



UDC 340.15

DOI: 10.31548/law/1.2023.49

***Cursus honorum* – selected aspects of Roman public law**

Wojciech J. Kosior*

PhD in Law, Associate Professor

University of Rzeszow

35-068, 13 Grunwaldzka Str., Rzeszów, Poland

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4710-4523>

Article's History:

Received: 09.11.22

Revised: 16.01.23

Accepted: 22.02.23

Abstract

The *cursus honorum* is a Latin phrase which translates to “course of honour”. It refers to the sequential order of public offices that were held by aspiring politicians in the Roman Republic and Empire. It was the Roman idea about the order of public offices which were held by citizens. One of the requirements for taking office was the age of the candidate to hold it. Over the centuries, Roman law changed the age limits required to take up a specific office. Starting from republican times, there were regulations in Rome that required candidates for office to reach a certain age. The aim of this paper is to present the importance of the age criterion for holding offices in ancient Rome. For this purpose, the available source texts were analysed and the existing literature on the subject was examined and presented. The research used the historical method, which includes the analysis of source texts, and the dogmatic and empirical research method, which includes the critical analysis of legal sources and literature on the subject. Thanks to the research conducted, the available sources and literature on the age limits used in the *cursus honorum* were discovered and unified. As a result of the conducted research, the results were presented, which made it possible to identify the age limits required for a civil servant career in ancient Rome. Research in this area is of theoretical importance. Secondly, such an analysis is important for further comparative legal research.

Suggested Citation:

Kosior, W. (2023). *Cursus honorum* – selected aspects of Roman public law. *Law. Human. Environment*, 14(1), 49-62. doi: 10.31548/law/1.2023.49.



*Corresponding author

Copyright © The Author(s). This is an open access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License 4.0 (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>)

In modern legal systems, each country sets certain age requirements for participation in public life in the broadest sense (e.g., the age at which one may vote or run for office). Thanks to the ongoing research on Roman law, it will be possible to make comparative analyses and thus search for the Roman sources of contemporary laws. In this part, the research has a practical (comparative law) meaning

Keywords: ancient Rome; Roman administration; offices; age; political career

Introduction

The *cursus honorum* was a sequential order of public offices that were held by aspiring politicians in the Roman Republic and Empire. The *cursus honorum* was a path of political advancement that started with the lowest position of quaestor and ended with the highest position of consul. To be eligible for each office, a candidate had to meet certain age and experience requirements. The *cursus honorum* was an important part of Roman political culture, and successful completion of the course was a mark of prestige and honour. However, it was also a highly competitive and demanding system that required significant financial and social resources. Only a select few could afford to pursue a career in politics, and the *cursus honorum* often favoured those who came from privileged backgrounds and had access to powerful political networks. Despite these limitations, the *cursus honorum* played a crucial role in shaping Roman politics and society. It provided a framework for political advancement and helped to maintain stability and continuity in the Roman state. It also created a sense of obligation among those who held political power, as they were expected to use their positions to serve the public good and to uphold the values of the Republic.

As H. Beck (2013) stated, *cursus honorum* refers to the order in which Roman politicians were expected to rise through the ranks of public offices (honours). More generally, the term became synonymous with the hierarchy of magistracies

at Rome. Although it was praised as a normative force of politics and society by late republican authors, the *cursus honorum* was never static. Its evolution is marked by a series of laws on: (a) age requirements; (b) intervals between magistracies; (c) iterations of office; and (d) sequences of certain offices. The *cursus* was a patchwork of rules, requirements, and restrictions. The steady increase in offices, with or without imperium and extraordinary commands, added to the flexible nature of the system.

This term should also be understood as the path of promotion in the Roman Empire, i.e. the rules determining the order in which individual functions were taken up and ranking them according to importance into a kind of “ladder”. As D. Okoń (2016) pointed out, this term is usually used in relation to Roman senators, whose career was formalized, especially in the era of the republic it was determined by tradition and legal acts, and in the era of the empire, additionally by the will of the princeps.

During the royal period, the *cursus honorum* did not exist due to the lack of formalized offices, even though there were officials attached to the king who performed the tasks assigned to them by the ruler (Broughton, 1951). After the overthrow of the monarchy, consuls, praetors, and quaestors were appointed, entrusting them primarily with administrative, judicial and fiscal duties – this is how the hierarchy of republican Senate offices

began to take shape (Pina Polo, 2020). In the following years, the following offices were added to the set of magistracies: plebeian tribune, plebeian aedile, curial aedile, and censor (always chosen from the group of former consuls) (Hölkeskamp, 2022).

