggressive and subversive manner in which the researcher attempted to decode possible implications and reasons for the level of accuracy in historic costuming for the chosen historic epic movies. This oppositional reading analysis was based on the synthesis of information gathered in the review of literature on the social mores and gender dynamics of the time period in which a particular movie was produced, the level of accuracy assessed in the dominant-hegemonic reading, and the observations made in the realist tale semi-subjective notes.

The oppositional reading of the level of accuracy and its relation to the historic epic as a whole and the time in which the movie was made was necessary because, as David L. Altheide explored in *Qualitative Media Analysis*, content analysis was the most basic part of research.[329] The outcome of the analysis made on the levels of accuracy in the historic costuming of the selected movies in this study was analyzed and recorded in Chapter 4, Results and Discussion. Further implications found by the researcher on the

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[329]   David L. Altheide, *Qualitative Media Analysis* (London: SAGE Publications, 1996), 23-44.

relationships between historic epics, gender dynamics per social era, and levels of accuracy in historic costuming were expanded upon in Chapter 5, Conclusions and Recommendations.

Procedure

David L. Altheide's "Process of Qualitative Document Analysis" was chosen by the researcher as a template to base the procedural steps in gathering the data and analyzing the level of accuracy for each movie. This model was particularly used because it employed the principles of qualitative research in gathering semiotic data through the medium of motion pictures.

Altheide's model, as earlier explained in Chapter 2, cannot be applied in its original format to this particular study because it was tailored to analyze informative news media rather than cinematic films created for entertainment and revenue. In order to best suit this particular study, the researcher readjusted and appropriated Altheide's steps[330] to the following:

1. *Topic* – level of accuracy of the costuming of the male protagonist in historic epic movies made in the post-WWII era and the late 1990s, early 2000s era

2. *Ethno-graphic study/literature* – review of literature

3. *A few documents* – familiarization of the historic epic genre and the movies chosen for analysis as recorded in Chapter 2, Review of Literature

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[330]   For the original procedural steps in Altheide's "Process of Qualitative Document Analysis," refer to page 79 in Chapter 2 Methodology.

4. *Draft protocol* – historic costume checklist of historically accurate men's clothing in ancient Greece, Rome, and Egypt for ease in data collection when viewing the historic epics for costume accuracy

5. *Examine documents* – implementation of the historic costume checklist per movie to gather data on levels of historical accuracy when viewing the historic epics using the dominant-hegemonic reading position and realist tales position. The movies were viewed in the following order: *The Ten Commandments*, *Spartacus*, *Gladiator*, and *Troy*.

6. *Theoretical sample* – the sampling rational of comparative analysis between historic epics produced in the relatively conservative Cold War era and the relatively liberal late 1990s and early 2000s

7. *Collect data* – utilized the appropriated historic costume checklist per movie while viewing the historic epic movie to document the level of accuracy in the costuming; each movie was viewed a single time

8. *Code data* – analyze and decode the collected data using knowledge established in the review of literature and assuming an oppositional reading position

9. *Compare items* – contrast and note key differences of data collected between the Cold War era and the late 1990s and early 2000s eras of historic epic film production

10. *Case studies* – create brief summaries and examples of found data per historic epic viewed

11. *Report* – integrate findings, key concepts of historic epic films and social mores of the films' relative eras of production, and the researcher's interpretations

Thus, after the problem was identified and the objectives of the research were outlined, the primary historic epic movie sources were chosen. The researcher then compiled background information in several key areas from secondary sources. A historic costume checklist per historic epic movie was created in accordance to each movie's historic time period and the accurate dress of the men of that time. Each movie was then analyzed using the checklist to verify the level of accuracy of the male protagonist's costuming. Additionally, observation notes were taken on character development and gender interaction for each movie. The results of each movie were analyzed using an oppositional reading in order to establish any relationship between the level of accuracy in the historic costuming of the male protagonists and the era in which the movie was made. Furthermore, the analysis of each movie was compared, contrasted, and integrated, completing the research objective and ultimately coming to an overall conclusion.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the gathered data presented within this chapter were based on the

historical accuracy of garments from the ancient Greco-Roman and Egyptian

civilizations. Furthermore, a theoretical framework on the use of semiotics in movies and

in costumes and dress as a means of nonverbal identity-shaping was used. This

framework served as a foundation during the process of gathering data for the primary

research: the viewing of the historic epics *The Ten Commandments* and *Spartacus* from

the Cold War era, and *Gladiator* and *Troy* from the turn of the millennium era. The male

protagonist from each movie was analyzed for the level of accuracy in their costuming

with the aid of a dominant-hegemonic position checklist of typical men's garments from

the time period the movie took place.[331] Additionally, notes were taken on character and

plot development during the viewing of each movie, the researcher assuming the realist

tales position of recording and decoding.

Additional Limitations

The following are limitations the researcher encountered during the course of

gathering data from the primary sources.

1. The observational viewing of some of the costuming of the male protagonist was

   sometimes limited due to the vantage of the screen capturing mainly the

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[331]   These checklists are located in the Appendices, A through D.

character's face and upper body, thus also limiting the viewing of the

unbifurcated or bifurcated garments worn on the lower half of the body.

2. Many scenes that allowed the researcher the opportunity to view the character's

full body were during action and battle sequences. The quick movements of the

character limited a thorough and detailed analysis of their garments.

3. The researcher chose not to pause or stop and rewind any sections of the movies.

This was due to the researcher preferring to view the films as a common movie-

goer would—in a single sitting. However, this limited the recording of details

that may have been better recorded if the movies were more meticulously viewed

through pausing and rewinding.

Found Accuracies and Inaccuracies of the Historic Costuming of the Male Protagonists

The following information is a summation of the gathered data from the primary

research, which includes the accuracies and inaccuracies observed in the costuming of the

male protagonist in each historic epic movie. The completed checklists used to gather

this information are located in Appendices A through D. An oppositional reading[332] of

analysis based on the findings reported in this chapter is also recorded within this chapter.

This critical analysis includes the researcher's conjectures on the relationships between

the level of accuracy in the historic costuming to character development within each

historic epic and to the era in which the movie was produced, as well as a comparison

between the movies themselves. Additionally, the information gathered in the realist tales

position notes are integrated into this analysis.

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[332]   "Oppositional reading" is defined in Chapter 2, page 79 and Chapter 3, page 86.

The Ten Commandments

Set in Ancient Egypt during the New Empire Period spanning 1550 B.C.E. to 1070 B.C.E., the male protagonist, Moses, consistently wore unbifurcated garments, although at times inaccurately. Garments on the checklist that were not worn by Moses include the following: leather loin cloth, long schenti, cape-like garment, and style 3 kalasiris. The costuming of Moses varied greatly due to the character's transition from being an Egyptian prince to a Hebrew leader. However, the natural color scheme of browns and dim reds, yellows, greens and oranges of the garments worn by Moses throughout *The Ten Commandments* was relatively static, both as an Egyptian and as a Hebrew.

Moses was observed wearing the short schenti, a wrapped, pleated, or draped skirt sometimes with a decorative triangular panel at the center front, on three occasions. Although the schenti historically was also worn under a sheer kalasiris, neither Moses nor any other male characters were depicted with any sheer garments. In the first two scenes where Moses dons the schenti, Moses is an Egyptian and wears the garment appropriately in the wrapped and draped style in opaque brown and green or yellow-orange fabrics. The third time the schenti was worn was with Moses as a Hebrew slave, this time the schenti being of brown rags with a side opening up the thigh, widely exposing his leg.

The kalasiris, a finely woven tunic that was worn sheer, layered, pleated, full, or belted, was observed on Moses in the first and second styles. The first style where the kalasiris was worn draped and rectangular without a head opening was viewed three times, each time accurately, although not as an Egyptian but as a Hebrew. Each viewing depicted the garment in a brown color, crossed at the center front and belted, and under

the Hebrew cloth[333]. Yet with the second style of the kalasiris tunic, inaccuracies were recorded because the sleeves of the tunic were set in rather than sewn from one piece of cloth. Although the rest of the construction of this garment was accurate, the seam of the set in sleeve was observable because of unaligned stripe placement in one scene of Moses as a Hebrew meeting Joseph. On another occasion, the shoulder seam of a light brown style two kalasiris was visible.

As an Egyptian in high-ranking military garments, Moses was correctly depicted wearing the short pullover garment with unbifurcated skirt with royal apron in his first appearance in the movie. However, the color used in his military regalia and in the other characters in this particular scene, which depicted a parade of civilizations he conquered and their joyful presentation to the pharaoh, was overt. Although color and adornments were used more in the New Empire of Ancient Egypt in comparison to previous periods, the vividness of color was inaccurate.

One Egyptian military garment that was inaccurately portrayed was the corset, a garment worn over the torso, either strapless or with straps, made with small plates of bone, metal or leather. During the scene where Moses erects an obelisk for pharaoh, Moses dons a corset-like garment comprised of diagonal strips of varying shades of brown leather, cut and sewn and fitted over his torso and over one shoulder.

