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Henryk Litwin, *Równi do równych. Kijowska reprezentacja sejmowa 1569–1648* [‘The equal to the equal: The Kiev sejm representation, 1569–1648’], Wydawnictwo DiG, Warszawa 2009; 195pp.

Can a man possibly be contained within a table or chart? Can the same thing be done with an entire community living in the late 16th/early 17th century? A community, let us add, somewhat specific to a contemporary reader as it dwelled in a rather remote lands of what once was a Kiev Province (or, Voivodeship). As it turns out, the answer is yes; and, moreover, there is an urgent need to do so. An attempt to present such community has been made by Henryk Litwin. As he puts it in the introduction: “A historical monograph is an organism whose genetic code may be of quite a diversified structure. This is determined by a complex system of references between a scholarly design and the source base available.” Yet, there emerges the question whether the man presented in a given study is a ‘living’ entity, in the sense that the source material used to make its profile would allow for presenting his ‘daily’ world, at least – or, will it be a mere presentation of ‘dull’ reference numbers and bibliographic extracts? Having read the study in question, one finds the answer rather ambiguous.

As for the layout and other editorial details, the book consists of an introduction, three sections (of which the first has two subchapters), a list of acronyms, a bibliography which, classically, consists of a list of sources (i.e. manuscript and published and studies used in its preparation), plus a name index. The volume contains a total of 195 pages.

The first section (‘Kiev deputies – a community’) is a collection of valuable lists and breakdowns. Data is provided concerning e.g. the statistics of Kiev envoys acting as *sejm* (diet) assembly deputies, by nationality, religion/confession, financial/property status – along with very detailed breakdowns concerning e.g. members of Kiev deputy circles, elected or recommended for self-government functions. The author draws ‘animated’ portraits of Kiev deputies in the extensive second section (‘Kiev deputies – connections and affinities’), discussing their family connections and/or affinities.

The material gathered by Mr. Litwin has enabled to grasp the interconnections of individual deputies, determine their political positioning relative to political or client connections, for that matter. As the author admits, it is traces or indirect evidence that we deal with at this point (p. 42). A brief attempt at ‘animating’ the study’s characters appears in the conclusion (‘Conclusion. Factions and families. Kiev Province deputies in their political and family configurations, 1569–1648’), forming the study’s third section and showing the Kiev Voivodeship deputies in their political and family configurations in the period of 1569 to 1648.

In spite of possible reservations one could make – e.g. the author juggling with statistics – is recommendable, first and foremost, to specialists dealing with the history of Ukraine, the origins of the nobility and magnates, as well as the history of Polish parliamentarism in the period in question: this valuable book has become indispensable in their bibliographies. In itself, it forms a considerable contribution to the research on the community of deputies of the former Kiev Province. The ‘ordinary’ reader might find it not approachable; apparently, the book is intentionally targeted at a professional group of readers.