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Language and culture

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Language in Italy c.1000

The first signs of the appearance of a vernacular Italian are the well-known *Riddle of Verona* and some graffiti in the Catacombs of Comodilla in Rome, both around AD 800. After these, the vernacular was documented at Capua and Teano, today in the province of Caserta, in AD 960–3. These fragments only underline the overall lack of textual evidence, which is not sufficient to give even a vague idea of the linguistic situation over the entire peninsula around the year 1000. Accordingly, it is possible to infer that awareness of the difference between Latin and the vernacular was not particularly fierce at the time.

As with other cultural aspects, the linguistic situation on the peninsula underlined an overall lack of political unity. There were two main opposing trends. The coastal areas, more in the south than the north, maintained a



Mediterranean orientation that went back to antiquity. Links with Constantinople, which continued to possess provinces in Italy until the Norman conquest, had reinforced the use of Greek, which for many centuries had been spoken along the southern Italian coast, particularly in the Salento area, Calabria, and eastern Sicily. Also influential was immigration from the east, particularly by Christians fleeing Muslim conquests. The Muslims themselves had occupied Sicily from the ninth century, and had then proceeded further up the peninsula, establishing long-lasting settlements. Entire parts of Sicily were Arabic-speaking, and the use of Arabic words spread north, particularly along trade routes.

The situation to the north and inland was rather different. The kingdom of Italy looked towards the Holy Roman Empire and thus towards Europe beyond the Alps. The Longobard language was extinct or just about extinct in its last stronghold, Benevento, but



there were isolated examples of immigrants who continued to speak their own languages, such as the Bulgars.¹ Along the southern reaches of the Apennine mountains, in Basilicata, there were settlements where Greek was spoken, and others that used an archaic romance dialect, traces of which still exist today. South of the Tiber river, there had formed a linguistic type that might be labelled 'Sabine', characterized by the loss of the *-mb-* and *-nd-* sounds (for example, *ganna* for 'gamba' and *monno* for 'mondo') that subsequently spread to all of southern Italy. Various texts were produced in this area, particularly in the Benedictine monasteries between Farfa and Monte Cassino.

The territory on the Adriatic side, from the Marches down to the Gulf of Taranto, had its own linguistic character, more open to influence from the north. In the Po valley the most important and populous centres were on the low plains, from Pavia and Milan to Treviso and Padua. The most linguistically conservative



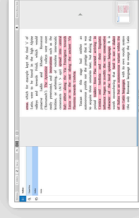
areas, which for example kept the final 's' of Latin, were to be found in the high Alpine valleys and towards Friuli, which would preserve Ladin and Rhaeto-Romance ('Romansch'). The Apennine valleys were more easily penetrated, and innovations such as the lenition, or softening, of voiceless intervocalic consonants (ACU > aɣo) spread into central Italy either along the Via Francigena towards Lucca or to the east along the ancient Via Flaminia towards Umbria.

Tuscan at this stage had neither an autonomous profile nor the prestige that it was to acquire three centuries later, but during this period traders from Pisa started arriving in Corsica and Sardinia and their linguistic influence began to modify the very conservative character of the local spoken language. It is worth remembering that Sard is not a dialect of Italian but an autonomous variant within the neo-Latin languages, with its own vocalic system (the only Romance language to merge the Latin



pairs of short and long vowels), taking the article from *ipse* and conservating the Latin final 's' (*sas domos* for *le case*, 'the houses'), and so on.

There is no proof that the inhabitants of the peninsula thought they all spoke the same language; if anything quite the reverse. Even if in the present it is difficult to decide exactly what 'Italy' means, the absence of the adjective 'Italian' cannot escape our notice. The first conscious affirmation of unity among spoken languages on the peninsula would have to wait for the definition by Dante of the 'lingua del sì'.



