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Catalonia and Castile 1598-1652: "us and the others"



This PhD thesis analyses the literature and iconography of Catalonia and Castile between 1598 and 1652, a period of great tensions between the Catalan institutions and the Hispanic Monarchy. Its aim is to demonstrate that these artistic expressions can be used as historiographical sources for the study of a nation's collective identity.

From 1598, the tensions between the Catalan institutions and the royal power, which were inherent in the Catalan contractual system of government, accented with different juridical and economic episodes. Simultaneously, these clashes were multiplied due to the "tercios" lodgings in Catalonia and the war that it began on 1635 between the Hispanic Monarchy and France. All that, with a special importance of the 1640 incidents and the later "Segadors" War (1640-1652), caused in Catalonia a reinforcement of the national identity assumptions, which was also motivated by the perception of an against strong Castilian identity that was considered as invader and enemy.

To know these identities and the visions between Catalonia and Castile that were present during that period, it is necessary to consult different types of sources which, at the same time, they complement each other among them: on the one hand, documents that contain the most intimate

opinions and feelings of the people who wrote them (intimate memories, private correspondences); on the other, another kind of productions that contain aspects related to the ideological debates and the authors' aims to affect in the public to whom they were going (history, geography, and literature works, as well as sermons, ideological texts and iconography).

The main part of the PhD thesis studies a great deal of literature and iconography works that were created from Catalonia and from Castile as well, during the years 1598-1652, where we can find aspects and opinions related with the visions between both communities and the stereotypes that each one applied to the other. In the analysis of these works, we must bear in mind also the influence of political and social events: which was the Golden Century Castilian literature image about Catalonia?, how this literature treats aspects like the tensions between the Catalan institutions and the royal power or the "Segadors" War, for example?, how the Catalan poetics of the Baroque period wrote about questions as, for instance, the defence of the political Catalan nation or the events related to the "tercios" lodgings in Catalonia and the war? And, about the iconography, there were images about the tensions between the Hispanic Monarchy and the Catalan institutions?, which was the influence of the social, cultural and also technical conditionings in the production of this kind of images?

The final aim of this PhD thesis is to show how literature and iconography, if first we assume their condition and their limitations, can be sources for the historical investigation about the national collective identities and the crossed visions between communities of the past. In this case, between Catalonia and Castile during the period 1598-1652.

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References

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