

saepe evenisse and *quas scio multas plurimum valuisse*. S. B. prefers the latter view 'if the text is sound'. I do not believe it is, and would read <et> *quidem*; the corruption of *quidem* to *quod*, easy in any context, is particularly so here because of the following *quod*.

15, 4, 6. *cumque magnum bellum in Cappadocia concitaretur si sacerdos armis se, quod facturus putabatur, defenderet, adulescens et equitatu et peditatu et pecunia paratus et †toto† iis qui novari aliquid volebant, perfeci ut e regno ille discederet.*

toto MV: *tuto* DHF

For the corrupt word a list of about 25 suggestions can be compiled from the editions, but none of them is even plausible. Preferable to any of them would, I believe, be *fautor*; for *fautor* construed with a dative see LANDGRAF on S. Rosc. 16, HOLDEN on Planc. 1.

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PLINY AND THE PATRONAGE OF COMMUNITIES*

Walter Schmitthenner zum 60. Geburtstag

Few historians would disagree with the statement that patronage is one of the most important, and yet elusive bonds in Roman society. To begin with, it is not easy to define what patronage is. To what extent, for example, do the words *patrocinium*, *patronatus*, *fides* and *clientela* describe different aspects of the same phenomenon¹? Moreover, there is the difficult question of

* The vocabulary of patronage is always difficult. I have used the Latin words *patronatus*, *patronus* and *patrocinium* in reference to the relationship arising out of a formal cooptation. The English words »patron« and »patronage« are, in contrast, used non-technically to describe any relationship based on mutual obligation and *fides* in which *beneficia* and *officia* are performed by parties of different status. Frequently cited literature: BADIAN = E. BADIAN, *Foreign Clientelae*, Oxford 1958. — GELZER = M. GELZER, *Die Nobilität der römischen Republik* (1912), in: *Kleine Schriften*, Wiesbaden 1962, I. — HARMAND = L. HARMAND, *Le patronat sur les collectivités publiques*, Paris 1957.

For their comments on the improvement of the text, I would like to thank A. ECKSTEIN, C. P. JONES, B. M. LEVICK, J. BLEICKEN and an anonymous critic.

¹ For a discussion of the latter two and of entry into the relationship, see BADIAN, 1 ff. No article on *patrocinium* has appeared in RE. Though various studies of patronage in the late republic and Augustan eras exist (cf. A. VON PREMERSTEIN, *Art. Clientes* RE IV, 23 ff; *Vom Werden und Wesen des Prinzipats*, Abh. München 1937, Heft 15, 113 ff.), there has been no general discussion of the institution in the principate.

whether the English word »patronage« is an adequate label for the institutions described by these words. And finally, it should be noted that patronage has for us a slightly negative or at best, a neutral force, which was not the case for the Roman.

Patronage is usually divided into four categories². There is the relationship between the patron and his *libertus*, between the patron and free-born individuals of lower social standing, the patronage acquired by the advocate (*patronus causae*), and the patronage of communities. It is the last of these which is the subject of this paper. These categories are, however, not rigid; one of the basic responsibilities of the patron of a community, for example, is to render legal assistance to his client, namely to the community and its members.

It is generally agreed that the origin of patronage as an institution is to be found in Rome's pre-history³. During the republic, patronage, with its emphasis on protection and on the basic inequality of the two contracting parties, complemented the related concept of *hospitium*, which stressed reciprocity and the equality of both sides⁴. BADIAN has argued, however, that in the 2nd Century B.C., as the dominance of Rome and of individual Roman became increasingly manifest, the theoretical reciprocity and equality of the latter disappeared and the two concepts, *patrocinium* and *hospitium*, merged. For all essential purposes, he concludes, the Roman noble treated *hospites* and *clientes* in the same way⁵.

MOMMSEN labeled the relationships of *patrocinium* and *hospitium* »Consensualverträge« that is, oral agreements concluded with a »beiderseitige Willenserklärung«⁶. More accurately, they may be considered simply as non-actionable agreements. This extra-legal basis refers back, as does the emphasis on the *pietas* which was felt to exist in the relationships, to the pre-historical development of both. The moral force of the *pietas* in maintaining these connections should not be underestimated, but there was another consideration, on a more pragmatic level, which also served to bind the two parties; namely the loss of prestige and *fides* incumbent with the abandonment of the other party in a time of need⁷. Or, more positively, such relationships prospered because they brought credit to both parties. They were a visible manifestation of the power and influence of each.

