

**THE POWER TO THE LOWER CLASSES. THE
ADMINISTRATION OF MUNICIPALITIES IN THE
KINGDOM OF NAPLES IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY**

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Resumen: A comienzos del siglo XVIII, el sistema municipal del reino de Nápoles se basaba en la existencia de un consejo en el que intervenían las cabezas de las principales familias de la ciudad. Este sistema, cercano al concepto de parlamento entendido como asamblea universal, fue fallando gradualmente en algunas ciudades, evolucionando hacia un consejo de mucho menor tamaño, para perjuicio, principalmente, de los campesinos y los artesanos.

Palabras clave: Reino de Nápoles, gobierno municipal, aristocracia, decurionato.

Abstract: In the early eighteenth century, the municipal system of universities in the Kingdom of Naples was based on the existence of a parliament to which were called to intervene all citizens head of the family of the town. But this system of general suffrage, which was closely related to the nature of the institution of parliament intended as a universal assembly, in some cities have come gradually to fall, giving way to a smaller council (Decurionate) in which the electoral power was concentrated in the hands «de nobili e degli honorati», to the disadvantage of farmers and artisans, no longer admitted to take part in that general assembly that would have called to resolve major issues concerning the city government. At the end XVIII century, the Decurionate was opened to the lower class such as farmers and artisans: this extension worked in almost every city in the Kingdom responded to the logic of break the monopoly of the aristocracy in the management of municipal affairs that often coinciding with the interests of the noble class: at least in theory this new social equilibrium would crack not only the power of the nobility, but also of the bourgeoisie laying in the «genteel parasitism»].

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The municipal system of universities in the Kingdom of Naples, in the early eighteenth century, consisted of a variable number of bodies (deliberative, executive, judicial), related mainly to the extension and importance of the town and local usages². In fact in the universities composed of a few family units we find the figure of the mayor, assisted in the government of the town by two elected and one chancellor³, in those with a large number of inhabitants there was a greater distinction of tasks with a greater number of municipal officers. University administrative institutions pertained most likely to elected bodies, designated by the citizens gathered in public parliament with secret votes⁴.

² DE JORIO, C., *Feracissimus tractatus de privilegiis universitatum*, Napoli 1713; CERVELLINO, L., *Direzione ovvero Guida delle università di tutto il regno di Napoli per la sua retta amministrazione*, Napoli, 1776; GALANTI, G.M., *Della descrizione geografica e politica delle Sicilie*, Napoli 1789-94; PECORI, R., *Del privato governo dell'università*, Napoli, 1770-1773; BASTA, G., *Institutionum iuris publici neapolitani ad usum privati*, Napoli, 1794; PALUMBO, M., *I comuni meridionali prima e dopo le leggi eversive della feudalità*, I, Salerno, 1910; PANNONE, A., *Lo stato borbonico: saggio di storia del diritto pubblico napoletano dal 1734 al 1799*, I, Firenze, 1925; CALASSO, F., *La legislazione statutaria nell'Italia meridionale*, Bari, 1929; DE MARTINO, A., *Antico regime e rivoluzione nel Regno di Napoli: crisi e trasformazione dell'ordinamento giuridico*, Napoli, 1971; AJELLO, R., *Il problema storico del mezzogiorno: l'anomalia socio istituzionale napoletana dal Cinquecento al Settecento*, Napoli 1994; PACE, G., *Il governo dei gentiluomini: ceti dirigenti e magistrature a Caltagirone tra Medioevo ed età moderna*, Roma, 1996; FEOLA, R., *L'amministrazione pubblica tra politica e società*, Napoli, 2005.

³ Cf. BULGARELLI LUKACS, A., "Le Universitates meridionali all'inizio del Regno di Carlo di Borbone: la struttura amministrativa", in *Clio*, XVII (1981), n° 7, pp. 19ff.

⁴ Cf. dispatch of August 4, 1759, in GATTA, D., *Reali dispacci: nelli quali si contengono le sovrane determinazioni de' punti generali o che servono di norma ad altri simili casi nel Regno di Napoli*, Napoli, 1773-1777, II, 3, p. 238.

