

The national before nations: a corpus-based study of the expression of ethnic identity in medieval Italo-Romance texts

(within the project “Discourses of the Nation and the National”)



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Structure

- Introduction
- Data: text corpora
- Research questions
- Methodological approach
- Study of concepts: core areas in the discursive construction of national identities
- Changes over time
- Main differences between modern and medieval national discourse
- Conclusions

Introduction

- corpus-based lexical analysis
- time frame: 12th-14th centuries
- medieval Italy: political, cultural and linguistic polycentrism
- multilingual society
 - Italo-Romance texts: many different linguistic varieties, no single Italian language
 - Latin, French and Occitan used as languages of culture: the modern concept “majority language” does not work

Data: text corpora

- Main tool:

Corpus OVI dell'Italiano Antico [Corpus of Old Italian]

<http://gattoweb.oivi.cnr.it/>

- Supplementary tools:

- ARTESIA - Archivio Testuale del Siciliano Antico [Textual Database of Old Sicilian] <http://www.artesia.unict.it/>

- DiVo - Corpus del Dizionario dei Volgarizzamenti [Corpus of Italian Vernacular Translations] <http://tlion.sns.it/divo/>

- ClaVo - Corpus dei classici latini volgarizzati [Corpus of Italian Vernacular Translations of Latin Classics] <http://clavoweb.oivi.cnr.it/>

- RIALFRi - Repertorio informatizzato antica letteratura franco-italiana [Digital Database of Medieval Franco-Italian literature] <http://www.rialfri.eu/>

- ARDIVEN - Archivio digitale veneto [Digital Database of Venetan Texts], <http://www.ilpavano.it/>

Data: which texts?

- only written sources: *scripta* ≠ language
- non-homogeneous corpus:
 - literary vs. non-literary
 - purely vernacular vs. translations from Latin (*volgarizzamenti*)
- point of view of the literate élite
- particularly important genres: historical chronicles, historical narrative, encyclopedic texts, political poetry

Research questions

- Is it possible to speak of late-medieval Italy as of a nation *avant la lettre*, at least intended as *Kulturnation*? If so, was there one Italian identity, or were there several Italian identities? If not, what other kind of identity can be individuated?
- Which factors were important for shaping the Italian identity in the late Middle Ages?
- Differences between medieval and contemporary nation-related concepts and terms. What has changed? Is there any continuity?

Methodological approach

- Semantic analysis of manually chosen contexts, both from concept to term and to term from concept
- Study of terms:
 - analysis of if and how modern nation-related lexical units were used and what meaning they had
 - analysis of other terms that emerged as important during the study of the contexts
- Study of concepts:
 - core areas in the discursive construction of national identities at the content-level (Wodak et al. 2009): do they work in medieval Italo-Romance texts?
- Presentation of the data: from concept to term

Core areas in the discursive construction of national identities

(Wodak et al. 2009)

- a collective past
- a collective present and future
- a common culture
- a common territory
- a *homo nationalis*

A collective past

- Strong self-perception as direct descendants of the ancient Romans:
 - foundation myths (esp. Aeneas), the important place of Virgil in the education of the literate élite
 - glorified past, emphasis on national (positive) uniqueness
- No distinction between ancient and contemporary peoples both in terms and concepts:
 - the same terms can be used interchangeably (es. *francese / gallico, fiammingo / cimbro*)
 - a different perception of historical time:
 - self-named *italiano, italico, lombardo* (= Longobard) and *latino*
 - the Italian language sometimes is also called Latin or even Lombardic

A collective past

However, *romano* \neq *italiano*:

Manifesto è a tutto il mondo e questo celare non si puote che **li romani**, che sono **nel mezzo d'Italia**, con **gli altr'italiani** conquistaron tutto il mondo.

Guido da Pisa, *Fiore di Italia*,
a. 1337 (pis.)

The whole world knows – and it is impossible to conceal it – that **the Romans**, who live **in the middle part of Italy**, together with **the other Italians** conquered the whole world.

Guido da Pisa, *The flower of Italy*,
before 1337

A collective past

Lombardo: very few references to the Langobardian past as a part of the Italian history

Gli Ungheri fur chiamati
Lungobardi, e conquistaro **Italia**, ed
abitarla;
onde noi fummo chiamati **Lombardi**.
Ver' è, che 'l nome tre' **Toscani**
intarla,
Ed è rimaso tutto in **Lombardia**.