Moses was never depicted wearing pleated garments, although other characters such as Ramses I and II and female characters did. His garments were generally heavier and wrapped. Sheer garments and the use of layering, very popular during the New

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[333] The Hebrew cloth, a woven red, black, and white piece of fabric, in *The Ten Commandments* served as a significant item in the movie, an additional token of foreshadowing symbolizing Moses' true heritage and destiny.

Empire, was not viewed in any of the costumes worn by Moses or any other male characters.

Level of Accuracy and Observed Peculiarities in the Historic Costuming of Moses

Overall, the costuming of Moses was correct. Silhouettes of the garments were analogous to the descriptions in the secondary research conducted prior to the analysis of the movie, as well as the methods of wearing the garments. However, while most costumes were correct, several styles of wearing Egyptian costume were not observed on Moses or on other male characters within the film. For example, very sheer garments with elaborate draping, pleating, and layering was very popular with the ancient Egyptians of this era but were not present in the men's costuming in *The Ten Commandments*. However, the female characters within the film were frequently outfitted in costumes with elaborate draping and pleating in sheer fabrics, although in silhouettes more correct to the 1950s than to the ancient Egyptians.

Additionally, it was observed that although unbifurcated garments were worn by Moses, the garment was oftentimes worn with a well fitted top or with an exposed torso, especially if the hem of the unbifurcated garment was at or above the knee. Torsos of males were seen regularly within the film, especially on characters with a muscular and visually attractive build. Thus, a hyper-masculinization of Moses in his short schenti or skirt was evident. While these garments were found to be accurately worn, the presentation of the garment on Moses made the masculinity and strength of his character obvious.

Yet, while many of Moses' costumes were accurately worn, the researcher observed several inaccuracies in the costuming of Moses. On two occasions the kalasiris, style 2, was inaccurate due to an observed shoulder seam on this supposed T-shape tunic. This flaw in costuming may have been due to the costumer's concern with the overall look of the garments rather than the accurate historic construction of the garment. Furthermore, the untrained eye of an audience member would most likely not be concerned with the correct construction of the garment, but rather the character who wears it.

The corset was also found to be inaccurate on one occasion. The inaccuracy of this particular garment was due to the fitted nature of the top, it being cut and sewn from what seemed to be diagonal strips of several shades of brown leather. While the garment was visually attractive on Moses exposing his arms and the silhouette of his torso, ancient Egyptians did not employ the use of well-fitted garments through cut-and-sew techniques of garment construction. Evident in this case of inaccurate costuming was both the masculinization of Moses, for the fitted corset, constructed from diagonal strips of leather elongating the flattering shape of his torso, was accompanied by a short brown schenti still fitting the color theme of Moses throughout the movie.

Moses was frequently observed to don garments in natural shades of color. Even as a prince of Egypt, Moses wore these colors while Ramses II and pharaoh donned more royal colors such as blue, red, and metallic gold. This may have been due to the use of color to visually foreshadow and symbolize the fate of Moses' transition from an Egyptian prince to a leader of the Hebrews.

The creative license used for foreshadowing was also evident in other facets of Moses' costuming, such as hair. Ramses II's character correctly portrayed the ancient Egyptians' disdain for hair with his chest and head, save his prince's lock in the beginning of the movie. Conversely, Moses had hair on both his chest and his head, even as a prince of Egypt. While ancient Egyptians shaved their hair, Hebrews let it grow; the hair seen on Moses as an Egyptian was therefore another foreshadowing technique.

Also noted was the verbose use of color throughout the movie. Again, while the silhouettes of the costuming of Moses were generally correct, color use was extravagant, not only with his character's costuming, but with all characters. Egyptians, especially royalty, wore mostly finely woven linen, a fabric that was more difficult to dye with the natural dyes and mordants available at the time. The female Egyptian characters were often adorned in costumes in colors that were naturally unavailable and undyeable on linen. Not only were scenes of the Egyptian court colorful and exotic, but even the Hebrews' exodus from Egypt was needlessly colorful. This may be due to the rise of movies filmed in color at the time that *The Ten Commandments* was made and released, the film displaying the new innovation for the moviegoers.

Impact of the Socio-Cultural Dynamics of the Cold War Era

The Ten Commandments was filmed and released at the height of McCarthyism when communism was not only feared, but homosexuality as well. Thus, scenes where the male characters, especially the male protagonist, Moses, were depicted in unbifurcated garments, the sexual orientation was clearly obvious. The young males were visually masculinized, with their exposed muscular and bronzed torsos, often in

scenes when they either conquered or planning to conquer a group of peoples or when they were courting women.

Despite the exposure of skin and sexuality in this movie[334], the film was concurrently released to the beginning of the twentieth century religious awakening in America, making the epic story of Moses, a major Biblical figure, popular. While critics were less pleased with the movie, box office results allude to the popularity of the film. Thus, because the film was Biblical in context, the exposure of skin and sexuality may have been excused by the Legion of Decency, a Catholic organization, that censored movies made in the Cold War era.

Also concurrent to the release of the film was the nation's role of women in the nuclear family unit. Within the movie all the major female characters commonly vie for Moses' attention. The strongest female character, Nefertiti, utilized her sexual appeal more than any other asset for her personal gain yet could not effect the actions of Moses. Moses' wife after his full transition to a Hebrew was visually less sexual in her dress and was characteristically and domestically strong but obedient to Moses. Even his Egyptian and Hebrew mothers showed great allegiance to Moses, his Egyptian mother leaving the royal family to join Moses' exodus with the Hebrews.

Moses as a leader of the Hebrews also was a symbol of hope in both the historical and Biblical reference of this character, as well as in his ability to lead thousands of people out of the subordinating and deprived position as slaves. This perhaps leads to the comparison of Moses, a figure elected by the Hebrew nation and whose position as a leader was bestowed upon him by the people and not by himself, as a leader of

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[334] The scene often referred to by film critics as "the orgy scene" where the Hebrews build an idol from a golden calf, resulting in their punishment by god to wander the desert for forty years, was particularly hypersexual.

democracy. In this position, Moses leads the Hebrews away from the Egyptians, a group of people who, as illustrated by the movie, believe in gods that cannot rival the works that Moses was able to command with the aid of the Hebrew god. Furthermore, without Moses as the leader, the Hebrews became falsely lead by the golden idol of the calf, as depicted in the scene where Moses left the Hebrews at the side of Mount Sinai so that he may fetch the tablets from God inscribed with the Ten Commandments. With Moses gone for even those few days, the Hebrews became immoral, violating many of the commandments to such a degree that they were forced to wander the desert for forty years. Thus, as Moses as a symbol of hope for democracy, this particular comparison further illustrates the social threat of being absent of a leader such as Moses.

<div align="center">Spartacus</div>

The male protagonist, Spartacus, was observed to mainly wear simple garments due to his status as a non-citizen of Rome throughout the movie. *Spartacus*, which takes place during the height of the senate in the Roman Republic between 509 B.C.E. and 27 B.C.E., employed more muted colors and less costume changes, with Spartacus primarily wearing the same few garments repeatedly. Garments on the checklist that were not observed to be worn by Spartacus include the toga[335] in all its variations, the pallium, the paludamentum, laena, lacerna, paenula, and cacullus.

Worn frequently by Spartacus was the colobium, a rectangular tunic joined at the shoulders and sides. Although this garment was often worn by citizens under their togas, Spartacus wore this garment tattered, belted, and extremely short, the bottom hem

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[335]   In ancient Rome, only citizens were permitted to wear a toga; Spartacus was a slave and would not have worn this garment.

reaching above mid-thigh. Throughout the movie Spartacus wore a brown colobium with a heavy belt, and later with a leather torso guard crossed at the chest when he becomes the leader of the Roman slave revolt.

Because the colobium was worn very short, the subligar, or wrapped loincloth, underneath was often clearly exposed during action sequences. During Spartacus' first gladiatorial fight, he wears only a subligar, belted, and with a shoulder and arm guard. In this scene the subligar was observed to be correctly draped. However, in one scene where Spartacus' body was used as a model during gladiatorial classes with the instructor marking vulnerable places on the body with different colors of paint, the subligar worn by Spartacus seems fitted, so much so that it did not appear to be wrapped and draped.

Spartacus was also depicted wearing the sagum, or a small blanket-like wrap, and the casula, a poncho-like garment that slips over the head. The latter garment was a primary costume worn by Spartacus and was worn in several different ways: long, loosely falling around the body, the center front panel pulled back and wrapped around the body and belted with the back panel worn loose, and the center front panel pulled back and wrapped around the body with the edges rolled before belting the front panel to the body with the back panel worn loose. Although the description of the first method of wearing the casula was found in the conducted secondary research, the latter two methods were not encountered in any research on Ancient Roman dress. However, the presentation of this garment within the movie and the frequency in which the casula was worn in this method by Spartacus makes it seem plausible though unfound in the secondary sources used by the researcher.