² These are the categories discussed by GELZER, 68 ff.

³ This is demonstrated by the fact that the patronage relationship, except for that between *patronus* and *libertus*, remained outside the *ius civile*. On the subject, see TH. MOMMSEN, *Das römische Gastrecht und die römische Clientel*, in: *Römische Forschungen*, Berlin 1864, I, 386; BADIAN, 1 ff. and J. MARQUARDT, *Das Privatleben der Römer*, Leipzig 1886, 195 ff.

⁴ MOMMSEN, *Gastrecht*, 329 ff.

⁵ BADIAN, 154–155.

⁶ MOMMSEN, *Gastrecht*, 335.

⁷ Cf. FIRA² I, page 62, nr. 21; Gell. (quoting Cato) V, 13, 4 and D. H. II, 10, 3.

That the patronage of communities was a successful institution was due in part to its flexibility in both form and content. The community could use the honor or dignity both to reward its benefactors (*ob merita*, cf. *ILS* 6109, 6110) and to encourage generosity (... *ut tantae virtutis vir auxilio sit futuris municipio nostro*, *ILS* 6106). Moreover, what MOMMSEN considered a logical impossibility (in a literal sense) of being both *patronus* and *hospes* to the same community and of being *patronus* and *hospes* to one's *patria*, the Romans easily accepted⁸. Such combinations are not unknown in the late republic (e.g., *ILS* 6049), but become increasingly common in the 2nd and 3rd Centuries A.D. Finally, flexibility was also ensured by the fact that, though Roman law established conditions by which the honor might be bestowed, it did not specify who might become *patronus* or define the duties of either party⁹. Indeed, the *tabulae patronatus*¹⁰, which commemorate the establishment of the agreement between patron and client-community, should be understood as honorary decrees rather than as legal contracts.

The patronage of communities, understood in its broadest sense, manifests itself in both a formal and in an informal manner. The *leges Ursonensis* and *Malacitana* describe the formalities that must be gone through before the title could be officially conferred by a *decretum* of the municipal senate¹¹. There can be no doubt that the approximately one thousand municipal *patroni* known from inscriptions were formally designated in accordance with these regulations. Indeed, the abovementioned *tabulae patronatus* are the physical manifestation of these provisions.

Informally, the situation was somewhat different. There was another group of benefactors who, although they did not formally have the honor or status of patron, nevertheless conferred *beneficia* on various communities and generally acted as »patrons«. For obvious reasons, it is not easy to identify these individuals, but at least two categories may be noted. There was, first, a group of would-be *patroni* whose *merita* and connections with the town were not yet considered sufficient for the honor. A second group would be made up of those whose *beneficia* were ample, but for whom, for one reason or another, the official honor was not considered appropriate. The letters of Pliny the Younger are particularly useful for understanding how patronage of communities worked in both the formal and, what is more important, in the informal relationship.

The particular questions to be discussed here are: first, what were the conditions and circumstances surrounding the initiation of these relationships?

⁸ MOMMSEN, *Gastrecht*, 331, 334 and 358 ff.

⁹ On this question, see J. NICOLS, *Zur rechtlichen Lage des Gemeindepatronats*, Chiron (forthcoming).

¹⁰ R. CAGNAT, *Cours d'Epigraphie latine*, Paris 1914⁴, 330 and HARMAND, 332 ff.

¹¹ *ILS* 6087 cc. 97, 130 and 131; *ILS* 6089 c. 61.

Secondly, what is the relationship between formal *patronatus* and benefaction? And, thirdly, what attitudes governed the exercise of these related institutions? Chronologically, the period under consideration is the early principate, particularly the reign of Trajan.

Pliny included a number of letters about his activities as a patron of communities; in fact, they make up a good proportion of the large number of letters concerning the various forms of patronage. His relations to three towns in Italy (Tifernum Tiberinum in Etruria, Firmum in Picenum and his *patria* of Comum) and to the Baetici illustrate well the variable nature of the patronal relationship.

Concerning his relationship to Tifernum, Pliny, in writing to his wife's grandfather about a prospective visit, comments:

erit una sed brevis mora: deflectemus in Tuscos, non ut agros remque familiarem oculis subiciamus (id enim postponi potest), sed ut fungamur necessario officio. oppidum est praediis nostris vicinum (nomen Tiferni Tiberini), quod me paene adhuc puerum patronum cooptavit, tanto maiore studio quanto minore iudicio (IV, 1, 3–4).

