

DEPICTION OF TRUTH IN HISTORICAL FILMS, DISNEY FILMS AND TELEVISION SERIES

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Abstract- Many high-profile filmmakers all over the world almost always choose to add a twist or exaggerate or sometimes even completely deconstruct the actual events that happened in history when they produce films based on historical events. Historical accuracy is something which script writers, creators, directors and filmmakers like to always meddle with. Look for instance at English historical and biographic movies like *The Other Boleyn Girl* (2008), *Gandhi* (1982), *The King's Speech* (2010), *Dunkirk* (2017), *The Lady* (2011), we find that history has always been altered to some extent.

Keywords – truth, critics, historical events. Henry VIII, Elizabeth, Disney films

I. INTRODUCTION

Film-makers claim that everyone knows they make things up. Which I don't think is true because there would be some part of the population who believes that the films are actually portraying the truth. But the fictions enter the record as attributed to historical figures. There are many movies which claim to be 'based on truth' but instead lies to its audience while trying to be 'true'. Some television critics argue such shows would be "pretty boring" if it kept entirely to history.

Now, let us look at some popular Films and Television series:

1. *Tudors (2007- 2010):*

This television series is based on the life story of Henry VIII of England. It was one of the highest rated television series of its time. But the series has heavy spiced of the enter truth revolving around the king's life and his many wives/queens.

Time gap in the series is different from what actually happened, giving the impression that things happened closer together than they actually did or along a different timeline.

By the time of most of the events in this series, King Henry VIII was already in his mid-to-late 30s and was rapidly gaining weight. But Jonathan Meyers who played Henry VIII in the Tudors looked a lot younger and had a very well-maintained body.

Also, about the age gap, in reality, Catherine of Aragon, was only six years his elder, and he was approximately a decade older than Anne Boleyn. Maria Doyle Kennedy (who plays Catherine of Aragon) is thirteen years older than Jonathan Rhys Meyers (who plays Henry VIII), who is, in turn, only five years older than Natalie Dormer (who plays Anne Boleyn). So, this made Henry VIII look a lot younger than he actually was during those events.

Also, Anne was recalled to Henry's court from France three years after her sister Mary Boleyn, not simultaneously, and Henry did not begin to court her until 1526. The matter of Henry falling enough in love with Anne to seek an annulment, ultimately severing from the Catholic Church, setting aside Catherine and marrying Anne took another seven years to resolve, culminating in Anne's coronation in 1533. In the series, the timeline from introduction to marriage seems to take little more than a year.

The assassination attempt on Anne during her coronation procession in Season 2 was a completely fictional event, invented by Hirst "to illustrate how much the English people hated her". In the opening scene they showed Stockholm City Hall but it was completed in 1923, 376 years after Henry VIII's death.

The character of Henry's sister, called "Princess Margaret" in the series, is actually a mixture of his two sisters. What happens to Princess Margaret in the series is taken from the life events of Henry VIII's younger sister, Princess Mary Tudor. But the name has been taken from Henry VIII's elder sister, Margaret Tudor.

The king's illegitimate son Henry Fitzroy was shown to be born near the beginning of the series and dying at a young age from the sweating sickness. In fact, he lived until 1536, long enough to marry the only daughter of Anne Boleyn's uncle Thomas Howard, Duke of Norfolk and be a witness to Anne Boleyn's execution.

In the last episode of the final series, Henry commissions Hans Holbein the Younger to paint his portrait, and the final result is shown as he dies. However, the actual portrait was painted almost a decade before his death, in 1536. Holbein, in fact, the painter had passed away several years before Henry.

2. *Elizabeth (1998):*

Elizabeth began to paint her face white with lead pigment after she was left scarred from an attack of smallpox in 1563, not after the 1569 Northern Rising as depicted. Although the idea of marriage to Henry, Duke of Anjou was briefly entertained in 1570, Elizabeth never actually met him and there is no evidence that he was a transvestite, as depicted in the film.

At the end of the film, Elizabeth is shown as having decided permanently against marriage. In fact, she entertained the idea of marriage with several European monarchs well into middle-age. These included her former brother-in-law, Philip II of Spain, Archduke Charles of Austria, Eric XIV of Sweden, Adolphus, Duke of Holstein, and the Valois princes Francis and Henry (later King Henry III of France and Poland).

3. *The Other Boleyn Girl (2008):*

This is the film adaption of the book 'The Other Boleyn Girl' by Phillipa Gregory.

Many histories, including Eric Ives's biography of Anne Boleyn, present evidence that Mary was the elder sister, and the eldest of the Boleyn children, whereas The Other Boleyn Girl presents Mary as the youngest of her siblings.

The movie portrayed Mary Boleyn as a shy, innocent girl but according to history, she was actually a rather an immoral woman who was kicked out by the Queen of France who was irritated with her affair with the French King.

4. *Disney films:*

Portrayal of Stepmothers in Disney films like Cinderella and Snow White: Media portrayals of stepfamilies influence societal views of stepfamilies and individuals' expectations for remarriage and stepfamily life. In the portrayal of stepmothers in Disney movies like Cinderella and Snow White, we saw an abundance of nonverbal cues that would lead a child to think of them as evil. This pattern shown through the two stepmothers presented may cause children to stereotype stepmothers in general.

CONCLUSION

Filmmakers have a very high tendency to alter the truth when it comes to making films based on historical events. But even though these films are not always accurate, their success rates tend to be very high. The creators of these movies claim that they have to alter the truth in order to make the film entertaining enough for the mass. As art doesn't always have to be moral in order to be beautiful, but it has to be captivating enough to have an effect on the people, scriptwriters have always chosen to add more drama to their films even if it is at the cost of losing their historical accuracy.

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