

decline, but unlike the notaries, who tended to come from the middling strata of society, the legal specialists often came from the urban aristocracy. In the more complex social and political conditions of the twelfth century the numbers of lawyers steadily increased. The contemporary revival of Roman law – Justinian’s Code, the *Corpus Iuris Civilis* – by the scholars at the University of Bologna can be seen both as a response to the growing demand for legal specialists, and as a sign of the growing esteem in which their profession was held. Roman law was becoming an essential instrument for the conduct of public and private business. It furnished principles for regulating the transfer and ownership of property, and for public administration, that did not differ from place to place like the multifarious rules of local customary law. It also provided an excellent foundation for the concepts of civic autonomy and secular sovereignty that were developing in the communes of northern and central Italy: these fledgling city-republics sought legitimacy by claiming descent from the republic of ancient Rome. The use of Roman law helped substantiate this claim, and provided the conceptual framework for a concept of political authority distinct from that of the Church or the aristocracy. Without the intellectual contribution of the legal and notarial professions the urban civilization of northern and central Italy would not have developed as fast and as fruitfully as it did.

Communal institutions were slow to appear in Turin, but from the early twelfth century the citizen body – the *cives Taurinenses* as they are styled in the records – appear as a recognizable entity. This designation probably refers to a nucleus of the better-off citizens, rather than to the entire urban population. The citizen body had probably begun to coalesce as a political force in the previous century, for there are occasional hints of friction between it and Countess Adelaide, but after 1091 her powerful presence no longer checked its emergence. The first formal recognition of Turin’s citizens as a collective body comes in a charter issued by the Emperor Henry V in March 1111. In gratitude for the citizens’ loyalty – we do not however know what events are referred to here – the emperor granted them jurisdiction over the road that led down from Susa and on towards Rome, with its pilgrim traffic and its trade: a lucrative privilege. This charter was renewed five years later, but this time with a proviso that upheld the bishop’s rights, while at the same time guaranteeing the citizens’ “liberties”. The ambiguity of this formulation suggests that a dual structure of authority operated in the city. The bishop was the senior partner, but the charter indicates that the citizens had established their own jurisdictional sphere in which they