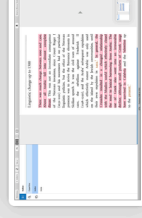
Linguistic change up to 1300

There was much change between 1000 and 1300. Above all Arabic fell into almost complete disuse. This was not an immediate consequence of the Norman invasions, since Count Roger I (1031–1101) and his successors had no particular linguistic policies, but the effect of the Norman presence was to revive the Romance elements in Sicilian speech. It was the civil wars of around 1200, the rebellion against Frederick II (1198–1250), and the Arabs' subsequent expulsion which effectively meant Arabic was only used on the island by the Jewish communities, until their own expulsion in 1492.² In general, the Crusades resulted in a changed relationship with the Muslim world which effectively closed the road to lexical borrowing from Arabic. The use of Greek also went into an irreversible decline, although small pockets of Greek usage have survived in Calabria and the Salentino up to the present.³

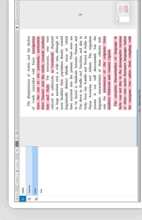


The disappearance of Arabic and the decline of Greek coincided with heavy immigration from the rest of the peninsula, particularly from Tuscany and the north, towards southern Italy and Sicily. The newcomers, who were referred to collectively as 'Lombards', dispersed in large numbers over a wide area, although in some localities their population density created linguistically distinct islands, some of which have survived into the present. These areas are to be found in Basilicata between Potenza and Tito down to Rivello and Trecchina, and also in Sicily, from San Fratello and Novara di Sicilia to Piazza Armerina and Aidone. The migration process is not well documented, but the linguistic characteristics of these colonies indicate the provenance of the migrants from southern Piedmont and western Liguria.

The complete Romanization of language in Sicily was not due to the demographic increase of those who spoke Romance languages before the conquest, but rather their mingling with

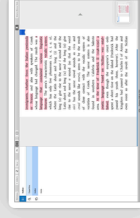


immigrants, whether from the Italian peninsula or France, and also with speakers of Greek whose language had changed. The result was a language that contained various linguistic features. The area's characteristic vocalic system, which has only five phonemes (*a, e, i, o, u*), where the Latin short and long (*i*) and the long (*e*) give rise to the same *i* sound and the Latin short and long (*u*) and the long (*o*) give rise to the same *u* sound (so that the word *vivi* has the same vowel sounds as *vivu* and *cruci* sounds like *murru*), seem to be the result of close contact with the vocalic system of varieties of Greek. The same system is also found in southern Calabria and the Salento area. At the time of Frederick II (1198–1250) a poetic language based on Sicilian was established, even though the emperor's court only spent a short time on the island (Frederick had passed his youth there, however). After the kingdom had passed to Charles I of Anjou and even more so after the revolt of the Sicilian



Vespers (1282), Naples became the centre of the kingdom: the language of Sicily lost its importance, particularly as the island passed into the Catalan political orbit. In effect Naples would crush many of the linguistic features of other parts of the kingdom, but this phenomenon was only evident after about two centuries. Meanwhile the southern linguistic varieties were defined as 'Longobard' (as opposed to Lombard), or as 'Apulian', an indication of the prevalence of Apennine and Pugliese influence.

It should be noted that Rome did not have a particular linguistic influence at the time. Its language type was still very southern, and would remain so until at least the second half of the fifteenth century, when Tuscan influence helped to create the modern Roman dialect. Tuscany assumed an increasingly important linguistic role from around 1200. Initially this was a polycentric phenomenon, with linguistic varieties in Lucca, Pisa, Pistoia, Florence, Siena,



and Arezzo. Later, Florence became increasingly dominant. Usually this is explained through the great prestige of Florentine fourteenth-century literature, but the process is in fact older and less monocausal. In the 1200s Tuscany witnessed an extraordinary economic, political, and cultural development, with a concomitant diffusion of writings. The flow of linguistic features from the north was halted, and the Tuscan language began to radiate northwards itself, particularly towards Bologna and the Veneto. By 1300 the written language of the Emilian city was different from that of Florence only because it was less idiomatic.