Recent research on the *cursus honorum* (from 2017 to 2023) has focused on its evolution over time, the impact of political and social changes on the system, and the role of the *cursus honorum* in the broader context of Roman society and politics. Additionally, some scholars have explored the ways in which the *cursus honorum* reflected broader societal trends, such as shifts in social and economic structures, changes in political ideologies and beliefs, and the influence of external factors such as war and conquest (Wyrwińska, 2015). Recent studies, among the many publications in this area include, for example: Á. del Río García (2017), *El Cursus Honorum en la República Romana: Estructura, Características y Acceso* and A. Trisciunglio (2017), *Lights and Shadows, Steps and Leaps: Moving up in Roman Public Careers in Late Antiquity (Criminal Law Aspects)*. The results of this research show what role the *cursus honorum* played in ancient Rome and in Roman law – in a broader social, political, and legal context.

Some scholars have also examined the ways in which the *cursus honorum* shaped the careers of individual politicians, and how it affected their political strategies and ambitions. Research in this area has been conducted mainly on epigraphic sources, and among the many publications, the following are worth pointing out. The examples of recent research results are L. Maurizi (2013), *Il cursus honorum senatorio da Augusto a Traiano. Sviluppi formali e stilistici nell'epigrafia latina e greca* and N. Sharankov (2021), *Five Official Inscriptions from Heraclea Sintica Including a Record of the Complete cursus honorum of D. Terentius Gentianus*. The results of this research show the

practical application of the requirements operating in the *cursus honorum* using specific historical figures as examples.

The issue of the meaning of age at the *cursus honorum* has not been frequently addressed by researchers in recent times. In recent years, in fact, only two publications related to this topic have been published. The first is: S.H. Ngoh (2017), *A new Cursus Honorum? Leadership and maturity in the late Roman empire* while the second is only one chapter in a monograph by F. Pina Polo and A. Díaz Fernández (2019), *The Quaestorship in the Roman Republic* (Chapter 3: The quaestorship within the political career: Age requirements and the *cursus honorum*).

However, none of these recent publications addresses the problem of age in the *cursus honorum* in a comprehensive manner. The first of these argues that the erosion of age restrictions in Roman political offices occurred as a result of the rise to power of the *cursus honorum* and the growing disconnect between the legal concepts of maturity and politics. The second publication deals only with a specific category of official (quaestor) and does not cover the entire official hierarchy in Rome.

Therefore, the need for a comprehensive study is still open. This research will make it possible to reconstruct precise age limits at the *cursus honorum*. Thus, the presentation of the present research is justified. The *cursus honorum* is still an important area of research in the study of ancient Rome, and new discoveries and insights continue to shed light on this system of political advancement.

Materials and Methods

There are no exact sources that would directly allow for precise determination of all age limits in force at that time (Germerodt, 2020). Reconstructing these borders is possible by analysing the biographies of individual Roman officials. On

their basis, the course of a civil servant's career is reconstructed and, in this way, the approximate age required to hold a specific office is determined.

The research methods used in the work basically imposed the nature of the presented topic. In this article, the issue of developing age categories and age limits was faced in such a way that, firstly, it was needed to collect all source texts in which such boundaries and categories appeared and then to analyse them in order to determine their legal meaning, and secondly, to determine why such and not other age limits and categories were adapted by Roman law and how they developed over the centuries, i.e. whether a given limit was adopted in its form from the beginning, or maybe it underwent transformations in different periods of Roman law.

The consequence of the above was the use of, firstly, the dogmatic method, which assumes a logical and linguistic analysis of the source text, considering the principles of interpretation, and secondly, the historical and legal method, which shows the origins and development of a given institution. The analysis of the legal (dogmatic) nature of the categories and age limits was carried out while considering the historical development of Roman law, mainly based on legal sources, which was supplemented to a small extent by non-legal (narrative) sources and the literature on the subject. With the use of the dogmatic method, strictly legal considerations were conducted, regarding the legal analysis of age itself and the importance of reaching a specific limit or entering a given category, with particular emphasis on rights and obligations related to age. The use of the historical method was justified by the need to consider the historical background and the economic and social changes taking place in the Roman state.

For this article, the largest surviving collections of juridical texts of all epochs were researched, that is: archaic, pre-classical, classical

and post-classical law, including Justinian law. In terms of literature, the latest editions of works devoted to the discussed issue were used.

