review of ancient studies that Publicola se rapproches de Mitra, chacun
ayant sa spécificité symbolique. Là est, à mon
sens, le passage le plus clair de tout le livre.

Vient ensuite l’analyse de la question des biens
des Tarquins et la naissance de l’île tibérine,
puis une conclusion très ferme qui reprend les
avancées. Le livre est sans conteste réussi :
les hypothèses y sont explicitées, argumentées,
sur la base de textes traduits et utilisés avec
profondeur. Comme toujours dans la démarche
comparatiste, on est séduit par l’esprit de
système et les clartés que cette réflexion permet
de répandre sur cette période romaine.

Mais aussi, on se arrêtera parfois en chemin,
lorsque la destruction de la maison de Publicola
et sa reconstruction au pied de la
élia sont assimilées au rabaissement au niveau du sol
der un char qui pouvait se mouvoir au-dessus des
terre. C’est, il y a le même mouvement vers le
bas, mais entre une maison, demeure publique,
devant et civique, et un char, privé et militaire,
la différence symbolique est grande. Quoi qu’il
en soit, on appréciera la richesse des hypothèses,
fécondes et stimulantes, et la belle fidélité à un
maître, dans le meilleur sens du terme : la figure
G. Dumézil ressort grandie de ces analyses,
aussi bien celles qui reprennent ses positions
que celles qui sont poussées plus loin, comme si
D. Briquel déplaçait le curseur sur une balance
imaginaire, pour faire ressortir de nouvelles
perspectives. Un livre stimulant, clair et riche.

Tran (N.), Les membres des associations
romaines : le rang social des collegiati en Italie
et en Gaules, sous le Haut-Empire. - Rome :
École française de Rome, 2006. - 578p.:
bibliogr., index. - (Collection de l’École française
de Rome, ISSN : 0223.5099 ; 367). - ISBN :
2.7283.0556.0.

This book is based on the author’s PDd
thesis. It studies the social impact of
collegium-membership in Italy and in
the Gallic-Germanic provinces under the
Principate.

The introduction (p. 1-41) presents the
concept of « sociability » and how it underlays
participation in voluntary associations. Besides
enjoying « sociability » the collegiate hope to
increase their social capital and realize ambitions
outside their collegium.

Part I (p. 43-203) analyses how college
membership conferred prestige and respectability.
« Collegiate » status was shared by members
from different social backgrounds, ranging from
slaves to local notables (although both extremes
were exceptional). Membership of professional
occupations was honorable for the plebs media,
particularly for freedmen. Collegia were
hierarchically structured. The larger a collegium
was, the more selective and exclusive its hierarchy
and the more prestigious collegiate office-
holding became. Collegia served as recipients
for semi-public munificence. Relations between
collegiati were modeled on amicitia, relying on
solidarity and mutual assistance. Thus collegia
allowed wealthy members to acquire prestige
by helping their co-members or by spending on
behalf of the collegium-community.

Part II (p. 205-369) deals with the place of
collegia within Roman society. Collegia were
an inseparable part of civic society (« la cité »).
Collegiate and civic honors converged. Some
high ranking collegiati achieved decurionate
or equestrian status, many became (seviri)
augustales, some received public tokens of
honor. The ordo augustalium in particular
appears closely connected with the collegia.
Wealthy collegiati and collegia were honored as
public benefactors. The prominence of collegia
was visualised in their scholae, temples and
monuments built in public places.

Because collegia were an integral part of
urban life but membership was not restricted to
citizens, they served to integrate migrants. This
is particularly clear in Ostia and Lugdunum.
Collegia maintained formal contacts with municipal authorities, manifested their loyalty to the emperor and sought to establish contacts with the imperial administration, particularly the annona. Tran rejects Sirks’s thesis that the corpora working for the annona were created and controlled by the state.

Part III (p. 377-518) studies the social networks of collegium-members on the basis of membership lists. Similarity of names suggests that collegia relations were often extensions of other relations, primarily between co-freedmen, and patrons and freedmen. These « groups » of namesakes are « nébuleuses » rather than « entités unitaires ». Occupational co-operation is likely, but collegia were no instruments of economic control for patrons over freedmen. The « nébuleuses » attest the potential of collegia to promote social mobility.

The group of collective patrons which a collegium elected was typically heterogeneous, including (former) collegiati and municipal or (sometimes) imperial aristocrats. It served as a waiting room for successful collegiati to achieve aristocratic status.

This work is visibly the revised version of an original doctoral thesis and retains some of this genre’s typical defects: excessively elaborated case studies, long footnotes, blind spots, etc... This is particularly clear in the third part, the chapters of which consist of long self-contained studies. Each is persuasive in itself, but although they elaborate the same themes, their lack of coherence obscures the general points the author wishes to make.

The concept of « nébuleuses » is interesting and avoids drawing conclusions from mere similarity of names. Yet, in some cases, particularly where prominent notables are involved, networks analysis would have been welcome. The concept of « density » (the number of effective links between group members compared to the possible number of links) and centrality would surely have been useful.

The author limits himself to the study of collegiati. Relations outside the collegia are rarely elaborated. Thus, he makes no mention of the fascinating dossier of the fabri (subaediani) of Narbo and their patron Fadius Secundus Musa. L. Helvius Frugi, curator and patron of the nautae Rhodanici et Ararici and decurio of Vienna is mentioned several times, but his network is not followed up. Frugi was no doubt related to P. Helvius Masso another decurio of Vienna, married to Apronia Casata. She in turn may be linked to C. Apronius Raptor, a Treverus residing in Lugdunum as negotiator vinarius and nauta Araricus and patron of their corporations. Frugi’s wife Nameria Titulla may be linked with the magister of the hastiferi at Vienna, Namerius Euprepes.

The author’s methodology is primarily prosopographic. Unfortunately, the repertorium is not included. The numerous tables and the excellent indices partly make up for this absence, and of course for most ordinary collegiati little is known beyond their name and collegium. Nevertheless, many privileged members, magistrates, benefactors and patrons provide sufficient data to warrant giving them a individual record. Royden has done this for the magistrates of the professional collegia in Italy, but Tran’s population is much larger than Royden’s, whose work in any case leaves room for improvement.

However, these imperfections should not obscure the merits of this work. The author’s analysis of collegiate membership as a structural element of the social life of millions of non-aristocratic Romans and of the role of collegia as inherent features of Roman social structures throws a fascinating new light on Roman society as a whole.

Koen Verboven