Roman Citizenship and Modern Citizenship
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Roman law had an enormous influence on many fields of the actual law worldwide. The modern concept of citizenship depends directly on the heritage of the Roman state. This project will investigate the birth of the Roman term civitas Romana and its further evolution until the end of the Roman Empire. Who could become a Roman citizen? Descent and bestowal by the state were the crucial premises. What were the legal differences between foreigners and Roman citizens? In this context the differences among private laws and political rights were born, the first belonging to every person, the second only to the citizens. The Roman policy was extremely generous towards foreigners, a special minister of justice, the praetor peregrinus took exclusively care of them as far as the legal affairs were concerned. An extremely rapid exercise of the award of the citizenship was normally reserved to those being through language and culture close to the Romans. All those acquired the Roman citizenship just by migration to Rome. A considerable particularity of the Roman policy regarding citizenship was the stratification of this law. This stratification was due to the creation of a particular right, a sort of expectancy, to nearly all the urban communities in the western provinces of the empire called *Latinitas*, the law of the Latins. All those in charge of public functions or being part of the local assemblies were awarded the Roman Citizenship by law. Great attention is paid by the project to the crucial importance of women as Roman citizens. The different rules regarding marriage and descent must be investigated again. To deepen is also the concept of *conubium*, nubility. All Latin women had this privilege and by marrying a Roman citizen their children became Roman citizens, too. This project will also take into consideration once again a famous Act, the *Constitutio Antoniniana* through which in 212 AD the Roman citizenship was awarded to all free people of the Empire independently of their descent, ethnic origin, language and religion. The Roman policy regarding citizenship was extremely successful and consequently reappeared together with the revival of the Roman law in the city-states of Northern Italy around the year 1100. Since then the concept itself and many of its contents became an indispensable mean of statehood. The most important political philosopher Montesquieu was totally convinced of the importance of the Roman citizenship for modernity as were the American framers and the French revolutionaries. From our point of view the stratification of this law in Roman times is of outstanding importance for modern Europe and the European Union.