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Moravian College
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Office Hours – Tues 4-5pm, Thurs 1-4pm, plus other times by appointment

Course Objectives and Format

Welcome to History 237: Popular Culture in Medieval and Early Modern Europe! This course has two main aims: (i) to explore the cultures, customs, beliefs, and modes of life of ordinary people during the middle ages and early modern period, and (ii) to examine major trends in historians' approaches to popular culture in medieval and early modern Europe. We'll structure this course by working from the general to the particular. First, we'll briefly survey the middle ages and early modern era, highlighting what is known about the everyday lives and culture of ordinary people in each period. We will also focus on the historiographical background – that is, the ways in which historians have approached medieval and early modern popular culture and the main trends in scholarship. The second part of our course will take a topical approach to particular aspects of medieval and early modern popular culture. We'll discuss, for instance, carnivals and heresies, witchcraft trials and religious reform, rebellions and rumors. Finally, we'll examine a case-study of a fourteenth-century village in the Pyrenees mountains.

As well as examining popular culture in medieval and early modern Europe, this course will also help you fine-tune five important skills of historical analysis and critical thinking:

- *Careful and critical reading of scholarly articles.* After the first two weeks, we'll not be reading from general textbooks but from articles and books written by historians largely for the benefit of other scholars. As well as taking note of the data in these articles, we'll assess and discuss the authors' main arguments, the ways in which they use evidence, and the

strengths and weaknesses of their work. By the end of this course, you should be efficient at picking up a piece of writing, locating the author's thesis, assessing his/her use of evidence, and forming a balanced opinion of its merits and deficiencies. You should also be aware of the ways in which historians talk to and argue with each other. We'll see some particularly good examples of these conversations and arguments in the Ladurie/Boyle debate and the Strauss/Beik debate at the end of the semester.

- *Interpretation of primary sources.* In previous history classes, you've doubtless been asked to read and interpret primary sources (sources written or constructed during the time period you were studying). This course will further develop your skills of locating and interpreting primary sources.
- *Research skills.* Throughout the semester, you'll be researching how historians have approached a particular topic of medieval and/or early modern popular culture, locating and reading information from articles and books. Our visit to the library early in the semester will help you identify methods and sources for locating information.
- *Oral presentation skills.* This course will be based around a discussion format, and you should come to class each day prepared to share your opinions on the readings. In addition, you will be responsible (along with a partner, if you choose) for leading one discussion.
- *Writing skills.* This course will involve *lots* of writing!! You'll be writing readings journal entries, an exam (part of which you may choose to do in take-home format if you prefer), and an historiographical essay.

Readings

The following books and readings are required for this course. Books are available for purchase from the college bookstore:

1. Coursepack of copied readings. We will talk in class about how to get hold of this. Page numbers of Coursepack readings are indicated in the syllabus with the abbreviation 'CP.' You will see that the page numbering is occasionally eccentric, so do consult the syllabus carefully to see what to read.
2. Emmanuel LeRoy Ladurie, *Montaillou: The Promised Land of Error* (trans. Barbara Bray, Vintage Books, 1979). [Hereafter 'Ladurie, *Montaillou*']

Please note: please be sure to bring the assigned readings to class each day.

Attendance Policy

I expect everyone to attend each class. Attendance is not required, but it is very highly recommended. Much of what we discuss will build on previous classes, and those who are absent will find it hard to understand the patterns and themes we are discussing. Those who miss class will also miss collection of readings journals (see below, under 'Evaluation'), and I will subtract 10% of the journal collection grade for each day that the journals are late.

Academic Honesty Policy

I expect that you will complete all readings journals, papers, and exams in this course individually and independently, and I will refer any cases of suspected cheating or plagiarism to the Academic Affairs Office. I strongly encourage you to ensure that you are familiar with Moravian's Academic Honesty Policy, found in the Student Handbook. As this policy explains, it is possible to commit plagiarism without intending to be dishonest, but serious consequences result regardless of intent.

