

FLOCEL SABATÉ (ed.)

# CONDITIONED IDENTITIES

WISHED-FOR AND  
UNWISHED-FOR IDENTITIES



**Identities.** An interdisciplinary approach to the roots of the present  
**Identités.** Une approche interdisciplinaire aux racines du présent  
**Identidades.** Una aproximación interdisciplinar a las raíces del presente

# Conditioned Identities.

## Wished-for and Unwished-for Identities

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“Like all children, I was fascinated by the Nazi paraphernalia. Uniforms, flags and parades I loved”. Hans Massaquoi wanted to be a good Nazi, like all his school and playmates in 1934 Hamburg. However, although he was the child of a German mother, his father was the son of the Liberian consul general in Hamburg, and his skin was black like his father. This led him into a contradiction between the desired identity and the criteria required for him to be granted that identity. Thus, decades later, on recalling his childhood passion for Hitler, he added that “like everyone around me, I cheered the man whose every waking hour was dedicated to the destruction of ‘inferior non-Aryan people’ like myself”<sup>1</sup>.

In the 12<sup>th</sup> century, Chrétien de Troyes expressed like nobody else the impossibility of surviving without identity when he depicted the Knight of the Lion who, on not recalling anything he had done until then – *ne li souvenoit de nule riens qu’il eüst faite* –, moved away from human habitats and took refuge in the forest, where he ate raw meat and lived like the animals until he recovered his memory, and then, on remembering his own identity, once again behaved like a person<sup>2</sup>. Identities, whether individual or collective, are always based on a memory taken as one’s own. Thus, when referring to the authors who wrote about the origins of the peoples in the 12<sup>th</sup> century, Bernard Guenée stated that *fuleron los historiadores quienes crearon las naciones. No hay nación sin historia nacional* (“it was the historians who created the nations. There is no nation without a national history”)<sup>3</sup>. Precisely in the 12<sup>th</sup> century, the notion of people acquired a political

- 1 Hans Massaquoi, *Destined to witness. Growing up black in Nazi Germany* (New York: Perennial, 2001), p. 2.
- 2 Chrétien de Troyes, “Yvain ou le Chevalier au Lion v. 85c/2799”, <[http://fr.wikisource.org/wiki/Yvain\\_ou\\_le\\_Chevalier\\_au\\_Lion](http://fr.wikisource.org/wiki/Yvain_ou_le_Chevalier_au_Lion)> 17 August 2013.
- 3 Bernard Guenée, *Occidente durante los siglos XIV y XV. Los Estados* (Barcelona: Editorial Labor, 1973), p. 65.

vigour (“exegetes endowed the people with constitutional rights and advocated popular duties with far-reaching – at least in theory – political consequences”)<sup>4</sup>. This framed the recognition and incidence of national groups, making it easier to define and assume specific, often idealised, origins for each national group. Thus, we have the Swiss, imagined as being descended from heroes, the Swedes from brave ancestors, the Danes from good rulers or many others from memorable civilisations, like Troy or Rome<sup>5</sup>.

The Carolingian counties situated in the north-east of the Iberian Peninsula evolved in a similar way between the 9<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> centuries. They were situated on the Muslim frontier and had growing mutual links in the political, economic and cultural spheres. At the start of the 12<sup>th</sup> century, when the campaign by various cities on the Christian shore of the western Mediterranean against Muslim Majorca under the command of the count of Barcelona was explained in Pisa, he was described as *catalanicus heros* or *catalannesis dux*<sup>6</sup>. The inhabitants of the north-east of the Iberian Peninsula were not then politically united and this was the first time from outside that they were mentioned with a common adjective, all being perceived as Catalans<sup>7</sup>. There was no political union in that case, but rather a cultural and social concordance had facilitated a common perception from abroad. In the same scenario, during the same century, with the closer social and economic links and the cultural concordance between peoples where Latin had evolved into Catalan, common institutional traits were gradually adopted which showed the assumption of a common identity<sup>8</sup>. This example enables us to see the two basic axes in the generation of identity: the external perception and internal assumption.

