

University of Wisconsin
Department of History
Semester II 1985-86

History 572: POPULAR CULTURE IN EARLY MODERN EUROPE

Ms. Desan
5124 Humanities

In this course we will discuss different issues and aspects of the culture of the peasantry and lower urban classes of Europe during the early modern period (16th-18th centuries). We will also focus on questions of methodology and interpretation.

The six books marked with an asterisk (*) have been ordered and should be available at the University Book Store and at Brown's. There is also a reader of articles available at Kinko's at 620 University Avenue. This reader is required; we will be reading selections from it almost every week. Readings from the xeroxed reader are marked (R).

Week 1: INTRODUCTION

Week 2: HISTORY AND ANTHROPOLOGY

*Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie, Montaillou, Intro, Chapters 1, 2, 4, 6-6, 10-13, 18-21. You should also skim the rest of the book.

Week 3: POPULAR CULTURE: IN SEARCH OF A DEFINITION & METHOD

*Peter Burke, Popular Culture in Early Modern Europe, Chapters 1-3.

Natalie Davis, "The Historian and Popular Culture" (R).

Roland Barthes, selected essays from Mythologies (R).

Week 4: THE TRANSMISSION OF POPULAR CULTURE: ORAL CULTURE AND LITERACY

*P. Burke, Chapters 4 & 5.

*Natalie Davis, Society and Culture in Early Modern France Chapter 8, "Proverbial Wisdom and Popular Errors."

*Robert Darnton, The Literary Underground of the Old Regime Chapter 6, "Reading, Writing, and Publishing."

Edward Shorter, "The 'Veillée' and the Great Transformation" (R).

Week 5: THE LITERARY UNDERGROUND OF EARLY MODERN EUROPE

*R. Darnton, The Literary Underground of the Old Regime. Chapters 2-4.

John Ashton, ed, selections from Chapbooks of the Eighteenth Century (R).

Margaret Spufford, selections from Small Books and Pleasant Histories: Popular Fiction and its Readership in Seventeenth-Century England (R).

Week 6: POPULAR RELIGION

*Carlo Ginzburg, The Cheese and the Worms

Robert Redfield, "The Social Organization of Tradition" from Peasant Society and Culture (R).

Week 7: ELITE VS. POPULAR CULTURE

*P. Burke, Chapter 8 & 9.

*R. Darnton, Chapter 1, "High Enlightenment and Low Life of Literature."

Week 8: CARNIVAL AND THE WORLD TURNED UPSIDE DOWN

*P. Burke, Chapter 7.

*NZ Davis, Chapters 4 & 5, "The Abbey of Misrule;" "Women on Top."

Paul Hollingsworth, "Carnival and Rulership in the Reign of Peter the Great" (R).

May 3, PAPER DUE, 5-7 pages. The topic choices will involve the issue of oral vs. written culture, high vs. low culture etc., and will be based on the reading for the first half of the course.

Week 9: POPULAR SEDITION--RIOTS AND UPRISINGS

E.P. Thompson, "The Moral Economy of the Crowd" (R).

*NZ Davis, Chapter 6, "The Rites of Violence."

William Reddy, "The Textile Trade and the Language of the Crowd at Rouen, 1752-1871" (R).

Week 10: EMOTIONAL AND FAMILY TIES IN EARLY MODERN EUROPE

*Michael MacDonald, Mystical Bedlam, Chapters 1-3.

Lawrence Stone, "The Rise of the Nuclear Family in Early Modern England" (R).

Week 11: POPULAR ATTITUDES TOWARD MADNESS

*Michael MacDonald, Chapters 4-6.

Michel Foucault, selections from Madness and Civilization
A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason (R).

Week 12: WITCHCRAFT AND MAGIC

Eric Midelfort, "Witchcraft, Magic, and the Occult" (R).

Robert Muchembled, "Witchcraft, Popular Culture, and Christianity in the Sixteenth Century" (R).

Alan MacFarlane, "Witchcraft in Tudor and Stuart Essex," (R).

Stuart Clark, "Inversion, Misrule, and the Meaning of Witchcraft" (R).

Selections of primary sources on witchcraft from E. Monter, ed., European Witchcraft (R).

Week 13: PERCEPTIONS OF WOMEN'S MEDICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL MAKE-UP

Vern Bullough, "Medieval Medical and Scientific Views of Women" (R).

Ian Maclean, "Medicine, Anatomy, and Physiology" from The Renaissance Notion of Women (R).

Robert Burton, selections from The Anatomy of Melancholy (R).

Michel Foucault, selections from Madness and Civilization (R).

Various primary source documents on early modern attitudes toward women (R).

Week 14: HEROES, VILLAINS, AND THE LAW

*P. Burke, Chapter 6

P. Linebaugh, "The Tyburn Riot against the Surgeons" (R).

James Sharpe, "The People and the Law" (R).

Week 15: THE CULTURE OF WORK

*NZ Davis, Chapter 1, "Strikes and Salvation at Lyon."

*R. Darnton, Chapter 5, "A Printing Shop across the Border."

Cynthia Truant, "Solidarity and Symbolism among Journeymen

Artisans: The Case of Compagnonnage" (R).

William Reddy, "Skeins, Scales, Discounts, Steam, and other

Objects of Crowd Justice in Early French Textile Mills" (R).

FINAL PAPER DUE MAY 9.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS: The most essential requirement for this course is to participate actively in discussion. Students will write two papers during the semester. The first paper will be short (5-7 pages) and will deal with the reading in the course. The second final paper will be longer (12-15 pages) and will deal with outside reading. Everyone will also be responsible for presenting comments and questions to lead discussion on the reading for two classes.

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON
Department of History

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<u>COURSE NO.</u>	<u>COURSE TITLE</u>	<u>INSTRUCTOR</u>
572-002	Undergraduate Studies in European History: Popular Culture in Early Modern Europe	Desan

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This seminar will explore the cultural perceptions and assumptions of peasants and poor city-dwellers in Europe during the sixteenth through the eighteenth centuries. The readings and discussions will be organized by topic. We will ask questions such as: how does oral culture differ from written culture? How is culture formed and transmitted in an illiterate society? What were popular attitudes in the early modern period toward religion, witchcraft, magic, and madness? What role did festivals and carnivals play in maintaining the status quo or in facilitating revolt? How did criminality and rebellion figure in the popular imagination? How did the people in early modern Europe view work and leisure? How did elite culture differ from popular culture? The reading will include literature on England, France, Germany, Italy, and possibly Russia, and will emphasize the comparison of different interpretations and methodologies.

LECTURES

none

WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS AND EXAMINATIONS

1 brief oral presentation, one 5-6 page paper, one 12-14 page paper
participation in discussion each week is required
no exams

GRADING SYSTEM

A-F

REQUIRED READINGS

Peter Burke, Popular Culture in Early Modern Europe. Harper Torchbooks
Robert Darnton, The Literary Underground of the Old Regime. Harvard U. Press
Natalie Davis, Society and Culture in Early Modern France. Stanford U. Press
Carlo Ginzburg The Cheese and the Worms. Penguin
Emanuel Le Roy Ladurie, Montaillou, Vintage (Random House)
Michael MacDonald, Mystical Bedlam, Cambridge U. Press