

# The History of Late Medieval Everyday Life

A Review of Patterns and Contrasts

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The history of everyday life was fashionable in the 1970s and 1980s, particularly in German-speaking historical research,<sup>1</sup> but since this fashion has visibly decreased. It has, however, had quite a number of positive results, and the subject has become a serious and seriously taken field among the historical disciplines.<sup>2</sup>

Medievalists did not participate or contribute considerably to the theoretical and methodological discussion on the history of daily life; if they did, it was later than the representatives of modern or contemporary history.<sup>3</sup> Among the main results of the discussion was that it demonstrated the necessity of an interdisciplinary approach, dealing with various evidence in written texts, pictorial sources, and archaeological materials.<sup>4</sup> This also meant leaving the boundaries of the humanities.<sup>5</sup> Also emphasised was the importance of comparative, qualitative and quantitative studies.<sup>6</sup>

The weakness of some 'Histories of Everyday Life in the Middle Ages' can be seen in the rather descriptive approaches and results of research offered, with too little care taken for the contextuali-

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1. See, e.g., Elias 1978; Borscheid 1983 and 1987; Tenfelde 1984; Lüdtke, ed. 1995; Scholliers 1997, pp. 130-33; Kocka 1997, pp. 140-42.

2. A group of critics, however, still may be traced. In the 1980s, Hans-Ulrich Wehler spoke of historians of everyday life as dealing with 'bland, conventional oatmeal': see Lüdtke, ed. 1995, p. 10. In the mid-1990s, Arnold Esch still did not recognise any value in the history of daily life. He posed the question 'Hat die Alltagsgeschichte Zukunft?' and, without any convincing arguments, gave the answer himself in negating any future for the field, or 'nur insofern, als sie einen kleinen, dienenden Bezug auf das Gesamtbild hat'. See Esch 1996, pp. 32-35.

3. See Jütte 1995; Goetz 1990 and 1994; Goetz 1999(b), pp. 299-310; Romeikat 1999; Jaritz 1989 and 1994.

4. See Goetz 1999(a); Hundsbichler 1999. Cf. Kühnel, ed. 1996; Dyer 1994; Iñigo 1995.

5. See Jaritz, ed. 2000(a).

6. See, e.g., Jaritz 1989.

ties of the source material. One still can recognise the tradition of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century *Kulturgeschichte*.<sup>7</sup> The problems and influences of norm and practice,<sup>8</sup> of (patterns of) intention and (patterns of) response,<sup>9</sup> of perception and realisation, of terminology,<sup>10</sup> of symbols and signs,<sup>11</sup> of types, stereotypes and topoi, of didactic aims, etc., are only a few considerations that have to play a major role in today's research. Sometimes there is still too little occupation with a number of them. Out of the 'reality' of the various sources a picturesque 'reality' of life may be developed too quickly, one that does not take into account the power of our, that is, historians' own cultural filters.<sup>12</sup>

### The necessity of comparative approaches

To escape at least some of these difficulties, comparative approaches to analysis have become indispensable. When, for instance, studying sumptuary laws and their influence on society and the life of the members of different late medieval social groups, their information cannot be taken unchecked as a reflection of certain aspects of the material practice of everyday life.<sup>13</sup> It is not only necessary to consider court evidence for the breaking of such laws,<sup>14</sup> but also to consult sources that deal with the material objects and the social groups mentioned in the sumptuary laws in other contexts – as, for example, didactic or narrative texts, and images. There, one may be able to recognise different criteria of perception, explanation, and effect. One may also discover or have confirmed that operating with contrasts played an important role

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7. See, in particular, some voluminous overviews having used large numbers of sources: Schultz 1889, 1892 and 1903; Heyne 1899, 1901 and 1903. For France, see, in particular, Gay 1887; d'Allemagne 1928.

8. Jaritz, ed. 1997.

9. Concerning visual sources, cf. Baxandall 1986; Freedberg 1989.

10. *Terminologie und Typologie mittelalterlicher Sachgüter*. 1988.