Parliament consisted of the «universitas in unum congregata»⁵ to which were called to intervene all citizens head of the family⁶ of any grade and condition, except those that might disturb or affect the meeting, as the Barons, clerics, young men under 18 years, women, debtors and litigants, the deaf-mute, the insane and furious⁷. Parliament had a proper decision-making power, which was differently implemented from place to place according to usages. It focus anyway on the most important issues related to the administration of University such us: distribution of taxes, imposition of new duties, donations, sale of property, defense of the city, aggregation of the municipality to other municipalities, formulation of requests to be submitted to the king and the election of municipal officers. Parliament session was valid if intervened at least two-thirds of heads of the family⁸ and to be effective deliberations must be taken by unanimous vote, such vote had to be free expression of will. No fear, malice or fraud should influence it. As a matter of fact, however, these Parliament sections were not immune from conditioning, because very often haves of the town influenced voting in order to achieve their interests⁹.

In addition to Parliament, there was a smaller representative body called 'Council', with the task of the current administration of the city. Its composition and competence varied from place to place.

⁵ Often enough the word university to designate the parliament or expressions such as «universitas et homines» or «universitas hominum et ipsius universitatis homines». Cf. ALIANELLI, N., *Capitoli dell'Assisa o statuti della citta di Caiazzo*, Caserta, 1992, cap. LXIII, p. 92; FARAGLIA, N.F., *Codice Diplomatico Sulmonese*, Lanciano, 1888, doc. CXXXV, p. 167.

⁶ The dispatch of August 2, 1801 (in State Archive of Naples, *Section Diplomatic Policy*, Coll. Dispatches, XXX, 2) specifically foresaw the exclusion the sons of the family.

⁷ This assembly was convened by public notice 8 days before the date fixed for the meeting «ad sonum tubae aut tympani aut voce paeconis, aut aliis solito et consueto modo». The assembly was ever convened in solemn feast days.

⁸ DA PENNE, L., *In tres libros Codicis*, Lugduni 1583, X, p. 32.

⁹ These households were composed mostly from the old bourgeois class, “burgenses”, or those who first went to live in a particular city. These bourgeois, like ordinary citizens, were in the cities the very population, which held the trade, industry and also the government. They were a privileged class citizen compared to the other inhabitants such as artisans, laborers, or strangers, but in their relations with the other two classes of nobles and clergy had a lower estimation.

Board members were usually elected by Parliament¹⁰, although other systems of election were popular: for example every three years in Aversa each of the 5 “door” of the city chose 50 men who in their turn chose another 40¹¹. The Council of University of Taranto instead consisted of 24 men¹², who were initially elected every 3 years by University Parliament, as shown by the Statute of 1491: for every three years were elected 72 men¹³, citizens of Taranto, 1/3 noble and

¹⁰ Thus, for example, in Lucera: «universitas ipsa eligit consilium». DITO, O., *Gli ordinamenti municipali di Lucera del 1407*, Trani 1895, chap. XXXVIII.

¹¹ These last, along with 20 other men chosen by the same "door" had free power to accept or reject and replace those first 50. The 90 citizens were appointed as councillors for three years that didn't rule all together but were divided into three lists of 30 names each. At the time established, was chosen one by lot and this 30 names constituted the Council for that year. So each year until the exhaustion of the three lists. Cf. *Statuto di Aversa (1491)* in TRINCHERA, F., *Codice Aragonese*, Napoli, 1874, III, p. 1ss. Equally in statutes of 1491 in Ariano, p. 80; S. Severo, p. 97; Barletta, p. 115, Mafredonia, p. 149; San Severo, p. 167; Salerno, p. 192; Sorrento, p. 68.