Level of Accuracy and Observed Peculiarities in the Historic Costuming of Spartacus

Inaccurate costuming on Spartacus was found only once by the researcher when Spartacus wears a well fitted subligar, seemingly undraped. Besides this observation and the observation of the questionable methods of how Spartacus wore the casula, the costuming of Spartacus was very accurate.

There were far less costume changes with Spartacus, which in itself was historically accurate, Spartacus being a slave without the means of having a varying wardrobe. One garment worn frequently by Spartacus as well as the other slave men was the colobium, which was worn very short easily exposing the subligar underneath. The hem of the colobium reached above the mid-thigh, and was at this length for all characters that were depicted as non-citizens, even the less muscularly built men. This too was correct for very short garments were worn by all men in the lowest classes.

The only moments within *Spartacus* where Spartacus was dressed differently than the other slaves was towards the end of the movie when he assumes the position of the leader of the slave rebellion. His costuming was not overtly different, but he was still set apart as a leader visually through his method of wearing the belted casula.

An ample amount of male body exposure was observed in this film, especially during scenes where Spartacus was in the gladiatorial school. While all the gladiator men in these scenes were well built, this would have been accurate due to the nature of being a gladiator. Additionally, all the gladiators were similarly outfitted in either a colobium or a belted subligar. Although the subligar was observed to be inaccurate on one occasion, this garment was worn correctly throughout the rest of the movie, most notably during the scenes of gladiatorial combat.

Overall, the costuming of the film was comparatively subdued. The characters portraying slaves wore natural colors while the senators appropriately wore more elaborate dress with colored clavi. More visually stimulating than the color of the film, color filming being a more common technique by 1960, was the cinematography of the movie. Expansive scenery of on location filming was complimented by the use of editing and unique vantage shots of action sequences. Thus, the role of costumes in *Spartacus* was more complimentary of the setting of the movie as well as the overall storyline rather than being a separate entity utilized to foreshadow character development.

Impact of the Socio-Cultural Dynamics of the Cold War Era

The theme of equality and class mobility are at the forefront of *Spartacus*. Although a complex movie, these themes are evident in the relatively homogeneous costuming of all of the slaves. Furthermore, themes of gaining equality through class mobility in capitalism were similarly evident in the Cold War Era. Spartacus, who seldom spoke in the beginning of the movie, only gains a voice after he freed himself from captive slavery and assumed the position of a leader, an interesting development in the face of heightened capitalistic ideals. Yet, even themes of equality seemingly transcend capitalist thought into more communist thought with the lowest class rebelling over the repression of the highest ruling class. It is interesting to note that *Spartacus* was one of the first Hollywood films to reemploy filmmakers formally blacklisted during McCarthyism.

In relation to the themes of equality, male-female dynamics within this movie were very different than they were in *The Ten Commandments*. Women were objectified

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when interacting with the antagonists in the Roman senate, while women were treated with more respect and with personal gain among the slave army. Even women, young and old, were depicted fighting with the slave army against the Romans in the final battle scene. Furthermore, Spartacus' wife, Varinia, was portrayed as a strong character, first introduced to him as a sexual offering while in gladiatorial school. He respected her by not accepting the offer although he clearly was attracted to her. In return, when both were free she asked him to "forbid me from leaving you," an interesting plea that he would not do.

While Rome was historically oppressive towards women, homosexuality was highly accepted and practiced. Thus, *Spartacus* furthermore pushes the boundaries of the closing of the Cold War era with passive-aggressive scenes of homo-eroticism. Most notable and cited is the bathing scene in which antagonist senator Crasseus asks a young male slave, Antoninus, who later shows his allegiance to Spartacus, if he likes oysters and snails. Another example is at the closing of the film when the captured Spartacus and Antoninus were forced to duel each other in gladiatorial combat, both men vocally expressing their love for each other. While Spartacus' sexual orientation was established as heterosexual with his marriage and child to Varinia, Antoninus' was never overt or resolute.

Also vastly different from *The Ten Commandments* was the level of violence that appeared on screen, whether it was between gladiators or slave and Roman armies. While skin exposure of many of the slave men were clearly evident, even more so than in *The Ten Commandments*, it and the fighting sequences of Spartacus did not overtly portray a sense of a visually hyper-masculinized protagonist. Although Spartacus was

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clearly masculine, his visual portrayal was more subtle, especially in comparison to other men similarly clad and portrayed in the movie.

While Spartacus's character lead the slave army while not ruling it, his character as a male hero was exemplified during the final scene where he hangs crucified. He sees his wife and son free before his death, yet it was evident that he died in the name of freedom, an extremely powerful message amid the Cold War era.

Gladiator

Set in the Roman Empire period, from 27 B.C.E. to 478 A.D., *Gladiator* takes place in an era when Rome's power sat behind a single emperor rather than a senate. Although the male protagonist, Maximus, began as a citizen and general of Rome, he was never depicted wearing any variation of the toga, and neither does the emperor. Both were primarily depicted wearing military regalia. In addition to the toga, which only the senators were observed to be wearing although not to the complexity gathered in the secondary research, the following garments were not viewed on Maximus that were present on the checklist: the pallium, dalmatica, paludamentum, laena, lacerna, casula, and cacullus.

Maximus was frequently observed wearing the colobium, especially when he was a gladiator. He was seen with the colobium on five occasions, with one other scene being questionable. In this earlier scene where a semi-conscious Maximus was found by Proximo, a character which captures Maximus and makes him a gladiator, Maximus wears a white sleeveless top; the detail of the garment was unobservable because the vantage of the screen captured only his torso and face. Otherwise, Maximus wears an

off-white or light blue colobium that is heavy, sleeveless, belted, and with the bottom hem just below the knees or just above the knees.

The tunica talaris, a long sleeved, tubular tunic ending at mid-calf, was also frequently observed worn by Maximus, each time accurately. He wore this garment during the earlier scenes of the movie when he was in Germania, a colder region. Thus, the tunica talaris was shown to be heavy or layered. Also, the tunica talaris was also shown to be off-white and made of linen during scenes where Maximus was retiring to sleep, thus being worn similar to a night gown.

Also worn during scenes taking place in Germania was the feminalia, a fitted, bifurcated garment adopted by the Romans for warmth as they began conquering the colder regions of Europe. Maximus was depicted wearing this garment under his colobium in Germania and when he escapes Germania. However, all other scenes, where the climate was presumably warmer, he does not wear them. It is noteworthy, though, that the antagonist Commodus, who becomes Emperor as Maximus becomes a slave, does wear feminalias throughout the film in addition to his imperial regalia.

Maximus was observed to wear the subligar, or loincloth, once throughout the movie during his battle with a Gaul gladiator. One very quick flash of the subligar as his colobium flies up during mid-fight exposed the garment. However, no detail beside the general identification of the subligar was available.

One more obvious garment observed to be worn was the lorica, or breastplate. Maximus wears this on several occasions, both as a Roman general over a tunica talaris as well as a gladiator worn over a blue colobium. Both loricas were engraved, the lorica worn by Maximus as a gladiator and given to him by Proximo engraved with horses.

Outerwear garments, such as the sagum, a blanket-like garment used as a wrap, was accurately portrayed on Maximus who wore one of a woolen texture in dark blue. However, one garment, the paenula, or a cape worn in especially bad weather with a center front opening and with a pointed hood, was never shown with a hood. Both instances in which this garment was observed were in scenes taking place in Germania, hence the bad weather, and in red, the color of the Roman army.

Level of Accuracy and Observed Peculiarities in the Historic Costuming of Maximus

Maximus' costuming was observed to be accurate overall. His costumes correctly portrayed his status as both a high-ranking general in the Roman army as well as a gladiatorial slave. The researcher observed only two instances where his costuming was inaccurate, and even then observation of the garments was limited due to the frequent close-ups of Maximus' face rather than full body. These instances include the questionable portrayal of the colobium when Maximus was first captured as a slave and the hoodless paenula when he is a Roman general. However, concerning the latter garment, a paenula-like garment or a hoodless mantle may very well have existed at this time period, although such information was not found in the researcher's secondary research of this time period of historic costuming.

Although Maximus was first introduced to audiences as a Roman citizen, he never dons a toga, and neither does the antagonist Commodus. Both wear military regalia even when not in battle, which was further evident with Commodus when he assumes the position of Emperor after murdering his father. The other characters seen wearing the toga were senators. Yet, this was historically accurate because at this Imperial Rome

period the emperor was frequently depicted in military regalia, perhaps conveying the message of the Rome's imperial might as they grew and expanded over other civilizations.

Also reflected in the dress was the impact of climate changes from region to region; more specifically, the change in dress between scenes that took place in frigid Germania and scenes that took place in the warmth of Rome. Most evident of this was the presence of the feminalia which grew popular during this period in ancient Rome. While practically worn in Germania, the only main characters to continue wearing this garment in Rome was Commodus and his young nephew who was heir to the throne. Commodus was never depicted without his feminalia, while Maximus discarded his for the colobium or tunica talaris in Rome.