Let me clarify two particular occasions in which it is legitimate (and even desirable) to use the help of others. First, while I expect that you will write all readings journals, papers, and exams on your own, I *do* encourage you to discuss with each other the ideas and arguments contained in our course, both within class and outside of it. For example, you might run into a friend in the library and start talking about the reading. Perhaps, for instance, you find you disagree with the author of a particular article and want to check that you've understood his/her argument properly. Your friend, after listening to you, might make an observation or suggestion. As you write your readings journal entry or your paper, it is legitimate to explain and respond to that comment, *as long as you do not claim the idea as your own*. You might, for example, write something like, "In talking about this reading with [your friend's name], he/she suggested that [author x] might really have been saying that [your friend's suggestion]. This makes good sense to me because . . ." In other words, signal clearly which things are someone else's opinion and which things are your own. Second, I encourage you to seek help with writing. It is perfectly legitimate to ask others to read over your written work and look for errors of spelling, grammar, and expression. You might also ask others to look over your paper and help you with organization and structure. I am happy to read drafts of papers, especially if you give me advance warning. I also encourage you to use the Writing Center. It is good practice to insert a footnote in your paper in which you thank anyone who has read and commented on a draft. Here's an example.¹

Inclusive Language Policy

Moravian College policy strongly encourages the use of inclusive, non-discriminatory language in all academic writing and communication. For instance, rather than writing about "mankind," write about "people" or "humankind." Rather than use the term "he" when referring to a person in the abstract (as opposed to a specific individual), replace it with "they" or "he/she." This mindfulness about language reflects Moravian's commitment to a tolerant and inclusive campus community. I would be happy to answer any questions you might have about inclusive language or to work with you to find ways to make your language more inclusive.

Policy on the Format of Written Work

I do not accept electronic submissions in place of hard copies for written work. If you miss class and need to turn in an assignment, please send me the attachment but *also* bring a printed copy by my office (Comenius 303). If I am not in my office when you come by, please pin it to my notice board or slide it under my door, then send me an email to ensure that I received it. I am happy to accept work printed in duplex – i.e., on both sides of the page – and would encourage you to print in duplex for environmental reasons.

¹ I am grateful to Marianne Cutler, of East Stroudsburg University, for proofreading this syllabus for me.

Evaluation

Quiz on readings from first 3 weeks	5%
Participation	10%
Readings journals	25%
Discussion facilitation	15%
Final exam	20%
Historiographical essay	25%

Quiz on Readings from First 3 weeks (5%)

I do not expect any background in medieval or early modern history prior to beginning this course, but you *will* need to pick up some background during the first 3 weeks of class so you understand the material that follows. We'll read six chapters from a brief Western Civilization textbook, and I'll give you a quiz on these on September 16. We'll talk more in class about the format of this quiz.

Participation (10%)

The quality of this course will depend on the quality of our class discussions. Good participation involves careful listening to the views of others, as well as a willingness to venture your own views, interpretations, and analyses. Please note that participation in this course is not the same as class attendance: it is possible to attend every class and still receive a low participation grade if you do not listen carefully to others or add to our conversations. I'd be happy to talk with you at any time about the quality of your class participation.

Readings Journal (25%)

I *really do* expect that you will read the material carefully and critically and think about it before coming to class. If everyone is prepared, our discussions will be more interesting and substantial. After the first 3 weeks, then, each of you will keep a journal in which you will summarize and discuss each reading, ahead of time.

