

Kinship and Command: Aspects of Paternity in the *Imperia Manliana*

This paper offers an analysis of Livy's narrative of the execution of the young Manlius Torquatus by his consular father, an episode Livy tags the *imperia Manliana* (Livy 8.7.1-8.2). I show that Livy's narrative of the episode is set within a broader context of familial obligations at tension with public duty. Drawing on previous work on paternity as a model for imperial power (esp. Roller 2001, Feldherr 1997) I argue that this episode employs the father figure as a strong heuristic foil for the behavior of the consul Torquatus. As a comparandum, I offer the execution of Brutus' sons (Livy 2.3-4), and suggest that the dynamic created between the two roles of father and consul reveals a moral evaluation of consular behavior, which is central to Republican thinking about political authority.

The execution of an adult son by his father is commonly seen as a straightforward *exemplum* of the *ius vitae necisque* of the Roman father (e.g., Crook 1967, Lacey 1986, Lobrano 1984, Oakley 1997:439, Saller 1994, Thomas 1981), or otherwise of the Roman prioritization of the state over the individual (Cic, *de Off.* 1.58; Polyb. 6.54.5, cf. Feldherr 1998). Harris 1986, however, has pointed out that in many of the extant filicide stories, the father was also consul, and the execution ordered and carried out through magisterial *imperium* rather than *patria potestas*. This paper will show that the attempt to narrow down the legal justification for the execution misses and detracts from the moralizing force of the *exemplum*. A more productive reading takes account of the differing sets of obligations placed upon a single individual by his various social and political roles. The resulting tension not only gives rise to a complex set of inter-personal interactions, but also defines and nuances the types of authority at play.

At the center of the Torquatus episode is the son's presentation of his spoils and the father's rejection of his son's heroism and the subsequent execution. The scene develops a dialectic between the father's two roles: the son emphasizes paternity and lineage, while the father promotes his consular role and the disruption of family ties, caused both by the son's offense and the demands of the consular office. But this dichotomy extends beyond the exchange itself and into the broader context of the war against the Latins. Like the younger Torquatus, the Latins are described as forgetful of their obligations to their superiors, which in turn compels their superiors to forget ties of kinship in order to exact punishment (8.5.10 (Latins), 8.7.8 (younger Torquatus), 8.7.16 (elder Torquatus)). Livy thus constructs an interlocking narrative of private and political obligations, in which the consul's duty is to punish those who transgress the boundaries between private sentiment and public obligation. The tension between public office and paternal kinship showcases the consul as a guardian of public *pietas*, even as the particulars of the episode impose on him forgetfulness of private *pietas*. I conclude the paper by analyzing some of the same themes in Brutus' execution of his sons, an episode which further emphasizes the centrality of the father/consul tension in Republican political thought.