As a slave Maximus tries to gain his freedom by winning the crowds of Roman spectators as he engages in gladiatorial combat. Interestingly, he continues to don the colobium with a lorica and other such protective garments when a gladiator, which exposes his arms and legs, the garment being sleeveless and the bottom hem reaching to just above the knee. Yet, in *Spartacus* the gladiators donned a belted subligar, exposing far more of the body than a colobium. In addition, the characters in *Spartacus* did not wear torso-covering garments such as the lorica, even for protection purposes. These differences in gladiatorial costumes per movie may be due to the fact that both movies take place in different eras in Ancient Rome, *Spartacus* taking place in the Roman Republic and *Gladiator* taking place in the Roman Empire. The costuming in *Gladiator* reflects the evolution of grandiose and violently theatrical gladiatorial contests into the Empire.

Impact of the Socio-Cultural Dynamics of the Turn of the Millennia

Maximus is first introduced as a Roman general leading his soldiers into battle to conquer Germania. In this opening scene he delivers a powerful speech to his soldiers before they engage in battle, clearly establishing for the moviegoer Maximus' skills as a leader and his ability to move crowds through his words. Although Maximus undergoes character development, primarily involving his will to avenge the death of his family and his journey in achieving this, his core values and character traits, i.e. leadership, family, democracy, etc., remain static. Thus, Maximus similarly utilizes his skill in captivating and impassioning his army to do the same for the crowds of Roman spectators watching and adoring Maximus the gladiator in the coliseum. In one scene where Maximus first begins his gladiatorial fights, Proximo advises him, "Win the crowd, then you win your freedom." A compelling remark, Proximo's words leaves one to question if the adoration of the crowd is due to Maximus embodying a sign of hope for those fighting out of despondency and for democracy, or for good entertainment. This question may also be raised in reference to the historic epic film genre in general.

Again, central to this movie, as well as the historic epics previously viewed, were themes of democracy. In *Gladiator* the protagonist Maximus represents the goodwill and fairness of democracy with antagonist Commodus representing the greed and even insanity of imperialism. Both characters overtly illustrate the good conquering the evil, with democracy being at the forefront for a better society so much so that Maximus dies at the closing of the movie fighting against Commodus, and thus imperialism.

Establishing the good from the bad was clear throughout the film in the characterizations of the male protagonist verses the antagonist: Maximus loves his

family, was not concerned with slavery, shows the need for social mobility by excelling at gladiatorial fighting in an effort to transcend slavery, shows compassion for people, etc., while Commodus loves himself, murdered his father so that he may become emperor, was portrayed as unstable and emotionally violent, was willing to partake in an incestual relationship with his sister in order to keep the royal blood of his family pure, etc. These blatant themes of the better social governing system echo with the themes of former historic epic movies of the Cold War, especially *Spartacus*, which was said to be the last great historic epic film before *Gladiator*.

Also clearly evident in the movie is Maximus' skills as a fighter, both as a Roman general fighting along with his soldiers and as a gladiator. Graphically violent and intense sequences on the battle field and in the coliseum depict this quality. The visual stimulation of these action sequences, enhanced with the aid of computer imaging technology, was to the moviegoers of the turn of the millennia as color filming was to moviegoers of the Cold War era. It was in these scenes where the main characters' entire bodies were most commonly viewed in a display of athletic abilities and cinematically enhanced visuals. Otherwise, the vantage of the camera primarily remained on the face and upper torso of the characters, capturing more of the facial emotions rather than the costumes.

Despite such visual limitations in assessing the accuracy of the costuming, the female characters' costuming was observed to be less accurate than the male characters' costuming, more notably the costuming of main female character Lucilla, daughter to Emperor Marcus Aurelius and sister to Commodus. Donned in colors and silhouettes inaccurate to the time period, Lucilla was depicted as a passively dominant character

throughout the movie, working covertly under the watchful eye of Commodus in order to aid in Maximus's escape from slavery and, thus, the greater good. Although clear to the moviegoer that she was a strong character with her father even stating that she would have been a great Caesar leader if she were born a boy, it was also clear that her sex debilitated her from exercising her strengths as a leader. Lucilla was intelligent but not in a position of power, which was socially true to the time period for Ancient Romans were considered a very oppressively patriarchal civilization. However, her duties as a mother to her son, the future heir to the Roman Empire, are what compel her to ask the senate and Maximus for help, in turn helping them in their fight against Commodus. Thus, her duties as a mother to her son and also to her country were what make her a strong character, duties that many women in both the Cold War and the turn of the millennia agree with. It was not until the very end of the movie when Marcus Aurelius, Commodus, and Maximus were all dead—all men of power over her in her position as a woman—that she gains a voice and speaks before the Romans.

Troy

Although the *Illiad*, the epic poem from which *Troy* was based, was written in Ancient Greek times by Homer, *Troy*, like the Trojan War, took place in 1200 B.C.E. during the Mycenaean period, predating the ancient Greeks. Comparatively shorter than the other checklists from the previously viewed films due to the limited information on the dress of the Mycenaeans[336], only one garment on the checklist for *Troy* was not observed on Achilles, the male protagonist, nor any other character in the film: leggings,

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[336] The Mycenaeans dressed similarly to the Minoans; after conquering the Minoans, the Mycenaeans adopted their dress.

which are similar to greaves but which covered both the front and the back of the lower leg.

Frequently worn by Achilles were short skirts, garments which ended at the thigh, wrapped around the hips, and were longer in the center front or center back, the point weighted by a tassel. No dramatic use of the tassel at the center front point or center back point was observed on Achilles throughout the movie, with the only short skirt worn by him being made of leather and worn in all the battle sequences as part of his military regalia. The skirt was very short, coming to above the mid-thigh with two vents at the front and at the back of the garment. The hem of this more fitted short skirt subtly curved lower in the front.

Because the short skirt was very short, it exposed the perizoma, which were briefs with a codpiece[337]. However, each viewing of the perizoma was very quick and was seen only during fighting sequences where Achille's short skirt flies up, thus making the presence of the codpiece indiscernible.

Also worn with the short skirt in the military regalia were greaves, shin guards of leather or bronze covering the front of the lower legs. The greaves were black, matching Achille's chest plate and short skirt. One scene in particular depicts Achilles preparing to battle Hector one-on-one with both men lacing up their greaves in juxtaposing camera shot editing.

When not battling, Achilles also wore the long skirt which ended at the knee or ankle and which dips lower in the front. Each scene where Achilles wears this garment the long skirt was portrayed correctly, worn wrapped and usually in a dark or dark blue

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[337]   A codpiece is an item of clothing covering the male genitalia.

color. While details in the woven patterns or embroidery of the costume fabrics were observed, no overt tassels were observed.

Frequently worn with the long skirt was the tunic, worn short when in combination with the skirt, or long when worn without the skirt. This garment was accurately worn in various ways, although usually with a deep v-neck or center front slit at the neck line exposing Achilles' chest, and usually with large armhole openings exposing Achilles' arms. In one scene where Achilles was in Phtia, the tunic was so short that it exposes the naval. The color scheme with the tunic remains dark or dark blue, sometimes with woven patterns or embroidery. In another scene Achilles was depicted with a leather tunic.

It is noteworthy that a considerable amount of the body was exposed with the costuming of *Troy*. In addition to the body-revealing costuming of Achilles and other warriors within the film, there were several scenes with nudity, primarily of the male characters. The character with the most scenes of nudity was protagonist Achilles.

Level of Accuracy and Observed Peculiarities in the Historic Costuming of Achilles

The historic costuming of Achilles remained accurate throughout the movie. However, a degree of creative license was taken with his dark blue and black color palette and high range of costume changes outside of his costume worn in battle. While no inaccuracies were observed, per se, the garments that he did wear were not entirely accurate as well; the costumers of the movie melded the garments of the Ancient Myceneans to the eyes of present day movie goers. An example of this was the lack of the heavy and pronounced tassel worn at the center front or center back of the men's

skirts, illustrated repeatedly in surviving depictions of the Myceneans. The skirts worn

by men in *Troy* had tassels on their skirts, but not to the severity or poignancy of what

was established as historically accurate.

Interestingly, more nudity of men was observed than that of women characters,

especially nudity of Achilles. Played by Brad Pitt, a sexual icon of the turn of the

millennia, the movie clearly exploited his body throughout the film, both through his

revealing costumes as well as numerous sex scenes. Even scenes where Achilles does

not engage in sexual activity, he was often depicted changing out of or into other

costumes, presenting more opportunities for moviegoers to view his body. In such

scenes, the camera cuts off the vantage of his body just below the naval never depicting

his full frontal body, but eluding to it.