The first day for which readings journals are required is September 23. From that date onward, please write an entry for all required readings. Each entry should be thoughtful and substantial. The minimum length for each entry is 1.5 typed, double-spaced pages (or the equivalent in legible handwriting); the maximum length is 2 pages double-spaced. Where we read more than one article for a single class, please write a separate journal entry for each. Book chapters from *Montaillon* should be combined into one entry. In terms of format and style, journal entries may be less formal. They will be graded for content, thoroughness, and willingness to engage with ideas, rather than for stylistic concerns such as spelling or punctuation. Please follow this format:

Head each entry with the author's name, the article/chapter title(s), and the date it was published. Then write your entry under these sub-headings:

(1) Sources. List the main types of primary sources used – for example, court records, poems, plays, wills, artwork, etc. Try to give the categories of primary sources (e.g., philosophical treatises) rather than the specific titles (e.g., *Summa Theologica*). Some articles serve mainly as a summary of other historians' arguments – in such cases, you should list the sources as

“secondary sources.” If you are not sure what kinds of sources are being used, look at the footnotes/endnotes and ask in class.

(2) Arguments. In *at least* ½ page double-spaced, summarize the article/chapter(s). What are the author’s main points and how does he/she go about proving these points? Pay attention to the author’s methods. For instance, does he/she rely mostly on statistics? On qualitative evidence from literature? On the arguments of other historians?

(3) Evaluation and Connections. Here you should record your impressions of each article/chapter and the ways in which it seems to relate to other material you have read for the course (and, where applicable, for other courses too). For example, did you agree with the author’s argument? Were there any parts of it you especially liked or disliked? Why? Were there any parts of the reading you found surprising? How does it fit with the arguments of other authors you have read? If you were able to ask this author a question, what would it be? As the semester progresses, I expect that this part of each entry will become longer and more analytical, making intelligent connections with previous readings and exploring the complex issues raised by the readings. It’s OK to go off on minor tangents here, as long as you demonstrate both that you have read the material thoroughly and thought about it carefully.

Please remember that these journals are worth ¼ of your final grade, so they are worth doing well. They are due at the beginning of class each day. I will subtract 10% of the journal grade for each day that the journals are late, beginning at the start of class on the day they are due. In other words, if a journal entry is due at the start of class and you arrive 5 minutes late or you print it out during the break in class, you will take a 10% grade hit. If you get it to me the next day, you will take a 20% grade hit, and so on. As an extra incentive to write full and thoughtful entries, you may bring your readings journal (but not the readings themselves) into your final exam. I reserve the right to look through your journals during the exam to be sure that they contain your own work.

Discussion Facilitation (15%)

On one occasion during the second part of the course (Themes in Popular Culture – October 7 to October 28), you will be responsible for leading our class discussion. If you choose, you may work with a partner. The aims of facilitating discussion are (i) to educate people about your topic and (ii) to encourage them to share their ideas and opinions. You and your co-facilitator will be responsible for leading the class for a day. You should present us with *some* new information – material not covered in the assigned readings – but you should also ask us provocative questions and get us to think and talk about your topic. Please plan to come and talk with me about what you will do. There’s plenty of scope for originality and innovation, but – at minimum – do make sure you do these five things:

(1) *Meet with me* at least one week prior to your scheduled discussion. Bring a class plan, primary source, and a draft of your questions (see below). Please note that I will not remind you about the need to meet with me and I will not always be able to meet at short notice – the onus is on you to set up this meeting ahead of time. Anyone who does not meet with me will have 20% of their facilitation grade deducted.

(2) *Read the required reading for your assigned discussion and, with your co-facilitator, make a list of at least three main questions* that you would like the class to focus on as we read. Please make sure that these questions are typed, copied, and distributed at the class *before* your assigned discussion.

(3) *Locate, copy, and circulate an example of the kind of primary source that historians have used in researching your topic*. Before deciding on a primary source, clear it with me. Aim for a source that is relatively brief (no more than 2 pages, and preferably closer to 1 page). I have a number of

source books that you can consult for ideas; you might also find good primary sources on the Internet Medieval Sourcebook (<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/sbook1.html>). Looking at the bibliographies of secondary sources will also give you some ideas. Again, please be sure to copy this and distribute it at the class *before* your assigned discussion.