- 4 Philippe Buc, “‘Principes gentium dominantur eorum’: Princely Power between Legitimacy and Illegitimacy in Twelfth-Century Exegesis”, *Cultures of Power. Lordship, Status, and Process in Twelfth-Century Europe*, Thomas N. Bisson, ed. (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1995), p. 325.
- 5 Flocel Sabaté, “Els referents històrics de la societat: identitat i memòria”, *L’Edat Mitjana. Món real i espai imaginat*, Flocel Sabaté, ed. (Catarroja-Barcelona: Editorial Afers, 2012), pp. 22-23.
- 6 Jaume Vidal, *Liber Maiorichinus. Text, traducció, notes i introducció* (Barcelona: Universidad de Barcelona, 1976), p. 52.
- 7 Flocel Sabaté, “Identity, perception and cohesion of a medieval region: Catalonia”, *Different Europes. The historical evolution of territorial identities and attachments as formative forces in a changing Europe*, Dick de Boer, Bar Spierings, Nils Holder Pedersen, eds. (forthcoming).
- 8 Flocel Sabaté, “Els primers temps: segle XII (1137-1213)”, *Història de la Corona d’Aragó*, Ernest Belenguier, dir. (Barcelona: Edicions 62, 2007), vol. 1, pp. 62-65.

From the mid 11<sup>th</sup> century, the Church adapted to a feudal Europe that was socially and economically expansive<sup>9</sup>, while the predominantly Platonic philosophical base of the 12<sup>th</sup> century gradually acquired new traits<sup>10</sup> that culminated in the 13<sup>th</sup> with an interpretation of Christianity from the parameters of Aristotelian realism<sup>11</sup>. Thus, the doctrine that guided the ideological behaviour of Europe became surer in its own beliefs and, in passing, became increasingly intolerant of the inassimilable otherness, whether these were Muslims, Jews or heretics<sup>12</sup>. The fact that the 13<sup>th</sup> century is defined as a century of preaching<sup>13</sup> expresses the need to assimilate this difference and that, when the difficulty of that mission was realised, otherness came to be regarded with fear, as “the enemy”<sup>14</sup>. From here, if finally the others could not be assimilated, their annihilation would even be proposed, as Roger Bacon predicted in the 13<sup>th</sup> century about the Muslims<sup>15</sup>. Thus, identity is reinforced by its contrast, in other words, by the alterity, which is often not merely described through its different characteristics, but also perceived by its opposing features that lead to a contraposition and, if necessary, a collision.

The institutionalisation of the forms has conditioned the historians when interpreting the start of the social processes in moments when these were really nothing more than their stabilisation. A clear example is the late-medieval cities, where the stabilisation of municipal governments culminated a prior social, economic and political evolution<sup>16</sup>, but was also

- 9 Augustin Fliche, *La Réforme grégorienne et la Reconquête chrétienne (1037-1123)* (Paris: Bloud&Gay Éditeurs, 1950).
- 10 Jean Jolivet, *La filosofía medieval en Occidente* (Madrid: Siglo XXI editores, 1990), pp. 154-146.
- 11 Eudaldo Forment, “La integración de la ética aristotélica en la síntesis aristotélica”, *Actas del II Congreso Nacional de Filosofía Medieval*, Jorge M. Ayala, coord. (Saragossa: Sociedad de Filosofía Medieval, 1996), pp. 51-85.
- 12 Jean Flori, *Croisade et chevalerie XI<sup>e</sup>-XII<sup>e</sup> siècles* (Paris-Brussels: De Boeck Université, 1998), pp. 60-64.
- 13 Jacques le Goff, *Lo maravilloso y lo cotidiano en el Occidente medieval* (Barcelona: Editorial Gedisa, 1985), p. 127.
- 14 Robert N. Swanson, *Religion and Devotion in Europe, c. 1215 - c. 1515* (Cambridge (UK): Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp. 267-270.
- 15 Marjorie Reeves, *The Influence of Prophecy in the Later Middle Ages. A Study in Joachimism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1969), p. 399.
- 16 Jean Schneider, “Libertés, franchises, communes: les origines. Aspects d’une mutation”, *Les Origines des Libertés Urbaines. Actes du XVI Congrès des Historiens*

preceded by a period in which local elites, often with specific names like *probi homines*, adopted decisions that affected everyone, even claiming a representativeness<sup>17</sup>. This is what Susan Reynolds warned about in 1982,

The richest and most established burgesses or citizens of a town, like the bishops and nobles of a kingdom, were those who were perceived as the most solid, respectable and responsible members. Representation was not a matter of representing individuals (hence the frequent vagueness about who attended or had the right to attend meetings), but of representing communities<sup>18</sup>.

