**Patrice Chéreau, *La Reine Margot* (1994)**

**Worksheet**

1. The film, its production history, its sources

* Find out more about the genesis of *La Reine Margot*: when and where was the film released? How many official versions are there, and how might they differ from one another?
* What production companies are behind *La Reine Margot*? What do they tell us of the public the film was intended for?
* The film is based on a novel of the same title by Alexandre Dumas sr. What do you know about this work? Its stage version? Any subsequent interpretations (filmic or otherwise)? What other sources have fed into *La Reine Margot*?

1. The people

* Find out more about Patrice Chéreau: what characterizes his films? What makes *La Reine Margot* stand out from other productions?
* Find out more about the actors, fulfilling the principal roles in *La Reine Margot*. What bearing does the casting have on the way the Valois court and the events 1572-1574 are portrayed?

1. Analysis:

* The original French version of the film lasts 2h 23 minutes. How long is the timeframe of the narration? Can you relate the narration to particular historical dates? Are there any significant deviations in the story from the accepted historical chronology of events?
  + Note the official duration for other official versions: how do they compare?
* ‘A vivid canvas of political intolerance and intrigue’ (Pidduck). Discuss this assessment of Chéreau’s *La Reine Margot*.
* ‘In contrast to the stereotypical heritage film, aesthetically beautiful but ultimately unchallinging, *La Reine Margot* seemed profoundly disturbing; […] The film engages its audience in a contradictory and critical relationship with the heritage genre, and in that context Margot emerges as an example of an active and engaged participant, at once spectator and protagonist, physically and emotionally involved even when perforce passive and ready to combat enforced passivity.’ (Alison Smith 2006, 229). Unravel and discuss this statement. How useful are terms such as ‘theatricality’, *spectacle* (in the French meaning of the word) and/or *tableau* to discuss *La Reine Margot*?
* Find out more about the reception of the film, in the film industry (e.g. film festivals), with critics, with historians? From what angles has the film been studied?
* Compare and contrast the critique of the film delivered by historians Viennot and Wanegffelen (see hand-outs)? Do you agree with their views? Why (not)?