11. See Blaschitz *et al.*, eds. 1992.

12. For the problem of cultural filters with regard to the description and analysis of images, see, e.g., Baxandall 1986, pp. 105-11.

13. Concerning sumptuary legislation, see, in particular, Bulst 1988; Hunt 1996; Killerby 2002; Muzzarelli and Campanini, eds. 2003.

14. Bulst 1988, pp. 51-56. Concerning court sources and the history of daily life, see Simon-Muscheid 1994.

in late medieval life.<sup>15</sup> The creation and usage of such (patterns of) contrasts can be seen as a phenomenon that not only influenced norm and didactics, but also the practice of life; just think of the confrontation and polarisation of 'elite' and 'popular' culture,<sup>16</sup> of one's own and the other,<sup>17</sup> of old and new,<sup>18</sup> and so on. For all these spheres, a context-bound comparison of the different 'realities' of the sources is indispensable; and also a connection of qualitative and quantitative approaches and analyses, particularly when dealing with types, stereotypes or topoi, and their usage.<sup>19</sup>

Moreover, one has to concentrate on different kinds and levels of the 'simultaneity of the unsimultaneous' (*Gleichzeitigkeit des Ungleichzeitigen*) in the sources, in which, for instance, certain objects, persons, situations and qualities may on the one hand seem to represent a clear 'closeness to everyday life,' but on the other hand, and simultaneously, are to be seen as symbolic and/or metaphoric references and messages, in the religious as well as in the secular space.<sup>20</sup> Such different phenomena and functions of 'closeness', and their utilisation as patterns of argumentation can be found regularly, starting from the apparent proximity of the contents of late medieval religious images to everyday life situations, generally,<sup>21</sup> to the sometimes complicated visual and literary symbols of the Virgin Mary and her representations, and so on.<sup>22</sup>

### In search of patterns

Any aspects of such quotidianity, their perception and evaluation, were strongly connected with, and depended on the public character and role which they played in human life. The degree of public

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15. Jaritz, ed. 2000(b).

16. Still important, Frijhoff 1984, pp. 30-31, and Burke 1990.

17. See, e.g., Harbsmeier 1987; Mellinkoff 1993.

18. See *Alltag und Fortschritt im Mittelalter*. 1986.

19. For the comparative utilisation of these methods, the application of computer-supported research seems to be relevant. This is true for the interpretation of texts as well as for the analysis of pictorial source material, where digital image analysis has gained more and more importance; see Jaritz 1999(a).

20. See Jaritz 2002(a).

21. E.g., Lavin 1994, *passim*.

22. Salzer 1893.

appearance influenced the way and necessity of discussing situations or trying to regulate them. Such public space has to be seen as status-, place-, and situation-dependent. For members of the nobility, burghers or peasants, it had, for instance, another meaning than for monastic communities. For the members of the latter, an area that one might call 'private space', often did and should not exist.<sup>23</sup> Each action inside the monastery was evaluated as though to be seen by everybody in the community, to be public, therefore, and publicly justifiable. Especially in the high medieval monastic rules, we find regulations for how to get into one's bed, which clothes to wear at night, how to go to the toilet, etc.<sup>24</sup> – normative aspects of life that one does not find regulated in secular space.

All spheres of everyday life are connected with the phenomena of communication that may reach from the local area to rather 'international' contacts and co-operation. Communication itself has to be seen as influencing daily life and also as a part of quotidianity. Manifold mutual interests, influences, adoptions, and interdependences existed.<sup>25</sup> Many connections lead from the 'daily' to the 'non-daily', and vice versa.<sup>26</sup> In addition, an important number of connections between everyday life and politics, religion, economy, the arts and sciences, and so on, should be recognised and have to be analysed.

