

Analytical essay



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Analytical Essay Name Instructor Date Analytical Essay History has been depicted in various elements that have shaped the methods and techniques historians utilize in their analysis of past events and situations. Elements such as poems, plays, pictures, household items, weapons, tools, songs, tapestries and artistic materials have captured the various sequential events that occurred during a certain period. To the common person, these works of art seem like mere compositions pleasant for the eye but to historians, they are vital pieces of information that can be used to examine the history of the object under study. One example of an artwork is the Bayeux Tapestry, which is one of the unique forms of art that has been used by historians. It is a portion of embroidery composed of images to venerate the Battle of Hastings in the year 1066. Part 1 The first image, image 12 describes two soldiers where one is giving the other soldier a helmet and three armed soldiers on horses arriving at a palace. At the palace, one of the soldiers who had arrived is talking to another person while sitting next to another man clad in a black cloak and green clothes holding a scepter like object pointing another man in a green cloak and black clothes who points the scroll.

Image 14 illustrates an old king on his bed in his palace with a young man carrying a feather. A cloaked white hand is revealed coming out of the sky above the church while another man is carrying a stick with a cock's head over the church. There are several men depicted carrying a casket while aside, two men are shown carrying brown objects. Other men are depicted standing behind the carriers of the casket. Image 15 depicts the old king with his eyes shut in his palace with three people carrying him. Four people are gathered around the king with one having his head as a skull.

Two people are depicted. One of him or her is pointing at the pale king while giving another soldier a crown. Another man is sitting on a throne while a priest is on the right side and two other people clapping for the man. Image 17 illustrates two men in a palace conversing. Another man is shown listening to the two persons while holding an axe pointing towards four men who are depicted cutting down five trees. Another man is portrayed fining the wood produced from the trees while being supported on a tree. Five other men are also shown using hammers and nails working on constructing canoes from the wood. The canoes are then illustrated being completed.

Image 18 depicts a group of men pulling the canoes with ropes over the water while one man ties the ropes onto a pole. A structure resembling a palace is shown. The image also demonstrates a group of men carrying army clad, axes and swords heading towards the ship.

Another man is portrayed carrying a cylinder while two other men are shown dragging a cart filled with spears and a cylindrical object amidst the spears. Image 22 indicates two men with one tall one swinging an axe while another man is holding a ram. Another man with a sword in his sash is carrying a pig on his shoulder while another man holds a long spear and a rope on a horse. Two men are depicted holding a bowl over a flame. Another man is also shown putting food in a tray while another one is playing a musical instrument. Image 23 portrays a man serving food to three people sat on a table that are wining and dining. There are six people sat on another table merrily eating and drinking. Another man is shown in the middle of the serving food while kneeling on one knee.

There are also three men sitting and conversing, whereby the man in the centre is holding a scepter like object, who orders other men carrying sharp end objects. Image 29 portrays several armed men in army uniform with spears and shields mounted on horses heading towards other armed men, in soldier clothing, directing spears and arrows at them, while carrying shields, as well. Many other men are depicted lying on the ground, motionless, some with spears embedded in their bodies. Another group of men in army clad is also illustrated throwing spears while protecting themselves with shields, which have arrows fixed in them. Part 2 1a) The Bayeux Tapestry, through a sequence of events, enables historians to gain knowledge on the Battle of Hastings. The embroidery as a piece of art can also be used as a historical source for the different events that led to the Conquest of England by the Norman people. The first image depicted the offering of arms to Duke Harold by the Duke of Normandy, Duke William. The image also showed the swearing of an oath by Harold to William.

This image thus portrayed the event in which Harold indicated his loyalty to William. The second image and third image illustrated the coronation of Harold as King of England upon the death of his predecessor, King Edward. The fourth and fifth image further indicates the plans made by William to sail across the English Channel to invade England. The sixth and seventh image shows the invasion of the Normans, in England under Duke William. This further shows the treachery enacted by the Norman Duke when he decided to invade England after learning about the death of King Edward and thus forgoing the oath sworn to him by Harold. William then orders his men to find food and cook a meal. The event depicted in the eighth image comprises the

final battle at Hastings between the English, under Harold and the Normans, under William leading to the death of Harold. From the images, the history circling around the Battle of Hastings was deduced by historians making it a formidable source.

b) However, there has been criticism formulated by other historians that have raised the question as to whether the Bayeux Tapestry is a reliable source of information. The critics base the unreliability of the tapestry as a historical source based on its creation stemming from a one sided point of view and some of the events depicted. Based on a single point of view, the tapestry was composed by the Normans, meaning that it did not address information from the English, as well. This further subjects the tapestry to bias regarding the battle and the outcome popularizing the notion that the Normans proved to be undeniably strong over the British. Regarding the events, the tapestry fails to address the truth surrounding the death of Harold. One source claims that Harold was struck with an arrow that pierced his eye and died while another source claims that Harold was slain in battle. The tapestry also hides the real end of the whole story because a section of the embroidery is missing.

2) The Bayeux Tapestry has not only provided information on the events bordering the Battle of Hastings, but has also portrayed other aspects regarding the era in which the battle took place. For instance, the tapestry indicates the image of a church and the presence of an archbishop. It is believed that the Normans and English in the eleventh century believed in Christianity. Another image also depicts the civilians gazing at the passing of

Hailey's Comet. In the eleventh century, people associated the passing of the comet with misfortune and bad luck.

The image depicting William giving Harold arms indicates that the eleventh century composed a monarchical government. It is also evident that oaths and vows were taken seriously and if broken, led to death as depicted in the swearing ceremony between Harold and William and the death of Harold due to the arrow that pierced his eye, which symbolized the gouging out of eyes due to perjury or vow breaking. The Bayeux Tapestry has indeed its advantages and criticisms; however, it has proved to be a reliable source of information that has proved to be beneficial to historians, as well as people alike.