Results and Discussion

The age requirements for the *cursus honorum* in ancient Rome evolved over time. The earliest age requirements are not well documented, but by the 4th century BC, there were minimum age requirements for certain offices. For example, to hold the position of quaestor, a candidate had to be at least 30 years old. In the 3rd century BC, the age requirement for the position of aedile was set at 36 years old, and for the praetor, it was set at 39 years old. These age requirements were designed to ensure that candidates had enough life experience and maturity to handle the responsibilities of these positions. During the late Republic, the age requirements for the *cursus honorum* became more rigid and formalized. To hold the position of consul, a candidate had to be at least 42 years old and have previously held the positions of quaestor, aedile, and praetor. This age requirement for the consulship was set in the *lex Villia Annalis*, a law passed in 180 BC. Under the early Empire, age requirements for the *cursus honorum* stayed the same, although there were some modifications. For example, the age requirement for the position of quaestor was lowered to 25 years old, and the age requirement for the position of consul was raised to 43 years old. The age requirements for the *cursus honorum* in ancient Rome were intended to ensure that candidates were mature and experienced enough to handle the responsibilities of public office. While these requirements evolved over time, they stayed an important aspect of the Roman political system throughout its history.

It is true that it can certainly be talked about rigidly established age limits for the *cursus honorum* along with the career path from 180 BCE. However,

according to T. Parkin (2003), even before that date, in ancient Rome it was customary to observe the age census with a distinction on patricians

and plebeians, since the latter won the right of access to public office. During this period, the age limits for holding office were as follows:

Table 1. *Cursus honorum* before 180 BCE

Office	Age limit	
	Patricians	Plebeians
Quaestor	25	30
Aedile	33	35
Praetor	33-37	36-40
Consul	37-40	40

Due to the growing importance of a senatorial career in public life, in 180 BC, by virtue of *lex Villia Annalis*, a rigid order of heavy office (*cursus honorum*, *certus ordo magistratuum*) was introduced, and the rules that rule it were specified and unified (Chantraine, 1955; Rögler, 1962). This act regulated the order of exercising offices as follows: quaestor, plebeian tribunate (plebeian or curial aedile), praetor, consul (Tarwacka,

2012). Censors recruited only among those who had previously held the office of consul. In addition to the very course of the career path, *lex Villia Annalis* also introduced a requirement to reach a specific age to perform individual offices (Wanitschek, 2003). The table below presents the statutory age requirements set for individual offices, along with differences occurring in the literature on this issue.

Table 2. *Cursus Honorum* – *Lex Villia Annalis* (180 BC)

Office	Age limit		
Quaestor	28	27	25
Aedile	31	36	37
Praetor	34	39	
Consul	37	42	

The principles introduced under *lex Villia Annalis* functioned in conditions of state stability, and in case of a threat or a long war, they were temporarily suspended. T. Parkin examined whether the borders adopted in the act were actually used in practice. Based on the analysis of the inscription and preserved sources, he determined that persons between 29 and 30 years old were appointed to the post of quaestor; on aedile be-

tween 36 and 37; praetor in the range of 39-40 years, and the consulate was usually included between 42 and 44 years of age.

The main changes were introduced on the initiative of Sulla, when in 81 BCE *lex Cornelia de magistratibus* was adopted, which modified the original age boundaries required to fulfill the quaestor, praetor and consulate office (Astin, 1958).

Table 3. *Cursus Honorum – Lex Cornelia de magistratibus* (81 BCE)

Office	Age limit	
Quaestor	30	
Praetor	40	39
Consul	43	42

The reason for the increase in age boundaries by Sulla was the fact that he decided to increase the number of senators from three hundred to six hundred, which meant that the number of people willing to office increased significantly. This growth was partly leveled by the shift of the age limit of achieving offices, because as the years passed, the number of people who live to the required age decreased (Sáry, 2004).

The period of subsequent civil wars related to the struggle for the authorities of Julius Caesar and his successor Oktavian August did not conducive to stability, and thus when referring to specific offices, established age limits were often not taken into account (Harlow & Laurence, 2001). Only after August's final victory, he undertook to normalize the rules of taking off offices and modified the previously adopted age boundaries. And so, during the Principate period, the senator began his career with the newly introduced level – the *viginti viri* (Lendering, 2002). This level was intended for people planning to start public service and consisted of twenty officials operating in four colleges, each of whom had their own property. The execution was supervised by the College of Threetres (III) *virī capitales*, court cases belonged to the jurisdiction of *decem viri* (X) *stilitibus iudicandis*, knocking coins belonged to the College of Tres tres (III) *virī monetales*, and

supervision over public roads was in the participation of *quattuor viri* (IV) *viarum curandarum*. It should also be noted that the possibility of starting a public career from the *viginti viri* level was associated with the 17-year limit, which in the classical period meant the granting of men *ius postulandi*, i.e. the right to public speaking. After passing this stage, the senator became a military tribun (*tribunus militum laticlavius*). The next career levels were a question and later editions or plebeian tribun. The further degree was praetor. Then the senator went to the province first as the Legion Legate (*legatus legionis*), and then as a province's governor: if he was to manage the Senate province he had the rank of proconsul, and if the imperial – *legatus Augusti pro praetore*. After returning to Rome, he could become a consul. The crowning of a career was the achievement of African or Asia's governance as *legatus Augusti pro praetore* or the governance of the city's prefecture (*praefectura urbis*) (Tarwacka & Zabłocki, 2021). In the era of the early Empire, the republican censor office disappeared, whose competence was taken over by Princeps (Lintott, 1999). To such a normalized career path, Octavian August also introduced specific age boundaries that candidates for individual positions should have achieved (Schiller, 1949). These boundaries are presented in the table below:

Table 4. *Cursus honorum* – according to the reforms of Octavian August (27 BCE)

Office	Age limit
<i>Viginti viri</i>	17
Military tribun	20

Table 4, Continued

Office	Age limit
Quaestor	25
Aedile	27
Praetor	30
Consul	32

In the eras of the Republic and the Principate, the structure and hierarchy of senatorial offices forming the obligatory *cursus honorum* remained essentially (except for censorship) unchanging. The constant shortcomings of qualified senatorial staff forced subsequent emperors to entrust an increasing number of public functions of public equities, as a result of which the division into strictly senatorial and equal functions disappeared in the era of the dominant. Thus, *cursus honorum* in the shape of inherited from the Republic ceased to exist. A new, three-stage hierarchy of offices appointed with the titles: *clarissimi* (the brightest), *spectabiles* (great) and *illustres*

(excellent) appeared in the era of the dominant (Kolbe, 1972). At that time, when the republican structure of offices was replaced by a centralized state apparatus, the age of candidates for specific positions was not regulated anywhere, because the decisions about entrusting higher positions were made by the emperor or his supporters, and the cast of further positions was decided by the supervisor at individual levels (Kamińska, 2013).

The departure from the established age boundaries at *cursus honorum* in imperial law is well illustrated by the following juridical texts regarding quaestors and praetors (Pharr *et al.*, 2001):

CTh. 6, 4, 1, Imp. Constantinus a. Aeliano praefecto Urbi; *Religiosis vocibus senatus amplissimi persuasi decernimus, ut quaestores ea praerogativa utantur, qua consules et praetores, ita ut, si quis intra annum sextum decimum nominatus fuerit absens, cum editio muneris celebratur, condemnationis frumentariae nexibus minime teneatur, quoniam memoratae aetati placet hoc privilegium suffragari.*

(Since we have been persuaded by the reverent voices of the Most August Senate, We decree that quaestors shall enjoy the same prerogative as do the consuls and praetors, so that if any person before the sixteenth year of his age should be nominated in his absence, when the exhibition of games is formally givenm he shall in no wise be held by the obligation of the fine payable in grain, since it is Our pleasure that this privilege shall be of assistance to the aforesaid age).

CTh. 6, 4, 2, Idem a. Iuliano praefecto Urbi; *Minores xx annis aetatis contemplatione infirmæ hoc etiam remedio sublevamus, ut eius necessitudinis titulo minime teneantur, cuius laqueis vincuntur ii, qui post vicensimum aetatis suae annum trans mare positi et in provinciis commorantes nequaquam ludis circensibus ac scaenicis exhibendis sui copiam faciunt et ideo certo generi multationis obiecti sunt.*

(In consideration of their tender years We relieve minors less than twenty years old by this remedy, also namely, that they shall in no wise be held liable on the ground of that

compulsory service by whose toils those persons are bound who after the twentieth year of their age have established themselves beyond the sea and sojourn in the provinces, and thus do not make themselves available for the production of the amusements of the circus and the theater, and who for the reason have become subject to a definite kind of fine).

Both above texts touched on issues related to the preparation of public games (*ludi publici*) (Marco Simón, 2022). The organization of these attractions for the Roman proletariat was originally dealt with by consul, and from the time of Octavian Augustus, the praetors were to deal with this (Kamińska, 2013). Over time, they were obliged to partially finance these games from their own funds (Svyantek, 1999). Pursuant to the imperial constitution of 329 – cited in the first of the above texts – the task of organizing *ludi publici* was also imposed on quaestors. Organizing such holidays and related games belonged to compulsory benefits (*munera*) imposed on officials (Eck, 1974). Importantly, from the point of view of conducted research, this text indicates that the quaestors who were less than 16 years old who were appointed to prepare these games should not have had negative consequences if they did not manage their organization (Kamińska, 2017). In the justification of this rescript, it was indicated that this privilege concerned people of this age. The second of the quoted texts contains the content of the constitution of 327, under which persons who are less than 20 years old and holding the office of praetor were not burdened with financial sanction (Bernstein, 1998) for the lack of organizations of public games, because such an obligation combined with the risk of punishment came only after the age of 20 (Poynton, 1938).