Antonio Pucci, *Il Centiloquio*, 1388

The Hungarians [or the Huns] were
named **Longobards**, and they conquered
and inhabited **Italy**, that is why we were
named **Lombards**.

However, it is true that this name has been
eaten by worms in **Tuscany**,
and it remained mostly in **Lombardy**.

Antonio Pucci, *Il Centiloquio*
(historical chronicles, 1388)

A collective past

- ***Lombardo*** with the meaning of ‘Italian’:
partially influenced by **French usage** (*lombars*)
- **Franco-Italian texts** contain both *italien* and *lombars*; the latter more often in reference to the Northern Italy or the Langobardian period

A collective present and future

- the most problematic semantic area, strictly related to the other four
- idea of a collective present: literary texts only
- usually negative feelings, warnings and reproaches:
 - unificatory warning against the loss of national uniqueness (topos of threat)
 - emphasis on a difference between then and now

A collective present and future

Dante, *Purgatorio*, Canto VI (before 1321)

Ahi serva Italia, di dolore ostello,
nave senza nocchiere in gran tempesta,
non donna di province, ma bordello!

Ah servile Italy, ah dolor's hostel!
ship without a pilot in a great storm,
no mistress of your provinces, but brothel!



A collective present and future

Boccaccio, *Esposizioni sopra la Commedia di Dante* (commentary on the ‘Divine Comedy’, 1373-74)

Allegano questi cotali, in difesa del lor vituperevole costume, ragioni vie piú vituperevoli che non è il costume medesimo, dicendo primieramente: - **Noi seguiamo l'usanze dell'altre nazioni: così fanno gl'inghilesi, così i tedeschi, così i franceschi e' provenzali.** - Non s'avveggonno i miseri quello che essi in questa loro trascutata ragion confessino. **Solevano gl'italiani,** mentre che le troppe delicatezze non gli effeminarono, **dare le leggi, le fogge e' costumi e' modi del vivere a tutto il mondo;** nella qual cosa appariva **la nostra nobilitá, la nostra preeminenza, il dominio e la potenza;** dov'e' segue, se dalle nazioni strane, da quelle che furon vinte e soggiogate da noi, da quegli che furon nostri tributari, nostri vassalli, nostri servi, dalle **nazioni barbare,** dalle quali alcuna umana vita non si servava, né sapeva, né saprebbe, se non quanto dagl'italiani fu lor dimostrata (il che è assai chiaro), da loro riprendendo quel che dar solevamo, confessiamo d'esser noi i servi, d'esser coloro che viver non sappiamo se da loro non apprendiamo; e così d'aver loro per maggiori e per piú nobili e per piú costumati. O miseri! non s'accorgono questi cotali da quanta gran viltá d'animo proceda **che un italiano séguiti i costumi di così fatte genti.**

These people, in defense of their reprehensible customs, give reasons that are even more reprehensible than the custom itself. First of all, they say: “**We follow the customs of other nations: we borrow something from the English, something from Germans, something other from the French and the Occitans**”. – Poor them, they do not realize what this mistaken belief really means. Before they were weakened by too much comfort, **the Italians used to give laws to the whole world, and everyone assimilated their style, customs and habits, which embodied our nobility, superiority, authority and power.** It follows from this that if we borrow from foreign nations what we used to give them, we confess to be the servants of those whom we conquered and subdued time ago. They used to be our tributaries, our vassals, our servants, these barbarous nations who would have nothing human in them, if they had not been taught by the Italians how to be human (which is obvious). If we take from them what we used to give them, we confess that we are incapable to live properly if we do not learn from them; therefore we admit that others are nobler and better mannered. Oh miserable people! They do not realize that **if an Italian follows the customs of such peoples,** this betrays so much baseness of mind.

A common culture

- language:
 - the association between language and ethnic identity is stronger than in the contemporary world (one ethnic group – one language)
 - the cultural distance between Italians and others is to a great extent perceived through linguistic closeness vs. distance, comprehensibility vs. incomprehensibility
- habits, customs, traditions and behaviours (*usanze / costumi del paese*):
 - very frequently referred to in the discourse
 - ambivalent: can refer to a single town or to a larger area
- religion (but on a larger scale):
 - Christian vs. non-Christian

A common culture: language

Identification based on local linguistic varieties

La tua loquela ti fa manifesto
di quella nobil patria natio,
a la qual forse fui troppo molesto.