To approach representativeness, the ruling elites developed discourses that backed both the representative position and the cohesion of the group represented. Thus, during the late Middle Ages, such terms as the land, a general or mystic body, adopted a social and political function that justified a representativeness over cohesive groups of their respective identity<sup>19</sup>. The *natio* was thus filled with a shared sense that could be expressed in vitals symbols of cohesion, as Léopold Genicot stated: *la nación era, pues, un sentimiento naciente* (“the nation was a rising sentiment”)<sup>20</sup>. It was, however, a sentiment promoted by the sovereign power that sought a higher circle of cohesion to link transversally those who assumed certain cultural traits<sup>21</sup>.

The concepts of community and collective solidarity that tightly bound people to the groups of belonging in the Middle Ages, clearly backed by contemporary thought<sup>22</sup>, have their continuity in the modern centuries<sup>23</sup>.

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*Médiévistes de l'Enseignement Supérieur (Rouen 7-8 Juin 1985)* (Rouen: Publications de l'Université de Rouen, 1990), pp. 7-29.

- 17 Flocel Sabaté, “Ejes vertebradores de la oligarquía urbana en Cataluña”, *Revista d'Història Medieval*, 9 (1998), pp. 130-136; Flocel Sabaté, *Història de Lleida. Alta Edat Mitjana* (Lleida: Pagès Editors, 2003), pp. 355-366.
- 18 Susan Reynolds, “Medieval urban history and the history of political thought”, *Urban History Yearbook 1982* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1982), p. 15.
- 19 Flocel Sabaté, “Expressões da representatividade social na Catalunha tardomedieval”, *Identidades e Fronteiras no Medievo Ibérico*, Fátima Regina Fernandes, coord. (Curitiba: Juruá Editora, 2013), pp. 68-79.
- 20 Léopold Genicot, *Europa en el siglo XIII* (Barcelona: Editorial Labor, 1976), p. 130.
- 21 Gisela Naegle, “Diversité linguistique, identité et mythe de l’empire à la fin du Moyen Âge”, *Revue Française d'Histoire des Idées Politiques*, 36 (2012), pp. 253-264.
- 22 Pierre Michaud-Quantin, *Universitas: Expressions de mouvement communautaire dans le moyen-âge latin* (Paris: J. Vrin, 1970).
- 23 Keith J. Stringer, “Social and political communities in European history. Some reflections on recent studies”, *Nations, nationalism and patriotism in the European past* (Copenhagen: Academic Press, 1994), pp. 11-12.

Indeed, the collective responses were maintained in different aspects of society<sup>24</sup>, the affective links of identification between collectives and territories were accentuated<sup>25</sup> and a national feeling was developed<sup>26</sup>, fuelled by the assumption of founding myths and the unifying function of the language<sup>27</sup>. However, these collective identities were still under the wing of the invoked representativeness with which the elites played a tense power game<sup>28</sup>, because the old medieval participative formulae – the mixed government of sovereign and the estates – were challenged by new formulae based on a greater concentration of sovereign power<sup>29</sup>.

It is thus no surprise that, in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, Rousseau called for a new order in which society would not be structured around the arguments of the politicians but rather on the national identities really shared by the social groups. Rousseau himself emphasised that, to achieve a veritable social cohesion, the legislator has to encourage this sentiment of mutual links through national identity<sup>30</sup>. Yet, the task of the legislator as a guide can compromise this objectivity. In first place, by claiming to base society on the nations that really existed, efforts were required to detect and define these, which led to rigid classifications, as bodies with soul, interpreted

- 24 Paolo Prodi, Valerio Marchetti, eds., *Problemi di identità tra medioevo ed età moderna* (Bologna: Clued, 2001).
- 25 Robert von Friedeburg, "The problems of passions and love of fatherland in protestant thought, Melancthon to Anthusius, 1520s to 1620s", *Studies in Medieval and Renaissance History*, 2/1 (2005), pp. 247-253.
- 26 Alain Tallon, ed., *Le sentiment national dans l'Europe méridionale aux XVI<sup>e</sup> et XVII<sup>e</sup> siècles* (Madrid: Casa de Velázquez, 2007).
- 27 Raphaela Averkorn, "The Process of Nationbuilding in Medieval Germany. A Brief Overview", *Nations and nationalities in historical Perspective*, Gudmundur Halfdanarson, Ann Katherine Isaacs, eds. (Pisa: Edizioni Plus-Università di Pisa, 2001), pp. 191-192.
- 28 Antoni Simon, *Els orígens ideològics de la revolució catalana de 1640* (Barcelona: Publicacions de l'Abadia de Montserrat, 1999); Jesús Villanueva, *Política y discurso histórico en la España del siglo XVIII. Las polémicas sobre los orígenes medievales de Cataluña* (Alacant: Publicaciones de la Universidad de Alicante, 2004); Antoni Simon, *Construccions polítiques i identitats nacionals. Catalunya i els orígens de l'estat modern espanyol* (Barcelona : Publicacions de l'Abadia de Montserrat, 2005).
- 29 Marie Gaille-Nikodimov, ed., *Le gouvernement mixte. De l'idéal politique au monstre constitutionnel en Europe (XIIIe-XVIIe siècle)* (Saint-Étienne: Publications de l'Université de Saint-Étienne, 2005).
- 30 Ana M. Cohler, *Rousseau and nationalism* (New York: Basic books, 1970), pp. 31-35, 191-195.

