

etnické cizosti a kulturní odlišnosti vůči římskému prostředí; kromě toho i Germáni začínali svou kariéru na nižších stupních společenské hierarchie. Rozdíl spočívá v tom, že tito Germáni většinou sloužili v armádě, kde římskou politiku neovlivňovali a ani žádnou vlastní nevytvářeli; naopak se ukázali být vcelku loajální jak vůči říši, tak i vůči konkrétním císařům. Na přelomu 4. a 5. století sice došlo k jistým méně významným projevům antigermanismu v římské společnosti, ale tyto projevy neměly ani dlouhé trvání, ani politické následky.<sup>106</sup> Naproti tomu obliba eunuchů u císařů a nenávisť a pohrdání vůči nim u většiny autorů pokračovala prakticky bez přerušení minimálně od začátku domínaty až po zánik byzantské říše.

#### Summary

#### *TERTIUM GENUS HOMINUM: ON THE ROLE OF EUNUCHS AT THE IMPERIAL COURT OF THE LATE ROMAN EMPIRE*

The eunuchs at the imperial court of the Late Roman Empire generally appeared to ancient authors to be a destructive element in the decision-making and executive processes at the highest level of government. Especially the *praepositus sacri cubiculi* is often described by our sources as an *éminence grise* behind a weak emperor, or at any rate a bad influence at the court. This is why eunuchs as a social group tended to be despised or mocked even by otherwise fair-minded and unbiased authors. Furthermore, a myth was created about innate or acquired bad personal qualities of all eunuchs. In sum, there may have been no other social group in the empire that was generally disliked that much. Ancient authors overlook multitudes of menial eunuchs with low social standing, who were of no influence whatsoever, because these were of no interest to them. Likewise, there were notable exceptions to the picture about greedy, effeminate, malicious castrated chamberlains, prone to cruelty

<sup>106</sup> K tomuto tématu viz např. WALTER GOFFART, *Barbarians and Romans AD 418-584: The Techniques of Accomodation*, Princeton 1980; PETER HEATHER, *Goths and Romans 332-489*, Oxford 1991; ALAN CAMERON – JACQUELINE LONG, *Barbarians and Politics at the Court of Arcadius*, Berkeley 1993 atd.



and abuse of power, and some of the reliable historians mention them. Access to power and handling of it was indeed what mattered most in the evaluation of the eunuchs by our sources; the other features, such as the ethnical or cultural otherness, or the physical defect itself, or humble origin, seem to be far less significant.