Dante, *Inferno*, Canto X (a.1321)

Questo Siccano n'andò **nell'isola di
Cicilia**, e funne il primo abitatore, e per
lo suo nome fu prima l'isola chiamata
Siccania, e per **la varietà di volgari
delli abitanti** è oggi [...] **chiamata
Sicilia**.

Giovanni Villani, *Nova Cronica*, a.
1348 (fior.)

Your speech makes it clear
that you are **a native of that noble land**
to which I was perhaps too hostile.

Dante, *Inferno*, Canto X (before 1321)

This Siccano went to **the island of
Sicily** and became its first inhabitant,
and the island was first named after
him, but nowadays it is **called Sicily
because of the linguistic variety
spoken by its inhabitants**.

Giovanni Villani, *New Chronicles*
(before 1348)

A common culture: language

- Identity based on language: emerging awareness of a common denominator in regional linguistic varieties (but very few attestations)
 - *volgare italico, lingua italica* (Dante, *Convivio*, 1304-7)
 - *loquela italiana* (Fazio degli Uberti, *Dittamondo* [a didactic poem], c. 1345-67)
- Terms: *italico* more common than *italiano*

A common culture: habits, customs, traditions, behaviours

Se boy avere 'nfray l' omini natura de cortese,
A lu modo conformate ke ttrovi nu paese:
Sci **genuese a Genua** et **en Pulia appuliese;**
Ma 'nn onne llocu guàrdate de male, non te pese.

Proverbia pseudoiacoponici, XIII sec. (abruzz.)

If you want to have a reputation of a courteous man,
adapt to the customs of the country you are in:
be **Genoese in Genoa** and **Apulian in Apulia,**
but do not behave badly in any place, do not give
troubles to anybody.

Proverbia, anonymous didactic poem (13th century)

E però sì se scrivea l'Alighieri “Dante **da**
Fiorença per nazione ma **non per custumi**”.

Jacopo della Lana, *Commento alla 'Commedia',
Inferno, 1324-28 (bologn.)*

But Alighieri wrote about himself: “Dante
Florentine by birth but **non by customs**”.

Jacopo della Lana, *Commentary on Dante's 'Divine
Comedy' (1324-28)*

A common territory: reconstruction of space

- Geographic criteria are extremely important for defining boundaries and shaping identities; boundaries are mostly determined by natural factors, such as mountains, seas, rivers
- The definition of ethnic belonging is strictly (often explicitly) related to the place of birth
 - evolution of the term *nazione*: from ‘birth’ to ‘a population group with a common origin, i.e. born in the same place’
- Two partially opposed visions of a common territory:
 - idea of homeland related to local identities
 - idea of Italy as a common territory defined by natural geographic factors

A common territory: reconstruction of space

- Identities, boundaries and geographic criteria:

Da Ytalia a Cicilia ha uno picciol braccio di mare in mezo per che alcuno dice che Cicilia non è d'Italia, anzi è paese per sé.

Antonio Pucci, *Libro di varie storie*, 1362
(fior.)

There is a **narrow strait between Sicily and Italy**, that is why some people say that Sicily does **not form part of Italy**, but is a **different country**.

Antonio Pucci, *Book of various tales*
(narrative, 1362)

- Ethnic identification more closely tied to the territory than in modern European languages: *mare italiano* (mod. *Mar Tirreno*, the Tyrrhenian Sea), *fiume italiano* (Tiber), *mare gallico* (the Mediterranean Sea close to the French coast), *fiume toscano* (Arno), *fiume Lombardo* (Po)

A common territory: reconstruction of space

- Importance of the place of birth:

“Tu se’ Italo francesco?” E quelli disse: “Non sono **francesco**, ma **di Francia**”: Cioè volle dire: non sono **nato di Francia**, ma vescovo di Francia.

Legenda Aurea, XIV sm. (fior.)

“Are you Italo the French?” And he said: “I am not **French**, but **of France**”. That means: I was not **born in France**, but I am a bishop of France.