When one is interested in late medieval daily life, its routine, its repetitiveness and habitus, one must concentrate on tracing and studying the patterns that the source evidence may contain. Their appearance, and their role and meaning in particular, depended on aspects of any kind of social order, of space, of intended messages, of the languages of signs, and so on. Historians' 'quasi knowledge' about any individual situation, object, action, or quality alone must be seen as meaningless. Their significance may only be seen if one also becomes aware of and acquainted with contemporary medieval classifications, evaluations, or connotations, and the differences and contrasts in context; and if one is able to integrate them into one's construction of results. One has to recognise the fact that there were regularly different levels and patterns of mean-

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23. See Zimmermann 1973.

24. Zimmermann 1973, pp. 120-22, 140-43, 409-13, 448-52.

25. See *Kommunikation und Alltag in Spätmittelalter und früher Neuzeit*. 1992; *Kommunikation zwischen Orient und Okzident*. 1994.

26. See, generally, still Elias 1978, pp. 25-29.

ing which might have operated simultaneously or supplemented each other.<sup>27</sup> For this reason, they may also have lead to different (ways of) reception and perception.

Context-bound 'daily life'-patterns can be found through the analysis of many source corpora. With the help of last wills, for instance, one comes across the important, mainly socially dependent, value structures, functions, and esteemed qualities of material objects like dress, vessels, jewellery, weapons, books, beds, and so on.<sup>28</sup> Similar results can also be obtained through the qualitative and quantitative analysis of the contents of account books.<sup>29</sup> They may range from the type of objects mentioned, their value, need, and context, to certain aspects of esteem and quality. The analysis of such criteria always has to take place in a comparative framework. The various patterns of any 'realities of the sources' should not only be seen individually but comparatively, referring to their varying contextualities. Literary sources also offer a great deal of information about aspects of medieval quotidianity and mentality, much more than the stories about the daily life of the figures mentioned in the text.<sup>30</sup> One has to emphasise for historical as well as for literary sources that the 'real fiction' and the 'fictitious reality' of the varied evidence from the past does not mean loss of information but, through their analysis, may be seen as an enrichment.<sup>31</sup>

The recognition and comparison of late medieval patterns of daily life may also lead to various results of the distinct meanings, functions, values, and legitimacy of objects concerning their owners and users, and their role and position in the social and the socio-economic system. This may also offer clearer results in those cases in which specific objects had a highly esteemed and positive connotation for one or more social groups, while for others, however, they might have represented paradigms of vanity to be evaluated in a strictly negative way. This seems to have been true, in particular, for things that were expensive, new, and fashionable.<sup>32</sup>

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27. Cf., e.g., Kluckert 1974.

28. See, e.g., Baur 1989.

29. See Dirlmeier 1990.

30. Concerning the role of literary sources for the history of daily life, see, e.g., Schüppert 1982, 1984 and 1986.

31. See Simon-Muscheid and Simon 1996, p. 19.

32. Cf. *Alltag und Fortschritt im Mittelalter*. 1986, passim; Jaritz, ed. 2000(b), passim.

### What the patterns reveal

Similar results can be attained when comparing the patterns of norm and patterns of practice in the study of daily life. One of the main outcomes of such analyses has been the conclusion that one cannot generalise concerning the acceptance or rejection of the manifold laws meant to influence certain, mainly public, aspects of daily life. In this context, one has to emphasise again that 'public' and 'private' must be seen as relative terms and definitions, with distinct meanings for everyday life in the late Middle Ages.<sup>33</sup> There, and also regarding the aforementioned acceptance and rejection of norms, we are regularly confronted with various types and aspects of compromises – compromises sometimes well-defined through rather obvious profit and loss accounting.

One finds different variants of socially, economically or religiously determined connotations and evaluations in all types of sources. They are based on comparison, on constructed differences and opposition, and on the consciousness of varieties of meanings. Old and young, rich and poor, small and large, close and distant, high and low, up and down, left and right, much and little, clean and dirty, male and female, and so on, all of them are regularly used pairs of difference or opposition that mediated contents and messages in the process of their context-bound reading. Arguments made with them and their use regularly occurred in late medieval daily life-situations and their constructions. A kind of 'neutral' daily life does not exist in our sources.

