Denis FEISSEL, *Chroniques d'épigraphie byzantine*
1987-2004

Paris, Collège de France – CNRS, Centre de Recherche d'Histoire et
Civilisation de Byzance (« Monographies », 20) 2006, 433 p., 24 cm, 30 €,
ISBN 2-916716-01-7.

Michael Whitby

Electronic version

URL: <http://journals.openedition.org/rhr/8275>

DOI: 10.4000/rhr.8275

ISSN: 2105-2573

Publisher

Armand Colin

Printed version

Date of publication: 1 October 2014

Number of pages: 502-503

ISBN: 978-2-200-92912-1

ISSN: 0035-1423

Electronic reference

Michael Whitby, « Denis FEISSEL, *Chroniques d'épigraphie byzantine 1987-2004* », *Revue de l'histoire des religions* [Online], 3 | 2014, Online since 03 November 2014, connection on 22 September 2020. URL : <http://journals.openedition.org/rhr/8275> ; DOI : <https://doi.org/10.4000/rhr.8275>

This text was automatically generated on 22 September 2020.

Tous droits réservés

Denis FEISSEL, *Chroniques d'épigraphie byzantine 1987-2004*

Paris, Collège de France – CNRS, Centre de Recherche d'Histoire et Civilisation de Byzance (« Monographies », 20) 2006, 433 p., 24 cm, 30 €, ISBN 2-916716-01-7.

Michael Whitby

REFERENCES

Denis FEISSEL, *Chroniques d'épigraphie byzantine 1987-2004*, Paris, Collège de France – CNRS, Centre de Recherche d'Histoire et Civilisation de Byzance (« Monographies », 20) 2006, 433 p., 24 cm, 30 €, ISBN 2-916716-01-7.

- 1 This volume collects, in a revised, corrected and expanded form, about 1,200 annual notices of publications of Christian inscriptions from the territories of the Byzantine empire that were originally published in the *Bulletin épigraphique* of the *Revue des Études grecques* between 1987 and 2004, a period when greater and better-informed attention was paid to this material than previously. Denis Feissel was responsible for the majority of the notices, as, continuing in the footsteps of Louis Robert, year by year he provided a searching commentary on the epigraphic publications and thoughts of other scholars, an approbation or condemnation that might be anxiously awaited. D.F.'s work is supplemented for Egypt by the notices that Jean Bingen contributed to the *Bulletin*.
- 2 Many of the notices are brief, just three or four lines of text that note publications that contain a reference to an epigraphic text from the relevant area, to more substantial entries of over a page. Inevitably the latter are more interesting, since they contain the majority of D.F.'s judiciously expert observations on the epigraphic suggestions of previous commentators as well as present enough information for the casual reader to appreciate the significance of the material without having recourse to the original publication. On the other hand, even a brief notice may jog the memory about a forgotten detail in a peripheral text. The notices are presented by Dioceses, which are

subdivided into Provinces and then their major cities; as a result users can quickly identify information relating to places on which they happen to be working, and then follow evolutions in the interpretation of a particular inscription. As in the original publication, these notices only include the text of the inscription when there are specific issues to be discussed; for complete understanding of the issues, therefore, readers are advised to consult the annual publication of new inscriptions in *Supplementum epigraphicum graecum* (although this does not include Byzantine inscriptions after the mid-seventh century).

- 3 This is not a volume that anyone, even the most assiduous of reviewers, is likely to read from cover to cover. There is much to be learned, however, from dipping in and out, naturally starting with the cities or provinces of most immediate relevance to current concerns but then allocating a quarter of an hour here or there to sampling other sections at random. One may thus stumble randomly across interesting new professions, references to individuals or types of structure that one has been thinking about in different contexts, of evidence for the vagaries of academic travel or the impact of particular excavations. Such serendipity is advisable since there are limitations to the indices, extensive as they are. D.F. does discuss the extent of the indices (xx-xxi), observing that a balance has to be struck between a comprehensive coverage that would have rendered the volume unwieldy and a selection that will leave users frustrated. It would be possible for dedicated users of the volume to compile headings they would have found useful or add entries to existing headings, for example dedicatees, people, festivals, individual heresies. Each user will have their own preferences, and D.F.'s defence that a limit had to be set at some point is valid, but it is worth underlining that the indices will only provide a partial picture of the contents. There is all the more reason, then, to indulge in the pleasures of browsing and hence appreciate more fully the double service to scholarship that D.F. has provided, first through the initial notices and then through this collection. Even a decade on from the last of D.F.'s notices, such retrospection can be beneficial.

AUTHORS

MICHAEL WHITBY

University of Birmingham, Birmingham.