It has been mentioned already that the spoken languages of the Po valley are termed Lombard. This denomination includes the great variety of distinct linguistic types extending from Piedmontese to Veneto and Romagnolo (the city of Venice for the time being remained a case apart). A dense network of intersecting linguistic boundaries covering the



entire plain is now well documented, although no single linguistic type dominated. These differences were maintained by the fragmentation of political power, competing economic interests, and cultural differences.

The periphery of the Italian linguistic area included the Alps and the Alpine foothills: Occitan and Franco-Provençal to the west, Rhaeto-Romance, Ladin, and Friulian to the north and east. Also peripheral are Istrian in Istria and Dalmatian in Veglia and isolated places along the coast to Ragusa (now Dubrovnik). In Corsica by this time the dialects retained few remnants of antiquity, by sharp contrast with Sardinia, except for the northern areas around Sassari.



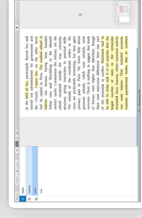
in the field of law, particularly Roman law, and turned out administrators for government and the Church. Canon law, on the other hand, had its capital in Paris. The medical school at Salerno was famous, having been founded before 1000 and flourishing in the eleventh century under Constantine the African; yet the school remained outside the true university structure, giving instruction in practical skills. The schools of the mendicant orders in the 1200s are particularly interesting, but here again primacy goes to Paris. We know little about grammar schools, which were certainly more common. There is nothing to suggest that levels of literacy were higher than elsewhere, though there were enormous differences from one part of the peninsula to another. Merchants had to be able to write, and it is no surprise that the largest number of texts in the vernacular emanated from Tuscany, where economic activity was most intense. They included accounts, business appointment books, lists of creditors



and debtors, payments, taxes, and the like.

Less striking is the literary production of the period in Latin, which is not comparable to the volume of work produced in France and the Rhine valley. Formerly, the slow development of Italian literature relative to German and French was justified by reference to the fact that educated Italians retained solid ties to Latin, which they felt to be their mother tongue, but this does not seem to be the case. The areas which witnessed the greatest growth in the production of literature in Latin in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries were substantially the same as those where literature in the vernacular also flourished. Until 1300 Italy was peripheral for both [types](#).⁵

This suggests that both characteristics were related to analogous external conditions: the potential reading public, the schools, and libraries. The golden age of Italian libraries had been earlier in the Middle Ages, the period of Monte Cassino, Verona, Bobbio, and Vercelli,



but during the period under consideration dust covered their treasures thickly and it would only be removed in the second half of the fourteenth century by indignant humanists. Between 1000 and 1300 the great monastic centres seem to have been in decline, and noble families did not have sufficient continuity to acquire books and establish cultural traditions. We do know that at least Frederick II was interested in books, but it is not possible to say how many he had or whether they were organized into a stable and permanent [library](#).⁶ Even the papal collections were begun after the period under consideration.

We have already mentioned the idea that primary education was reasonably widespread (though mainly in urban areas), and this was obviously connected with the needs of the Church and the legal profession. The beginnings of commerce and finance had also provided reasons for the young to learn how to read, write, and do arithmetic, but only in Tuscany



and certain restricted [areas](#).⁷ In effect merchants had already been writing frequently since the early 1200s, but this does not mean that literacy was common outside the Church and the legal profession. Notaries in particular were often writers as well. Giacomo da Lentini was a notary, and between the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries notaries in Bologna used to fill the blanks in their registers with transcriptions of poetry. The Italian clergy, on the other hand, with the exception of the texts produced at Monte Cassino, played a less important role in the development of literature than their French brethren, possibly because the Italian clergy seemed to be more administrative than intellectual. Notable exceptions were provided by the likes of St Francis of Assisi, who recognized the importance of poetry and was the author of the *Laudes creaturarum* (1224–6). Also noteworthy was the production of religious poetry known as *laudi* ('lodi' or 'praises'), which reached their highest point



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with the *Stabat mater* of Jacopone di Todi. The secular clergy remained at the periphery of literary production, as did the aristocracy, which elsewhere provided essential patronage.