The material aspects of everyday life may provide some examples. There are the many instances of patterns of the good and beautiful in the broadest sense of the word versus the bad and the ugly – always to be seen in their manifold levels of adequacy.<sup>34</sup> In an urban context these might have been connected with a rather high number of innovations and improvements: with window glass, with roof-tiles, with the paving of roads, with mechanical clocks, etc.<sup>35</sup> They increased the standard of living, security, and prestige. Particularly in the first and most attention-attracting phase of their installation and application, they also seem to have played an im-

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33. See Hebert 1987; Vincent 1989; Austin 1998.

34. Jaritz 1993(a).

35. See Jaritz 2001.

portant role in a number of other contexts. One used such positively evaluated objects – signs of (one’s own) material success – to mediate other, immaterial messages: of the purity of the Virgin, the learnedness of a saint, or the ‘*buon governo*’ in a community.<sup>36</sup> Parts of already existing or just developing ideals of material culture became – in new or other contexts – explanatory signs for positive, often immaterial and spiritual, aspects of ‘daily life’. And the opposites may have been used for visualising negative aspects. One was confronted with context-bound patterns of the positive ideal versus patterns of negative deviation, from the social order or from material possibilities of the communities or from other phenomena that were seen as generally relevant for communal life.

Without taking into consideration all the connections, contexts, and networks, ambiguities might occur that make any interpretation difficult or impossible. An example concerning late medieval dress, its visual representations,<sup>37</sup> and the ‘ambiguity of their language’ may be used to demonstrate the problems.

### Visual representations of dress

Medieval pieces of dress and their depictions received meanings and connotations in context with the status, position, and function of their wearers, with occasions and actions at which they were used, with the type of representation in which they were utilised. Without the existence and recognition of these contexts, they could be meaningless or bear ambiguous connotations. One has to be aware of the fact that the same piece of dress may have created a positive image of its wearer in one case, while in another, with regard to a person of different status and function or concerning another action, it may have aroused negative connotations and messages. Without knowing the contexts, medieval people might have been at a loss to identify the message(s) just as today’s analysing historians are.<sup>38</sup>

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36. Concerning the ‘*buon governo*’ patterns, see Deuchler 1984; Kempers 1989. See also Burkart 2000.

37. Concerning the role of visual images for the history of medieval daily life, see Moxey 1996.

38. One fifteenth-century example comes from the German town of Wismar, where it was prohibited for maidservants to wear trimmings on their dresses. In

We are confronted with such a phenomenon, in particular, when studying costume in pictorial and written sources of the late Middle Ages, and with regard to the variety of representations in which dress occurs in the evidence of this period. It is indispensable here to consider the different existing 'languages of dress' and their 'dialects'<sup>39</sup> when analysing the meanings and messages that the outer appearance and costume of people were to carry. Especially patterns and contrasts played a decisive role in using and understanding dress as an object of classification, connotation, and perception of oneself and 'others'.

To recognise such others by their outer appearance and to be recognised correctly oneself was generally an important domain of medieval life and order. Conventions and norms influenced outer appearance and its evaluation crucially. One has only to think of the wide range of sumptuary laws that were intended to regulate many spheres of human activities and material culture. They had an important standing in late medieval society, and concentrated on explicit and detailed norms to control human display: to show order, to make the relevance of social grouping and hierarchy visible, to reduce expenditure, and to point out morals. In them, dress regulations often played the most important role.<sup>40</sup>

The pieces or patterns of clothing that became the main objects of discourse were connected with fashion, with value and prestige, with the extraordinary, or with novelty. They attracted attention and could therefore be used as particular signs and distinguishing marks. In some cases they were used as negative representations and signifiers of various kinds of illegitimate rank and behaviour, their utilisation to be socially regulated, forbidden or controlled. They were seen as ostentatious marks of *superbia*, to be criticised,

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their function as controllers, the executioner and his servants were urged to cut them off if trespasses were found. However, this could not be upheld for long. It happened that the trimmings were cut off the dress of *maniges amtmanns erber kind* (honorable daughters of various officials), but were not touched in the case of two actual maidservants. The correct contextualisation had not worked, as the necessary knowledge and recognition did not exist (Eisenbart 1962, p. 47). Concerning the context-bound role and function of visual representations of medieval costume and dress, see, e.g., Reichel 1998.