Achilles' costumes, especially his military costume, clearly exposes his body,

much more than other characters, even male characters also played by sexual icons. The

costume consistently worn in battle scenes by Achilles was considerably short, fitting,

and revealing, allowing the viewer to see his body fully as he engages in intense battle

sequences. Thus, his short skirt became clearly connoted with his overt sexuality and

heterosexuality, masculinizing the garment.

During such battle scenes, observation of the detail of the garments was difficult

because of the rapid movements. Details of the garments were further difficult due to the

close camera framing around the face or torso throughout the film during non-battle

sequences. Yet, of what was observed on Achilles in his non-military costume was

further exposure of his arms with large arm holes and sleeveless tops, and at times his

exposed naval, either with him wearing only a skirt with no top or him a very short tunic with a skirt.

Impact of the Socio-Cultural Dynamics of the Turn of the Millennia

Throughout *Troy* Achilles was portrayed as a tragic protagonist, undergoing a substantial amount of growth, much more than any other male protagonists examined in this study. Achilles began as an arrogant character concerned with immortalizing himself by creating legends of himself as a great warrior, but then ended as an honorable character free from his former hubris. Interestingly, the catalyst of Achilles' character improvement was the presence of Briseis, a Trojan royal woman and cousin to Paris and Hector, princes of Troy. Despite their being on opposing sides of a war, Briseis and Achilles engage in a love affair when Briseis was taken prisoner and sent to Achilles' chambers. Similar to Spartacus' first meeting of his future wife in *Spartacus*, Briseis was introduced to Achilles as a sexual offering, an offering he did not take. Ultimately, by choosing not to objectify Briseis, this led to their affair, Achilles' transformation into the heroic protagonist, the death of antagonist Agamemnon, and the closing of the Trojan War.

The role of women in *Troy* was fundamental to the movie, especially considering the affair between Paris, prince of Troy, and Helen, Queen of Sparta, which resulted in Helen's plight from Sparta to Troy and the Greek world declaring war on Troy. Although 50,000 men essentially fought for a single woman during the Trojan War, the film works to reiterate other timeless themes of war and honor that carry on through today—love, pride, power, and immortality. In one scene Hector tells his soldiers,

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"Honor the gods, love your woman, and love your country," invariably applicable in the modern American society and more so during times of war, although slightly dated with the turn of the millennia for both men and women enlist for duty fight on the battlefield.

While female characters show significantly less skin then male characters, they were clearly objectified through several scenes of the movie. Furthermore, the objectivity of women served as a method of discerning between the good and evil male characters, the "evil" men objectifying women as possessions and as sexual favors. Even Achilles, whose stance as protagonist or antagonist was not clear in the beginning of the movie, was first introduced to the moviegoer in a scene where he, nude and in bed with two women, was awoken and informed that he was late for battle. This initial scene alludes to Achilles' sexual behavior and automatically establishes his masculinity, heterosexuality, virility, and questionable placement as either antagonist or protagonist. Again, Brisies, a woman whom he grows to respect, catalyzes Achilles' eventual placement as a protagonist.

Yet, although the role of women was paramount, none were heroes in the movie. Rather, they served as a means for the male characters' development. All the main male characters were affected by women: Achilles became valiant because of Briseis, Paris gained the courage to fight for Helen, and King Priam accepted the war that was cast upon him by Agamemnon because of his new Princess Helen of Troy. While Agamemnon's final death was given to him by Briseis, this was the only case in which a female fought and killed. However, her heroism was greatly undermined thereafter with the immediate and tragic death of Achilles in her arms.

Comparative Analysis of Findings

With the movies *The Ten Commandments* and *Spartacus* from the Cold War era and *Gladiator* and *Troy* from the turn of the millennia each analyzed for their level of accuracy of historic costuming of the male protagonist and the socio-cultural impact of the eras in which each movie was made, these findings were synthesized into a comparative analysis. This greater oppositional reading of analysis was conducted in order to gain further insight to possible relationships between the level of accuracy of historic costuming and the mindset of conservative verses a more liberal American society.

Accuracy of the Costuming

Overall, the costuming of the male protagonist in each viewed movie was generally accurate, more so than the costuming of female characters. Any observed inaccuracies in the historic costuming in each movie were due to the following reasons: creative license in the use of color for visual foreshadowing of the character, creative license in order to achieve exoticism of the time period and of the character while still being comfortable to view by the moviegoers, exhibition of new cinematic technology, and an ease of construction of garments for the movie costumers.

Observed more in the costuming of Moses in *The Ten Commandments* and in Achilles in *Troy*, the same color palette follows both characters throughout each movie. Despite their transitions and development per movie, each dons colors that set them apart from other characters, further visually pronouncing their role as the male protagonist of the movie.

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Also due to the use of costumer's creative license was the construction of costumes that both displayed a level of exoticism of the historic period in which the movie takes place while still being comfortable to view by the moviegoer. Ancient costumes and ways of life are generally intriguing to audiences, and to further exploit this intrigue the costuming of the characters reflected a certain level of accuracy to the time period in which the movie was set. However, because historic epic films are very expensive to produce due to the length of the movie, costuming and sets, and the cost of the main actors, the attendance and money of the moviegoers are crucial to the movie's success. Thus, the moviegoer must be engaged in the story set in a time period that is far from theirs while still feeling comfortable with the costuming. This may be why a significant amount of masculinization of the unbifurcated garments takes place in each movie with the male protagonists. There were no question of the masculinity and heterosexuality of the male heroes, despite their skirt costumes, a garment currently considered effeminate.

Because the moviegoer comes to watch movies to be entertained, the historic epic film naturally becomes a forum of display for new cinematic technologies. As earlier discussed, the use of color in *The Ten Commandments* was not only inaccurate for the ancient Egyptian time period but it was oftentimes needlessly used. This was due to the new color film technology of the 1950s. In regards to the movies made at the end of the 1990s and early 2000s, computer enhanced or created visuals were utilized a great deal in both *Gladiator* and *Troy*. Yet, this did not greatly affect the accuracy of costuming, but did make the costuming less of an individual component to notice as it was for *The Ten Commandments*; rather costumes were less boisterous and more an element of setting.

Because background settings and action sequences were of greater interest due to the new computer technology, costumes were of less importance, not conspicuously or clearly filmed. Instead the use of more head shots and setting shots were observed.

However, in *The Ten Commandments* costumes were of greater interest. Because of the closer camera shots of the costumes, flaws in costume construction were observable. This includes the inaccurate construction of the T-shaped tunic worn by Moses. It was observed that the authenticity of construction and even of the types of fabrics used were more accurate in the costuming of the rest of the viewed historic epics.

These reasons of inaccurate costuming occurred to some degree in each movie viewed, however in regards to the correct portrayal of men's unbifurcated costuming, no film violated the historic accuracy. Each male protagonist accurately wore unbifurcated tunics or skirts, regardless of era in which the movie was produced.

Male Protagonist Heroes

While there was not a great degree of observed inaccuracies of historic costumes with the male protagonists, especially when donning an unbifurcated garment, a heavy amount of masculinization of the character was evident. Traditional masculine characteristics were unquestionably virtues of each examined male protagonist. Each was an excellent warrior, either implied as was the case with Moses and his conquest of several civilizations at the beginning of *The Ten Commandments*, or shown through violent displays of fighting in battle.

Each male protagonist also displays a large amount of leadership skills, with men declaring their loyalty and allegiance to him, regardless of what they fight for. Moses led

the Hebrews' exodus from Egypt through the desert with no real destination. Spartacus

led the slaves in a battle they knew they would not win, and yet they defended him and

kept his personage anonymous from the Romans in a powerful display of loyalty.

Maximus had not only the allegiance of men formally in his army even after he became a

slave, but also his fellow gladiators and the Roman onlookers, all of whom showed more

affection for him than for Emperor Commodus. And Achilles, despite his flamboyance

and arrogance in the beginning of *Troy*, had a crew that declared their loyalty exclusively

to him and not to the nation that they fought for or the reasons they were in battle against

the Trojans.

Another commonality between all examined male protagonists was their physical

attractiveness and obvious heterosexuality. Each character, played by actors considered

as sexual icons of their respective eras, displayed a certain amount of exploit in their

bodies and in their sexuality. Thus, as they donned their unbifurcated garments, they

reinforced their heterosexual virility through some sort of sexual connection with a

woman; this was more so with the movies made in the turn of the millennia, especially

Troy. Their bodies, always in athletic condition, were exposed to the viewer both

through accurate costuming, but also through sexually intimate scenes.

In regard to the role of women in relation to the male protagonists, they

functioned more as a divider between the protagonists and the antagonists. Although

more clearly expressed in *Troy* but evident in all viewed historic epics was that the

protagonists respected women and did not wish to possess or objectify them; the

antagonists, however, treated women as a possession, either as a visual trophy, for power,

or as a sexual favor. While there were circumstances where women exercised an amount

of power within each movie, it was a more passive power under the lens of patriarchy of the historic time period of the movie, or perhaps even the time period in which the film was produced. However, this was the extent of the women's roles in the historic epics, for it was the male protagonists that were clearly the heroes of each movie.

