

La Bataille de Gaulle: Cinema & National Memory

Revisiting Historical Figures and Leadership in CPGE TSI 2

Name:

Class: TSI 2e Année

Date:

I. Visual Discovery & Description (Oral Work / Notes)

Observe the historical photograph representing General de Gaulle walking alone in the desert during World War II, then answer the following questions:

1. Describe the environment and elements in the scene (foreground, background, vehicles):

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2. Analyze the general's posture, clothing, and facial expression. What impressions does this composition create?

☐ Determination ☐ Solitude ☐ Authority ☐ Danger ☐ Uncertainty ☐ Hope

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II. History, Remembrance, and Cinema

1. Why is World War II still remembered and commemorated so heavily in contemporary France?

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2. In your opinion, do films about historical events only tell us about the past, or do they also talk about current issues?

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III. Categorizing Vocabulary

Complete the table below by proposing terms related to each field:

Historical Vocabulary	Political Vocabulary	Cinema Vocabulary
occupation / resistance	leadership / authority	biopic / blockbuster
liberation / exile	patriotism / nationhood	screenplay / box office
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IV. Predicting the Text (Vocabulary in Context)

Complete the sentences with words from the list below: **upsurge** — **knock-on effect** — **leader** — **challenges** — **success**

1. The biopic about the general's wartime exile has become a massive commercial _____.
2. High attendance at the movie theaters has triggered a sudden _____ of interest in history.
3. This boom in curiosity had a positive _____ effect on museums.
4. Rather than showing a perfect icon, the screenplay focuses on a complex, lonely military _____.
5. He had to make severe moral choices and face extraordinary geopolitical _____.

V. Match Word with Definition

In pre-reading, matching words to their definitions builds analytical skills. Connect each word to its synonym and French translation:

Key Word	English Definition	French Translation
1. Upsurge	a. Tense, filled with difficulties or anxiety	A. Imparfait, comportant des failles
2. Fraught	b. To disregard, violate, or defy rules	B. Distant, froid, peu communicatif
3. Flout	c. Distant, unemotional, or reserved	C. Un regain, une forte augmentation
4. Aloof	d. An indirect consequence / domino effect	D. Bafouer, transgresser ouvertement
5. Knock-on effect	e. Severe, obvious, plain or absolute	E. Tendu, lourd de menaces ou d'angoisse
6. Stark	f. Imperfect, containing faults	F. Effet domino, répercussions indirectes
7. Flawed	g. A rapid increase or rise	G. Cru, tranchant, sans concession

VI. Mini-Debate / Writing Challenge

Question: *"Why do modern societies continue to celebrate historical, often controversial leaders through cinema?"*

Write exactly three sentences to answer, using at least two vocabulary words from Section V (e.g., *aloof*, *flawed*, *upsurge*). Use the structures provided below to guide your thoughts:

• **Sentence 1 (The Past):** Films about historical leaders help us understand...

• **Sentence 2 (The Present):** Furthermore, they connect historical figures with contemporary...

• **Sentence 3 (The Consequence):** Consequently, they spark...

The Odyssey Backlash: Race, Gender, & Cinema

Analyzing Representation and Media Controversies in CPGE TSI 2

Name:

Class: TSI 2e Année

Date:

I. Warm-Up & Brainstorming (Discussion)

Casting decisions in historical or mythological films are frequently contested. Discuss or write your initial thoughts on these items:

1. Think of other characters whose casting sparked debate (e.g., Idris Elba rumored as James Bond, or Cynthia Erivo in Wicked). Why did people react strongly?

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2. Should a fictional or mythological character (like James Bond or Helen of Troy) always be portrayed by actors of a specific race or appearance? Why or why not?

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II. Key Vocabulary Acquisition

These terms are critical for discussing representation and media controversies. Match them with synonyms and translations:

Key Term	English Synonym / Meaning	French Translation
1. Backlash	a. Prepare oneself physically/mentally for a shock	A. Gêner, irriter, froisser l'opinion
2. To brace oneself	b. Strong negative reaction or resistance	B. Un bouc émissaire / souffre-douleur
3. To spawn	c. Legitimate target for attack or criticism	C. Misogynie spécifique envers les femmes noires
4. Scapegoat	d. To generate, multiply, or give birth to	D. Se préparer psychologiquement (au choc)
5. Ruffle feathers	e. To irritate, offend, or upset people	E. Engendrer, pulluler, faire naître
6. Fair game	f. Person blamed for the mistakes of others	F. Une cible légitime (critique facile)
7. Misogynoir	g. Racist misogyny directed at Black women	G. Retour de bâton, tollé, rejet hostile

III. Myth vs. Adaptation (Homer's Odyssey)

In the original myth, Helen of Sparta is married to King Menelaus. She runs away with Paris to Troy, causing Agamemnon to lead the Greeks to war. In Christopher Nolan's film, the plot is adapted. Read these statements and try to predict how they differ from traditional views:

1. In the film, Helen is a victim and a scapegoat of Agamemnon's ambition. What does this change suggest about the traditional blame put on her for the war?

2. Lupita Nyong'o plays both Helen and her twin sister Clytemnestra. What artistic effect could this double role achieve?

IV. Contextual Fill-In-The-Blanks

Complete these sentences with words from Section II (conjugate verbs if necessary): **backlash — to brace oneself — to spawn — scapegoat — ruffle feathers — fair game — misogynoir**

1. Every time a diverse cast is announced, I _____ for hateful online comments.

2. The rumors of a diverse casting in mainstream blockbusters usually _____ endless sterile debates.

3. Detractors argued that making Helen Black was 'woke' propaganda, but their anger only _____.

4. Online trolls treated the actress as _____, attacking her appearance and character relentlessly.

5. Saskia Calliste argues that this aggressive online reaction is a form of _____, which targets Black women.

V. Exam Preparation: Translating & Structuring

Translate the following sentences into English using the vocabulary from the worksheet. Be careful with grammar and syntax (TSI 2 standard):

1. Le choix d'embaucher cette actrice noire a provoqué un tollé immédiat sur internet.

2. Les minorités méritent d'être représentées à leur juste valeur dans la culture occidentale.

VI. Synthesis & Reflection (Homework / Essay Prep)

Question: *In your opinion, is the backlash against diverse casting motivated by a desire for historical accuracy or is it simply a form of prejudice?* Write a 100-word paragraph answering this question. Use at least three words from this worksheet.