(4) *Research your topic.* Consult books in Reeves Library, find articles using the same finding aids as for your paper, and come and ask me. As you read, look out especially for (a) the kinds of primary sources historians use to research your topic and (b) any debates or differences in emphasis that you detect between different scholars. The number of secondary sources you use will vary according to your topic, but I would expect most people to consult at least a half dozen published books and articles. Please keep in mind that you may need to order some of these on inter-library loan and plan ahead accordingly. Turn in to me, at the beginning of your facilitation, a list of the sources you used.

(5) *With your co-facilitator, lead class.* Probably, you'll want to start with a brief presentation in which you give us an overview of your topic and present information not covered in our common reading. Try not to go more than 10 minutes each in this presentation. Then use the rest of the class time for discussion and class participation. You might begin, for instance, by going over the pre-circulated questions. Then you might devise some activity that illustrates effectively the arguments made in the reading. Or you might show a short video clip or play a tape (please ensure these are not more than 10 minutes long so we still have ample time for discussion). You might ask us to debate a particular issue, or to answer questions either in small groups or as a class. Or you might come up with some other good way to encourage discussion and engagement. Note: please do *not* summarize the reading for us (either the secondary source or the primary source you've circulated). Instead, *ask* us about it and do what you can to draw us out and build on our answers – we'll learn better as a result.

If you prefer, you may facilitate discussion alone rather than with a partner. If you work with a partner, you will each receive the same grade. Whether you work alone or with someone else, I encourage you to start planning your facilitation early and to consult with me several times as you plan. Come by my office hours and/or email me to set up a time.

In terms of your participation in discussions that other people facilitate, please remember the karma cycle/golden rule: 'what goes around, comes around'/'do unto others as you would have them do unto you.' More bluntly, if you take other people's facilitations seriously and do your best to contribute to discussions, they'll be more inclined to do the same for you.

Final Exam (20%)

This will take the form of two or more essays. I will give you the option of completing part of the exam outside of class (as a take-home) if you choose. You may bring your readings journal (but not the readings themselves) into the exam.

Historiographical Essay (25%)

During the semester, you'll write a paper on a topic of medieval and/or early modern popular culture. It will be due in three installments (a proposal and lists of sources, abstracts of the most useful sources, and a final paper). Please see the handout for more detailed information on what it should involve. Please submit the final paper to me via email as well as in hard copy. Late assignments will be penalized 10% per day, starting at the beginning of class on the day that they are due (e.g., if you arrive 5 minutes late, you will lose 10 points; if you turn it in the next day, you will lose 20 points, etc.). Here are the due dates of each main component:

1. Proposals and lists of sources (5%), due September 23

2. Abstracts (10%), due October 14
3. Final paper – 6-8 pages long (I'm looking for quality more than quantity) (10%), due November 18.

It is within my purview as an instructor to apply qualitative judgment in determining grades. I will do my utmost to be fair and consistent in applying this judgment.

Students can expect to work, on average, 6-7 hours per week outside of class preparing for this course. Some weeks will require less; others (especially before an assignment is due or a mid-term is scheduled) will require more. Keeping on top of Readings Journals will be a lot of work, and I recommend that you start on these early in the week!

Students with disabilities who believe that they may need accommodations in this class are encouraged to contact the Learning Services Office as soon as possible to enhance the likelihood that such accommodations are implemented in a timely fashion.

Class and Readings Schedule

Please note: this schedule is subject to change. In the event that a change is made, I will inform you in class and – if the change is a major one – hand out a revised copy of the schedule.