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The first documents in the vernacular and para-literary traditions

The number of documents written in the vernacular and dating prior to about 1211, details of which were collected some years ago by Livio Petrucci, amounted to no more than about twenty for the entire Italian peninsula (excluding Sardinia; Sicily counted none). Also interesting is their geographical distribution. Apart from the *Riddle of Verona* and the *Glossary of Monza*, which in a strict sense do not count as vernacular, from the north there is only an inscription from Casale Monferrato (dating from before 1106), the Venetian *Recordazione* of P. Corner (c.1150–75), the *Declaration of Paxia* (Savona, 1182–93), the *Ritmo bellunese* (Belluno-Feltre, c.1200, but extant only in much later copies), the *Subalpine Sermons* (c.1200), and the *Ricordi Veronesi* (c.1205). Of these, only the Sermons present a text of any length, and it is still a matter of debate whether



they are in Gallo-Romance or Italian. Writings from the south are even rarer. After the *Placiti campani* of 960–3 there was nothing until the *Ritmo cassinese*, the three verses of the Cassinese *Pianto di Maria*, and the inventory of S. Maria at Fondi, all from about 1200, and all from northern [Campania](#).⁸ At the northern limit of the southern linguistic area we find two brief Roman texts: the already mentioned graffito of Comodilla and the inscription of San Clemente (c.1100). On the other side of the peninsula there is the *memoratorio* of Monte Capraro (1171) in Molise.

Tuscany and the central areas were much richer. There are the *Postilla amiatina* of 1087, the naval accounts of Pisa of about 1100, the testimonies of Travale (1158), the *Decime* of Arlotto (1160–80), the inscription on the tomb of Giratto at Pisa (1174–80), the *Ritmo laurenziano* (between 1188 and 1207), the *Declaratoria pistoiese* (from the middle of the twelfth century), the Pistoiese annotation dated



between 1187 and 1208, the rents and notes of Coltibuono (c.1200), and finally the Florentine banking accounts of 1211. From the area of Umbria and the Marches we have the Umbrian confessional formula (before 1080), and the charters of Osimo (1151), Fabriano (1186), and Piceno (1193).

Sardinia represents a case apart. During the same period the island produced at least fifteen legal documents, from the *privilegio logudorese* of 1080–5 to the charter of Cagliari of 1200–12. There are seven texts from Logudoro, which represent the most conservative linguistic type, four from Arborea, three from Cagliari, and one from Gallura. Although the linguistic features vary from region to region, the textual typology is similar among all the texts, to the extent that they are all juridical documents using highly official [language](#).⁹

It should be noted that there is nothing from the better part of the Mezzogiorno, including Sicily, nor from most of the Po valley, including



Milan, Bologna, Verona, Padua, and Venice. Typologically the majority of these texts, which are usually brief, are linked to a practical function, generally connected with the law or religion. Very few of them are even slightly literary. Consider the scant lines of the *Ritmo bellunese*, which celebrate the victory of the militias of the communes of Belluno and Feltre over the commune of Treviso in a local skirmish:

De Castel d'Ard avi li nostri bona part I lo getà
tutto intro lo flumo d'Ard. E sex cavaler de Tarvis
li plui fer Con sé dusé li nostre cavaler.

From Castel d'Ardo came our better part, and they threw it all into the River Ardo. Six horsemen from most proud Treviso took our horsemen with them.

Whether or not it is complete, this very humble text, in epic decasyllables with caesura after the fourth syllable, refers to the sorts of events which are likely to have inspired



numerous other poetic works. The celebration of occasions in small warlike communities must certainly have been recorded in poetry, both for the purposes of spreading the word and for boasting about victories. From the 1200s we have three texts that refer to such situations: the *Serventese* of the Lambertazzi and Gieremei (1280) and the *Serventese romagnolo* of almost the same date, as well as the older *Ritmo lucchese*. Communal pride, which was to be so important in Dante's *Commedia*, permeates much of this literary production, the greater part of which was lost. Similar attention to founding myths is preserved in municipal chronicles. In the cities of the Po valley, this production is in Latin prose, whereas in Tuscany the vernacular was used relatively early on. The myth of the origins of Florence in Fiesole was known not just to the educated, but to the whole commune.

