

**SZYMON OLSZANIEC, *Prosopographical Studies on the Court Elite in the Roman Empire (4<sup>th</sup> century AD)*, trans. J. WEŁNIAK, M. STACHOWSKA-WEŁNIAK, Wydawnictwo Naukowe Uniwersytetu Mikołaja Kopernika, Toruń 2013, pp. 509.**

The presented book was written by Szymon Olszaniec<sup>1</sup>, a renowned researcher of the late Roman and early Byzantine Empire from Toruń. It roughly follows some parts of the author's habilitation dissertation – *Comites consistoriani w wieku IV...* – a thorough study dedicated to a group of high-ranking imperial officials, such as: *quaestor sacri palatii*, *magister officiorum*, *comes sacrarum largitionum* oraz *comes rerum privatarum*. The discussed work is composed of two major parts. The first comprises a multi-dimensional analysis of the individuals – members of *comites consistoriani* (from their origin, up to their lives after their offices terminated); the second part contains their biographies. This

second part has been translated into English. It was supplemented by a new bibliography. Also the sequence of biographies has changed – now it is in the alphabetical order rather than the post and time they served. The researcher has prepared 95 biographies of *comites consistoriani* (p. 37–439) from the 4<sup>th</sup> century, according to the following scheme: identification and names, social and regional background, the career before obtaining the office, post in the consistory, further career, religion, family and connections, other information, literature. This scheme allows a thorough presentation of particular dignitaries and gives a good background to draw more general conclusions. The biographies have been developed on the basis of a profound analysis of the available sources and great knowledge of the multi-language literature, which has helped the author verify and enrich our knowledge about the particular *comites consistoriani*.

The main part of the book has been complemented by a *Preface* (p. 7–8), *Introduction* (p. 9–34), characterizing the dignitaries who belonged to that category; *Summary* (p. 441–442), *Fasti of Comites Consistoriani divided according to Particular Courts* (p. 443–447), *List of Abbreviations* (p. 449–455), *Bibliography* (p. 457–586), *Index of Historical Names* (p. 487–509).

The book is a trademark of both the author himself and the circle of Polish scholars researching the history of late Roman Empire. It will certainly enter the international scientific circulation, making the basis of contemporary knowledge about *comites consistoriani*. I truly encourage the author to prepare also an English version of the analytic part of *Comites consistoriani w wieku IV...* as well, whereas the information of making a series of articles reflecting the conclusion of the book seems to be a step in the right direction, although much insufficient.

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