¹² This council of 24 - according to the study of RIDOLA, P., “Gli statuti municipali e lo statuti di Taranto”, in *Japigia*, XVI (1945), p. 85ss - was born by the fusion of the Council of 9 and 12 described in the Statute of 1465. According to that statute, every 2 years were elected by the university in parliament assembled, that chose for the regiment 108 men, including 1/3 noblemen, 1/3 merchants and 1/3 mechanics and popular artists. The names of the elected were divided into twelve cards (so that in each one there were nine names, three for each of the respective classes), which were enclosed in a “shaker”, from which it was drawn one every two months: so the 9 on the list drawn taking the regiment of the city for two months. Similarly were formed 4 lists, each containing 12 names (4 for class): every 6 months was extracted a card and the 12 names formed the "Council of twelve" who remained in office for one semester. Privilege of the King Ferdinando I of September 22, 1465, chapter 1, in *Diplomi dei principi di Taranto*, manuscript in Biblioteca Liceo Archita di Taranto, 39 A 01, document n° 35, pp. 80v-93v.

¹³ *Diplomi dei principi di Taranto*, doc. n° 51, pp. 150r-167v. Privilege of the King Ferdinando I of October 1, 1491, cap. 1: «Imprimis dicta Majesta ordina, et vole che lo consilio de la dicta Cita dacqua avante se habea da fare secundo lo modo, et ordine infra scripto cio e, che se elegano septanta dui homini de dicta Cita, che siano la sua parte de gentilomini, et le doe parte de popolari de li più di sposti, et idonei al regimento, et governo de epsa Cita, quali se habiano da devidere in tre parte, che seranno vintiquattro per parte, et habiano da durare tre anni, cioe, vintiquattro per anno».

2/3 popular¹⁴, from which were formed 3 lists of 24 (according to the proportion of 1/3 noble and 2/3 popular), which were extracted 1 for each year¹⁵. Such election system changed because of mismanagement of “interested people who run the power”, those whom “have not followed the good orders established in the usages and in the pragmatics of the Kingdom: in the parliamentary session of July 23, 1603 it was determined the need to make some changes to the composition of the Council of 24 and the procedure of their election. It was settled that all the families of the nobility and “personalities” were recorded in a book. The families enrolled in this book had to choose the members of the council of 24¹⁶.

Examples like these show that the system of general suffrage, which was closely related to the nature of the institution of parliament intended as a universal assembly or *concilium universale*¹⁷, in some cities have come gradually to fall, giving way to a smaller council.

The concentration of electoral power in the hands «de nobili e degli honorati», to the disadvantage of parliament, was recorded - according to Bulgarelli Lukacs since the sixteenth century – also in other towns such as Amalfi, Bari, Cosenza, Gaeta, Teramo and

¹⁴ According to FARAGLIA, *Il comune*, cit., p. 134: «for Popular must always be understood, according to the interpretation of King Robert, the best of the people, the richest, fat, merchants, who formed a class limited, numbered, as opposed to the patrician».

¹⁵ Privilege of the king Ferdinando I of October 1, 1491, chapter 2, in *Diplomi dei Principi di Taranto*, cit., doc. n° 51, pp. 150r-167v: «Item che se facciamo tre liste de dicti tre spartimenti de ventiquattro homini per ciaschuna lista, et in una de epse liste sia signata sopra una lictera A. in l'altra lista B. et in la terza lista C. Quale liste signate de sopra: chiusa ciascheuna da per se et sigillata con lo sigillo della Cita, se debiano ponere in una bossula, in la quale sia signio o scripta de sopra per se conoscere che e la bossula deli XXIII electi del consiglio».

¹⁶ *Diplomi dei Principi di Taranto*, cit., doc. add. n° 38, pp. 254r-257v. Minutes of the parliamentary session of July 23, 1603. *Reform of the regiment and government of the city*: «circa il capo de la forma del Regimento che in questo presente anno si descrivano in libro tutte le famiglie delli nobili di detta città et del populo quelle però sono solite di governare citra pregiudizio di quelli che litigano et pretendono essere ammessi al detto regimento».

¹⁷ Cf. *Statuti di Cerreto*, in ALIANELLI, N., *Delle consuetudini e degli statuti municipali nelle provincie napoletane*, Napoli, 1873, p. 184.