Minstrels played an important role in the celebration of local feasts, but little record of



their performances has been preserved. It is to a jester, perhaps from Volterra, that we owe the *Ritmo laurenziano* ('Salva lo vescovo senato lo miglior k'unqua sia nato ...'), in which the bishop of Jesi is celebrated because he had given a horse to the poet. Religious minstrels were responsible for the *Ritmo cassinese*, which compares the contemplative to the active life.

Minstrels, as well as the lower clergy, also put on dramatic works that were precursors of modern theatre. The fragment of the *Pianto cassinese di Maria* belongs to this category, as do certain texts by Jacopone. The inscription of San Clemente contains the depiction of a dramatic work. This shows the miracle in which the saint's persecutors are forced to drag a heavy marble column rather than the saint's body; the persecutors utter phrases in the vernacular ('Falite dereto colo palo, Carvoncelle', etc.), while the saint uses solemn Latin ('Duritiam cordis vestris saxa traere meruistis'). Drama as an aspect of literature was of less



importance, but it had its place, especially the elementary form of the *contrasto*, a poetic 'dialogue' that had no need of scenery and where the same actor played both parts. There are three examples of such works from the thirteenth century: the *Contrasto di Cielo d'Alcamo* (mentioned by Dante as an example of rustic Sicilian), the *Song of Castra*, and the dialogue 'O Zerbitana retica'.



The establishment of literary traditions

The communal poem and the dramatic dialogue are two examples of the slow emergence of literary traditions. Already these examples pose the problem of whether they are autochthonous or not. The decasyllabic *Ritmo bellunese* seems to have some of the characteristics of French epic poetry, a form that spread quite early in northern Italy and gave rise to a hybrid linguistic form, Franco-Italian. Among other works, there is a version of the *Song of Roland* in this hybrid language. The *contrasto* also has characteristics that come from outside Italy: among the oldest Italians texts we should include stanzas by the Occitan troubadour Raimbaut de Vaqueiras. These amount to two stanzas (which can only be judged as generically Italian) of the plurilingual 'Eras quan vey verdeyar' and half of the *contrasto* 'Domna, tant vos ai preiada', considered Genoese. These



texts, both from the end of the twelfth century, provide examples of the diffusion in Italy of troubadour poetry, as well as their presence in the peninsula and their attention to the local spoken language.

Traditionally the relationship between the Italian language and Occitan poetry has been considered in linear terms: troubadours arrive in Italy and perform their own compositions, then certain Italians adopt Occitan and imitate its forms and motifs. In a third phase some Italian poets adopt their own language, continuing to imitate Occitan models. By about 1200 there were already numerous Occitan poets visiting Italian courts, particularly in the north. The troubadour Peire Vidal participated in the social and literary life of the peninsula, as did Uc de Saint Circ, who became the biographer of his teachers and colleagues. There were already northern Italian poets who had adopted Occitan for their own poetry for some decades. The most famous figure of the 1200s would be



Sordello da Goito. Rather later, around 1230, Frederick II would promote the poetic production of his court, usually referred to as the Sicilian poetic school. A few years ago there was an important discovery: a *canzone*, datable to around 1200, transcribed in Ravenna, in a language that was not local but appeared to be a mixture of southern forms that had passed through a more northern filter. It begins 'Quando eu stava in le tu' cathene'. Besides this there was a partial copy of another, rather different, composition. A short time earlier there had been a discovery in relation to Sicilian poets. In the Zentralbibliothek of Zurich a poem by Giacomino Pugliese, written around 1234-6, had been found. This copy must have been made near Lake Constance, where it seems to have arrived via Aquileia.