There can be no question here about Pliny's status: *me . . . patronum cooptavit* is the precise legal language for the cooptation of *patroni* known from municipal charters and from the various *tabulae patronatus*¹².

We do not know how many other *patroni* Tifernum might have had¹³, but Pliny's age at the time of the cooptation was remarkable (even to himself!) and requires some explanation. SHERWIN-WHITE has suggested that he was, in fact, 17 or 18 years old at the time in question and that the occasion was his acceptance of the inheritance of his uncle, Pliny the Elder, who had died during the Vesuvius eruption of 79¹⁴. In that year Pliny was 17. Though the evidence for the connection is not decisive, it is difficult to establish any other source for this valuable piece of property¹⁵.

The situation may be reconstructed as follows. The elder Pliny owned a large estate near Tifernum¹⁶. On his death, the estate passed to his nephew, and now adopted son, Pliny the Younger. As the estate was one of the largest in the area and as Pliny, in combining the property of both his natural and adoptive parents, had become a very wealthy man¹⁷, it would have been desir-

¹² ILS 6089 c. 61 and ILS 6093 ff. They are discussed by HARMAND, 332ff.

¹³ There were no restrictions on the number or age of *patroni* Cf. A. N. SHERWIN-WHITE, *The Letters of Pliny the Younger: A Historical and Social Commentary*, Oxford 1966, 265.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ This connection has been generally accepted, cf. R. DUNCAN-JONES, *The Economy of the Roman Empire*, Cambridge 1974, 19.

¹⁶ The income from this estate was HS 400000 per annum, *ep.* X, 8, 4.

¹⁷ On Pliny's wealth, see DUNCAN-JONES, *Economy*, 17–32.

able for the community to insure his good-will by coopting him as *patronus* immediately upon acceptance of the inheritance. The urgency would be especially pressing as Pliny had no other bond to the community.

Two points are remarkable in this action. The first concerns the status of Pliny the Elder in Tifernum and the second the official justification for coopting his adoptive son. Concerning the first, it is manifest in the *tabulae patronatus* that the *patronus* and all his descendants received the *clientela*¹⁸. There is no evidence proving that Pliny the Elder was a patron of this town, but if he were, then the formal cooptation of his adopted son would have been, though technically not necessary, all that more impressive for having taken place at all. More interesting is the question of how the citizens of Tifernum justified coopting the young Pliny. The two surviving *tabulae* emanating from Italian communities are in the form of *decreta decurionum* and justify the cooptation by describing at length, though in vague terms, the merits of the patron¹⁹. This would have been difficult to do in the case of the young Pliny. But, regardless of the status of the elder Pliny or of the public justification for the cooptation of his nephew, it is clear that the citizens of Tifernum were anxious to secure the good-will of the new landowner. Hence, Pliny's wealth, and not his merits or still unproven talents, was the motivating factor in the decision to coopt him.

The importance of this letter then is that it clearly reveals the means which communities used in order to secure the good-will of those who possessed wealth and influence. Inscriptions protest (perhaps too much) that the honor had been won by merit²⁰, but it was probably an all too frequent occurrence that communities bestowed the honor as an incentive in the hope that it would eventually be deserved²¹.

This letter is also of interest because it indicates the nature of the mutual responsibilities of both parties. Pliny comments further:

adventus meos celebrat, profectionibus angitur, honoribus gaudet. in hoc ego, ut referrem gratiam (nam vinci in amore turpissimum est), templum pecunia mea exstruxi (IV, 1, 4 – 5).

The basis of the exchange is clear: in return for the acknowledgment of Pliny's superior status, he is prepared to assume financial responsibility for local projects, in this case for the building of a temple. That is, benefactions, here material ones, are being traded off against prestige.

¹⁸ The usual formula is: *sibi liberis posterisque suis in fidem clientelamque suam recepit*, ILS 6100.

¹⁹ ILS 6106, 6110.

²⁰ Cf. HARMAND, 357.

²¹ Augustus attempted to regulate this form of »bribery« by forbidding provincials to honor their current governors, Dio 56, 25, 8. Cf. NICOLS, Gemeindepatronat.