Sulmona¹⁸, in which from public life were excluded farmers and artisans, no longer admitted to take part in that general assembly that would have called to resolve major issues concerning the city government.

This structural change of the Parliament was caused by the fact that in many municipalities not all those who were entitled to take part to it could attend the Assembly¹⁹. For example in a document of Amalfi in 1455, it is written that the the *universitas* was congregated «pro majori et saniori parte eorum qui voluerunt et potuerunt quomodolibet interesse»²⁰. Absence of general and common rules of law governing different situations of municipalities within the Kingdom, gave rise to numerous cases before the Royal House of “Santa Chiara”²¹. In order to regulate situations that already exist - but were a perennial source of discussion at local level - in the eighteenth century many universities, especially those with a greater number of inhabitants, felt the need to seek approval of the King of their deliberative acts. Trough such acts these universities establish autonomously privileged representation forms of few citizen, instead of the council and parliament, which took the name of Decurionates²².

¹⁸ BULGARELLI LUKACS, *op. cit.*, p. 9.

¹⁹ CALASSO, *op. cit.*, p. 234.

²⁰ CAMERA, M., *Memorie storico-diplomatiche dell'antica citta e Ducato di Amalfi*, Salerno, 1881, II, p. 648.

²¹ According to GALANTI, *Della descrizione geografica e politica delle Sicilie*, cit., p. 443: «The election of the municipality is a perennial source of strife, because the municipalities do not have uniform constitution and because the laws are not observed». The copious documentation on the subject is kept in State Archive of Naples, *Policy Section*, Royal Chamber, Notamentorum, vol. 30.

²² Cf. ALLOCATI, *op. cit.*, p. 165: «The government in this case did not proceed to general laws. Uncertainty, weakness, caution? Perhaps all this, but probably also unable to make simple procedural rules for the continuation of a cumbersome mechanism, which was also the result of a particular legal tradition. [...] The Bourbon government intervened only when it was requested. Witness to how antiquated and unsuitable to the new community life were the old statutes, customs, the privileges of the universities, there is the large amount of revisions that were requested from the government in the eighteenth century».

Other universities instead maintained the Parliament, with a reduced participation²³.

The characteristic of Decurionate was determined by the fact that the choice of members was not reserved to a different representative body. Past Decurions after their office period had to appoint new elected among citizens belonging to the regimental families²⁴, of bourgeois and noble²⁵ (enrolled in a special book or list), without anymore their meeting in Parliament²⁶.

So the town of Taranto in 1751 had a Decurionate composed of 16 members (8 noble and 8 civilians, but no popular: this means that the system of "concentration" in the town had remained practically unchanged from 1603). They were elected annually by the Past Decurionate itself²⁷ and not anymore by general Parliament, now

²³ Cf. FARAGLIA, *Il comune*, cit., p. 252: «Meanwhile, in the lands of minor importance, the changes of municipalities orders were less frequent, and ancient customs more respected».

²⁴ Cf. ABBAMONTE, O., "Dialettica degli status e rivendicazioni nobiliari a Napoli nel 1734", in *Archivio storico per le Province Napoletane*, CIII (1985), pp. 355-375; ROVITO, P., "Strutture cetuali, riformismo ed eversione nelle rivolte apulo-lucane di metà seicento", in *Storia e Diritto*, II, Napoli, 1989, 189ss; CIANCIO, C., "La nobiltà di spada napoletana tra viceregno spagnolo e viceregno austriaco. Le «Memorie» di Tiberio Carafa principe di Chiusano", in «Archivio Storico del Sannio», XI, n.s., 2006, n. 1, pp. 31-89.

²⁵ This functional division, qualitative and legal of classes and groups expressed an understanding of the social structure and hierarchy of values of the old regime, in short a theoretical and practical order, resulting directly from the school Aristotelianism. Cf. AJELLO, R., "Continuità e trasformazione dei valori giuridici: dal probabilismo al problematicismo", in *Rivista di Storia del Diritto Italiano*, XCVII, 1985, pp. 884-931.

²⁶ FARAGLIA, *Il comune*, cit., p. 236.

