

Call for Papers

International Congress of the Association for the Development of Cultural History and the International Society for Cultural History

Paris, September 10–12, 2026

The theme of the 2026 ADHC and ISCH joint annual congress in Paris/Aubervilliers is:

Identities, Circulations, Migrations – a Cultural History.

Based on the observation that all societies have been shaped by the movement of human beings, ideas and beliefs, goods and capital, the organizers wish to build an international scientific meeting around this central theme. More specifically, they wish to examine the relationship between these movements (particularly those of all individuals who physically cross state borders) and identities, at all levels that deserve to be considered: identities of the people who move as well as those of the host and home countries, local, national, international and transnational, and even civilizational identities. We welcome proposals about all historical periods, in comparative approaches across regions and times, as well as about the contemporary period (19th-21st centuries). We also welcome proposals on epistemologies, theories, and methodologies of cultural-historical research with reference to any aspect of cultural history.

A large number of books on the theme of identity, whether or not the expression appears in their title, have appeared in recent years. Polemic essays, scientific studies, novels, plays, films, and more recently web-related productions, have seized upon a polysemic and polemic notion for which there are several possible definitions. If we define identity as a system of representations of the self and others through which a certain form of recognition by the group and permanence over time is constructed, this editorial effervescence could well be evidence of a crisis, or at the very least of a questioning of the traditional methods of identification and the institutions that support them.

This crisis affects the entire Western world and is detectable globally. It can take on different forms depending on the country and culture, which do not all give the same meaning to the concept of identity. Salman Rushdie pointed out that in India, “identity” tends to mean religious identity, “at the heart of the Hindu nationalist attempt to reinvent the idea of India in purely Hindu terms, excluding members of all other religions”. In the United States, it is questions of racial and sexual identity that dominate the debate. In Europe, there is more concern about defending national identities, supposedly threatened by uncontrolled immigration or by Brussels bureaucracy. These concerns are exploited by hate mongers of all stripes who manipulate fantasies or nostalgia for a closed, pure, fixed identity. That is why a

scientific and historical, international and transnational reflection on questions of identity and their links with movements and mobilities of all kinds seems expedient and even urgent.

Proposals are welcome on (but not limited to) the following topics:

- historical approaches to how cultures, groups, and periods select and around characteristics perceived as common.
- the construction, development, or end of systems of identity representation.
- discourses and struggles of representation.
- practices and practical modalities of identity belonging.
- phenomena of socialization, exclusion and marginalization of groups.
- historical and contemporary mobility and fluidity.
- identity conflicts and the paroxysmal moments of 'identity fever.'
- history of institutions and public policies dealing with issues related to migration phenomena (language policies, immigration museums, etc.).
- history of institutions, public policies, and phenomena centered on any forms of identity (religious, regional, national, ethnic, gender, race, etc.).
- intersectionality and any forms of identity throughout history to the present.
- theories, and methodologies of research regarding any aspect of cultural history.

Please send proposals for individual papers and panels, in PDF format of no more than two pages (600-700 words in 12-font Times New Roman, double-spaced), in French or English, to this address by January 20, 2026:

adhc.isch2026@gmail.com

Proposals will be evaluated by a scientific committee. Participants will be notified in early March 2026. To attend the conference, participants have to be members of the ADHC or the ISCH and to have paid their membership fees in full.

ADHC address: <https://adhc.hypotheses.org/> and Revue d'histoire culturelle, XVIIIe-XXIe siècles: <https://journals.openedition.org/rhc/>

ISCH address: <http://www.culthist.net/> and ISCH-Journal: <http://www.euppublishing.com/loi/cult>