Though Pliny's attitude is clearly »patronizing«, he does, nevertheless, seem to have taken genuine pleasure from the enthusiasm of the citizens of Tifernum. Even so, he is acutely aware of the reality: the costs he has assumed are seen as a necessary burden (*necessarium officium*, IV, 1, 3)²². He has assumed them not because of the prestige he might enjoy in a small town but because such *officia* belong to the responsibilities of the good citizen. Officially, Pliny built the temple because he wanted to thank the community for the honors he had received from it (cf. VI, 34); unofficially, he recognizes that the patron must also be a benefactor.

The situation described in III, 4, is more complex but well illustrates the characteristics of the institution in Pliny's day and the attitudes toward it among men of his standing. In this letter, Pliny describes how an embassy had arrived from the province of Baetica with the intention of indicting its former governor, Caecilius Classicus (PIR² C 32). The provincial legates request the services of the advocate for the prosecution; he, however, wishes to decline, claiming other duties. Subsequently, he writes,

Factum est senatus consultum perquam honorificum, ut darer provincialibus patronus si ab ipso me impetrassent. Legati rursus inducti iterum me iam praesentem advocatum postulaverunt, implorantes fidem meam quam esset contra Massam Baebium experti, adlegantes patrocini foedus. Secuta est senatus clarissima adsensio, quae solet decreta praecurrere. Tum ego 'Destino' inquam, 'patres conscripti, putare me iustas excusationis causas attulisse'. Placuit et modestia sermonis et ratio (III, 4, 3 - 4).

This letter is not easy to interpret, for Pliny uses the vocabulary of patronage in a manner which, though perhaps clear to his contemporaries, is ambiguous. The result is that his relationship to the Baetici remains obscure. Nevertheless, this letter does illustrate, as no inscription can, the basic contradiction between the theory and practice of patronage during the principate.

In form, this letter is consistent with the principles outlined by J. BÉRANGER in his discussion of *le refus du pouvoir*, namely, that one generates legitimation, consensus and authority by initially refusing and then being »persuaded« to accept a power or a responsibility which one has already determined to exercise²³. BÉRANGER is referring, of course, to the role of the emperor and how each successive princeps legitimized his position by giving, at first, a show of refusing power. It is, however, interesting to observe how Pliny uses the same devices of *recusatio* and *cunctatio* in order to secure prior approval for actions which, in the course of the long trial ahead, might be offen-

²² On the significance of *necessarium*, cf. GELZER, 72ff.

²³ J. BÉRANGER, *Recherches sur l'aspect idéologique du principat*, Basel 1953, 137ff.

sive to some of his senatorial colleagues. And, just as with the emperor, his apparent modesty is praised by the Senate when he finally accepts the contract. In this sense, indeed, the parallel between *optimus civis* and *optimus princeps* is not inappropriate, for in both cases, the image is created of the modest and responsible individual serving the best interests of the state. Indeed, this idea of service is a basic component of the patronage of communities.

The critical question in this letter is whether Pliny's standing in reference to the Baetici was simply that of *patronus causae*, or had he been coopted as *patronus provinciae*²⁴? Admittedly, the distinction between these two functions is not always clear, but communities clearly employed the patronal relationship in order to secure such senators for themselves on a permanent basis who could most effectively represent their interests at Rome²⁵.

In order to understand the nature of the connection between Pliny and the Baetici in 99, it is necessary to examine the previous relationship between the two parties. In the year 93, six years earlier, the Senate had instructed Pliny to act as counsel for the Baetici in the prosecution of another governor indicted for extortion. That is, he was to serve as *patronus causae* in accordance with the provisions first established by the *lex Acilia*²⁶. This is what he says about the case:

Dederat me senatus cum Herennio Senecione advocatum provinciae Baeticae contra Baebium Massam, damnatoque Massa censuerat, ut bona eius publice custodirentur. Senecio, cum explorasset consules postulationibus vacaturos, convenit me et 'Qua concordia' inquit 'inunctam nobis accusationem exsecuti sumus, hac adeamus consules petamusque, ne bona dissipari sinant, quorum esse in custodia debent'. Respondi: 'Cum simus advocati a senatu dati, dispice num peractas putes partes nostras senatus cognitione finita.' Et ille: 'Tu quem voles tibi terminum statues, cui nulla cum provincia necessitudo nisi ex beneficio tuo et hoc recenti; ipse et natus ibi et quaestor in ea fui.' Tum ego: 'Si fixum tibi istud ac deliberatum, sequar te ut, si qua ex hoc invidia, non tantum tua.' (VII, 33, 4–5).