²⁷ State Archives of Taranto, *Town of Taranto*, Parliamentary conclusions, reg. n.º 1, 1750-51, fol. 93r. Minutes of the decurial assembly of August 20, 1751. *Ibid.*, reg. n.º 2, 1752-53, fol. 124r. Minutes of August 19, 1753. The decurions had to be necessarily all present to proceed with the election of the new Decurionate. In the absence of someone, was prevented the substitution of a decurion with other nobleman or civil, which was proposed by the chief elected (civil or noble) and voted on by the decurions there. After the election of the new decurions, it was necessary to choose the elected (2 noblemen and 2 civilians) who would rule in each of the four trimesters. The choice was entrusted to draw: 4 folders were formed, each of which is inscribed the name of 2 nobles and 2 civilians among the new decurions nominated. The folders

obsolete. A similar system was implemented in the University of Foggia in 1725²⁸, in Gallipoli in 1731²⁹, in Brindisi in 1789³⁰, in Muro already in 1762³¹, in Melendugno in 1770³², in Otranto in 1773³³; in Manduria in 1801³⁴.

were put into a hat, "mixed and turned over and over again by Mr. Governor," and drawn one at a time: the first extracted folder gave the names of the elected who would rule in the first trimester. The chief elected noble drawn at random then proposed the nomination of mayor who would be voted on by the new Decurionate.

²⁸ Cf. ALLOCATI, *op. cit.*, p. 165; LUCARELLI, *La Puglia nel risorgimento*, I, Trani, 1951, p. 293.

²⁹ State Archive of Lecce, *Scriptures of the universities and feuds of Terra d'Otranto*, town of Gallipoli, bag 28a, fol 1. Minutes of September 1, 1731. In place of the parliament, it detects the presence of a "little regiment" composed of 22 members including elected old mayors and decurions. Cf. minutes of September 10, 1731 (*ibid.*, fol. 3r), September 19, 1731 (fol. 4v), May 28, 1732 (fol. 29v), August 19, 1735 (fol. 99r), August 21, 1758 (*ibid.*, bag 28b, fol. 314v); November 29, 1763 (*ibid.*, bag 29a, fol. 3v), Genuary 14, 1764 (fol. 5r), Genuary 26, 1765 (fol. 33r). By August 8, 1765 (fol. 55r) the Decurionate is divided into three classes: noble, civil and popular.

³⁰ State Archives of Naples, *Royal Chamber*, v. 37, 1.

³¹ State Archives of Lecce, *Scriptures*, town of Muro, bag 22/64, fol. 1r. The oldest minute of the municipal assembly dates back to August 8, 1762. Were gathered 22 «subdecurions». The parliament wasn't no longer congregated. The number of decurions will remain so until the changed imposed by the law of October 18, 1806. Cf. minutes of March 17, 1765 (*ibid.*, fol. 31r); September 1, 1776 (fol. 48v); March 9, 1777 (fol. 62 r); September 7, 1806 (fol. 64r). In fact in the minute of June 14, 1807 (*ibid.*, fol. 66r) the decurions decurioni will come down to the number of 10.

³² *Ibid.*, town of Melendugno, bag 22/59, fol. 1r. Minute of the municipal assembly of September 9, 1770. Result congregated 12 decurions. Cf. minute of October 15, 1770 (*ibid.*, fol 4r); March 27, 1771 (fol 7r); March 29, 1772 (fol 18r). On 1807 the Decurionate will be composed of only 9 decurions. *Ibid.*, fol. 22. Minute of August 11, 1807.

³³ *Ibid.*, town of Otranto, bag 23/70, fol. 1r. Minute of the municipal assembly of October 15, 1773. Result congregated 9 decurions. Cf. minutes of October 19, 1783 (fol. 5r); September 27, 1768 (fol 8r); September 12, 1805 (fol 20r).

³⁴ State Archive of Taranto, *Conclusions of the parliament and Decurionate*, town of Manduria, fol. 7r. Minute of Decurionate of September 20, 1801. The Decurionate was composed of 20 decurions (10 of civil class and 10 of popular class) chosen by the Royal Chamber on a shortlist of 60 names (30 civils e 30 populars) formed by the outgoing Decurionate.