The Historic Epic Genre

As time progresses, the gender dynamics between men and women have historically become more egalitarian. This progress was illustrated even in the relatively brief time span between the Cold War era and the turn of the millennia; the Cold War gender dynamics exemplified the nuclear family, the growth of suburbia, and the roles of the husband in the public sphere and the wife in the private sphere. In the turn of the millennia, gender dynamics exemplified the working woman, double income house holds, and a heightened awareness and acceptance of homosexuality, divorce, and single parent families.

Yet, these historic epics with their grandiose scale of production and excessive costs were set in time periods far less egalitarian than the time periods in which these films were produced. To be accurate with the time period, a woman would not have been part of the Roman senate nor would she rise to be an Emperor, even if she were well equipped for the position. Thus, the viewer observes some strong female characters, but their strength was more passive and she was not made a female hero, especially in the movies made at the turn of the millennia. These epic movies were more a display of masculinity, either through intense battle sequences, hyper-masculinization in the protagonists' costuming, or their interactions with other women.

Furthermore, the success of a historic epic movie was dependent on large attendance by both men and women moviegoers. To appease the men, action sequences and themes of valor and honor were displayed, the male protagonist becoming a character that men could visualize as a role model. A distinction of heterosexuality was also apparent in the historic epic heroes, with the protagonist always able to win a beautiful woman. To appease the women, the male protagonists were played by very attractive actors, donned in methods of costuming that heightened their sexuality. Additionally, a certain level of romance was included. And to appease audiences, themes of honor, family, and other social values were common causes that the male protagonists fought for.

Conclusion

This study primarily dealt with if and how historic costuming transcends the bounds of historical accuracy in historic epic movies and the possibility that the level of accuracy in these movies were due to the dictates of the moviegoers' comfort levels per social era. With each historic epic movie analyzed both individually and comparatively for its level of accuracy in historic costuming and for its socio-cultural relationships with the era in which the movies were produced, questions initially posed in Chapter 1, Introduction were addressed and answered.

Does the costumer's treatment of the historic costumes of the male heroes in post-World War II historic epic movies reflect a historical accuracy to the ancient Greeks, Romans, and Egyptians or the cultural mores of the time?

The historic costumes of the male heroes in the historic epic movies made in the Cold War and post-World War II era reflect a historical accuracy. However, when compared to the level of accuracy of the historic epic movies produced in the turn of the millennia, more inaccuracies in the costuming of the male heroes of the Cold War historic epics were observed, although not significantly more.

Most inaccuracies dealt with creative license taken by the movies' costumers and with the costumes as a means to exhibit the new cinematic technologies of the time. Garments that were accurately worn were exotic while being comfortable for the moviegoers to view. Thus, many garments that may have been too exotic for the moviegoer but were popular in the ancient era of the movie's setting were not seen on the male protagonists. Additionally, while the costuming displayed a level of accuracy, hyper-masculinization of the male protagonists was observed.

Is there a connection between the levels of historical accuracy of the costuming of the historic epic male hero with the mindset of post-World War II American society?

Cultural mores of post-World War II American society were observed to be subtly reflected in the historic costuming of the male epic hero, although not in the level of accuracy. While historic costumes generally displayed a level of accuracy, other factors, such as the hyper-masculinization of the male character, his interactions with other characters, and the gender dynamics of the movies portrayed the male characters appropriate to the social era the movies were produced. Strong men characterized the protagonists, symbolizing the attitude of equality, democracy, and leadership of the Cold

War era. A stronger social message of democracy and the need of a democratic leader were evident in both *The Ten Commandments* and *Spartacus*.

Strong female characters were observed in the historic epic movies viewed from the turn of the millennia, although the male protagonist remained the strong, masculine hero. Social themes of democracy and family were present in *Gladiator* and *Spartacus*, although the use of violence and sexual scenes made the movies not only a symbol of the aforementioned social themes, but also of entertainment.

At the forefront of inaccuracies in costuming was the function of the historic epic film as a means for collective vicarious escapism. How each era used movies as a means of vicarious escapism was the greatest impact of difference between the viewed historic epic movies produced in the Cold War era and the turn of the millennia.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The major purpose of this study was to assess the historical accuracy of male protagonists in historic epic movies and to evaluate if any found inaccuracies related to the social mores in which the movie was produced. In this study, historic epic movies from the relatively conservative Cold War era and the relatively liberal turn of the millennia were selected as the primary source, specifically observing the male protagonist of each movie. The investigated historic epics included *The Ten Commandments* (1956) and *Spartacus* (1960) from the Cold War era, and *Gladiator* (2000) and *Troy* (2004) from the turn of the millennia.

Due to the multi-facetted nature of this study, background information was gathered in the following areas of research: the socio-cultural dynamics of the Cold War and turn of the millennia, the historic epic movie genre, production information per selected movie, accurate historic men's costume of ancient Egypt, Greece, and Rome, and fashion and qualitative semiotic theory. Thereafter, a checklist was created to aid in assessing the accuracy of the historic costuming while viewing the historic epics. An analysis of the individual and comparative findings from each movie in relation to the historical accuracy of the costuming of the male protagonist and social mores of the era in which the film was made was then completed and recorded.

Major Findings

1. The historical accuracy of the male protagonist's costuming for each examined historic epic was generally accurate in silhouette and appropriateness to the historic time setting.

2. Inaccuracies in historic costuming were mostly due to:

    a. achieve visual foreshadowing of the character development,

    b. showcase new technological advances in cinematography,

    c. and to exhibit the exoticism of the historic epic genre and of ancient civilizations.

3. A significant amount of heterosexual masculinization in the visual portrayal of the male protagonist was observed.

4. The male protagonists in each historic epic embodied the democratic socio-cultural American ideal.

5. Several key men's fashions popular during ancient Egyptian, Greek, and Roman times were not shown on any characters in the examined movies as dictated by the overall comfort levels of the moviegoers.

6. The main purpose of historic epic movies is to achieve very high movie attendance, the movie courting the appeal of men and women.

7. There was no observed significant difference in the accuracy of the historic costumes between the Cold War era and the turn of the millennia.

Objectives Examined

Objective 1. To assess the historical accuracy of the costumes of the male hero protagonist in the historical epics The Ten Commandments *and* Spartacus, *both of which were set in time periods of pre-bifurcated dress, ancient Egyptian and Greco-Roman eras, and which were produced in the 1950s and early 1960s.*

Both movies were viewed with the aid of a dominant-hegemonic position checklist to asses the accuracy of the historic costuming of Moses for *The Ten Commandments* and Spartacus for *Spartacus*. Several key elements of costuming were analyzed, with an emphasis on the accurate or inaccurate use of bifurcated verses unbifurcated dress. Other major components of costuming such as tunicas, togas, outer wear, etc. were also analyzed, while costuming peripherals or accessories were not specifically analyzed. Both movies were observed to accurately portray the costume of the male protagonists, although *The Ten Commandments* had a lower level of accuracy than *Spartacus*.

Objective 2. To gain an understanding of the socio-political climate of the 1950s and early 1960s and how it may have impacted levels of accuracy in the historic epics' methods of costuming.

Secondary research on the cultural mores of 1950s and early 1960s American culture and the rise of historic epic movies in the Cold War era was first conducted prior to viewing *The Ten Commandments* and *Spartacus*. During the viewing of these movies observational notes, in addition to the historic costume checklist, were taken using the realist tales position in order to document character development of the male protagonist

and the gender dynamics of the movie. Findings in the secondary and primary research were used to assess how the Cold War era may have impacted levels of accuracy in the male protagonists' historic costuming.

Objective 3. To assess the historical accuracy of the costumes of the male hero protagonist in the historical epics Gladiator *and* Troy*, both of which were set in time periods of pre-bifurcated dress, ancient Egyptian and Greco-Roman eras, and which were produced in the 1990s and early 2000s.*

Both movies were viewed with the aid of a dominant-hegemonic position checklist to asses the accuracy of the historic costuming of Maximus for *Gladiator* and Achilles for *Troy*. Several key elements of costuming were analyzed, with an emphasis on the accurate or inaccurate use of bifurcated verses unbifurcated dress. Other major components of costuming such as tunicas, togas, outer wear, etc. were also analyzed, while costuming peripherals or accessories were not specifically analyzed. Both movies were observed to accurately portray the costume of the male protagonists.

Objective 4. To gain an understanding of the socio-political climate of the 1990s and early 2000s and how it may have impacted levels of accuracy in the historic epics' methods of costuming.

