

EUROPE AND ITS MEDIEVAL ROOTS

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Abstract

The thousand years of medieval history are decisive for the birth and the foreshadowing of the European world *as* European. The debate on the European identity and its medieval roots, often prompted by political situations contingent went through the whole history of modern and contemporary. The different historical studies, while recognizing always a multiplicity of educational contributions in the construction of European identity, have given a prominent role in the elements and different periods: the opposition against the "other"(from time to time the Barbarians, Asian populations, Arabs, Turks), to Christianity, the Carolingian Empire, the Church or the Empire, the economic revival after the Mille, to the Renaissance. Today, the latest research lay the foundation of the identity of an enlarged Europe up to the Urals and the Bosphorus on the theme of 'diversity' and bring out the image of a continent without rigid boundaries, always based migration, interactions and shuffles as well as contrasts and conflicts between peoples, powers, nations; a continent whose founding characteristic lies perhaps in the plurality, often problematic, of its roots. That something that makes us Europeans, in spite of many differences and divisions first national, to be found in our past during which they are sediment inheritance that gradually, through a non-linear and fragmented, formed the heritage of 'Europe and helped to shape the European world as European. And it is particularly in the Middle Ages, in the centuries that canonically ranging from IV to XV, which begin to form those 'original characters' that will provide European identity. During the Middle Ages the formation of a number of elements of political, cultural and religious common to the different nations and kingdoms of Europe goes hand in hand with the training of local and national identities increasingly strong and conflicting, but also opposed to external entities, such as the Islamic world or the Byzantine Empire or the Mongol Empire or Turkish. It is this dialectic between a European identity based on common elements and the many different local, or the diversity that can coexist with the unit, is one of the essential characteristics of Europe and a major legacy that has left the Middle Ages to the centuries next.

Keywords: *European identity, Middle Ages, European integration, local elements.*