In smaller communities, instead, continued to operate a sort of restricted parliament: in the town of Castellaneta, in addition to the mayor and 3 elected assemble 16 'ordered' in charge of run current administration, while for the election of "governors and officers' was convened the "general public and parliament" but only composed by "20 nobles and 61 civilians"³⁵; in the town of Fragagnano was convened a "concentrated" Parliament of only 39 citizens³⁶; in the municipality of Lizzano mayor, 2 elected and an average of 30 citizens³⁷; in Grottaglie the public and general Parliament consisted of 45 citizens³⁸; in Mottola there was a presence in parliament of a variable number of citizens from 68 to 8³⁹; in Ruffano an average of 50 citizens⁴⁰; in Monteroni 60⁴¹, in Matino 40⁴², in Cavallino 40⁴³, in

³⁵ State Archive of Taranto, *Town of Castellaneta*, fol. 36r. Minute of May 11, 1806. The relation between the number of inhabitants (about 4000) and citizens gathered in parliament leaves to understand that in reality there was also here a Decurionate. About the population density in Apulia cf. ASSANTE, F., *Città e campagne nella Puglia del sec. XIX. L'evoluzione demografica*, Geneve, 1974, appendix III.

³⁶ State Archive of Taranto, *Town of Fragagnano*, fol. 1r. Minute of November 27, 1791. Even here, the relation between the number of inhabitants (about 1,300) and the members of the parliament (39) is disproportionate to the general concept of assizes.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, *Town of Lizzano*, fol. 1r-6v. Minutes of May 15, 1802; May 6, 1803; May 15, 1803; May 8, 1804; May 4, 1806. The number of inhabitants at the time was around 1200.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, *Town of Grottaglie*, fol. 1r-9r. Minutes of September 7, 1806, September 14, 1806, September 19, 1806; November 25, 1806. Inhabitants: around 5000.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, *Town of Mottola*, fol. 2r-16r. Minutes of May 2, 1784, May 16, 1784, October 30, 1785. Inhabitants: around 2400.

⁴⁰ State Archive of Lecce, *Scriptures*, town of Ruffano, bag 23/77, fol. 63r-80r. Minutes of September 1, 1799, September 15, 1799; May 25, 1800; June 29, 1800; January 6, 1801; March 21, 1802; May 30, 1802; June 27, 1802; August 8, 1802; September 19, 1802; September 5, 1802. Inhabitants: around 2000.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, town of Monteroni, bag 22/63, fol. 2v-25v. Minutes of January 31, 1773; April 28, 1773; October 23, 1774; November 7, 1774; February 19, 1775; September 6, 1801; October 4, 1801. Inhabitants: around 1800.

⁴² *Ibid.*, town of Matino, bag 22/58, fol. 1r-8r. Minutes of July 14, 1805; September 29, 1805; May 4, 1806; August 31, 1806; September 7, 1806; November 9, 1806. Inhabitants: around 2500.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, town of Cavallino, bag 2/15, fol. 139r-144v. Minutes of September 4, 1803; August 3, 1806, September 7, 1806; September 14, 1806. Inhabitants: around 700.

Copertino 80⁴⁴. Percentance between numbers of the citizens present at the "public and general parliament" and the amount of population for each university considered, make us understand how the institution of general Parliament, in its original meaning, had disappeared everywhere in second half of the eighteenth century, and now where replaced - even in the smaller universities - by a small number of citizens.

The system of identification of members of Decurionate, as described, was weakened by the fact that the restricted circle of those eligible to the city government were gradually run out of due to the scarcity of regimental family members. Faraglia writes: «It happened that the always same people were in the office, sometimes non suitable for running the government, not active or even stupid»⁴⁵.

To remedy these problems, the universities of the Kingdom flooded of requests the Royal Chamber of S. Clare attempting to obtain aggregations of new families to the seats⁴⁶, and the continuation of the term of the election of the municipal government from five to ten years, or the license to confirm, for the new year, the previous governors⁴⁷.