Secondary research on the cultural mores of 1990s and early 2000s American culture and the rise of historic epic movies in the turn of the millennia was first conducted prior to viewing *Gladiator* and *Troy*. During the viewing of these movies observational notes, in addition to the historic costume checklist, were taken using the realist tales position in

order to document character development of the male protagonist and the gender dynamics of the movie. Findings in the secondary and primary research were used to assess how the turn of the millennia may have impacted levels of accuracy in the male protagonists' historic costuming.

Objective 5. To compare the findings from the selected movies, The Ten Commandments *and* Spartacus*, and* Gladiator *and* Troy*, within their relative eras of production to further understand society's ideas of masculinity and the "appropriate" visual manifestations of maleness in relation to the male-female dichotomy.*

While no significant difference between the levels of accuracy of historic costuming was observed between the historic epic movies of the Cold War era and the turn of the millennium, a similarity in the visual portrayal of the male protagonist was observed. Hyper-masculinization and unquestionable heterosexual orientation were clear in the costuming of the male protagonists, as well as in his interactions with other characters, namely with female characters.

Implications

Dress and adornment are inexorably connected to the dictates of culture, and because of this connection, dress and adornment are not only a distinctive characteristic of society but integral to it. Thus, it is difficult to recreate the costuming of a historic epic movie exactly accurate to the ancient time period in which the movie was set. This is because the success of historic epic movies, cinematic endeavors requiring ample amounts of resources and money, relies on attracting an equally ample amount of

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moviegoers. In order to please a large variety of moviegoers, the costuming of the male

protagonist, the hero of the historic epic, must be visually intriguing depicting a level of

exoticism of the ancient times while still being in accordance to the comfort levels of the

moviegoers.

Being that male dress of ancient times was overwhelmingly unbifurcated and that

American culture was undergoing a very conservative and gender-rigid social climate

after WWII, observed hyper-masculinization may have been utilized in the costuming of

The Ten Commandments and *Spartacus* to deter from the feminization of the male hero.

This may be due to unbifurcated garments being generalized as explicitly feminine—not

masculine—since men adopted trousers as an explicitly masculine garment in the 1700s.

Yet, when compared to the costuming of the male protagonists in *Gladiator* and *Troy*,

movies produced in a generally less conservative era of the turn of the millennia, hyper-

masculinization was still observed. Therefore, the inaccuracies of the visual identities of

the male protagonists, inarguably the heroes that the audiences want to see succeed by the

end of the movie and who exemplify wholesome American ideals, may be the result of

filmmakers manipulating the historic costuming in order to please the audiences.

Furthermore, these American ideals regarding the appropriate portrayal of a strong male

have changed little between the Cold War era and the turn of the millennia, despite any

societal progression towards egalitarianism between the genders and sexes.

Collective vicarious escapism and the need to appeal to a large variety of

audiences were the foremost reason of found inaccuracies in the historic costuming of the

male protagonist. The popularity of historic epic movies was due to the audience's need

for entertainment, escape, and leisure, in addition to the filmmakers' need for capital.[338] In accordance to the comfort levels of the vast amount of moviegoers the historic epic movies attracts, hyper-masculinization of the male protagonists was implemented by the filmmakers in order to compensate for the twentieth century understanding of an unbifurcated garment as being feminine. Moreover, particular costumes that would be uncomfortable for the moviegoer to view were omitted from the costuming wardrobes of the male protagonists all together. This allowed for generally historically accurate costumes for the male protagonists in each selected historic epic movie viewed by the researcher.

Recommendations for Further Research

1. Continue investigating the research problem by viewing more historic epic movies produced in the Cold War era and in the turn of the millennia, comparatively analyzing the implications of each era's social mores in the historic costuming of the male protagonists.

2. Continue investigating the research problem several decades after this research so that the researcher may assess historic epic movies and the eras that they were produced in an equally retrospective manner.

3. Broaden the scope of the research to include the level of historic accuracy of female protagonists and how their costuming may be affected by the social mores of the era the historic epic was produced. These findings can be compared to the

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[338] Kristin Thompson and David Bordwell, *Film History: An Introduction, 2nd Ed* (Boston: McGraw-Hill, 2003), 341.

findings of the level of historic accuracy of the male protagonists' costuming, allowing for greater analysis with the observational reading.

4. Have other researchers evaluate the chosen historic epic movies utilizing the methodology of this study in order to strengthen the validity of the found results.

5. View each of the chosen historic epic movies twice rather than in a single viewing in order to exclusively assume both the dominant-hegemonic and the realist tales methods of viewing the movies. The researcher will assume the dominant-hegemonic position with one viewing, utilizing the checklist to observe inaccuracies. During this viewing the researcher can meticulously analyze the historic costuming of the male protagonist through pausing and rewinding the film as needed. An additional viewing will take place with the researcher assuming the realist tales position of viewing. During this viewing the researcher will watch the movie in a single sitting analyzing and taking note of the character development and gender dynamic of the male protagonist.

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APPENDIX A

CHECKLIST OF ACCURACY IN THE MALE PROTAGONIST'S HISTORIC
COSTUMING: *THE TEN COMMANDMENTS* (1956)

Time period: Ancient Egypt, New Empire Period, 1550 – 1070 B.C.E.

Male Protagonist: Moses

Dominant-hegemonic reading

Garment	Description	Frequency	Accuracy	Inaccurate Observations	Additional Observations
Leather loincloth	Lower class men, worn like diaper, lattice slashing				
Short schenti	Wrapped, pleated, draped; sometimes with decorative triangular panels at center front; may be worn under sheer kalasiris or royal apron	3	3		• (saves Joshua) wearing brown and green; color symbolism • Gold border at edges, no pleating, white with yellow/orange mantle cape • (as slave) brown rags with side opening up thigh (high exposure)
Long schenti	Wrapped, worn various ways, either transparent or opaque; long, sheer, pleated or plain, worn over an opaque skirt				
Cape-like garment	Shirt fabric shoulder cape, fastening at the				

	center front				
Kalasiris: style 1	Tunic; drape, rectangular without hole at head	3	3		• (Moses released into desert) brown, belted, given Hebrew cloth • (Moses to Ramses II)gift of word of god; brown, crossed at front, belted with mantle • (Moses accepts Egyptian mother) dark brown, belted, cross at CF torso, under Hebrew Cloth
Kalasiris: Style 2	Tunic; draped with hole at head; sometimes with slit at CF[339] neckline with back panel brought forward and belted or tied at waistline	5	4	• (meets Joseph) tunic T-shaped, but sleeves set in; stripe unaligned • Set in sleeves again with light brown	• (Moses as Hebrew) short, belted, woolen, with skins, blue vertical stripes • (sheering festival) very colorful scene; dark blue, belted, gold broad necklace; to calf • (meets Joseph) dark tunic, short, belted, vertical stripes • Light brown, long, under Hebrew cloak; belted and binding at hem; vertical slit at

					CF neck
Kalasiris: style 3	Tunic; closed, tubular, sleeveless garment pulled over head				
Military: short pullover	Covering torso, wide ornate bands extended at front; wrapped and crossed	1	1		
Military: skirt	Short, unbifurcated; worn with royal apron	1	1		• (first entrance) in military uniform; gold, yellow, red; more color than accurate
Military: corset	Sleeveless, straps, small plates of bone, metal, or leather	1		• (Moses erecting obelisk) diagonal strips of leather, fitted (cut and sewn, no draped) with one strap over one shoulder	
Military: royal apron	Around waist, falls longer in front than back; front of numerous narrow panels with tassels at edges; pattern matching short pullover	1	1		

APPENDIX B

CHECKLIST OF ACCURACY IN THE MALE PROTAGONIST'S HISTORIC
COSTUMING: *SPARTACUS* (1960)

Time period: Ancient Rome, Roman Republic, 509 – 27 B.C.E.

