This assignment will have you analyze the Georgian film Repentance, which is about the actions and legacy of a Stalin-esque mayor in a Georgian town in the 1930s. This is an extremely complicated film which is rich with surrealism and symbolism. This is one of the most important Soviet films of the Gorbachev era – so the assignment is relevant for the first two sections of the course.

According to the dictionary, “to repent” means to feel such regret for past sinful conduct as to change one's mind regarding it. Repentance usually involves the intention to change one’s behavior as a result of remorse or contrition for one's sins.

The film Repentance highlights the “political sins” of many different characters. In your paper, you will address the following two questions:

A) What are the “political sins” of this particular character?

B) Does this particular character carry out any kind of “repentance”? If so, how? If not, why not?

You should examine these two questions with the following characters:

1) Varlam Aravidze
2) Abel Aravidze
3) Tornike Aravidze
4) Ketevan Barateli
5) the town
6) the Soviet audience of the late 1980s

Your paper should be 4-6 pages in length, word-processed and double-spaced. The paper is due on Tuesday, November 13. (Late papers will be penalized twenty points for each late day. If you turn in your paper after 9:55 on the due date, you will lose ten points.) This paper will count as 30% of your overall grade. Please note that the paper will be due after the second exam.
Your paper should consist of a short introduction, the main part of your analysis, and a short conclusion.

I think that you should watch the film at least two times. This is a very complicated film, and you must have some understanding of the Stalin period in order to understand parts of the film. Watch the film once straight through. Later, watch it again with an “eye” toward constructing your paper. On the second viewing, I think it will be necessary to stop occasionally and take notes, jot down ideas, etc. I am quite sure that you cannot complete a good paper if your wait until the last minute to watch the film and write the paper.

I will try to set aside some time in class to talk about the assignment as the due date approaches. Of course, feel free to see me with any questions about the assignment.

Warning: If you are caught plagiarizing any portion of this paper, you will receive a zero for this assignment. Don’t do it!