Thanks to reformism of the minister Bernardo Tanucci⁴⁸, the problem was solved with the opening of Decurionate to the lower

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, town of Copertino, bag 2/17, fol. 2r-21v. Minutes of September 1, 1805; January 1, 1806; May 15, 1806; August 13, 1806, September 7, 1806. Inhabitants: around 3400.

⁴⁵ FARAGLIA, *Il comune*, cit., p. 236.

⁴⁶ On 1745 in Bari, the Royal Chamber of S. Clare ordered to be made new aggregations in the patrician class and in civil class (ASNA, *Policy Section*, Royal Chamber, Notamentorum, vol. 30, fol. 95) and in Trani on 1746 the Royal Audience of the Province, by order of the Supreme Royal Council, ordered new aggregations of other other families. BELTRANI, G., - SARLO, F., *Documenti relativi agli antichi seggi dei nobili e della piazza del popolo di Trani*, Trani 1881, pp. 94ff; BONAZZI, F., , *I registri della nobilita delle province napoletane con un discorso preliminare e poche note di Francesco Bonazzi*, Napoli, 1879, pp. 10, 13, 43 e 56.

⁴⁷ The king granted dispensation of confirmation to university administrators only after ascertaining that there weren't more people admitted to this charge. Cf. DE SARIIS, A., *Codice delle leggi del Regno di Napoli*, Napoli, 1794, V, p. 106.

⁴⁸ Cf. AJELLO R. – D'ADDIO M., *Bernardo Tanucci statista letterato giurista: atti del Convegno internazionale di studi per il secondo centenario*,

class such as farmers and artisans: this extension worked in almost every city in the Kingdom in XVIII century⁴⁹, and it was determined - according to Faraglia - «not for the reason of equal rights and duties of all citizens, but to remedy damages in the administration of universities coming from the small number of the old regimental families, who didn't like this news»⁵⁰. To tell the truth this opening to the lower class responded to the logic of break the monopoly of the aristocracy in the management of municipal affairs that often coinciding with the interests of the noble class: at least in theory this new social equilibrium would crack not only the power of the nobility, but also of the bourgeoisie laying in the «genteel parasitism»⁵¹. The lower classes, therefore, took part of the city government and could actively participate in discussions of Decurionate related to the financial and fiscal matters, which covered more closely the class to which they belonged.

1783-1983, Napoli, 1986; MAIORINI, M. G., *L'amministrazione periferica nel Regno di Napoli durante la reggenza borbonica*, in *Storia e Diritto*, II, Napoli, 1989, pp. 357ff; VINCIGUERRA, M., *La Reggenza borbonica nella minore età di Ferdinando IV*, Napoli, 1918, appendix; MIGLIORINI, A.V., *Epistolario di Bernardo Tanucci, 1752-56*, III, Roma, 1985, pp. 489ff.

⁴⁹ Brindisi obtained by order of the Royal Chamber of June 13, 1789 the extension of the Decurionate to the third class, «including under the name of this class also the workers, the farmers and owners of boats». State Archive of Naples, *Camera Reale*, 37, fol. 1. Foggia also obtained in 1725 the opening to the third class. The Decurionate was in fact composed of: 1. The ancient regimental people, doctors and other gentlemen; 2. Doctors, merchants and farmers; 3. Notaries and other people of equal rank. ALLOCATI, *op. cit.*, p. 165; LUCARELLI, *op. cit.*, p. 293. Taranto gained admission to the third class to the Decurionate on 1758. The composition was now of 60 decurions, 20 of noble class, 20 of civil class and 20 of rest of the people including artisans, farmers and sailors. GATTA, *op. cit.*, III, XV, p. 488.

⁵⁰ FARAGLIA, *Il comune*, cit., p. 237.

⁵¹ Cf. IOVINE, R., *Il trattato «Della moneta» di Ferdinando Galiani: la dialettica politica a favore e contro la pubblicazione*, in *Frontiera d'Europa*, Napoli, 1999, I, p. 220.

