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ABSTRACT

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ABSTRACT: The presentation, based on a vast historiography, retraces the evolution of taxation systems in Europe between the 13th and 18th centuries. Direct and indirect taxes, duties, levies, franchises, mandatory loans and public debt are all analysed, focusing attention on the dialectical relationship between the state and citizens, and on taxation as an instrument of power, diversified over time and space. In the first part, the author, after having established a discourse on the importance and usefulness of analysing the past in order to understand the present, expands his analysis on two cases taken in comparison: monarchical Spain and Italy's city states, providing emblematic case studies on procedures for collecting taxes and their end uses. In the second part, the text takes into consideration the relationship between theoretical thought aimed at sustaining and justifying the power of nations, and its influence on taxation, its purposes and results.