

L'EVOLUZIONE DELLA CODIFICA DEL GENITIVO NEL CODICE DIPLOMATICO LONGOBARDO

Abstract

This paper analyses the process of substitution of the Latin genitive by means of the prepositional phrase headed by de, focusing on Early Medieval documents written in northern and central Italy (Codice diplomatico longobardo, CDL). The first part sketches the use of the prepositional phrase with de as an adnominal modifier in Classical and Late Latin, pointing out the functions expressed and its usage restrictions. In 8th century charters the analytical construction increases its frequency and extends to more abstract contexts; however, noun phrases expressing kinship and ownership are consistently expressed through synthetic means. The Lombard charters represent a transitional stage in the grammaticalisation path of the prepositional phrase with de as a marker of adnominal possession: the concurrence of a synthetic and an analytical construction can be semantically motivated, with reference to the prototypicality of the possessive relation and the degree of animacy of the modifier. The analysis of nominal morphology in CDL displays the constitution of new, analogical paradigms for animate nouns, thus showing the role of semantic factors in the evolution of Latin case system as well.