this latter through the combination of language and people, as Herder stated, with an impermeable character<sup>31</sup> that predisposed them to confrontation. Then, under the guise of assuming this naturally, the 19<sup>th</sup> century saw a string of national constructions through the erection of numerous references and custodies of memory – museums<sup>32</sup>, pantheons<sup>33</sup>, archives<sup>34</sup>, monuments and works of art<sup>35</sup>, festivities<sup>36</sup> –, all coherent with the historical tales now elaborated<sup>37</sup> and spread through society with the extension of new educational systems<sup>38</sup>.

Having defined identity above from the external perception, the internal assumption, the confrontation with otherness and the incidence of representativeness, we must now add the provision of a specific discourse. This contributes a narration linked to a specific shared memory, with common myths that accompany a veritable biological continuity<sup>39</sup>, paired with a cultural singularity expressed in the language<sup>40</sup>, all properly orientated by an ideology that, while still accommodative, aims to steer

- 31 Adriana Rodríguez, *Identidad lingüística y nación cultural en Johann Gotfried Herder* (Madrid: Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, 2009), pp. 101-102.
- 32 Pierre Géal, *La naissance des musées d'art en Espagne (XVIII<sup>e</sup>-XIX<sup>e</sup> siècles)* (Madrid: Casa de Velázquez, 2005), pp. 143-273.
- 33 José María Rodríguez, "El sueño del Panteón Nacional", *Historia de Iberia Vieja*, 39 (2008), pp. 66-75.
- 34 Flocel Sabaté, "Frontera peninsular e identidad (siglos IX-XII)", *Las Cinco Villas aragonesas en la Europa de los siglos XII y XIII* (Saragossa: Instucion Fernando el Católico, 2007), p. 58.
- 35 Béatrice Fontanel, Daniel Wolfrohm, *Quand les artistes peignaient l'Histoire de France* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 2002); Lucian Boia, Monica Enache, Valentina Iancu, *Mitul Național. Contribuția Arcelor la definirea identității românești (1830-1930)* (Bucharest : Muzeul Național de Artă al României, 2012).
- 36 Páll Björnsson, "National and gender Identities in 19<sup>th</sup>-Century Germany: the case of Leipzig", *Nations and nationalities in historical...*, pp. 30-36.
- 37 Stefan Berger, "The Power of National Pasts: Writing National History in Nineteenth and Twentieth-Century Europe", *Writing the Nation. A global perspective*, Stefan Berger, ed. (Basingstoke-New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), pp. 30-46.
- 38 María del Mar del Pozo, *Curriculum e identidad nacional. Regeneracionismos, nacionalismos y escuela pública (1890-1939)* (Madrid: Editorial Biblioteca Nueva, 2000).
- 39 The national community is presented as a very long succession of generations linked by blood (Alberto Mario Banti, "Telling the Story of the Nation in Risorgimento Italy", *Nations and nationalities in historical...*, 2001, p. 19).
- 40 There are few examples as clear as the Finnish case: Hannes Saarinen, "The Building of the Finnish Nation in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century", *Empires and States in European*



the interpretations of identity and national destiny<sup>41</sup>. The new mass culture means that the approach is soon shared and assumed, apparently naturally, by the population<sup>42</sup>.

Thus, an axiology made up of adequately hierarchical values is adopted. Once the identity has been defined and a segmentation imposed regarding the difference, the values assumed set the degree of intolerance to otherness. The 20<sup>th</sup> century contributed deep and painful examples of societies structured around parameters of clear and full rejection of otherness<sup>43</sup>, always with the full coherence of having taken the singularisation of identity and its opposition to otherness to the extreme:

making the nation an absolute, as practiced first of all by the “integral nationalists”, later on by the Fascists, and especially by the Nazis, meant making its enemies an absolute too, and with it, the war which now overrode all conventions hitherto established by European civilization<sup>44</sup>.