As *patronus causae*, Pliny clearly considered that his responsibilities to the province had come to an end when the case was over; and Herennius accepted

²⁴ Scholarly opinion is divided on this question. SHERWIN-WHITE, *Letters of Pliny*, ad loc., and J. DEININGER, *Die Provinziallandtage der römischen Kaiserzeit*, München 1965, 129–130, consider him as such. HARMAND does not include him in his list of provincial patrons, and leaves the question of his status open, 414–417.

²⁵ ILS 6106; Fronto, ad. Am. II, 11, suggests that those men should be elected patron » ... qui nunc fori principem locum occupant. «

²⁶ FIRA² I, p. 87.

that interpretation. That Pliny continued to support the provincials thereafter was based not on his previous commitment to them, but on his friendship for his colleague. It is to be noted, moreover, that Herennius felt his own commitment to be continuous because, first, he had been born in the province and, second, because he had served there. These two facts establish a natural bond between the two parties as distinct from the legally defined status of *patronus causae*.

In 99, however the situation was very different. The critical passage in the letter cited at the beginning of this discussion reads: *adlegantes* (i. e., the Baetici) *patrocini foedus* (III, 4, 4). Pliny's language here is unambiguous: in order to support their request for the advocate's services, the *legati provinciae Baeticae* produced a formal treaty (*foedus*; cf. VIII, 6, 14, 24, 2; X, 93) of *patrocinium*, the validity of which Pliny does not question. Unfortunately, he does not explain whether, by *patrocinium*, he means a general patronage, such as he enjoyed in Tifernum, or the more specific *patrocinium* of the *patronus causae*. In support of the latter interpretation, it may be observed that on the occasions when Pliny does use the word *patrocinium* (VI, 23, 1; IX, 7, 1; cf. *Cod. Just.* II, 7, 9), it refers to his services as an advocate. There are, however, several problems with this interpretation. First, if the *foedus patrocini* had been made specifically to ensure his services as an advocate, then the whole *recusatio-cunctatio* motif becomes meaningless, for he had already made a formal commitment to represent the interests of the Baetici. This is, however, highly unlikely, for he had on at least one previous occasion (I, 7) refused to act for them in a similar case and can see grounds for refusing on still another (III, 4, 8). These considerations suggest that Pliny's *patrocinium* was the general variety²⁷. This conclusion is, moreover, supported by his admission that he enjoyed the *iura hospitii* with these provincials (III, 4, 5). This is significant because there are a number of bronze inscriptions from the Spanish provinces (*tabulae patronatus*) which combine the cooptation of a patron with the extension of *hospitium*²⁸. It is likely that the Baetici are referring to such a document when they mention *foedus patrocini*.

There are also problems with this interpretation. Only twelve provincial patrons are epigraphically attested²⁹. Of these only five are senators, four of whom date to the end of the 3rd Century or still later and the fifth, Nonius Balbus, the *patronus* of the *commune Cretensium* (CIL X, 1430), probably received this honor in about 30 B. C.³⁰ This suggests that a great deal of caution is required, if this honor is to be ascribed to Pliny.

²⁷ Cf. NICOLS, Patronum cooptare, patrocinium deferre, ZSSSt (forthcoming).

²⁸ AE 1936, 23; 1969/70, 746 and ILS 6108.

²⁹ HARMAND, 411 ff.

³⁰ On Nonius' career, see L. SCHUMACHER, Das Ehrendekret für M. Nonius Balbus aus Herculaneum, Chiron 6 (1976) 165–168.

The most satisfactory solution to this problem is to find some way of explaining the *patrocinium* without making Pliny *patronus provinciae*. The starting point must be the *iura hospitii*, as these are openly acknowledged by Pliny. It may be that Pliny had been extended such rights in one or more of the communities in Baetica or in the province at large after the trial of 93. That is, he could have been *hospes* and not *patronus*. Indeed, some of the tablets (*tesserae hospitalis*) mentioned above do extend *hospitium* without referring to *patrocinium* or to the cooptation of a patron³¹. It is notable, moreover, that in some of these documents, the *hospes* receives the community *in fidem clientelamque suam*, apparently assuming the functions of both *hospes* and *patronus*³². It is precisely out of such documents, in which *hospitium*, *clientela*, *patrocinium* and other related concepts are equated, that misunderstandings could arise. Hence, it may be that the *foedus patrocini* referred to by the Baetici was, in fact, a *tessera hospitalis* (with or without reference to *clientela*) which was understood by the provincials as being equivalent to a *tabula patronatus*.

