

Nuova Rivista Storica

Anno XCVI, Gennaio-Aprile 2012, Fascicolo I

Abstracts

GIULIANA ALBINI, Una reciproca e collettiva concessione di cittadinanza: Parma e Reggio all'inizio del Quattrocento

In the late Middle Ages the conditions to obtain a citizenship differ from place to place in the communes of Northern and Central Italy and are governed by civic statutes. Between the fourteenth and fifteenth century many cities are included in larger political dominations and the right to grant new citizenships gradually becomes a tool in the hands of princes, a way to affirm their power over the local ruling class.

This essay examines the *privilegium civilitatis* that the citizens of Parma and Reggio grant each other at the beginning of the fifteenth century, when both cities are part of the state built by Ottobuono Terzi after the death of the duke of Milan. This mutual exchange of citizenship, actively supported by Ottobuono, involves the dominant classes of Parma and Reggio and represents an attempt to strengthen the ties between the two cities and also Ottobuono's authority over them. This very interesting document is characterized by the use of a strongly evocative language which is full of references to *auctoritates* like Aristotle and Seneca and also to concrete political practices carried out by late medieval princes.

The author analyzes the structure and language of this *privilegium civilitatis* reconstructing a project which appears to be in line with the new political experience of the construction of regional states. In this process the expansion of powers of the prince tends to make the condition of *civis* blur into that of *subditus* with a passage of prerogatives from the local ruling classes to the prince.