



***Border Crossings:
Exploring the French & Spanish Pyrenees
September 14-26, 2019***

Suggested Readings from Steve Strand

I'll be giving two short presentations (one on the rise of medieval Catalonia and Catharism, and the other on Catalonia's subsequent fall from power and influence in both Spain and the Western Mediterranean), and a slightly longer discussion of how the Spanish Civil War (1936–39) contributed to Catalonia's current desire for greater, if not complete, independence from Spain.

- Sean Martin. The Cathars. Shelter Harbor Press. (New York: 2013). Catharism was a heretic Catholic sect that formed in the mid-12th century, grew rapidly in the 13th century, and was exterminated by the mid-14th century following the Albigensian Crusade and subsequent Inquisition. This is a good non-academic introduction to the Cathars.
- Alan Ryder. The Wreck of Catalonia: Civil War in the 15th Century. Oxford University Press (Oxford, England: 2007). More of the current debate over Catalan independence from Spain can be traced back to the Catalan Civil War in the 15th century than one might think. Ryder's book is a concise and fairly complete history of that event.
- Julian Casanova. A Short History of The Spanish Civil War. I.B Taurus & Co. (New York: 2013). Several good but brief histories of the Spanish Civil War have been published recently and this is one of them.

- George Orwell. Homage to Catalonia. Will Jonson & Dog's Tail Books. Orwell fought for the Republicans in the Spanish Civil War. This slim volume relates his first hand observations of, and commentary on, that experience.

Suggested Readings from Dana Strand

I will focus on the Yellow Vest “movement” in France as well as the French approach to immigration and multiculturalism:

- Louis, Edouard, Who Killed My Father? (Qui a tué mon père?) Directions, 2019 (87 pgs).

Through a discussion of the difficult life led by his working class father, a young writer offers a mordant critique of the economic inequality and disaffection animating the Yellow Vest protests that have rocked France over the past year.

- Cantet, Laurent, dir., The Class (Entre les murs), 2008. (Film available for rental through streaming services.)

Set in an outer-ring neighborhood in Paris, this film highlights the tensions between youth of immigrant descent and the majority society, calling particular attention to the resistance of French notions of citizenship to diversity.

- Salvayre, Lydie, Cry, Mother Spain. (Pas pleurer) MacLehose Press, 2016.

While I don't have an academic interest in the history of the Pyrenees region, I am including this recently published autobiographical novel that tells the story of Spanish refugees in France during the 1930s.