author goes on to spoil this interesting finding by arguing that the entire urban population of early-Imperial Italy was fed with cheap grain imported from the provinces. Moreover, he pledges his adherence to the old view that Italian viticulture was wiped out by provincial competition during the second century A.D. without taking any account of the decisive counterarguments developed in A. Tchernia's *Le vin de l'Italie romaine* (Rome, 1986) and in many other publications.

All in all, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the book under review is of limited value to those who are interested in the economic history of late-Republican and early-Imperial Italy.

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ECONOMIC *AMICITIA*

K. VERBOVEN: *The Economy of Friends. Economic Aspects of* Amicitia *and Patronage in the Late Republic.* (Collection Latomus 269.) Pp. 399. Brussels: Éditions Latomus, 2002. Paper, €54. ISBN: 2-87031-210-5.

In recent years, scholars have increasingly paid attention to the ways in which concerns, which we would tend to characterize as social, played significant rôles in Roman politics and law. Now, Koenraad Verboven offers up a splendid study of the interrelationships between the two most important social mechanisms engaged by the aristocracy, and the economic world of the late Republic (also the early Empire). V. is perfectly clear, in his preface and introduction, regarding boundaries. The book aims to examine the ways in which friendship and patronage shaped 'the allocation and circulation of scarce resources, and the organization of economic activities and strategies' (p. 10). In order to get at these matters, V. concentrates first on three specific techniques for the giving and getting of those scarce resources, namely, gift exchange, loans, and legacies. Next, he examines various methods of managing such resources, once they were in hand. Here, the book takes up relationships of agency (looking at *mandatarii* and *procuratores*), partners in business (*socii*), and the employment of personal contacts to accomplish economic goals (by means of *commendationes*). V. realizes full well that his chosen approach causes him to disregard various other important and interesting matters, e.g. the ways in which *amicitia* might have influenced prices, or the effects of patronage on the awarding of public contracts. V. is also fully conscious of the fact that he is dealing throughout with the concerns of a small élite; but, as he says, the people who populate the pages of his book were precisely those who dominated the economic life of the Roman world. And finally, V. is very careful to set the stage for the whole book by carefully discussing the distinctions between emotional friendship, instrumental friendship, and patronage. In doing this, V. makes real and significant use of (esp.) sociological work in these areas.

The result of this all is a book that is extremely well focused on its particular goals, and which is always conscious of (i) the limitations imposed by the nature of our evidence, but (ii) the possibilities opened up via theoretical or comparative methods. In

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short, V. has taken very great pains to make his arguments very solid; and he has succeeded very well in doing so. The ultimate result is a portrayal of the thoroughgoing influence exerted by friendship and patronage on the activites herein examined. There may yet be room for some debate about, for example, the precise extent to which *amicitia* informed the selection of managers (*procuratores*). But be that as it may, V.'s overall discussion will surely remain essential to further work on the economics of the Roman world. In the space I have remaining, let me set out some of the ways in which this book is now also a very noteworthy contributor even to discussions that range beyond the business world.

In the part of this book which is dedicated to the allocation of scarce resources, a large chapter is devoted to gift exchange between friends. Later, similar attention is paid to the writing of letters of recommendation, so as to achieve economic goals for *amici*. These practices resulted in *gratia* being owed the giver or writer. In wrapping up his remarks about *commendationes*, V. says the following (p. 322):

> *Gratia* left its marks on the institutional plane in such a profound way that it determined the working of the entire system of administration, both in economic and other matters . . . For a privileged part of the population, therefore, personal networks of *amicitia* and patronage largely obviated the need for an impersonal bureaucracy.

This is obviously an important conclusion, in and of itself. However, if read in conjunction with the parallel arguments of Matthew Roller (*Constructing Autocracy. Aristocrats and Emperors in Julio-Claudian Rome* [Princeton, 2001], pp. 173–212) and Miriam Griffin ('*De Beneficiis* and Roman Society,' *JRS* 93 [2003], 92–113)—all of this against the background of Saller's earlier work on patronage—we are suddenly left with an extremely important picture of social mechanisms that were absolutely crucial to the fabric of pretty well everything in which the Roman aristocracy of the waning Republic and waxing Empire engaged. V.'s contribution here is vital to an understanding of the Roman élite that stretches well beyond their economic activities. (One article in particular, which V. has missed but which is very good on the matter of *commendationes*, might also be consulted: P. Leunissen, 'Conventions of Patronage in Senatorial Careers under the Principate,' *Chiron* 23 [1993], 101–20.)