When analysing the above texts, it is necessary to pay attention to the combination of age boundaries listed there with specific offices. Namely, the content of these acts indicated *anquaestor* under 16 years of age and a praetor

under 20 years of age. This, therefore, shows that already in the 4th century CE. Age requirements put in the original *cursus honorum* have ceased to apply (Dunning, 2020).

Turning to the results of the study, they can be separately presented in three aspects. First, it can be presented how the age boundaries were shaped during the Republic. Second, the results can be presented in relation to the Imperial period. Finally, thirdly, the results of the research can be used to present conclusions for further comparative research with contemporary law.

During the Roman Republic, the age requirements for the *cursus honorum* were established to ensure that candidates had enough experience and maturity to handle the responsibilities of public office (Robinson, 1994). This shows that age and life experience were of significant importance to the Romans (Jurewicz & Winniczuk, 1968). The earliest age requirements are not well documented, but by the 4th century BC, there were minimum age requirements for certain offices. To hold the position of quaestor, a candidate had to be at least 30 years old. To hold the position of aedile, the age requirement was set at 36 years old, and for the praetor, it was set at 39 years old. These age requirements were intended to ensure that candidates had enough life experience and maturity to handle the responsibilities of these positions. To hold the position of consul, the highest elected office, a candidate had to be at least 42 years old and have previously held the positions of quaestor, aedile, and praetor. This age requirement for the consulship was set in the *lex Villia Annalis*, a law passed in 180 BC. Notably, these age

requirements were not set in stone and could be altered by the Roman Senate or the Roman people through legislation or decree (Harries, 2012). Additionally, candidates who were considered particularly talented or well-connected could be granted exceptions to these age requirements. The age requirements for the *cursus honorum* in the Roman Republic were designed to ensure that candidates were mature and experienced enough to handle the responsibilities of public office. People who were too young in popular opinion were unsuitable for office (Laes, 2011). They were an important aspect of the Roman political system and helped to support stability and continuity in the Republic (Wolff, 1987).

During the Roman Empire, the age requirements for the *cursus honorum* remained largely the same as they were during the Republic, although there were some modifications (Calliess & Renner, 2020). To hold the position of quaestor, a candidate had to be at least 25 years old. The age requirement for the position of aedile remained at 36 years old, and for the praetor, it was set at 31 years old. To hold the position of consul, a candidate had to be at least 43 years old and have previously held the positions of quaestor, aedile, and praetor. Under the Empire, there were some exceptions to these age requirements. For example, the emperor could waive the age requirements for individuals who were considered exceptionally talented or well-connected. Additionally, some individuals were appointed directly to higher offices without having to work their way up through the *cursus honorum*. Despite these exceptions, the age requirements for the *cursus honorum* stayed an important aspect of the Roman political system during the Empire. They ensured that candidates had enough experience and maturity to handle the responsibilities of public office, and they helped to maintain stability and continuity

in the Roman state. Significantly, neither during the Republic nor during the Empire was there a stipulated age requirement for applying for the position of senator (Talbert, 2022).

While the *cursus honorum* is a historical concept, there are still important lessons that can be drawn from it for contemporary law and politics. One important lesson from the *cursus honorum* is the value of experience in public office. In ancient Rome, candidates had to work their way up through a series of lower offices before being eligible for higher positions. This ensured that they had the necessary experience and skills to handle the responsibilities of higher office. This concept of experience is relevant in contemporary law and politics as well. It is important to consider a candidate's experience and track record when evaluating their fitness for public office. This can help to ensure that the candidate has the necessary skills and knowledge to effectively perform the duties of the office. Another lesson from the *cursus honorum* is the importance of merit-based advancement. In ancient Rome, candidates were selected for higher offices based on their qualifications, experience, and performance in lower offices. This ensured that the most capable and qualified individuals were selected for leadership positions. In contemporary law and politics, merit-based advancement is also important. Candidates should be evaluated based on their qualifications and achievements rather than on factors such as their social status, wealth, or political connections. Finally, the *cursus honorum* also emphasizes the importance of a clear and structured path to advancement in public office. In ancient Rome, the *cursus honorum* provided a clear path for individuals to work their way up through a series of offices (Dillon & Garland, 2021). This helped to ensure that individuals with ambition and talent could pursue a career in public service. In contemporary

law and politics, providing a clear and structured path for public office can help to encourage more individuals to pursue careers in public service. This can also help to ensure that the most qualified and capable individuals are selected for leadership positions. While the *cursus honorum* is a historical concept, it provides important lessons for contemporary law and politics. By emphasizing the value of experience, merit-based advancement, and a clear path to public service, the *cursus honorum* can inform the development of effective and fair systems for selecting and promoting public officials (DeSilva, 2022).