Male Protagonist: Spartacus

Dominant-hegemonic reading

Garment	Description	Frequency	Accuracy	Inaccurate Observations	Additional Observations
Toga pura or toga virilas	Elliptically shaped and draped; plain white, unembellished; worn after 16 years old and by ordinary citizens				
Toga candida	Elliptically shaped and draped; similar to toga pura but bleached to extreme white; worn by candidates for political office				
Toga praetexta	Elliptically shaped and draped; with two or three inch wide purple border; worn by sons of nobility, adult magistrates, and high priests				
Toga pulla	Elliptically shaped and draped; black or dark; for				

	mourning				
Toga picta	Elliptically shaped and draped; purple with golden embroidery; worn on special occasions by victorious generals or other distinguished men				
Toga trabea	Elliptically shaped and draped; multi-colored and striped; worn by augers (prophets) and important officials				
Clavi	Purple color bands extending from hem to hem and over shoulders; applied to tunics of senators and emperors; narrower for knights				
Colobium	Rectangular tunic joined at shoulders and sides; worn wide, less fitted	7	7		• (opening with Spartacus) brown, tattered, very short, exposed subligar underneath • (branding) very short, brown • (training)

					heavy belt, short, subligar exposed • (mess hall uprising) same • (striking deal with pirate) dark, belted with leather crossed bands and cape; to mid-thigh • (Metapontum celebration) with leather crossed bands at torso • (prisoner of war) tattered, dirty, chains
Pallium	Draped garment similar to toga but based on rectangular shape; worn on less formal occasions				
Subligar	Loincloth for middle and upper class; working class garment for lower class	3	2	• (painting body) does not appear wrapped very fitted with wide belt; belted very high	• (bathing scene) wearing during bath • (first gladiatorial fight) belted with arm protector; seemingly draped; belted
Palu-damentum	Rectangular cloth worn pinned at right shoulder; worn by generals as military cloak				
Sagum	Worn by	1	1		• (Spartacus

	soldiers; small blanket-like garment used as a wrap				fight Romans) worn like cape; with colobium and crossed bands at torso
Laena	Large semicircular wrap; heavy and brightly colored; pinned at right shoulder				
Larcena	Semicircular wrap similar to laena, but made of lighter, finer fabric				
Paenula	A cape worn for especially bad weather; CF opening with pointed hood				
Casula	Meaning "little house"; slipped over the head similar to a poncho	5	5		• (woman for Spartacus) poncho-like, heavy, long • (Spartacus gather gladiators) CF panel pulled back and belted with CB panel free like a cape; loose, simple, to knee (unsure of accuracy of style) • (learns he is a father) throws poncho over wife • (dinner scene) front belted back;

					edges rolled and back panel free • (leading into last battle) same
Carcullus	Worn with casula, laena, or lacerna; a hood attached to a small shoulder cape				

APPENDIX C

CHECKLIST OF ACCURACY IN THE MALE PROTAGONIST'S HISTORIC
COSTUMING: *GLADIATOR* (2000)

Time period: Ancient Rome, Roman Empire, 27 B.C.E. – 478 A.D.

Male Protagonist: Maximus

Dominant-hegemonic reading

Garment	Description	Frequency	Accuracy	Inaccurate Observations	Additional Observations
Toga pura or toga virilas	Elliptically shaped and draped; plain white, unembellished; worn after 16 years old and by ordinary citizens				
Toga candida	Elliptically shaped and draped; similar to toga pura but bleached to extreme white; worn by candidates for political office				
Toga praetexta	Elliptically shaped and draped; with two or three inch wide purple border; worn by sons of nobility, adult magistrates, and high priests				
Toga pulla	Elliptically shaped and draped; black or dark; for				

	mourning				
Toga picta	Elliptically shaped and draped; purple with golden embroidery; worn on special occasions by victorious generals or other distinguished men				
Toga trabea	Elliptically shaped and draped; multi-colored and striped; worn by augers (prophets) and important officials				
Sinus	Over fold of toga, rolled into loose folds crossed behind body and under right arm; causes draped apron effect; complicated				
Umbo	"the knob"; pulled fabric formally placed on the shoulder over the floor; creating a lump of fabric draped across body				
"toga with the folded bands	Over fold pleated rather than hung; creates smooth diagonal band across chest				

	from shoulder				
clavi	Purple color bands extending from hem to hem and over shoulders; applied to tunics of senators and emperors; narrower for knights				
Colobium	Rectangular tunic joined at shoulders and sides; worn wide, less fitted; wider in Empire with should seam falling to forearm	6	5	• (Maximus found) in white sleeveless top? With subligar or feminalia? Cannot observe because screen cuts off at torso	• (first fight in training)heavy, white, sleeveless, belted, below knees • (first fight in Arab coliseum) same • (second fight, alone) light blue, belted, sleeveless, leather chest and shoulder guard, overskirt; hem above knee by 2 inches, tattered edges • (talking with gladiators) light blue, belted • (first battle in Rome) blue, same, black lorica
Pallium	Draped garment similar to toga but based on				

	rectangular shape; worn on less formal occasions; more popular in Empire, worn belted				
Tunica talaris	Long sleeved tunic to mid-calf; tubular and pulled over head	4	4		• (first scene) under lorica, heavy material (cold—Germania), reddish brown, leather strip over skirt • (talk with emperor) under lorica • (praying) linen, long-sleeved, light night gown • (escape from Roman army) reddish brown, under lorica; with tighter long sleeve underneath (warmth)
Dalmatica	Shorter and wider version of tunica with wider sleeves; tubular and pulled over head				
Subligar	Loincloth for middle and upper class; working class garment for lower class	1	1		• (battle with Gaul gladiator) one quick flash; flashed as colobium flies up mid-fight
Feminalia	Fitted, knee-length breeches	3	3		• (first scene in Germania)

	covering legs; worn by soldiers and eventually generals and emperors				barely recognizable; tunica long with greaves over • (talk with emperor) under tunica and lorica • (escape from Roman army) same
Lorica	High quality breastplate; worn for parades and official occasions; rarely worn in battle because cumbersome	4	4		• (first scene in Germania) with fur over shoulders (cold); embossed with animals • (talk with emperor) over tunica talaris • (escape from Roman army) same • (first fight in Rome) over blue colobium; given by Proximo; with horses embossed
Palu-damentum	Cloak worn pinned at right shoulder; worn by generals as military cloak and by emperors by the Empire				
Sagum	Worn by soldiers; a small blanket-like garment used as a wrap	1	1		• (meeting with senator) woolen texture; dark blue
Laena	Large semi-				

	circular wrap; heavy and brightly colored; pinned at the right shoulder; worn by all classes, varied in length				
Lacerna	Semicircular wrap similar to laena, but made of lighter, finer fabric; worn by all classes, varied by length				
Paenula	A cape worn for especially bad weather; CF opening with a pointed hood; homespun for poor; finer for dignitaries	2		• (talk with emperor) fur, chain closure, CF opening, heavy, red, no hood, long, over lorica • (Finds emperor dead) mantle? Red, heavy, over white tunica night gown	
Casula	Meaning "little house"; slipped over the head similar to a poncho				
Cacullus	Worn with a casula, laena, or lacerna; a hood attached to a small shoulder cape				

APPENDIX D

CHECKLIST OF ACCURACY IN THE MALE PROTAGONIST'S HISTORIC
COSTUMING: *TROY* (2004)

Time period: Ancient Greece, Mycenaeans, c. 1200 B.C.E.

Male Protagonist: Achilles

Dominant-hegemonic reading

Garment	Description	Frequency	Accuracy	Inaccurate Observations	Additional Observations
Short skirt	Ended at thigh, wrapped around hips with longer point of fabric at CB or CF weighted by a tassel	7	7	• (general) no dramatic tassel at CF or CB point	• (first scene) very short, above mid thigh; black (leather?) with two vents at front and back; hem subtly curves longer in front; with helmet and chest plate also black; more fitted than other characters • (attack Troy) same • (after attack, washes up) same • (Achilles looking over battle) same, but cannot observe skirt— vantage cuts off below torso • (battle at beach) same • (fights Hector) same • (Trojan Horse) same
Long	Ended between	3	3		• (Phtia) dark

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skirt schenti	knee and ankle, wrapped				blue, wrapped but points longer at CF; small patterns, worn with tunic-like top • (talks with Odysseus) wrap with CF longer, no tassels?; rich blue matching tunic with gold detail • (talks with Priam) dark wrap, longer in front; hem to calk with leather tunic top
Perizoma	Briefs, worn with a codpiece	3	3	• (general) cannot clearly see a codpiece; no clear vantage for observational opportunity	• (first scene) flashes when kills other Thessalonian fighter; dark in color, fitted, cannot see detail • (attacks Troy) same • (fights Hector) same
Poncho-like cape	Rectangular fabric; folded over body with opening for head; usually accompanying the skirt	1	1		• (learns of cousin's death) black, long, unfitted; gold ornamentation at CF to CB to bottom hem and at side hems; rectangular, draped
Tunics (later the chiton)	t-shaped, either with long or short sleeves, varied in length;	6	6		• (Phtia) matching top, short sleeves, short on torso (exposes

	embellished at hems, sides, and shoulder lines with decorative selvages, embroidery, or woven tapes; sometimes belted				naval); CF closure by single tie, exposing chest • (speaks to mother) short tunic, border at neck and sleeves, deep V and square back neckline; subtle patterned blue fabric; cannot see below torso • (refusing to fight) dark, deep V-neck; cannot see length or detail • (saves Briseis from soldiers) dark, sleeveless rounded neck; belted, deep armholes; length? • (after Briseis) short tunic, t-shaped; gold décor at CF and neck to hip (like clavi); CF slit at neckline; matches long skirt • (talks with Priam) CF slit at neckline, sleeveless; dark, hem at hip; leather
Greaves	Shin guards of bronze or leather; covered front of lower leg	5	5		• (first scene) black, matches chest plate; covers shin and strapped behind

					at calf; worn with short skirt • (attack Troy) same • (preparing for battle) same; shows character lacing greaves with juxtaposing shots of Hector doing the same • (Trojan horse) same
Leggings	Similar to greaves, but covered front and back of lower leg				