39. Cf. Jaritz 2000.

40. See, e.g., Eisenbart 1962; Bauer 1975; Zander-Seidel 1993; Jaritz 1993(b); Bulst 1993; Muzzarelli and Campanini, eds. 2003.





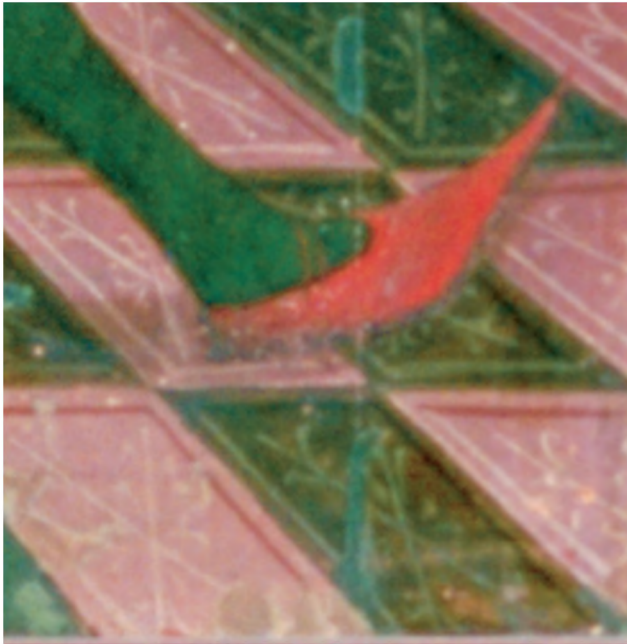
Fig. 1-1. The pointed shoes of a sorcerer. Detail from the temptation of Saint Martin by the devil clad as a sorcerer, panel painting of a winged altar-piece, before 1500. Göflan (South Tyrol), parish church. (Photo: Institut für Realienkunde des Mittelalters und der frühen Neuzeit of the Austrian Academy of Sciences, Krems an der Donau (Austria)).



Fig. 1-2. The pointed shoes of Emperor Frederick III. Detail from Emperor Frederick III, 'Wappenbuch', coloured ink drawing, last quarter of the fifteenth century. Vienna, Austrian National Library, cod. s. n. 12820, fol. 23v. (Photo: Institut für Realienkunde des Mittelalters und der frühen Neuzeit of the Austrian Academy of Sciences, Krems an der Donau (Austria)).



*Fig. 1-3. The pointed shoes of a standard-bearer. Detail from the institution of the First Grand Master of the Order of the Knights of Saint George, panel painting, c. 1500. Klagenfurt (Austria), Kärntner Landesmuseum. (Photo: Institut für Realienkunde des Mittelalters und der frühen Neuzeit of the Austrian Academy of Sciences, Krems an der Donau (Austria)).*



*Fig. 1-4. The pointed shoes of a tormentor of Saint Vitus. Detail from the oven martyrdom of Saint Vitus, panel painting of a winged altar-piece, 1470/80. Klagenfurt (Austria), Kärntner Landesmuseum. (Photo: Institut für Realienkunde des Mittelalters und der frühen Neuzeit of the Austrian Academy of Sciences, Krems an der Donau (Austria)).*



Fig. 2. The striped dress of Malchus. Detail from the imprisonment of Christ, panel painting of a winged altar-piece, c. 1520. Pulkau (Lower Austria), Holy Blood church. (Photo: Institut für Realienkunde des Mittelalters und der frühen Neuzeit of the Austrian Academy of Sciences, Krems an der Donau (Austria)).



