
This is a book about the ideal Roman relationship between brothers—characterized as fraternal pietas by B—and the way in which this ideal was applied as a model in legal texts, and in a variety of evolving (social, political, and military) relationships. There has been quite a lot of work done on the Roman family, especially in the past two decades, but this is the first time that brothers have been focused upon in such detail. B combines literary criticism with historical and legal analysis in her study of Roman ideas of brotherhood. Instead of simply describing the ideal, or the norm of fraternal relations, she seeks to describe and evaluate how the behaviour of brothers responded to the ideal, challenging, reshaping, and reinforcing it (7-8). Her fundamental conclusion is that fraternal symbolism, epitomized by mythological figures like Romulus and Remus, pervaded Roman society and culture to a degree not generally appreciated.

There are five chapters, ‘organized around the places, real and metaphorical, where brothers met and through their interaction established the limits and powers of fraternal pietas’ (8). Chapter One, ‘At Home’ (12-61), begins with an examination of legal rules in the Digest of Justinian relating to inheritance, ‘because the transfer of property from one generation to the next was an occasion for brothers to question, change, or simply articulate their rights and duties toward one another and the rest of the family’ (190, cf. 14). The basic aim is to establish how economic circumstances affected the relationship between Roman brothers. Several legal institutions are examined, such as intestate succession, partible inheritance, wills, and guardianship, but there is a special concentration upon consortium, an archaic form of partnership in which brothers jointly own the family property inherited from their father (14-26). It seems
that Roman practice of the middle and late Republic was heavily influenced by the *consortium* model, so that brothers of the second and first centuries BC tended to operate according to its rough outlines, even though *consortium* itself and the traditional norm of intestate succession gradually became less common. B finds that financial considerations were supplemented by affection in determining strategies related to inheritance and the maintenance of family power. Flexibility was also important in order to take advantage of the economic opportunities afforded by Roman expansion. Informal cooperation was prized as an expression of fraternal *pietas*, but Roman brothers also used formal legal arrangements, such as partnership, guardianship, and contracts, to buttress natural devotion and to negotiate conflict (26-43). Over time, according to B, Romans generalized the concept of *consortium* to represent an idealized form of fraternal *pietas* whereby brothers resolved conflict through cooperation (43-61). This process resulted in a mix of reality and ideal in representations of brothers in Roman literature and law. Thus, fraternal *pietas* ‘embodied the ideal and set limits on what the Romans considered brotherly’ (7).

Chapter Two, ‘Between Brothers’ (62-90), identifies common kinship rather than common property as the source of fraternal devotion, and asks why fraternal intimacy was exceptional. Friends, soldiers, cousins, and (male) lovers could be like brothers, but no one was as close as a biological brother, because brothers were thought almost to share a single life by virtue of their shared parentage (64-76). When Romans compared friends, *sodales*, and even lovers, to brothers, they transferred to these other relationships both the inherent similarity of fraternal kinship and the equality between brothers that was promoted in inheritance practices. Fraternal *pietas* provided a safe, even honoured, model for intimacy in male relationships in a society whose traditional social morality and political rhetoric condemned sexual intimacy between men, especially sexual passivity. Fraternal *pietas*, because it was rooted in natural kinship, also symbolized a lasting devotion in contrast to the
various and changeable relationships that Romans knew as *amicitia* (77-90).

From private life, B moves out into the Forum, the sphere of political relationships, in Chapter Three, ‘In the Forum’ (91-135). Discussion centres on a case study of the cooperation between Cicero and his brother Quintus in public life (101-16). The findings from this study are used to analyze the relationships between Scipio Africanus and his brother Lucius Scipio Asiagenus (116-27), and between Tiberius and Gaius Gracchus (127-35). B finds that the public and private spheres were inextricably intertwined and that successful men like Africanus and Cicero could help less talented brothers into office. She also finds that appeals to fraternal *pietas* could meet with a warm reception, though people were aware that such an appeal might be mere pretense, designed to mask an individual’s ambition or actions dangerous to the state. Even outside the élite sphere, there was great interest in the implications of brotherhood, in particular the strength of fraternal *pietas*, which was used metaphorically to represent the sense of community among Roman citizens and soldiers. The Scipiones are idealized in Livy as brothers who balanced their duty to the state against their devotion to each other. The ‘trials’ of the Scipios provided a venue for debate about the extent and nature of fraternal cooperation in politics, which was seen as an element with the potential to destabilize the (oligarchic) state. Could fraternal *pietas* impinge upon a citizen’s fundamental devotion to the fatherland (*pietas ad patriam*)? Could a Roman prefer his *frater* to his *patria*? The Romans invoked both law and the *mos maiorum* to mark out limits on fraternal *pietas* in matters potentially destabilizing for the state.

The military sphere, with special reference to the civil wars of the late Republic, is covered in Chapter Four, ‘On the Battlefield’ (136-73). The image of brothers fighting together on behalf of their ‘family’ appealed to Romans. B sees the image of the brother-soldier melding with that of the citizen-soldier, so
that fraternal *pietas* is metaphorically extended to the relationship between citizens (10):

>'The relationship between brothers thus acquires a broad political symbolism representing traditional social and political morality, what the Romans called the *mos maiorum*.'

Accordingly, fratricide becomes the ultimate metaphor when civil strife brought political murder and civil war to Rome in the late Republic. This metaphor appears frequently in battle narratives written both during and after this period (149-58); it also receives emphasis in retellings of the Romulus and Remus story (158-73). Literary use of fraternal symbolism indicates the Roman perception of moral decline and emotional trauma associated with the experience of fighting against, instead of alongside, fellow citizens. Cooperation had fallen prey to conflict.