Through the final pages of his treatment of *commendationes* (pp. 323–9), V. worries about the extent to which people attempted to subvert the course of justice in courts of law (where economic disputes were being handled) via letters of recommendation directed to those who would judge. Here, he seems to work with a particular notion of 'justice', namely, that all were in principle supposed to be treated equally before the law. This accords well with the picture of Roman law as guarantor, so to speak, of the whole imperial project, painted recently by Clifford Ando (*Imperial Ideology and Provincial Loyalty in the Roman Empire* [Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London, 2000], esp. pp. 73–130). On the other hand, I have tried to make the argument that the Roman élite worked with a rather different concept of 'justice', namely, that those of the élite were expected to be advantaged, that precisely herein, for the Roman aristocrat, lay justice and equity, and that the legal system, as a whole, was nicely geared toward providing the 'haves' with various methods of domination in court (Iudex vice Caesaris. *Deputy Emperors and the Administration of Justice during the Principate* [Stuttgart, 1996], esp. pp. 65–78). This view of things, obviously, would make things easier for V. But whether one prefers Ando's more optimistic approach or Peachin's pessimism, the work of V. will now be essential to grasping this central question regarding the way Rome's empire functioned.

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In sum, V. has produced a book that is quite important for our understanding of the Roman economic world, and well beyond. It merits a large and attentive audience.

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ROME'S STAMMERING CLIENTS

T. S. BURNS: *Rome and the Barbarians, 100 B.C.–A.D. 400*. Pp. xvi + 461, maps, ills. Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003. Cased, £37. ISBN: 0-8018-7306-1.

Ever since the Prophet Jeremiah foresaw a cauldron of peoples poured on Jerusalem from the north (*Jeremiah* 1:13–15), and since the Cimmerians swept into Anatolia and thence into Herodotus' *Histories* (1.6, 15–16), western historiographers have been fascinated with northern intruders. Fascination often breeds exaggeration. In the present work, B. exhibits curiosity rather than enchantment, and is thus able to fashion a more balanced portrait than do most observers.

B. treats 500 years of Roman interaction with northerners, from the days of the Cimbri and Teutones until the morrow of the Gothic influx. He sets his story on two stages, both nebulous and fluctuating—the pinnacle of Roman society and what might be called Northern Frontierland. The players on the first stage were ever-changing, while the second once stood between the Po and Rhone estuaries, but then moved to the drainages of the Rhine and Danube. During the half-millennium under study, the dramas ran simultaneously on each stage. Their course and direction depended on two principles, and on two ancient perceptions of the players. The principles first: (i) the most abiding contacts between Romans and northerners were those occurring in the Roman army; and (ii) the interactions were not the result of massive intrusions of northerners into Roman territory. And the two perceptions, one to be preferred over the other. Borrowing from the Greeks, the Romans called the northerners *barbari*—savages, stammering brutes. The cultural animus behind such a term is evident, and thus B. keeps a distance from it. He prefers another Roman characterization, one which the supposedly speech-impaired roughnecks were disposed to accept. The northerners were clients, their patrons at first being individual (and distinguished) Romans and later the Roman state. The Roman government maintained treaty relations with a leader, the principal client, and by extension the people he ruled. Now, having set perceptions and principles in order (pp. 1–41, an introductory chapter), B. is ready to generate the two dramas. From Caesar's Rhineland campaigns until the aftermath of Julian's victory at Argentoratum, the mingling of Romans and their neighbors in Northern Frontierland produced a composite society; B. gives special attention to one case, the emergence of the Alamannic confederation. Meanwhile, the second and perhaps more chaotic drama was unfolding in the centers of Roman power. In the time of the Roman Dominate, some of the habits and even the players from Northern Frontierland came to the top of Roman society, their arrival at this dizzying height being the result of commander-and-troop interactions since the third century and a sudden big intrusion of northerners after the Battle of Adrianople. It will be useful to quote the sections in which B. sets forth the fundamentals of his

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