These two discoveries led to a rethinking of old assumptions. 'Quando eu stava' without doubt shows familiarity with Occitan models, but it lacks the imprint of the themes of



Occitan poetry, which are, on the other hand, more evident in the smaller fragment. The two poems indicate that in Italy at the end of the 1100s compositions displayed form and content that was influenced by the Provençal model but was also relatively autonomous. Even more interesting is the language, which is far from representing a local model, and thus indicates the existence of a supra-local practice, which also applied in more southern areas. By rereading other, anonymous compositions, apparently of a later date, it may be possible to discover further fragments of this prehistory of the Italian language.

Nearly all Sicilian poetry has come down to us in Tuscan guise through the collections produced there in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. There exist only a few stanzas in the original language, but these were copied in the sixteenth century and their origin is therefore open to doubt. The language of the Zurich poem, which dates back to the emperor



Frederick II, shows no Tuscan influences and is written in a Sicilian enriched by supra-local influences.¹⁰ Overall, this text, along with the one from Ravenna, seems to indicate the existence of a poetic and literary non-dialect language that predated Frederick.

The relationship with Provençal poetry thus becomes more dialectic, and there is another sign of this. Occitan poetry brought courtly manners to Italy and with them the formula of courtly love, or 'fin'amore'. This formula appears in the work of Sicilian poets, notably John of Brienne and above all Rinaldo d'Aquino. But elements of this formula had already appeared much earlier in personal names. In Genoa as early as 1191 and then in 1201 there were people called *Finis Amoris* and *Iaconus Finis Amoris*, and later, in 1232, in Pistoia there was a Dominam *Finamorem*. These people would not have been children when their names were registered in archival documents, and their adopted names indicate the popularity



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of the formulas of courtly poetry long before they were harnessed by the pens of John of Brienne or Rinaldo d'Aquino.

The fact that today the background is much more complex detracts nothing from the importance of Frederick II. At his coronation in 1220 there were troubadours, Provençal poets, and German *Minnesänger*, but there is no record of performances by Italians. It is undoubtedly to his credit to be the first lord, as far as we know, consciously to assume the role not just of protector but promoter of vernacular poetry, encouraging the members of his court, and participating himself, in the writing of poetry. The emperor's intervention needs to be seen in the light of his overall aim to increase the prestige of his court, partly through these manifestations of refinement. The model was certainly Occitan, but it was not a passive imitation. The emperor was not keen on political content, so important in the poems of many troubadours, beginning with Bertran



de Born; even moral themes are transposed to the plane of theory rather than relating to real people or classes. Alongside moral themes the theme of love was important, but even here there was a certain autonomy with respect to the Occitan model. This autonomy was even more marked at the level of form: it was the Sicilians, and above all Giacomo da Lentini, who invented the sonnet. This was unknown to the Provençal tradition, but would remain the canonic form of short poetry in Italy and the rest of Europe.

Even beyond the initiative of Frederick II and the not inconsiderable achievements of other poets, particularly Giacomo da Lentini, the Sicilian poetic school has further historic significance, of which Dante himself was fully aware. Even before the fall of the Hohenstaufen dynasty at Benevento (1266) there were traces of its influence in Tuscany, a region strongly linked to King Manfred. Thus we have a group of poets described as Siculo-Tuscan. Afterwards



there was constant innovation, from Guittone d'Arezzo to the Bolognese Guido Guinizelli and from Guido Calvalcanti to Dante. Dante's 'Dolce Stil Nuovo' characterizes this last group of poets as a school, a community, despite differences of personality, style, and poetry. The tradition of Italian lyrical poetry, in its two principal forms of the *canzone* and the sonnet, took on its definitive shape among this group. Later, with Petrarch, it would become a model of perfection that would continue for centuries, even beyond Italy. Thus the Sicilians created a tradition of lyric poetry. Having mentioned Guinizelli, it might be added that other poets writing in Bologna tended to imitate Tuscan poetic circles, and in the same city prose writers composed books on more learned subjects than in Tuscany. With Boncompagno da Signa and Guido Faba, vernacular texts began to be produced in the universities, and formed the basis for lectures to an educated public, which was constantly expanding in size.



