



# Italian Identity:

Does it exist?

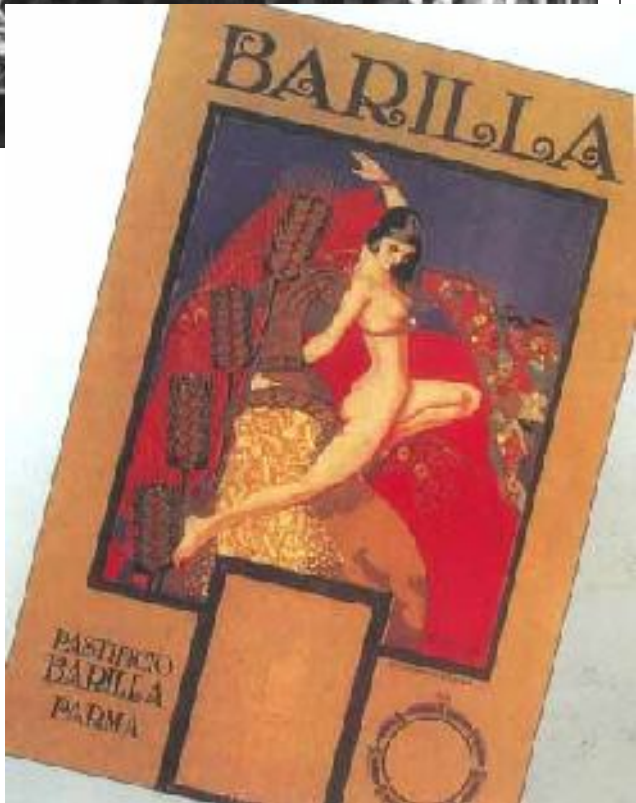
Sources: Collected articles of the Conference on  
Italian Identity,

Siena, 2008

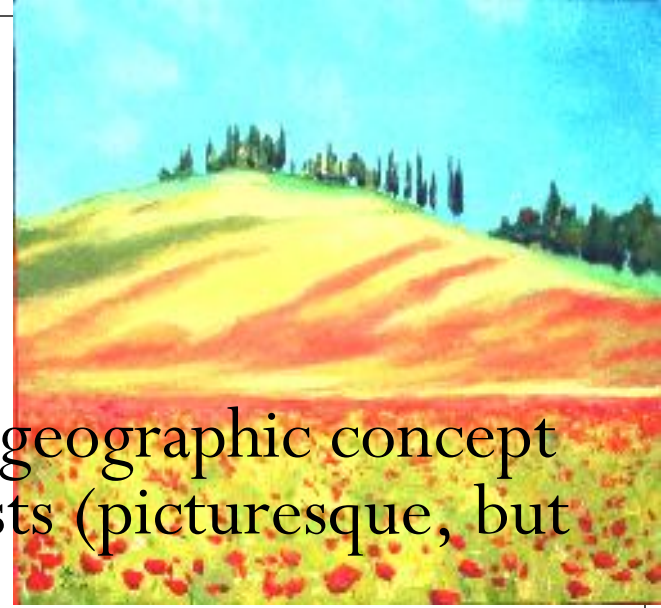
David Gilmour "The Pursuit of Italy", 2011

- Prediction: The rich diversity of regional identities will submerge under tide of modern materialism. (1960<sup>th</sup> )

- 1950-1973 Period of economic boom. All Italians ride Fiat, Vespa, watch Carosello, drink Paulista, eat Barilla



# Identity: view from outside (1)



- Before the Unification

- Italy as a geographic concept for tourists (picturesque, but poor)

- Italian unification

- Romantic vision, sympathy

- End of the 19<sup>th</sup> century



- Critics of expansionism, ridiculous image, misgovernment



# Identity: view from outside (2)

- Fascism



- 1950<sup>th</sup>

- 1960<sup>th</sup> -80<sup>th</sup> Italian style

- 1990<sup>th</sup> – 2011 Misgovernment

- Ridiculous image

- Misgovernment, trade with the Third world



Berlusconi and 3 female judges

# Identity: self-identification



1. Race: italians are multiethnic

2. Language: strong dialects

(in spite of military service and tv)

1. History: divided memory

2. Religion: catholicism is universal, not nationalistic

BUT: Creativity (adopt elite products to masses,  
experiments)

\*Omar Calabrese, Conference

The Ideas of Unity and Liberalism were not achieved by  
Italian Unification, Fascism, Republic

- State-building, but not Nation-building
- Berlusconi instead of Mussolini (videocracy)

Solution: Federalism from the start

- \*David Gilmour “The Pursuit of Italy”

# Conclusion

Stronger National Identity through:

- Good government
- Weakening of secession movements  
(Northern League)
- Economic development
- Civic education