Anonymous Florentine translation of the *Golden Legend* by Jacobus de Voragine (hagiographies, 14th century, 2nd half)

A common territory: reconstruction of space

- **Nazione**: birth (social characteristics) => birth (geographical place) => metonymy: a population group united by the place of birth (synonyms: *popolo, gente*)
 - i **latini** e prossimani **popoli**, come le **barbare e strane nazioni**. *Lancia, Eneide volg., 1316*
 - nel quale concistoro erano uomini di **diverse nazioni**, cioè **greci, latini, franceschi, tedeschi, schiavi e inglesi e d'altre diverse lingue del mondo**, infiammato dello Spirito santo *Fioretti. S. Francesco, 1370/90, anonymous*
 - con gran danno delli Scotti, e **d'altre nazioni**. *Ottimo, Purg., a. 1334*
 - lo Signore Re di Ragona e di **tutta nazione Sardesca** *Stat. pis., a. 1327*
 - una galea de' **Genovesi o d'altra nazione** *Sacchetti, Trecentonovelle, XIV sm.*
 - In questo circuito di brieve abitacolo **molte nazioni** abitano, di lingua, di costumi e di ragioni di tutta la vita strane. *Alberto della Piagentina, 1322/32 Boezio, Della filosofica consolazione.*
 - i costumi delle **varie nazioni** del mondo *Boccaccio, Filocolo, 1336-38*
- Discourse about others: **strane nazioni, barbare nazioni, diverse nazioni** ('foreign', 'barbarian', 'different') – very frequent

The structure of the territory: terms and respective concepts

Old Italian

- *città* ‘city / town’ - *contado* ‘rural area surrounding a town’ - *villa* ‘rural village’
=> *cittadino* vs. *contadino*;
cittadino vs. *villano*
- *paese* = *contrada* ‘country / land’ (+ *terra*, *provincia*, *regione*) – much more vague terms, can refer to almost any territorial unit, with or without an idea of belonging
strani paesi / strane contrade
- *patria* ‘(home)land’: stylistically neutral; mostly local identities; also used without transmitting an idea of belonging

Modern Italian

- *città* ‘city / town’ - *provincia* ‘county: includes villages but also small towns’ – *paese*² / *villaggio* ‘village’
- *paese*¹ ‘country’, *regione* ‘region’: precise terms, clear hierarchy
- *patria* ‘homeland’: stylistically elevated; always transmits an idea of belonging; perceived somewhat negatively because of the Fascist rhetorics
=> *casa mia* ‘my home(land)’ – very close to the medieval concept of *patria*

The mental map of the world

- **home town** (patriotic feelings usually restricted to this unit), e.g. Florence, Pisa, Bologna, Genoa
- **home region** (less strong feeling of belonging, awareness of some cultural unity), especially if it is Tuscany or Lombardy
- **other towns and regions** of the Apennine Peninsula
- **Italy** as an abstract territorial and cultural unity (not universal, a mental construction of the literate people, a much weaker feeling of belonging)
- **Romance-speaking lands** (their inhabitants are perceived as the least foreign among all the foreigners), e.g. France, Provence, the Aragon Crown
- **lands** inhabited by **non-Romance-speaking Christian** populations (perceived as more extraneous and inferior), esp. Germany (or its parts) and the Flanders
- **lands** inhabited by **non-Romance-speaking non-Christian** populations **in direct contact** with the Italians and other western Europeans (perceived as enemies and a threat), e.g. the Arabs, the Turks, the Tartars
- **lands** inhabited by **non-Romance-speaking non-Christian** populations **in less direct contact** with the Italians and other western Europeans (no threat of an armed conflict => 'exotic' lands which may have some positive connotations), India in the first place

The mental map of the world

Local identities:

- Literary genre of *laus civitatis*, e.g. Bonvesin da La Riva, *De magnalibus urbis Mediolani* (“On the Marvels of the City of Milan”), 1288
- Praise poems dedicated to single cities and towns, e.g. Florence, Siena

The mental map of the world

An idea of Italy as a common territory

Fiorenza, intra l'altre **città italiane** più nobile.

Florence, the noblest among all **the Italian cities**.

Boccaccio, *Trattatello in laude di Dante* (1351-1355)

Boccaccio, *Little Treatise in Praise of Dante* (1351-1355)

Li roi de Ungarie, che fu apellés Atilla flagielum Dei, desfist **grand part de Itallie**, e Fiorenze fu une de les teres che furent destrutes.

The king of Hungary (*sic!*), called Attila the Scourge of God, pillaged large parts of Italy, and Florence was among the ravaged lands.

