**AP European History Final Project-**

**Historical Accuracy of a Movie**

Historical Film Review and Analysis

For as long as there have been movies, filmmakers have plumbed the depths of history to tell a good story.  Though a film might tell a compelling story, oftentimes the truth is pushed aside and an inaccurate portrayal of the people, the place, and the time is formed.  It is your job as a historian to watch one of the movies listed below and evaluate how accurately it depicts the history.  You will write a film analysis that demonstrates an accurate understanding of the time, place, and people depicted in the film and which shows a close examination of the film itself.

*Questions about the film*

* *Who are the main and minor characters?  How are they connected to each other?*
* *Where is the film set?  What is the time span of the film?*
* *What is the main plot?  What are the subplots, if any?  Trace the plot through place and time.  Identify the different roles played by the characters in the plot.*
* *What are the themes of the film?*
* *Consider the acting and direction?  To what extent do these enhance or detract from the film?*

*Questions about the history in the film*

* *Does the film capture the look of the time? – Costumes? Sets? – How do these affect the attempt at historical accuracy?  Do they help to make the film more realistic in order to limit questions about the film’s accuracy?*
* ***Is the plot historically accurate?  How much is true? How much is embellished or invented? How does this film shape the utility of film as a historical document? (minimum of two typed pages discussing this point-this will require research outside of simply watching the movie)***

*Other questions to ponder*

* *Does the film create an accurate impression of the time?  Are the liberties taken with the truth useful in depicting a greater truth about the time, place, or person?  Are there any clues in the presentation of the film that make one realize that the film is not trying to be historically accurate?*
* *Does the film purport to be a piece of history or does it only seek to tell a compelling story – is it historical fiction? Pure fiction?*
* *To what extent are the misrepresentations of the past harmful to understanding the people, places, and time?  Who or what is harmed by the film?  Is credit given to someone that does not deserve it?*
* *Is it Hollywood or is it history?  Can the two be merged at all?  What does the film tell you about a film’s ability to tell any truth?  Or the ability of history to be shaped into film?  Is historical fiction a legitimate medium for presenting the past?  Would a documentary be better?  What would a documentary of the same subject look like?*
* *What should a history teacher think of this film?  How could it be used in the classroom?*

Expectations

1. Watch the film closely – 2 viewings minimum – use the pause button to take notes
2. Read the textbook and at least two other secondary sources on the subject – you will need to create a works consulted page.
3. Write a 3-5 page paper that evaluates the film as a presentation of history ( one page of the paper must specifically address the **historical accuracy** of the film).
4. Give a 10 minute presentation to the class about your movie – show a clip no more than two minutes long (please review beforehand)
5. How can the film be used in a classroom environment

**Film List**

* Christopher Columbus: The Discovery (1992)
* The Mission (1986)
* The Agony and the Ecstasy (1965)
* Elizabeth (1998)
* The Return of Martin Guerre (1982) (French – La Retour de Martin Guerre)
* Cromwell (1970)
* Barry Lyndon (1975)
* The Madness of King George (1994)
* Danton (1982)
* Mrs. Brown (1997)
* Les Miserables (1998)
* Michael Collins (1996)
* Out of Africa (1985)
* Gallipoli (1981)
* Paths of Glory (1957)
* All Quiet on the Western Front (1930)
* Battleship Potemkin (1925)
* Oktyabr or Ten Days that Shook the World (1927)
* Dr. Zhivago (1965)
* Triumph of the Will (1934)
* Judgment at Nuremberg (1961)
* Schindler’s List (1993)
* Life is Beautiful (1997)
* La Battaglia di Algeri / The Battle of Algiers (1965)
* Das Boot / The Boat (German)
* Enemy at the Gates (2001)
* Europa, Europa (1990) (German)
* The Great Escape (1963)
* In the Name of the Father (1993)
* Lawrence of Arabia (1962)
* The Pianist (2002)
* Reds (1981)
* Downfall (2004)
* Queen Margot (1994) French
* Elizabeth: The Golden Age (2007)
* A Very Long Engagement (2004)
* Au Revoir, les Enfants (1987) French
* A Man for All Seasons (1965)
* Immortal Beloved (1994)
* Pan’s Labyrinth (Spanish)
* Valkyrie (not available for period 5)
* Hugo
* American Rhapsody
* Goodbye, Lenin (German)
* Everything is Illuminated
* The Last Station
* Billy Elliot
* Elizabeth, the Golden Age
* The King’s Speech
* Sunday, Bloody Sunday
* In the Name of the Father
* The Queen
* Angela’s Ashes
* Liam
* Cabaret
* Cinema Paradiso (Italian)
* The Music Box
* Atonement
* The Libertine
* Midnight in Paris (not available for period 1)
* War Horse

**If you want to review a movie not on this list, it must be cleared with me first- provided your choice is a film that deals primarily w/a European event, it’s quite likely the choice of film will be approved.**