There is another possibility. There is no epigraphical evidence for the existence of *hospites provinciae*, hence it is unlikely that this was Pliny's status. Instead, it is more likely that he enjoyed such *iura* with one or more communities of Baetica, and the legati are claiming that, as the *tota provincia* (III, 9, 4) stood behind the prosecution of Caecilius, then Pliny's obligations to the individual communities could best be fulfilled by defending the whole³³.

Pliny's contacts with the Baetici may be summarized as follows. In 93, he served as *patronus causae* in an action on behalf of the provincials (VII, 33). He seems, at first, to have reckoned his relationship as having terminated with the end of the trial. But soon thereafter, on the urging of Herennius, he was again active on their behalf. And, for reasons which he does not make clear, may have continued to be so over the next several years if the expression, made in 97 about his services to the Baetici (... *tot officiis, tot laboribus*, I, 7, 2), is to be understood as a reference to events beyond those of 93. But, regardless of the timing and the situation, a formal agreement of some kind existed in 99.

It appears then, that, when a province or a municipality was in need of assistance, the usual procedure was to request the services of a senator who might be bound to the community by natural or acquired ties. Pliny's colleague in the prosecution of Baebius Massa in 93, Herennius Senecio, is a

³¹ ILS 6096, 6104, 6102.

³² AE 1962, 287; 1961, 96; 1967, 239; and ILS 6097.

³³ That Pliny would be *patronus causae* for the whole province and then *hospes* to one or more individual communities would not be unusual; governors of provinces, in so far as they became *patroni*, were patrons of individual communities in the province governed, and not of the province as a whole.

good example of both. As Herennius told Pliny when the latter was prepared to terminate his relations to the province after the completion of the trial:

Tu quem voles tibi terminum statues, cui nulla cum provincia necessitudo nisi ex beneficio tuo et hoc recenti; ipse et natus ibi et quaestor in ea fui (VII, 33, 5)

That is, it was customary for the community to enlist the support of those senators who were connected to it by natural bonds³⁴. By 99, Pliny had, through the *iura hospitii* and his services and labors on behalf of the province, achieved something like that status.

The relationship between Pliny and the province of Baetica may be summarized as follows. First, he had acted formally for the province on at least two occasions as *patronus causae*. Secondly, he enjoyed the *iura hospitii* with one or more communities in the province, or perhaps even with the province as a whole. Thirdly, he may have been *patronus* of one or more communities but it is unlikely that he was ever coopted *patronus provinciae*. All these factors plus the appeal of the Baetici to his *fides* and their celebration of him in the Senate point to a general, if informal, patronage of the province. Or, in other words, the relationship between the two parties consisted of a variety of formal and informal ties in which Pliny was clearly the »patron« and the provincials the »clientes«. This state of affairs is comparable to the traditional practice of the institution in the late Republic³⁵. Now that Pliny's status has been established, the attitudes governing the exercise of patronage may be considered.

The first question to be considered here is: why did the Baetici seek out Pliny in 99 instead of a native son like the now dead Herennius? There can be no doubt about the fact that there was a sufficient number of senators from Baetica in the Senate at this time³⁶. Indeed, the emperor Trajan came from Italica, a community in that province. The imperial family then surely had an interest in the selection of any *patronus causae*. Given these circumstances, it is difficult to reconstruct a plausible explanation for the choice of Pliny. Clearly, the emperor must have allowed or even encouraged the Baetici to seek out Pliny, which, if true, may well account for his wish to preserve appearances by having the Senate legitimize his status.

³⁴ Note the use of *necessitudo*, cf. GELZER, 72f.

³⁵ Cf. GELZER, 89f.

³⁶ B. STECH, *Senatores Romani qui fuerint inde a Vespasiano usque ad Traiani exitum* (= Klio Beiheft X), Leipzig 1912, 167–170, and, more recently, R. WIEGELS, *Die römischen Senatoren und Ritter aus den hispanischen Provinzen bis Diokletian*, Diss. Freiburg 1971 (unpublished). There are at least ten from Baetica.