Raffaele da Verona, *Aquilon de Bavière* (1379-1407)

Raffaele da Verona, *Aquilon de Bavière* (Franco-Italian narrative, 1379-1407)

The mental map of the world

Italy as a common territory: topos of *locus amoenus*

Tu sai che molti [...]
voglion soggiogar **la parte italica**,
la cui **dolcezza** dì e notte **sognano**.

Ventura Monachi, *Rime*, a. 1348
(fior.)

You know that many [foreigners]
want to subdue **the Italian land**,
the **sweetness** of which they **dream**
about day and night.

Ventura Monachi, *Poetry*
(before 1348)

The mental map of the world

Nicolò de' Rossi, 14th century (Northern Italy, Treviso)

A fare una donna bella soprano,
sì la fornisi di queste arnese:
viso **di Greçia**, ochio **senese**,
ungare ciie, capo **marchesano**,
boca **fiorentina**, naso **romano**,
masila **de Spagna**, gola **françaese**,
colo **picardo** e spale **luchese**,
petto **todesco** e mento **pisano**,
braçe **flamenghe**, mane **d'Engletera**
e corpo **sclavo** e flanchi **di Puia**,
cosse **bolognese**, gambe **de Ferrara**,
pè **veniçiano**...

It will be possible to make a beautiful woman
providing her with the following:
a **Greek** face, eyes **of Siena**,
Hungarian eyelashes, a head **of the Marches**,
a **Florentine** mouth, a **Roman** nose,
a **Spanish** jaw, a **French** throat,
a **Picard** neck and shoulders **of Lucca**,
a **German** chest and a chin **of Pisa**,
Flemish arms and **English** hands,
a **Slavic** body and **Apulian** hips,
thighs **of Bologna**, legs **of Ferrara**,
Venetian feet...

The mental map of the world

- What is closer and more familiar is mentally more fragmented than what is more distant
 - When speaking about foreigners, they refer to larger units, such as countries (in an almost modern meaning of the term) or provinces; there is no clear distinction between the two concepts.

A homo nationalis: how many Italian identities?

- Ethnonyms: *italiano, italico, latino, lombardo*²
 - references to the common past (core area 1), to a (mentally constructed) linguistic unity (core area 3) and to a common territory (core area 4)
 - can also be used as a plural: *i popoli italiani* ‘Italian peoples’ => names of inhabitants of various cities of the Apennine Peninsula (e.g. *fiorentino, veneziano, genovese*) and names identifying larger territorial units (*toscano, siciliano, lombardo*¹) refer to local identities
- Categorising terms: *popolo, nazione, gente*
- Discursive strategies:
 - Constructive strategies of perpetuation and justification; explicit or implicit topos of comparison, including ‘we are superior compared to them’
 - Strategy of avoidance: suppression / backgrounding of internal differences

A homo nationalis: praising the Italians

E in questa parte [Europa] è **Ytalia**,
ch'è una **nobile provincia** ch'è verso
mezzodì, col grande mare dallato,
nela quale provincia sono più
uomini e donne inamorat[i] che in
alcuna altra parte, e miglior gente.

Antonio Pucci, *Libro di varie storie*
(fior., 1362)

Prenderà l'arme, et fia 'l combatter
corto:
ché **l'antiquo valore**
ne l'italici cor' non è anchor morto.

Petrarca, *Canzoniere*, a. 1374

And in this part of the world [i.e. Europe],
there is **Italy**, which is **a noble province**
situated towards the south, surrounded by
the see, and **there are more men and**
women in love in this province than in
any other land, and it has better people.

Antonio Pucci, *Book of various tales*
(narrative, 1362)

Virtue will take arms against fury, and the
battle will be brief,
for **the ancient valor**
in Italian hearts is not yet dead.

Petrarch, *Canzoniere* (before 1374)

A homo nationalis: Italians vs. others

- a considerable number of terms used in reference to the foreigners
 - the most generic terms (neutral): *straniero - estraneo* (mod. It. ‘extraneous’) – *strano* (mod. It. ‘strange’) – *forestiero – forese*
 - less generic terms (neutral): *d’oltremare* ‘overseas’, *oltremontano* ‘beyond the mountains, i.e. the Alps’ (importance of geographic criteria, esp. of natural boundaries)
 - *barbaro* ‘barbarian’: negative connotations, accent on linguistic and cultural differences