<i>Part I: The Historical and Historiographical Background</i>	
September 2	Introduction; The Early Middle Ages; Library Assignment
September 9 Assignments:	The High & Late Medieval Ages <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This syllabus, pp. 1-6. You need to know what you are getting into! Mark Kishlansky, Patrick Geary, & Patricia O'Brien, <i>A Brief History of Western Civilization</i> (3rd edition, Longman, 2002), vol. I, chapters 8-10.
September 16 Assignments:	The Renaissance, Reformation, and Early Modern Era <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mark Kishlansky, Patrick Geary, & Patricia O'Brien, <i>A Brief History of Western Civilization</i> (3rd edition, Longman, 2002), vol. I, chapters 11, 13 & 15. <p>Quiz on all readings to date in last 20 minutes of class! (5%)</p>
September 23 Assignments:	Marxist & Annaliste Approaches to Popular Culture <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marxist history: Rodney Hilton, <i>Bond Men Made Free: Medieval Peasant Uprisings and the English Rising of 1381</i> (Methuen, 1973), introduction, CP 1-8. Annaliste history: Fernand Braudel, <i>The Structures of Everyday Life: The Limits of the Possible</i> (Vol. I of his <i>Civilization and Capitalism, 15th – 18th Century</i>, Trans. Siân Reynolds, Harper & Row, 1981), preface & part of chapter 2, CP 9-57. <p>Journals 1 (Hilton) & 2 (Braudel) are due at the beginning of class.</p> <p>Proposal and lists of sources are due today! See assignment handout for full details.</p>

September 30 Assignments:	<p>Anthropological and “New” Historical Approaches to Popular Culture</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • E. P. Thompson, “The Moral Economy of the English Crowd in the Eighteenth Century,” <i>Past and Present</i> 50 (1971); reprinted in his <i>Customs in Common: Studies in Traditional Popular Culture</i> (W.W. Norton, 1993) [shortened version], CP 58-81. • Natalie Zemon Davis, “The Rites of Violence: Religious Riot in Sixteenth-century France,” <i>Past and Present</i> 59 (1973); shortened version reprinted in Richard M. Golden (ed.), <i>The Social Dimension of Western Civilization</i> (4th ed., 1999), vol. I, CP 82-88. • Peter Burke, “Overture: The New History, its Past and its Future,” in Peter Burke (ed.), <i>New Perspectives on Historical Writing</i> (University Park, PA, 1992), CP 102-113. <p>Journals 3 (Thompson), 4 (Davis) & 5 (Burke) are due at the beginning of class.</p>
<p><i>Part II: Themes in Popular Culture</i></p>	
October 7 Assignments:	<p>(i) Carnival, Misrule, and the World-Upside-Down</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Edward Muir, Selections from his <i>Ritual in Early Modern Europe</i> reprinted as “Carnival, Charivari, and Rites of Violence,” in Richard M. Golden (ed.), <i>The Social Dimension of Western Civilization</i> (4th ed., 1999), vol. I, CP 123-131. <p>(ii) Sexuality & Marginalized Groups in Renaissance Florence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Richard C. Trexler, “Celibacy in the Renaissance: The Nuns of Florence,” from <i>The Women of Renaissance Florence: Power and Dependence in Renaissance Florence</i> (1993), CP 132-147. • Michael Rocke, excerpt from <i>Forbidden Friendships: Homosexuality and Male Culture in Renaissance Florence</i> (1996), CP 147-171. <p>Journals 6 (Muir), 7 (Trexler), & 8 (Rocke) are due at the beginning of class.</p>
October 14 Assignments:	<p>(i) Popular Rebellion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • William Beik, excerpt from <i>Urban Protest in Seventeenth-Century France: The Culture of Retribution</i> (1997), CP 172-183. • Yves-Marie Bercé, “The Rising of the Communes of Périgord, 1637-1641,” from <i>History of Peasant Revolts: The Social Origins of Rebellion in Early Modern France</i> (1990), CP 183-196. <p>(ii) The Reformation and Social Radicalism</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Norman Cohn, “The Egalitarian Millennium,” from <i>The Pursuit of the Millennium</i> (1970), CP 252-268. • Peter Blickle, “The Reformation in the City and Territory of Erfurt: A Paradigmatic Case,” from <i>From the Communal Reformation to the Revolution of the Common Man</i> (1998), CP 268-277. <p>Journals 9 (Beik), 10 (Bercé), 11 (Cohn), & 12 (Blickle) are due at the beginning of class.</p> <p>Abstracts are due today! See assignment handout for full details.</p>