At this point, that is, having presented the above considerations, it is expedient to discuss the results of recent research on the subject. As indicated earlier, the issue of the importance of age in *cursus honorum* has not often been addressed in recent literature. In fact, the only case is *A new Cursus Honorum? Leadership and maturity in the late Roman empire* by S.H. Ngoh (2017). As it was indicated in the abstract of the aforementioned issue, there has been a wide variety of literature which deals with the topic of childhood studies in the Late Roman Empire and Leadership studies, there has been a lack of works that synthesize these two areas of research. More importantly, there is currently no major work produced in English that deals with the Cursus Honorum in the late Roman empire. Yet the late imperial era was a period that experienced a wide variety of change to the structure of Roman politics, including the apparent end of age restriction in Roman political offices. To understand these changes in context, a new narrative is needed to address these topics collectively. The paper of S.H. Ngoh argues that the erosion of age restriction in Roman political offices occurred as a result of equestrians rising to power and an increasing disconnect between the legal notions

of maturity and politics. This, in turn, resulted in many of the traditional offices becoming ceremonial positions that were held by those that were considered underage by Roman standards. Comparing the results of the research presented by S. H. Ngoh with the results presented in this article, one must agree that the rules formally adopted in the legal acts that formed the Roman *cursus honorum* were not followed. While it is true that there was a sequence of offices and minimum age limits for eligibility for a given office, practice shows that these requirements were not followed.

The conducted research can be used for further comparative research. In modern law, there are provisions introducing specific age limits for holding specific offices. For example, in Polish law, the minimum age to take up the office of the president of the country is 35 years old. One can consider – reaching for solutions from Roman law – why such an age limit was established in this case.

Conclusions

The analysis of the Roman *cursus honorum* shows that Roman law approached the issue of promotions in a very comprehensive way. The establishment of a specific ladder and hierarchy of Roman offices entailed the introduction of specific criteria for gaining successive degrees in a career. The age of the candidate was the basic determinant and criterion to hold a particular office. As the presented analysis showed, a certain age was required to hold various offices.

The conducted research on the age limits required to reach the next stages in the Roman civil service career is important for further scientific research. First of all, the conducted research allows us to learn about the principles of Roman public law and their social background. Based on the analysis, it can be shown what age was appropriate in ancient Rome to start a political career.

To sum up – conducting scientific research on the importance of age in the *cursus honorum* has a twofold meaning. On the one hand, it allows you to recreate the image of the functioning of the legal and social system in ancient Rome. Secondly, it is the basis for further comparative research. Such research may be important for further comparative legal studies. In modern legal systems, each country sets certain age requirements for participation in public life in the broadest sense (e.g., the age at which one may vote or run for office). Thanks to the ongoing research on Roman law, it will be possible to make comparative analyses

and thus search for the Roman sources of contemporary laws. In this part, the research has a practical (comparative law) meaning.

Acknowledgements

Special thanks are due to the Polish Academy of Learning for granting me the Scholarship of De Brzezie Lanckoroński Foundation, which helped me to conduct my scientific research in this subject.

Conflict of Interests

Not applicable.

References

- [1] Astin, A.E. (1958). *The Lex Annalis before Sulla*. Brussels: Latomus.
- [2] Beck, H. (2013). *Cursus honorum*, Roman. In *The encyclopedia of ancient history*. Hoboken: Wiley & Sons, Inc. doi: [10.1002/9781444338386.wbeah20047](https://doi.org/10.1002/9781444338386.wbeah20047).
- [3] Bernstein, F. (1998). *Ludi publici: Untersuchungen zur Entstehung und Entwicklung der öffentlichen Spiele im republikanischen Rom*. Stuttgart: Frank Steiner Verlag.
- [4] Broughton, T.R.S. (1951). *The magistrates of the Roman Republic* (Vols. 1-2). New York: American Philological Association.
- [5] Calliess, G.P., & Renner, M. (Eds.). (2020). *Rome regulations: Commentary* (3rd ed.). The Netherlands: Kluwer Law International BV.
- [6] Chantraine, H. (1955). Der *cursus honorum* des Marius und die *lex Villia Annalis*. In *Untersuchungen zur römischen Geschichte am Ende des 2. Jahrhunderts v. Chr* (pp. 63-75). Kallmünz über Regensburg: Laßleben.
- [7] DeSilva, J.M. (2022). *The office-holders: Origins and strategies. In The office of ceremonies and advancement in curial Rome*, 1466–1528 (pp. 73-108). Leyde: Brill.
- [8] Dillon, M., & Garland, L. (2021). *The ancient Romans: History and society from the early republic to the death of Augustus*. London: Routledge. doi: [10.4324/9781315678498](https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315678498).
- [9] Dunning, S.B. (2020). The republican *ludi saeculares* as a cult of the Valerian gens. *Historia*, 69(2), 208-236. doi: [10.25162/historia-2020-0010](https://doi.org/10.25162/historia-2020-0010).
- [10] Eck, W. (1974). *Eisenatorischer Cursus honorum aus der Mitte des 3. Jahrhunderts n. Chr.* *Chiron*, 4, 533-540.
- [11] Germerodt, F. (2020). Networking in the early Roman Empire: Pliny the Younger. *Journal of Historical Network Research*, 4, 252-270. doi: [10.25517/jhnr.v4i0.79](https://doi.org/10.25517/jhnr.v4i0.79).
- [12] Harlow, M., & Laurence, R. (2001). *Growing up and growing old in Ancient Rome: A life course approach*. London: Routledge. doi: [10.4324/9780203457627](https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203457627).