Italians vs. others: migration and identity

- immigrant *avant la lettre* (a person living in a place, usually a city, other than the one he or she was born in): *forestiero* / *forese* (the latter developed this meaning from ‘rustic from the countryside’)
- expatriate *avant la lettre*: *pellegrino* (developed this meaning from ‘pilgrim’), *esiliato* / *in esilio* ‘in exile’

Italians vs. others: some 'national' stereotypes

Romance-speaking, Christian

- **the French:**
 - mighty warriors
 - well-mannered
 - skillful singers (and most probably poets, as singing and poetry were inseparable)
 - selfish and arrogant
- **the Catalan:**
 - mighty warriors
 - well-mannered people

Italians vs. others: some 'national' stereotypes

non-Romance-speaking, Christian

- **the German:**
 - great eaters and especially drinkers
 - greedy
 - deceitful and pernicious
 - speaking an incomprehensible language
- **the Flemish:**
 - great eaters and drinkers
 - greedy
 - coward and unable to fight (according to some sources)
 - desperate and cruel (according to other sources)

Italians vs. others: some 'national' stereotypes

non-Romance-speaking, Christian

- **the Greek:**
 - associated with a glorified past
 - inconstant
 - good singers
 - detractors, prone to criticize unfairly
 - speaking an incomprehensible language
 - rough, uncivilized
- **the Slavic populations:**
 - mean, base
- **the Hungarians (not clearly distinguished from the Huns):**
 - rough, uncivilized, culturally inferior
 - cruel

Italians vs. others: some 'national' stereotypes

non-Romance-speaking, non-Christian

- **the Tartars, the Turks, the Muslim Arabs (the Saracens), the Jews** – all have very negative connotations
 - rough, uncivilized
 - ill-natured
 - cruel
 - impious
 - speaking an incomprehensible language
 - rough, uncivilized
- The terms *tartaro*, *turco*, *giudeo* and *saraceno* are often used together in combinations of two or three
- All these terms can be used metaphorically: connotations become denotations

Italians vs. others: some 'national' stereotypes

*non-Romance-speaking, non-Christian,
geographically distant, no threat of an armed conflict*

- **the Indians**

- rough, uncivilized

BUT:

- association with valuable exotic spices
 - skillful artisans producing beautiful tapestries

=> a partially positive vision of an exotic population

The 'national' discourse in late-medieval Italy: changes over time

- The awareness of the cultural unity grows over time
 - The terms *italiano* and *italico* begin to be used later than terms referring to more local identities
 - Discourses about Italians as a population group with a sense of identity date from the 14th century, not earlier
 - Dante, Petrarch and Boccaccio play an important role in shaping this identity

Main differences between modern and medieval national discourse

- Modern terms related to the *Staatsnation* are absent (e.g. *stato* ‘state’), the political aspect emerges only at the local level (the communes – Italian city-states)
- In medieval texts, the ‘national’ is closely tied to the social and sometimes emerges from the social
 - *nazione, popolo* – originally used to refer to the social status, whereas the ethnic identification is a secondary meaning.
 - linguistically, the religious was more closely tied to the ‘national’
- The emerging nation-related concepts were fuzzier than their modern equivalents; the nation-related terms also covered meanings not connected to the ‘national’ (e.g. *nazione guelfa, patria celestiale*)
- The nation-related lexical units have stylistic and discursive characteristics differing considerably from modern usage (e.g. *patria*)

Conclusions: linguistic facts

- Labiality of terms and concepts:
 - a great variety of terms used to refer to the same concepts
 - one term usually covers many more meanings than modern nation-related lexical units
 - some modern nation-related lexemes are used, but their semantic structures are different: much more polysemantic, greater labiality
- No significant diatopic variations in the use of terms and concepts: the whole Italo-Romance corpus is homogeneous, and so are Franco-Italian texts.

Conclusions: sociolinguistic facts

- Identities are based on geographic, linguistic and cultural criteria. No perception of political unity beyond the borders of a single city commune. Geographic and linguistic factors have more weight than in the contemporary world.
- Multi-layered identity:
 - importance of local identities
 - a common supraregional cultural identity. The concepts of Italy and Italian are not universal, but known only to the literate. This awareness of the Italian cultural unity grows over time.
- The national is closely tied to the social.
- In some cases, there is no clear distinction between the ethnic and the religious.
- The perception of space and boundaries shows similarities to the situation in modern Europe. Hierarchy in the perception of foreigners, based on the criterion of linguistic and cultural closeness/distance.
- The perception of time is very different. A different idea of history.

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Thank you!

