

AN OUTLINE OF THE ORIGINS OF MODERN RESEARCH
ON IMPERIAL COURT OFFICES IN THE PRINCIPATE*

by

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ABSTRACT: The article presents the results of research concerning the origins of the historiographic discourse of the imperial court offices in the Principate. Drawing on the works of Th. MOMMSEN, J. MARQUARDT, O. HIRSCHFELD, G. KRETSCHMAR, J. N. MADVIG, L. FRIEDLÄNDER, E. HERZOG, É. CUQ and many others, the author investigates the origin of scholarly views on the subject and uncovers the mechanisms that formed the image of imperial administration in the European historiography in the second half of the 19th century.

The majority of historians specialising in Roman law or antiquity and presently doing research on the administration of the early Roman Empire incorporate the scholarly achievements of their nineteenth-century predecessors in their research. Distinguished scholars such as Th. MOMMSEN, J. MARQUARDT, O. HIRSCHFELD, J. N. MADVIG, L. FRIEDLÄNDER and É. CUQ are among the most widely quoted authors nowadays. There are several reasons that validate this practice. Firstly, these scholars pioneered modern research on the imperial administration. In their writings, they used a variety of sources, encompassing literary, legal, inscriptive or numismatic materials. Furthermore, their source base is not significantly different from what we know today, so it can be said that there are two primary goals of contemporary research on the Roman administration: updating scholarly findings by using newly discovered sources (mainly epigraphical and papyrological) as well as drawing new conclusions or developing new original theses from the same sources as the authors of the early works on the subject. All studies by contemporary scholars have one thing in common, at least in theory, namely that they need to address the issues raised by their predecessors.

The aim of this article is to highlight to the issues which have previously been absent from scientific discourse, namely to present the results of an analysis of the

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