Less lasting were other poetic traditions. The Po valley area witnessed a flowering of didactic poetry in the 1200s, often but not always religious, sometimes anonymous (as in the case of the so-called 'Anonimo Genovese') but sometimes by authors such as Girardo Patecchio di Cremona, Ugucione da Lodi, Giacomino da Verona, and the Milanese Bonvesin da la Riva. These names are already enough to indicate that vernacular poetry originated in many places, but none of them succeeded in establishing stable models or continuity. More fortunate was another genre of poetry, the so-called 'comic-realistic' begun by the Florentine Rustico Filippo, continued by the Siensese Cecco Angiolieri, and then developed by Folgore da San Gimignano. There are echoes of this genre in Dante's *Inferno*.

The foregoing schematic indications are sufficient to demonstrate that by about 1200 Italy, with its many linguistic variations, was home to rich and differentiated poetic



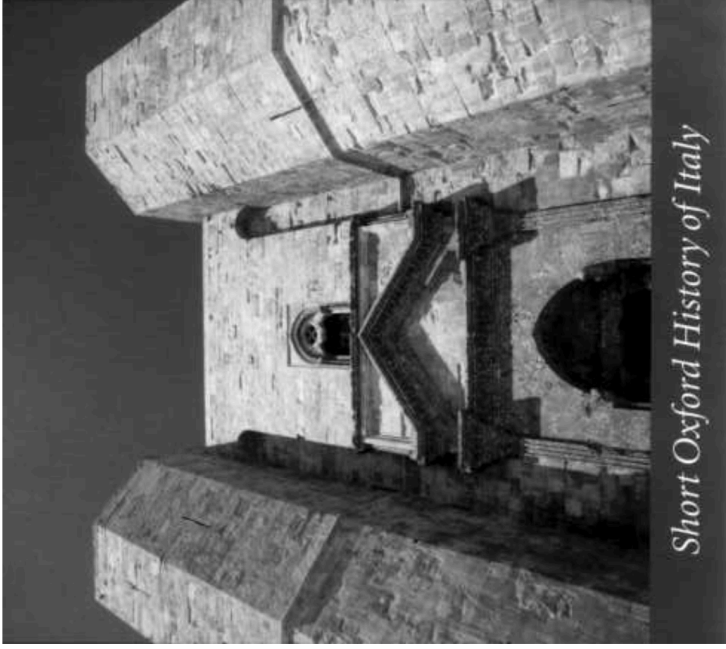
traditions, which went from the poetry of courtly love to religious, moral, and comic-realistic work, and to occasional poetry with political overtones. Dramatic poetry is likely to have existed, but there is little documentation. Epic poetry was noticeably lacking. Italian prose was probably not particularly original but covers a broad range, from the novel to science. We also see the beginnings of the most successful genre of pre-modern Italy, the *novella*.¹¹ Behind this maturing literature stood Latin culture.

The sum of these Italian and European traditions was the extraordinary appearance of Dante Alighieri. On the one hand, Dante participated in the 'Dolce Stil Nuovo', but his interests were much broader. His lyric production is seen in the *Vita Nuova*, whose complex structure foreshadows Petrarch's *Canzoniere*. But Dante was interested in conscious linguistic selection and the style of literature (the *De vulgari eloquentia*), in culture



as a whole (the encyclopaedic, if incomplete *Convivio*), and in the theory and practice of politics (*De Monarchia*). These are interests that went beyond the theoretical. His passionate participation in Florentine political life, the price of which was a long period of exile, is proof of his commitment to high ideals. It was on the basis of this life and culture that the ambitious structure of the *Commedia* was based. This was an extraordinary project for a poem that embraced all of human experience, from the terrestrial to the eternal. It was both a summing up of, and a point of departure from, medieval culture in all its aspects, yet it was always linked to the personal experience of the author, his beloved Florence, and the places of his exile.





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CENTRAL MIDDLE
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David Abulafia

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