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Abstracts

ALESSANDRO CONT, *Ministri, favoriti, confidenti. L'entourage dei sovrani secolari italiani nell'Antico Regime, 1659-1796*

The sovereign of the Italian dynastic states during the century and a half that elapsed between the peace of the Pyrenees and the first Napoleonic campaign in the Peninsula (1659-1796) were surrounded by ministers, favourites and confidants who left a significant mark in the political life of the various potentates. The second half of the seventeenth century was characterized by the widespread presence of the figure of the «Prime Minister», which was usually in possession of a title of nobility and sometimes had solid legal or financial skills and experiences. The wars of the early eighteenth century brought about major changes in the Italian political system and contribute to the rise of skillful diplomats, who entered the inner circle of the advisers of the princes, while the indispensability of the personal «favour» of the monarch in promoting careers at court was confirmed also by the French modes of sociability. The restoration of lasting peace after 1748 opened the season of the internal reforms implemented by vigorous prime ministers with the support of the great powers of Catholic Europe. In the seventies, however, these ministers had to retreat in front of the willingness expressed by the respective sovereigns to proceed with greater individual autonomy and with new employees to the economic, political and often military strengthen of their States.

Keywords:

*Ministers, Favourites, Confidants
Italian States
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