

HIST 334

Reading Guide: Natalie Z. Davis, *The Return of Martin Guerre*

1. What does *The Return of Martin Guerre* tell us about the beliefs and costumes of 16th century French society? How does Natalie Z. Davis incorporate local beliefs into her telling of the story?
2. What particular problems does identity theft represent for 16th century society?
3. Why would a historian devote so much effort to bring to light the history of some totally unknown people with seemingly little or no historical significance? Is Martin's story important historically? Why?
4. How does Natalie Davis fill in the details to the story for which she possesses no sources? What do you think of this approach to historical reconstruction? Is she convincing?