

The US is in an Era of Loss. Dilemmas about Nuclear Weapons. The “Oppenheimer” Film.

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The US is in an era of loss.

Look today at the current film “Oppenheimer”. The whole story of that man revolves around dilemmas about nuclear weapons flooding into his life. But that is skipped over – because it is not politically acceptable to raise such discussions in the US anymore. An article points to the phantastic drama which the film “Oppenheimer” *should* have been about. See [this](#).

Nothing makes us care about the historic person Julius Robert Oppenheimer other than his personal role in developing the nuclear bomb, the killing of 100s of thousands of innocent Japanese, and the nuclear arms race it started. And the subsequent personal and grand political upheavals inside and around J. Robert Oppenheimer that followed.

This is an existential story. A story of human destiny, and a story of politics and intrigue. A story of morals. Of personal doubt. Feeling of guilt (though some say he defended the use on Japan). Of religion (he was into Indian philosophy). Of power play. Of folly. Of anger. And the killing of 100’s of thousands of Japanese – perhaps for no reason, because Japan was already about to surrender. Of efforts to change the course of history by stopping the arms race into the hydrogen-bomb. The story about the beginning to the ever more complicated efforts to control the possibility of nuclear, as these weapons become more advanced. The story of the birth of the US nuclear war lobby. This story may be centered on one man “Oppenheimer”, but its about much more than one person.

I can easily imagine a tense movie of just normal 1½ hours – half the length of the tea-cup

story served over 3 hours. But in the degraded US culture, the big story about life and human existence and the deep questions and big politics that follow is not relevant anymore. It has to be degraded to a comic book. The [New York Times](#) (NYT) in its “critic” serves the “Oppenheimer” as a soap-opera.

That is the NYT conception of a “Hollywood success”: No teeth, no bite, but a wash-out of the real theme. And indeed, that is what Hollywood has become. Then better watch “Barbie” – that is at least an honest story, not pretending to be more than it is. Tellingly, the maker of the “Oppenheimer” movie decided NOT to show any scenes from the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki: Don’t show the audience what this is ALL about!

And the NYT agrees openly. Don’t show the disturbing pictures of destroyed lives and cities which resulted from J. Robert Oppenheimer’s creation. We can discuss back and forth about nuclear weapons. Some say nuclear weapons risk humanity – which may be true. Others say that nuclear weapons since 1945 have saved the northern part of the World from war – which may be true as well. We can discuss back and forth about whether it was justified to use nuclear weapons to kill a massive number of innocent Japanese civilians. We can discuss back and forth about the hydrogen bomb and the arms race that has followed. And we should. Stanley Kubrick’s masterpiece “Dr. Strangelove” from 1964 does precisely that. The moral sin of the “Oppenheimer” movie is a sin of covering up: Serving soap instead of digging into this fundamental human dilemma, which is the *real* story, and the *only* reason why the rest of us should care at all about the figure called “Oppenheimer”.

Russia’s President Putin saw the *real* movie about this existential dilemma for humanity – the Dr. Strangelove film about “incidental” nuclear destruction of the planet. Putin replied about the nuclear issue:

“It has become even more difficult, more dangerous.”

But not for Hollywood anymore – and neither for the NYT liberals.

The US loss is not only about culture. It is about morals too.

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