The establishment of the Augustan principate changed the significance of fraternal *pietas* in public life, as B outlines in Chapter Five, ‘At the Palace’ (174-88). Fraternal *pietas* remained a popular theme in public image-making, and expectations remained constant (174), but it related to sets of imperial brothers and to the sharing of imperial power, or to the conception of the imperial family administering the *res publica* as their family estate. B emphasizes Tiberius’ rededication of the temple of Castor and Pollux in his own name and that of his brother Drusus as a prime example of the exercise of fraternal *pietas* under such conditions (179). The story of Romulus and Remus continued to have influence, but it inevitably evoked Rome’s experience of civil war, whereas the divine twins Castor and Pollux provided an image of perpetual fraternal cooperation because they shared one lifetime of immortality by living on alternate days. This myth fits well the situation where only one brother could hold imperial power and look forward to deification. With regard to Titus and Domitian, B argues for the
relevance of Statius' *Thebaid*, which explores the fraternal conflicts between Oedipus' sons, Polynices and Eteocles, who fought to the death for the kingdom of Thebes (181-86). Such a literary response, set in the past and in a different country, was a way of skirting the problems inherent in the Romulus and Remus story, especially the act of fratricide which could evoke painful memories of the civil wars. If B is right in this, it becomes another example of the way in which Romans constantly renegotiated and recreated the idea of brotherhood.

In general terms this seems a fine book, from which there is much to learn. It is well organized and argued reasonably. On the other hand, the concentration upon horizontal relationships, brotherhood, partnership, sharing of property, and so on, is inclined to give an impression of egalitarianism or at least fraternté which is an ill fit with the fundamentally hierarchical and competitive nature of Roman politics and society. Perhaps this is merely a matter of emphasis, and B certainly balances cooperation with competition when describing fraternal relationships, but at times she seems to go too far in stressing the centrality of fraternal ideology, e.g.

'The Romans, who saw themselves as descendants of Romulus and Remus, considered brothers central to their public and poetic myth making, to their experience of family life, and to their ideas about intimacy among men' (3),

'Starting with the foundation story of Romulus and Remus, the Romans’ experience of family, intimacy, politics, and history was shaped by their ideas about brothers’ (4),

'... fraternal pietas had natural priority for the Romans’(63),

and,
'The ideal of fraternal pietas, or in other words the ideology of fraternity, shaped the rhetoric and the reality of Roman politics both as a dynamic of contemporary events and in literary accounts of Rome's political history' (92).

Certainly, there is much fraternal imagery, but an alternative view would be to see this as a product of the underlying familial imagery, dominated not by bonds between brothers but by pietas between fathers and sons. 'Iuppiter' was the leading god (his name incorporating his role as father), the senators were patres, the emperor was pater patriae, the patria potestas of the paterfamilias commands more attention in legal textbooks than the rights of brothers, and the father-son relationship receives at least as much attention in literary works as the bond between brothers. If indeed it was not so common for adult males to have a full brother at Rome, and if this was a reason for prizing the fraternal relationship (62), it was equally not so common to have a father (62 n.1, for Saller's view that around half Rome's men would have lost their fathers by age twenty-five, and around three-quarters by age thirty-two; cf. 91 n.2). Rome often seems dominated by fathers rather than brothers, whom even B describes as 'descendants of a founding father so to speak' (62 n.2). There was no legal equivalent to patria potestas in the fraternal relationship (13), and the patria could theoretically be endangered by filial as by fraternal pietas (e.g. the story of Fabius Cunctator dismounting on the orders of his son the consul: Liv. 24.44.10 ff., Plut. Fab. Max. 24.1 ff., Gell. NA 2.2.13 ff.; cf. Val. Max. 5.4 for exempla of pietas to parents, brothers, and the patria).

In understanding the familial imagery I would be inclined to stress the moral constraints against abuse of power associated with B's ideal model. As in the Romulus and Remus story, the behaviours and attitudes associated with the fraternal relationship ranged from political partnership to rivalry, or cooperation to conflict (even fratricide). The downside was partly controlled by appeals to the benefits of a relationship based on
pietas (the sanctions in this case being moral). This aspect of the study is very interesting. B illustrates a way in which the Romans dealt with potentially destructive power, but it probably relates better to hierarchical and competitive than to horizontal and fraternal thinking. It is noticeable that B's sets of brothers often tend to have one dominant personality, usually the elder brother, so that the problems of hierarchy can be envisaged even among brothers.

At any rate, B is surely right that brothers were extremely important, and her study illustrates well how they negotiated their relationship with regard to an evolving ideal of pietas. This kind of approach has great potential for the study of other power relationships at Rome, especially if scholars duplicate the care and multidisciplinary facility shown by B.

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ALESSANDRO BARCHIESI The Poet and the Prince: Ovid and Augustan Discourse (Berkeley, London and Los Angeles, University of California Press, 1997); 292; ISBN 0520 202236; $US45.00/£35.00.

Of late Ovid's Fasti, even more than the Aeneid, has become the focus of debate among scholars seeking to clarify the complex interrelation of literature and politics in the 'Augustan Age'. This revived interest in the Fasti, after a long period of relative neglect, is set to spill over into the Classical Studies curriculum internationally with the coming available of an attractive and readable translation into modern English verse by Betty Rose Nagle (Indiana University Press). Barchiesi's book, translated