



Associazione Culturale

Nebbie del Drago

History for Lower Lodigiano



(THE) VISCONTEAN CITADEL OF PIACENZA **Piacenza (Italy), April 20th, 2008**

What: medieval citadel (fortification).

Where: Piacenza (Italy).

How: thematic itinerary (Italian language).

When: April 20th, 2008.

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(The) Viscontean Citadel of Piacenza [(La) Cittadella viscontea di Piacenza] was the title of the undertaking organized on 20th April 2008 in Piacenza by the **Associazione Culturale Nebbie del Drago** of Castiglione d'Adda (Lodi, Italy), which has offered to all interested people the possibility of 'discovering' a particular monument of Piacenza: the ancient citadel made built in the **XIV Century** by the seignior of Milan **Galeazzo II Visconti** at the present Farnese Palace.

Also called New Citadel [Cittadella Nuova], Legate's Citadel [Cittadella del Legato] or Viscontean *Rocca* [Rocca Viscontea], it was the town **defensive 'pivot'** between late Middle Ages and Renaissance, and is now the best kept evidence of the imposing fortifying work undertaken by the Visconti in Piacenza, fundamental stronghold for the connections between Lombardy and peninsular Italy.

The importance of the Citadel exceeds the local ambit or the consideration of a simple 'castle': besides having provided a **model** for various fortalices later built in the Piacentino, it represents an **atypical exemplar of Viscontean fortification**, and one of the first 'prototypes' of **Renaissance rocca**, kind of fortification developed in Italy between the XV and the beginning of the XVI Century.



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The Citadel witnessed several events of the history of Piacenza: in **1447**, the town siege and brutal sack led by **Francis Sforza's** troops; or else, in **1547**, the conspiracy against the first duke of Piacenza and Parma **Peter Louis Farnese**, ended up with his brutal murder.

During the second half of the XVI Century the fortalice was the subject of deep



restructuration, when on its area the Farnese family undertook the construction of the homonymous palace. Still, the stoppage of the Farnesian yard permitted to keep **widely whole** the Citadel, even if with various transformations worked during the decades.

Transformations which yet didn't spoil the **historic-architectonical value** of the building, relevant not only for the ambit of Piacenza, given the numerous analogies and peculiarities compared to other defensive structures built in the same period inside the Viscontean territories (Como, Pavia, Pizzighettone, Vercelli).

Step by step, it has been possible to 'discover' this important monument, in a itinerary (exterior of the **towers** and of the **walls, courtyard** and **vaults**) through which it has been possible to **come back into and understand the history**. To lead the illustration – based on **own studies and researches** – an expert at fortified architecture and territory historian: **Davide Tansini**, associated of the [Istituto Italiano dei Castelli](#) and of the [Istituto per la Storia dell'Arte Lombarda](#).

[GO BACK TO THE PREVIOUS PAGE](#)