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**The Peculium - a Legal Instrument for Business Ventures?**

Even though the peculium is usually interpreted as a separate estate of sons, slaves, and other individuals subject to the authority of someone else, or *personae alieno iuri subiectae*  it has two distinct characteristics for those who were subject to another’s authority: receiving a peculium gave some degree of financial independence and autonomy, while for those who exerted authority, granting a peculium offered the pro spect of participating indirectly, and therefore at lower risk, in the recipient’s potential business ventures. Recent legal theory has made it common to turn to the peculium’s second characteristic and rationalize the peculium as a legal instrument through which businessmen could finance specific business ventures. This paper will analyze this paradigm and conduct an evaluation of whether or not this legal institute of roman law can be interpreted as a sui generis corporate entity, or if on the other hand it had objectives both from a legal and practical perspective that can lead to quite contrary conclusions.

**Key terms:** Peculium, Business, Corporatation

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