XIII/B **Carta Pisana**

a supplement of the analysis presented in "Letture da recuperare"*

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*Perondi, L., Romei, L., 2011,
'Letture da recuperare", in «La Vita Nŏva»,
iPad magazine of «Il Sole 24 Ore»,
April, n. 2, v. 1.1

Anonymous,
Late 13th century,
"Carta pisana", Bibliotheque Nationale de France (BNF), Dep. des Cartes et Plans, Res. Ge. B1118.
Public domain image
http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Carta_Pisana.png

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Some notes about the map
This is a famous Portolan Chart known as "Carta Pisana" or "Carte Pisane", it's dated late 13th century. It was used as a tool of navigation by sailors and merchants in the middle ages.
In the same period of the T-O mappaemundi http://classes.bnf.fr/ebstorf/feuille/to/index.htm (diagrammatic maps of the world), medieval people produced this kind of map.

We chose to show it because of its clear visual presentation and for the presence of a bar scale and of grids: these elements show a continuity between the cartography during the middle ages and the renaissance.

The essential pages about Portolan Charts are:
Campbell, T., 1987, 'Portolan Charts from the Late Thirteenth Century to 1500", in The History of Cartography. Vol. I. Cartography in Prehistoric, Ancient, and Medieval Europe and the Mediterranean, edited by J. B. Harley and D. Woodward, Chicago & London, The University of Chicago Press, pp. 371-463.

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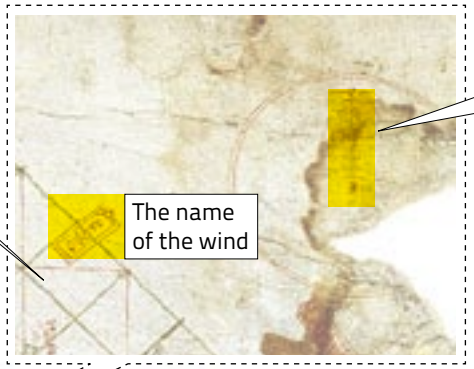
There is a grid. Sailors probably used it to make calculation with the compass.



Probably a scale bar, very useful to understand the distance between different points of the coastline.

The chart is oriented with the north on the upper side.

North wind (Tramontana)

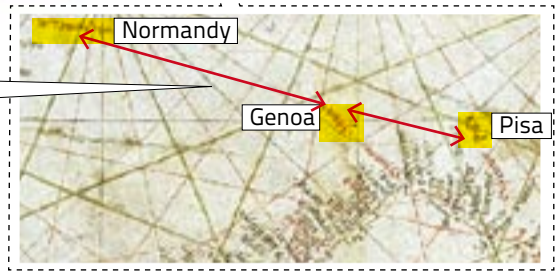
The map has two centers, from each center a compass rose with 16 directions.

You can use all the reliable informations of the chart (distances, compass rose, scale bar) to navigate and to extrapolate informations as the best wind to follow to reach a certain harbor.

The colors of the toponyms are not random, in particular the most important alphanumeric informations are in red: big cities and winds.

Toponyms, where the space is sufficient, are written from the coastline to right.

This a navigational map and only the informations about the distance between cities of the coastline are reliable.



32 winds, represented by lines in different colors, originaly black, green, red.

The outline of the italian coast is probably created as the sum of all the distances and positions observed in the navigation.
This chart represents, in some regards, italian peninsula, but just as a consequence of is primarily use: a tool of navigation.

The analysis can be downloaded at:
http://sinsemia.files.wordpress.com/2011/04/vitanova_2_cartapisana.pdf