Return of Martin Guerre writing assignment, due Friday, October 14th for 20 points

On Tuesday and Thursday, Oct. 4 and 6, we will be watching the film The Return of Martin Guerre in class. Next Friday, October 14th, you will turn in a two-page double-spaced typed answer to one of the following questions.

1. Who held authority in a peasant household? Discuss how such authority was exercised, illustrating with relevant examples from the film. Could that authority be circumvented?

2. How did 16th-century peasant assumptions and mores differ from what we would take for granted in a modern technological society?
   Consider examples from the film of how the peasants treated such concepts as:
   Privacy   Personal identity   Travel
   Personal space   Group identity   Strangers

3. Discuss the system of formal justice in mid 16th century France as shown by the story of Martin Guerre.
   Were the principles upon which it was based similar to or different from our current system of justice?
   Was true “justice” administered in this case?

4. Discuss the determinants of women’s status in mid 16th-century France, specifically the social limitations or restrictions on Bertrande and how she may have circumvented them.

5. For those ambitious few who want to perform research on this period, read the following articles about the real story of Martin Guerre, that has been assembled both from court records and the account of the prosecutor, Jean de Coras.


   (Both articles are available in pdf from the publisher by typing the author’s name and the title into a search engine, but I could not find reliable URLs to post.)

   Was the real Bertrande guilty, and if so, what were her motivations? How might the filmmakers have changed the motives behind Bertrande’s actions to fit sensibilities of modern viewers? Did the filmmakers go too far in this respect?

THE FILM

SETTING:
ARTIGAT in SOUTHWESTERN FRANCE, COURT AT RIEUX, PARLEMENT OF TOULOUSE

MAIN CHARACTERS:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Role</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MARTIN GUERRE</td>
<td>PIERRE GUERRE (UNCLE/FATHER IN LAW/STEPFATHER)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BERTRANDE DE ROLS</td>
<td>RAIMONDE DE ROLS (MOTHER/AUNT)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SANXI (SON)</td>
<td>ARNAUD DU TIHL. “PANSETTE”</td>
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<tr>
<td>BERNARDE (DAUGHTER)</td>
<td>JEAN DE CORAS (PROSECUTOR)</td>
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