October 21 Assignments:	<p>(i) Witchcraft</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marianne Hester, “Patriarchal Reconstruction and Witch Hunting,” from Jonathan Barry, Marianne Hester, and Gareth Roberts (eds.), <i>Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe</i> (1996), CP 392-402. • Robin Briggs, “Men Against Women: The Gendering of Witchcraft,” from <i>Witches and Neighbors: The Social and Cultural Context of European Witchcraft</i> (1996), CP 402-417. <p>(ii) Persecutions and the ‘Other’ (heretics, lepers, Jews & Muslims)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • R. I. Moore, <i>The Formation of a Persecuting Society: Power and Deviance in Western Europe</i> (Blackwell, 1987), pp. 1-65. CP 219-251. <p>Journals 13 (Hester), 14 (Briggs), & 15 (Moore) are due at the beginning of class.</p>
October 28 Assignments:	<p>(i) Did Women have a Renaissance?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joan Kelly-Gadol, “Did Women have a Renaissance?” from Renate Bridenthal, Claudia Koonz, and Susan Stuard (eds.), <i>Becoming Visible: Women in European History</i> (1977), CP 418-432. • David Herlihy, “Did Women have a Renaissance? A Reconsideration,” <i>Medievalia et Humanistica</i> (1985), CP 432-444. <p>(ii) Gossip and Subversive Speech</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Steve Hindle, “The Shaming of Margaret Knowsley: Gossip, Gender, and the Experience of Authority in Early Modern England,” <i>Continuity and Change</i> 9 (1994), CP 445-459. <p>Journals 16 (Kelly-Gadol), 17 (Herlihy), & 18 (Hindle) are due at the beginning of class.</p>
Part III: Microhistory	
November 4 Assignments:	<p>Montaillou I</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ladurie, <i>Montaillou</i>, Introduction, chapters 1-5. • Sample historiographical essay (will be distributed in previous class) <p>Journal 19 (<i>Montaillou</i>, Introduction & Chapters 1-5) is due at the beginning of class.</p>
November 11 Assignments:	<p>Montaillou II</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ladurie, <i>Montaillou</i>, chapters 8-16. <p>Journal 20 (<i>Montaillou</i>, chapters 8-16) is due at the beginning of class.</p>

November 18 Assignments:	<p>Montaillou III</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ladurie, <i>Montaillou</i>, chapters 17-21. • Leonard E. Boyle, “Montaillou Revisited: Mentalité and Methodology,” in J. A. Raftis (ed.), <i>Pathways to Medieval Peasants</i> (Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1981), CP 277A-277D & 278-95. [sorry about the awkward page numbering here!] • Nancy P. Stork (trans.), The Inquisition Record of Jacques Fournier, Bishop of Pamiers 1318-1325. Confessions of Grazide Lizier, Barthémy Amilhac, CP 296-307. <p>Journals 21 (<i>Montaillou</i>, chapters 17-21) & 22 (Boyle, “Montaillou Revisited”) are due at the beginning of class. Read over the primary sources translated by Stork, but do not worry about writing readings journals for them.</p> <p>Your final historiographical essay is due today! See assignment handout for full details.</p>
November 25	No Class – Thanksgiving Break
December 2 Assignments:	<p>Conclusion; Strauss, Beik, & Strauss again</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gerald Strauss, “The Dilemma of Popular History,” <i>Past and Present</i> 132 (1991), CP 359-378. • William Beik, “Debate: The Dilemma of Popular History,” <i>Past and Present</i> 141 (1993), CP 379-387. • Gerald Strauss, “Debate: The Dilemma of Popular History: Reply,” <i>Past and Present</i> 141 (1993), CP 387-391. <p>Journals 23 (Strauss), 24 (Beik), & 25 (Strauss again) are due at the beginning of class.</p>
December 16	Final Exam