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"Flavius Merobaudes. Wódz i poeta z V wieku [Flavius Merobaudes. General and Poet from the 5th century]", Adrian Szopa, Kraków 2014 : [recenzja]

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Tekst jest udostępniony do wykorzystania w ramach dozwolonego użytku.

finally Photius again after Ignatius' death. The clash between Constantinople and Rome (won by the former) over the affiliation of the Bulgarian Church was one of the events that occurred during this period. The book is supplemented by: a list of abbreviations (p. 9–21), foreword (pp. 22–26), summary in English (p. 355–366) and an index (p. 367–382).

The author presented the changes that occurred in the Byzantine Church during 843–886 in a competent and comprehensive manner, much like the relations between the Emperor and the Constantinopolitan patriarch, and Byzantine missionary activity. He grounded his work in the full source base that he keenly studied. Some doubts may be raised by the use of secondary literature, however. Among the works listed by Predrag Komatina I could not find, for example, works by Tadeusz

Wasilewski¹, Daniel Zimann² or Ivan Božilov³, most important when considering the matter of Christianisation of Bulgaria.

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Translated by Michał Zytka

¹ T. WASILEWSKI, *Bizancjum i Słowianie w IX wieku. Studia z dziejów stosunków politycznych i kulturalnych*, Warszawa 1972.

² D. ZIEMANN, *Vom Wandervolk zur Großmacht. Die Entstehung Bulgariens im frühen Mittelalter (7. bis 9. Jh.)*, Köln–Weimar–Wien 2007; IDEM, *The rebellion of the nobles against the baptism of Khan Boris (865–866)*, [in:] *Post-Roman Towns, Trade and Settlement in Europe and Byzantium*, vol. II: *Byzantium, Pliska, and the Balkans*, ed. J. HENNING, Berlin–New York 2007, s. 613–624; IDEM, *Between Authoritarianism and Consensus. Domination and the Role of Nobility in the First Bulgarian Realm (7th – late 9th Century)*, *BMD* 2, 2011, p. 373–397.

³ И. БОЖИЛОВ, *Българската архиепископия XI–XII век. Списъкът на българските архиепископи*, София 2011.

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ADRIAN SZOPA, *Flavius Merobaudes. Wódz i poeta z V wieku [Flavius Merobaudes. General and Poet from the 5th century]*, Wydawnictwo AVALON, Kraków 2014, pp. 240.

The presented book was written by Adrian Szopa, an assistant lecturer at the Department of Ancient History, the Institute of History, the Pedagogical University of Cracow. His research concentrates on the period of late antiquity, especially such topics as Latin literature and the role of the barbarians in the late Roman Empire. The book is the author's first, and it presents the life and works of Flavius Merobaudes, a 5th century Roman soldier, statesman and a poet. He was closely affiliated with Aetius, a powerful general of the West and one of the most important figures of these times. Merobaudes was also a renowned poet, well known and liked in his times, however, unfortunately only two panegyrics and five shorter poems survived into our times. It is the first monograph in Poland tackling that topic, however it follows the author's long-standing interest in that person, which was shown in his MA thesis about

the panegyrics of Merobaudes and several articles also exploring similar subjects¹.

The book begins with a preface (p. 11–19), and the main part is divided into four main chapters. The first one, *Świat Flawiusza Merobaudesa – Cesarstwo Rzymskie w latach 395–455* [*The World of Flavius Merobaudes – Roman Empire in Years 395–455*, p. 21–32], presents a brief overview of political history of the Roman Empire in years 395–455. The following one, *Flawiusz Merobaudes [Flavius Merobaudes]*, p. 33–67, deals with the life of Merobaudes, his origins, education, and later career with special emphasis on such things as his relationship with Aetius, received honours and dignities, and political activity.

¹ *Notitia Dignitatum – „najbardziej rzymski z dokumentów”?*, *AUPC.SH* 8, 2009, p. 183–191; *Flavius*

The next chapter, *Literatura przełomu IV i V wieku* [*The Literature of the Turn of the 4th and the 5th Century*, p. 69–110], contains an overview of the most prominent authors, their works, and the characteristic traits of literature in the late antiquity. While this part certainly serves as an important introduction to the later analysis and helps the reader understand the intellectual environment of the epoch in which Merobaudes wrote, the author takes a very broad approach, trying to condense two centuries of the history of literature in just a couple of pages and one might wonder if passages concerning Ammianus Marcellinus or earlier Christian authors are relevant to the topic of the dissertation.

In the last chapter, *Twórczość Flawiusza Merobaudes* [*The Works of Flavius Merobaudes*, p. 111–197], the author proceeds to present Merobaudes' works and their characteristics. Quite surprisingly this chapter contains also a brief overview of the history of panegyrics, with special emphasis on the most prominent

writer in this genre, Claudian, which, while certainly important due to Merobaudes' activity in this field, belongs probably in the aforementioned introductory chapters. The author then proceeds with a thorough analysis of both Merobaudes' panegyrics, contemplating their meaning as well as historical background of their writing, and technical difficulties with their interpretation, due to their incompleteness. The following parts deal with Merobaudes' poetry, four *Carminæ* and the poem *De Christo*. The text is closed by the conclusion (p. 199–200).

In addition to that, the book also contains appendices with all of Merobaudes' works in Latin (p. 201–215) and also their translations into Polish (p. 217–232). The book is concluded with a bibliography (p. 233–240).

The author's effort to present a curious persona of Flavius Merobaudes, a soldier, politician, but also a poet, worthy of a praise. His task was not easy, as the sources are scarce and incomplete, yet the author managed to deliver a satisfactory narrative. Overall, it is a valuable study of a topic, that did not get almost any coverage in Polish literature up to this point, and it can be noted, that despite its problems, it is a valuable entry into the historiography of the late Roman Empire and it gives promise for the author's future works.

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SZYMON OLSZANIEC, *Prefektura praetorio Italii, Illyrikum i Afryki (312–425 n.e.)* [*Pretorian Praefecture of Italy, Illyricum and Africa (312–425 A.D.)*], Wydawnictwo Naukowe Uniwersytetu Mikołaja Kopernika, Toruń 2014, pp. 323.

The presented book was written by Szymon Olszaniec, a renowned Polish researcher of the history of the of the late Roman Empire and early Byzantium from the Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń. He is particularly interested in the social history and the administrative system of the Empire and

is already an author of numerous works in this field¹. The presented book follows that pat-

¹ SZYMON OLSZANIEC is the author of following books: *Julian Apostata jako reformator religijny*, Kraków 1999; *Comites consistoriani w wieku IV. Studium prozopograficzne elity dworskiej cesarstwa rzymskiego 320–395 n.e.*,