The intolerance of otherness forms part of the very rigid unifying discourses. Mohammed Chiguer called these *la pensée piégée* (“the trap thought”) because the discourse that sustains the identity of the group imposes rejection of the others, as it is clear in the case of religious fundamentalism:

*Aussi se considère-t-elle porteuse d'un message universel qu'elle doit livrer à l'humanité et dont elle a la charge de mettre en exécution. Pour cela, elle use la force, utilise d'une manière systématique la violence et recourt à la terreur aveugle pour instaurer la peur et promouvoir la Fitna.*

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*Perspectives*, Steven Ellis, ed. (Pisa: Edizioni Plus-Università di Pisa, 2002), pp. 144-145.

41 In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the interpretation of the past has sometimes led to explanations suspiciously close to very conservative approaches: Marco Revelli, “Il Medioevo della Destra: pluralità di immagini strumentali”, *Quaderni Medievali*, 16 (1983), pp. 109-135.

42 Anne-Marie Thiesse, *La création des identités nationales. Europe XVIIIe-XIXe siècles* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 2001), pp. 237-284.

43 David El Kenz, “Le massacre, objet d’histoire”, *Le massacre, objet d’histoire*, David El Kenz, ed. (Paris: Éditions Gallimard, 2005), pp. 11-23.

44 Stefan Zauner, “The Growth of the Modern Nation-state: the Case of Germany, 1815-1945”, *Empires and States in European...*, p. 157.



It believes to be itself bearer of an universal message, which must deliver to humanity and thus, it is responsible for putting in execution. For this, it uses force, applying in a systematic way violence and resorting to indiscriminate terror to create fear and promote the “Fitna”<sup>45</sup>.

However, the discourse of identity adapts to the times and the experience accordingly. It is worth recalling Amin Maalouf’s comments about the adaptability of a person who, over a few years, coinciding with the changes in his country, would have had to progressively adapt to feeling and defining himself sincerely as a Yugoslav, a Muslim and a Bosnian<sup>46</sup>. In any case, the evolution of the justifying discourse modifies the limits of tolerance to otherness, with serious consequences. Pero the Croat met a stranger in 1992. If he had met him a few years earlier, they would have shared a pride in being Yugoslavs. In contrast, at the time of their meeting, the acceptance of the discourses of identity and rejection of otherness considered intolerable meant things went as follows:

*En un pequeño bosquecillo de nogales, a unos cien metros de la primera línea del frente, el croata Pero, miembro del Consejo de Defensa croata, se encontró con un soldado que no conocía. Llevaban el mismo uniforme, hablaban la misma lengua. Poco después, refugiados detrás de un árbol, se fumaban el mismo cigarrillo. — Y dime, amigo —declaró al fin el desconocido—, nos estamos fumando este cigarrillo juntos pero aún no nos hemos presentado. ¡Soy Boro, serbio de Crkvina...! Por toda respuesta, Pero disparó una salva con su fusil automático.*

In a little walnut grove, a hundred metres behind the front line, the Croat Pero, member of the Croatian Defence Council, met a soldier he didn’t know. Both were wearing the same uniform, both spoke the same language. Shortly after, sheltered behind a tree, they shared a cigarette.

— And tell me, friend — the stranger eventually said —, here we are sharing a cigarette but we haven’t presented ourselves. I am Boro, a Serb from Crkvina...!

Pero’s only reply was to pull the trigger of his sub-machine gun<sup>47</sup>.

45 “It also believes it carries a universal message and must deliver it to humanity and that it is responsible for putting it into effect. To do this, it uses force in a systematic way using violence and resorted to indiscriminate terror to create fear and promote the Fitna”. Mohammed Chiguer, *Pensée piégée, Islam et modernité* (Rabat: Édition KmcExperts, 2008), p. 19.