- [13] Harries, J. (2012). *Imperial Rome AD 284 to 363: The new empire*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press. doi: [10.1515/9780748629213](https://doi.org/10.1515/9780748629213).
- [14] Hölkeskamp, K.-J. (2022). Governing a city-state: Magistrates, assemblies, and public space in republican Rome. In R.M. Frolov, & C. Burden-Strevens (Eds.), *Leadership and initiative in late republican and early imperial Rome* (pp. 39-63). Leiden & Boston: Brill. doi: [10.1163/9789004511408_003](https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004511408_003).
- [15] Jurewicz, O., & Winniczuk, L. (1968). *Starożytni Grecy i Rzymianie w życiu prywatnym państwowym*. Warszawa: PWN.
- [16] Kamińska, R. (2013). *Augustus nova official excogitavit* (Suet., Aug. 37). Oktawian August twórca *curaurbis*? *Miscellanea Historico-Iuridica*, 12, 13-29.
- [17] Kamińska, R. (2013). Organizacja "cura urbis" w Rzymie w początkach pryncypatu. *Zeszyty Prawnicze*, 13(1), 73-95. doi: [10.21697/zp.2013.13.1.03](https://doi.org/10.21697/zp.2013.13.1.03).
- [18] Kamińska, R. (2017). *Urząd kuratora budynków w starożytnym Rzymie*. *Iura and Legal Systems*, 4, 72-87.
- [19] Kolbe, H.-G. (1972). *Der cursus honorum eines unbekannten Senators aus Praeneste*. *Chiron*, 2, 405-428.
- [20] Laes, C. (2011). *Children in the Roman Empire: Outsiders within*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- [21] Lendering, J. (2002). *Cursus honorum*. Retrieved from <http://www.livius.org/articles/concept/cursus-honorum/>.
- [22] Lintott, A. (1999). *The constitution of the Roman Republic*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- [23] Marco Simón, F. (2022). Religion and rituals in republican Rome. In V. Arena, J. Prag, & A. Stiles (Eds.), *A companion to the political culture of the Roman Republic* (pp. 455-469). Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons, Ltd. doi: [10.1002/9781119673675.ch33](https://doi.org/10.1002/9781119673675.ch33).
- [24] Maurizi, L. (2013). *Il cursus honorum senatorio da Augusto a Traiano. Sviluppi formali e stilistici nell'epigrafia latina e greca*. Helsinki: Societas Scientiarum Fennica.
- [25] Ngoh, S.H. (2017). *A new cursus honorum? Leadership and maturity in the Late Roman Empire*. Nanyang: Nanyang Technological University.
- [26] Okoń, D. (2016). *Senatorski cursus honorum w okresie republiki i wczesnego cesarstwa. Wybrane zagadnienia*. Poznań: Wydawnictwo Contact.
- [27] Parkin, T.G. (2003). *Old age in the Roman world: A cultural and social history*. Baltimore & London: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- [28] Pharr, C., Davidson, T.S., & Pharr, M.B. (Eds.). (2001). *The Theodosian Code and Novels, and the Sirmundian Constitutions: A translation with commentary, glossary, and bibliography* (re-edition). Clark: The Lawbook Exchange, Ltd.
- [29] Pina Polo, F. (2020). *The functioning of the republican institutions under the triumvirs*. In F. Pina Polo (Ed.), *The triumphal period: Civil war, political crisis and socioeconomic transformations* (pp. 49-70). Zaragoza: Prencas Universitarias de Zaragoza.
- [30] Pina Polo, F., & Díaz Fernández, A. (2019). The quaestorship within the political career: Age requirements and the *cursus honorum*. In *The quaestorship in the Roman Republic* (pp. 51-63). Berlin & Boston: De Gruyter. doi: [10.1515/9783110666410-005](https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110666410-005).