Fig. 3. The striped dress of a tormentor of Saint Stephen. Detail from the stoning of Saint Stephen, panel painting of a winged altar-piece, 1500/20. Krenstetten (Lower Austria), parish church. (Photo: Institut für Realienkunde des Mittelalters und der frühen Neuzeit of the Austrian Academy of Sciences, Krems an der Donau (Austria)).

*Fig. 4. The striped dress of a standard-bearer. Detail from the institution of the First Grand Master of the Order of the Knights of Saint George, panel painting, c. 1500. Klagenfurt (Austria), Kärntner Landesmuseum. (Photo: Institut für Realienkunde des Mittelalters und der frühen Neuzeit of the Austrian Academy of Sciences, Krems an der Donau (Austria)).*



*Fig. 5. The striped dress of a nobleman. Detail from the institution of the First Grand Master of the Order of the Knights of Saint George, panel painting, c. 1500. Klagenfurt (Austria), Kärntner Landesmuseum. (Photo: Institut für Realienkunde des Mittelalters und der frühen Neuzeit of the Austrian Academy of Sciences, Krems an der Donau (Austria)).*



condemned, or burnt.<sup>41</sup> In other cases, they could serve as positively meant, extraordinary material characteristics of upper-class social membership that was not touched by any sumptuary regulation. Such objects were, for instance, horn-shaped female headdresses,<sup>42</sup> long trains, pointed shoes, many types of furs, precious metal applications, and so on. Only knowledge of the contexts in question can offer information on their significance, connotation, and categorisation.

Pointed shoes may be seen as one of the most discussed and most controversial pieces of dress in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.<sup>43</sup> Written normative, didactic, and narrative sources show a clear concentration of heavy criticism and condemnation, particularly in urban space, based on the deadly sin of *superbia*. The visual evidence followed this direction regularly; at the same time, it also represented contrast by using the pointed shoes as a specific legitimate and necessary mark of distinction worn by upper class members of society: mainly noblemen and also their servants, to show the high status and the extraordinary position that they represented. The meaning of the object 'pointed shoe' could therefore be, at least twofold. The compilation (in fig. 1) of the Austrian depictions of four examples of fifteenth-century pointed shoes out of context proves the impossibility of finding out what they represented: the positive signs of members of the late medieval upper classes, or the negative characteristics of villains, torturers, and other social undesirables. Without the contextualisations we are helpless; we do not know whose shoes they were and what they meant. Only when seeing or being told, may we understand. This example shows the negatively characterising pointed shoe of the sorcerer (= the devil) who tried to seduce Saint Martin (fig. 1-1), another highly positive worn by Emperor Frederick III (fig. 1-2), the third by a standard-bearer on the occasion of the institution of the First Grand Master of the Order of the Knights of Saint George (fig. 1-3), and the last pointed shoe is the footwear of a tormentor of Saint Vitus (fig. 1-4). The shoes differ in the meaning

41. One may think of the fifteenth-century preachers against the Vanities and their success concerning matters of dress, e.g., Saint John Capistran's sermon in the Cathedral Square at Bamberg and the following Burning of the Vanities in 1452, which was depicted on a panel painting of c. 1470. See Ruß, ed. 1989.

42. See, e.g., Reichel 1998, pp. 271-74.

43. See Jaritz 1994/95 and 2002(a).

of their sign character. In the right context, they can be seen as representatives and signifiers of the heavily negative connotation of the persons who wear them. As they were a clear negative mark of *superbia* for all people who did not represent the upper classes of society, they fit well for any bad figures in visual and textual material as, for instance, the enemies of saints and the Christian faith. On the other hand, they could also function as legitimate material signs of exceptionality for the members of the upper classes or from their direct environment. It was 'necessary' to depict Emperor Frederick III as wearing them, in the same way as the servant who bore the standard at the occasion of an important festive meeting of the members of the uppermost strata of society, like the Emperor and the Pope. Only the context of the representation counted and should lead to the understanding of the positive or negative role and significance of specific material objects.