46 Amin Maalouf, *Identidades asesinas* (Madrid: Alianza Editorial, 1999), p. 22.

47 Velibor Čolić, *Los bosnios* (Cáceres: Periférica, 2013), p. 68.

This behaviour is an evolution in the concept of identity, but can also be dealt with as dysfunctions, as the elements we repeat as constituting the identity – external perception, internal assumption, definition of otherness and cohesive discourse – can disengage from each other, leading to contradictory situations. What is felt and what is perceived may not match. Given the concordance between the individual and collective identities, it is a suggestive perspective for study and research, focussed on the dysfunctions raised by binomial wished-for and unwished-for. Identity is an indelible trait: *l'identità si presenta perciò come irrinunciabile, non è na faccenda che si possa procrastinare* (“identity is presented as irrenunciabile therefore, it is not a thing that we can postpone about”)<sup>48</sup>. And this same permanence means investigating its contradictions if the official discourses match the real experience. We can remember here Fatéma Mernisi’s childhood memories, when her mother attributed her identity as a woman to immobile contents, as a kind of fate, although, in contrast, they surprised her:

*Quand ma mère eut fini l'histoire de Schéhérazade, je me suis mise à pleurer: « Mais comment apprend-on à dire des histoires pour plaire à un roi? ». Ma mère a murmuré, comme se parlant à elle-même, que c'était là le destin des femmes.*

When my mother had finished the story of Scheherazade, I started crying: “How is it possible to know and tell stories just to please a king?”. My mother whispered, as if speaking to herself, that this was the fate of women<sup>49</sup>.

The transgression of the imposed order can generate a clash of identities, as Nazario attempts to reflect through a striking literary title: *Dissecció del suïcidi quotidià d'un sant gai que volia ser màrtir* (“Dissection of the everyday suicide of a gay saint who wanted to become a martyr”)<sup>50</sup>. In fact, the social order can even be altered if we attempt to modify the functions that each group identifies itself through: the medieval peasant who wants to eat in a refined delicate way, as if he were a lord, falls ill and only

48 Francesco Remotti, *Contro l'identità* (Bari: Editori Laterza & Figli, 2012), p. 17.

49 Fatéma Mernissi, *Rêves de femmes. Contes d'enfance au harem* (Casablanca: Éditions La Fennec, 1997), p. 23.

50 Nazario, “Dissecció del suïcidi quotidià d'un sant gai que volia ser màrtir”, *Del fanzine al manga yaoi. Lesbianes, gais i transsexuals al còmic*, Julián Acebrón, Ana Merino, eds. (Lleida: Ajuntament de Lleida, 2005), p. 7.

gets better when he goes back to his own place, eating beans and peas accompanied by bread dunked in milk<sup>51</sup>.

One way or another, the clash between the attributed and desired identities is reiterated in the attribution of roles in society. The study of these situations thus becomes a challenge that requires a very global approach to society and each individual, including all the formulae of expressivity, understood as the channelling of the tensions that really exist and are felt, knowing that, in fact, the history that humans weave is a patchwork of “the places and spaces of emotion”<sup>52</sup>. A few years ago, Burke and Stets stated that “future research for identity theorists involves systematically examining the contextual factors that interact with the verification process to produce different emotions”<sup>53</sup>. In fact, if the Social and Human Sciences look into the different aspects of the how individuals fit into society, all inherent expressivity becomes a subject for study, while the necessary plurality is required to cover the different channels of expression: literature, art, the anthropological or sociological footprint, the historical references, talks on the management of the memory or any other indicator.

With this in mind, the Institute for Research into Identities and Society organised a meeting at the University of Lleida that was held between the 13<sup>th</sup> and the 15<sup>th</sup> of November 2013. Outstanding specialists in a range of aspects of the Human and Social Sciences were invited to contribute their knowledge, alongside a specific call for papers to tackle the different aspects of research into conditioned identities. The work was divided into six specific strands: Solidarity and identity groups throughout History; Curriculum and national identity; Symbolic depictions of social reality; Literature and Identity; Spelling and linguistic codifications and Identity construction in multilingual learning and use. After a process of peer-review, 67 communications were presented. The selection published here derives from this set of papers, after a specific re-evaluation for publishing.

51 Paul Freedman, “Els pagesos medieval. Imatge d’ells mateixos en relació amb el règim senyorial”, *L’Edat Mitjana. Món real...*, p. 95.

52 Barbara H. Rosenwein, “The places and spaces of emotion”, *Uomo e spazio nell’alto medioevo (4-8 aprile, 2002)* (Spoleto: Centro Italiano sull’Alto Medioevo, 2003), vol. 1, pp. 505-532.

53 Peter J. Burke, Jan E. Stets, *Identity theory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), p. 174.

We sincerely believe that its diachronic and multidisciplinary character makes it a good contribution to individual and collective identities from a perspective that, despite not have been the focus of much research in itself to date, is a vital prism for knowledge and one of the keystones of social cohesion: wished-for and unwished-for identities.