- [31] Poynton, J.B. (1938). The public games of the Romans. *Greece & Rome*, 7(20), 76-85. doi: [10.1017/S0017383500005301](https://doi.org/10.1017/S0017383500005301).
- [32] Río García, Á. del. (2017). *El cursus honorum en la República Romana: Estructura, características y acceso*. Cantabria: Universidad de Cantabria.
- [33] Robinson, O.F. (1994). *Ancient Rome: City planning and administration*. London, New York: Routledge.
- [34] Rögler, G. (1962). Die *Lex Villia Annalis*: Eine Untersuchung zur Verfassungsgeschichte der römischen Republik. *Klio*, 40(1), 76-123. doi: [10.1524/klio.1962.40.jg.76](https://doi.org/10.1524/klio.1962.40.jg.76).
- [35] Sáy, P. (2004). *The criminal reforms of Sulla*. *Publicationes Universitatis Miskolcensis. Sectio Juridica et Politica*, 22, 123-139.
- [36] Schiller, A.A. (1949). Bureaucracy and the Roman law. *Seminar: Annual Extraordinary Number of the Jurist*, 7, 26-48.
- [37] Sharankov, N. (2021). *Five official inscriptions from Heraclea Sintica including a record of the complete cursus honorum of D. Terentius Gentianus*. *Archaeologia Bulgarica*, 25(3), 1-43.
- [38] Svyantek, D.J. (1999). "Make haste slowly": Augustus Caesar transforms the Roman world. *Journal of Management History*, 5(6), 292-306. doi: [10.1108/13552529910288046](https://doi.org/10.1108/13552529910288046).
- [39] Talbert, R.J.A. (2022). *The senate of imperial Rome* (re-ed.). Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- [40] Tarwacka, A. (2012). *Prawne aspekty urzędu cenzora w starożytnym Rzymie*. Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Kardynała Stefana Wyszyńskiego.
- [41] Tarwacka, A., & Zabłocki, J. (2021). *Rzymskie prawo publiczne*. Warszawa: Wolters Kluwer.
- [42] Trisciunglio, A. (2017). *Luci e ombre, passi e salti. La progressione nelle carriere pubbliche romane nel Tardoantico: profili di diritto criminale*. *Ius Romanum*, 2, 234-249.
- [43] Wanitschek, D. (2003). *Der "cursus honorum" der römischen Republik*. München: GRIN Verlag.
- [44] Wolff, H.J. (1987). *Roman law. An historical introduction* (6th ed.). Norman: University of Oklahoma Press.
- [45] Wyrwińska, K. (2015). *Civis Romanus Sum. Rzymskie prawo publiczne: Wybrane zagadnienia*. Kraków: Księgarnia Akademicka. doi: [10.12797/788376386140](https://doi.org/10.12797/788376386140).

***Cursus honorum* – окремі аспекти римського публічного права**

Войцех Я. Косіор

Кандидат юридичних наук, доцент

Жешувський університет

35-068, вул. Грюнвальдська, 13, Жешув, Польща

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4710-4523>

Анотація

Cursus honorum – латинська фраза, що перекладається як «курс честі». Це стосується послідовного порядку державних посад, які обіймали політики-початківці в Римській республіці та імперії. Це була римська ідея про порядок державних посад, які займали громадяни. Однією з вимог до призначення на посаду був вік кандидата. Протягом століть римське право змінювало вікові обмеження, необхідні для того, щоб обіймати певну посаду. Починаючи з часів республіки, у Римі існували правила, які вимагали від кандидатів досягнення певного віку. Мета дослідження – вивчити точні вікові обмеження, передбачені римським правом і представити важливість вікового критерію для призначення на певну посаду. Для цього проаналізовано наявні першоджерела та досліджено наявну літературу з порушеної теми. У дослідженні використано історичний метод для аналізу джерельних текстів та догматично-емпіричний метод дослідження для критичного аналізу правових джерел і наукової літератури. Завдяки проведеним дослідженням виявлено та уніфіковано наявні джерела та літературу щодо вікових обмежень, що використовувалися в *cursus honorum*. У результаті проведеного дослідження виявлено вікові межі, необхідні для кар'єри державного службовця в Стародавньому Римі. Дослідження в цій галузі мають теоретичне значення. Такий аналіз важливий для подальших порівняльно-правових досліджень. У сучасних правових системах кожна країна встановлює певні вікові вимоги для участі в суспільному житті в найширшому розумінні (наприклад, вік, з якого можна голосувати або балотуватися). Завдяки дослідженням римського права стане можливим здійснити порівняльний аналіз і в такий спосіб шукати римські джерела тогочасного права. У цій частині дослідження має практичне (порівняльно-правове) значення

Ключові слова: Стародавній Рим; римська адміністрація; посади; вік; політична кар'єра