Such a phenomenon is also true for the colourful striped dress that Michel Pastoureau dealt with, the 'devil's cloth', for which he showed its general negative characteristics and significance, not least in the visual source evidence of the late Middle Ages.<sup>44</sup> One finds it, for instance, as a clear sign for negative figures in the Passion of Christ (fig. 2) or for the torturers of various saints (fig. 3). It also should be clear, however, that the same object, but with a contrasting meaning, had to occur in other contexts, with the distinction going in the direction of upper class significance. If one, for instance, goes back to the representation of the institution of the First Grand Master of the Order of the Knights of Saint George that had taken place in 1469 and was depicted in c. 1500, not only the standard-bearer with his pointed shoes wore such striped cloth (fig. 4), but also a number of noblemen who attended the ceremony (fig. 5). One is confronted with the portrayals of explicitly positive figures of distinction, for whom these types of dress and cloth were legitimately used to show their extraordinary position as members of the upper classes of society or as their servants.

One could offer a large number of other examples – concerning doublets, hose, codpieces, the décolletage of females, the lengths of female and male clothes, etc. In each case one may find a similar situation of representation: the utilisation of special or extraordinary pieces of dress to characterise and to make recognisable

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44. Pastoureau 2001.

specific negative persons and, in another context, the same pieces used as material objects to identify and to signify positive figures of distinction and high social status.

## Conclusion

Similar situations may be found when taking people as the initial 'material' basis of analysis: for instance, peasants as the objects of discourse. Members of the rural population were portrayed in texts and pictures as positive models and examples. Their visual and textual representations were to show the ideal peasant's life and work, as the basis and support of medieval society. In other functional contexts, other peasants entered the stage: the negative ones. They could be represented as doing the wrong work; or they could wear the wrong clothes, such as fashionable doublets, hoses and pointed shoes, and have the long curly hair that was normally significant for young upper-class persons.<sup>45</sup> Something must have been wrong; one made fun of the objects 'peasant' that had un-fittingly tried to leave their social status.<sup>46</sup> At the same time, this could become a warning for everybody not to behave in a similar way.

Again, any research into medieval daily life and material culture has to be done in awareness of the context of representation. Without it, the individual bits and pieces may be ambiguous or completely meaningless, the feasibility of understanding the language of objects and signs correctly would be lost.<sup>47</sup> The 'ambiguities' put into the right context offered possibilities for late medieval 'participants' to identify and understand, and also to 'construct' material culture and people better. The same has to be true for today's 'observers', that is, the historians of everyday life.

To summarise: The history of late medieval daily life nowadays represents an integrated and indispensable part of social history, of cultural history, and of the history of mentalities.<sup>48</sup> It no longer

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45. See Jaritz 1999(b), p. 63.

46. See, e.g., Schüppert 1984; Raupp 1986; Moxey 1989, pp. 35-66; Jaritz 1995.

47. Concerning the sign language of dress in literary sources, see, in particular, Raudszus 1985.

48. See Goetz 2000, p. 5.

concentrates on the usage of picturesque details out of, for instance, urban sumptuary laws, 'realistic' late Gothic images, or individual pieces of archaeological evidence. It focuses on patterns, on habitus, routine and the repetitive, and systematic comparison based on them. It tries to connect the material aspects of life with the immaterial ones. In this way, the history of late medieval daily life no longer represents a curiosity cabinet, as everyday-life studies have been generally seen by a number of 'traditional' historians. The danger of the 'rhétorique de la curiosité', as Jean-Marie Pesez called it in the specific context of the history of material culture more than twenty years ago, has decreased.<sup>49</sup> The history of daily life in the Middle Ages has become a field of research interested in the interdependence between humans, objects, environment, and space in the context of micro-and macro-levels, and in the course of historical processes and developments.<sup>50</sup>

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49. Pesez 1978, p. 130.

50. See Romeikat 1999, p. 313.



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