The reasons which Pliny openly and officially professed for undertaking the prosecution of Caecilius are, however, more traditional and idealistic. As such, they suggest much about the conflicting attitudes toward patronage of communities during the principate. He says:

Compulit autem me ad hoc consilium non solum consensus senatus, quamquam hic maxime, verum et alii quidam minores, sed tamen numeri. Veniebat in mentem priores nostros etiam singulorum hospitem iniurias voluntariis accusationibus exsecutos, quo deformius arbitrabar publici hospitii iura negligere. Praeterea cum recorderer, quanta pro isdem Baeticis superiore advocatione etiam pericula subissem, conservandum veteris officii meritum novo videbatur (III, 4, 5 – 6).

Hence, the major reason for accepting was the unanimous feeling in the Senate (*consensus senatus*); that is, the good citizen yields gracefully to the authority of the Senate (why the Senate should urge this task on him is not clear; but it is likely that the *consensus* was not as spontaneous as Pliny suggests, but, rather, conformed to what the emperor, the provincials and Pliny all wished).

These two themes, the weight of tradition and the responsibility of the good citizen are then given further emphasis: *Veniebat in mentem priores nostros etiam singulorum hospitem iniurias voluntariis accusationibus exsecutos* (III, 4, 5). This idea is consistent with the idea of patronage developed in the early principate. Dionysius of Halicarnasus notes:

ὁ δὲ Ῥωμύλος ἐπικλήσει τε εὐπρεπεῖ τὸ πρᾶγμα ἐκόσμησε πατρωνεῖαν ὀνομάσας τὴν τῶν πενήτων καὶ ταπεινῶν προστασίαν, καὶ τὰ ἔργα χρηστὰ προσέθηκεν ἑκατέροις, καὶ φιλανθρώπους καὶ πολιτικὰς ἀπεργαζόμενος αὐτῶν τὰς συζυγίας (II, 9, 3)

Thus, the good patron (or, as the case may be, the good client) is also a good citizen. Tradition then sanctified this exercise of civic virtue.

Pliny then continues his explanation with a statement that is central to the understanding of Roman patronage:

Est enim ita comparatum ut antiquiora beneficia subvertas, nisi illa posterioribus cumules. Nam quamlibet saepe obligati, si quid unum neges, hoc solum meminerunt quod negatum est (III, 4, 6).

Pliny does not specify here whether the *beneficia* result from the actions of a formally designated *patronus* or from those of a benefactor, but the attitude described applies equally to both. The duties of each party are clear. The beneficiaries (or *clientes*) are expected to remember and »memorialize« the benefits received and the benefactor. Conversely, the disappointed client readily

forgets past achievements and »memorializes« instead the rejection. Thus, as argued above, the services of the patron and benefactor are exchanged against the celebration of his name and generosity. The Baetici praised Pliny's past services to them in the Senate, thereby honoring him. It would be a terrible blow to his reputation and *fides* to refuse their request. He seems to be saying here that the patronal relationship depended, at least in theory, upon the continuous performance of mutual duties and services. To deny even one request could result in a serious loss of *clientela* and prestige.

Pliny admits that two other considerations also moved him to undertake the prosecution:

Ducebar etiam quod decesserat Classicus, amotumque erat quod in eiusmodi causis solet esse tristissimum, periculum senatoris. Videbam ergo advocacioni meae non minorem gratiam quam si viveret ille propositam, invidiam nullam. In summa computabam, si munere hoc iam tertio funger, faciliorem mihi excusationem fore, si quis incidisset, quem non deberem accusare. Nam cum est omnium officiorum finis aliquis, tum optime libertati venia obsequio praeparatur (III, 4, 7–8).

This statement illustrates the contradiction involved in the exercise of patronage. Whenever one acts on behalf of one's clients, particularly when it is against another senator, one risks incurring the *invidia* of one's colleagues (cf. Caes. *Bell. Hisp.* 42, 2). This *invidia* is the consequence of the tendency of a privileged class to view an attack on one of its members as an attack on all. As Pliny writes, the most painful aspect of the situation would have been the *periculum senatoris*. To ally with the provincials and to prosecute a fellow senator meant that the *patronus (causae)* would not only earn the enmity of the defendant, but also antagonize many of the defendant's friends³⁷. Consequently, to prosecute Classicus would create an uncomfortable situation in the Senate, would incur the displeasure of many of Classicus' friends, and, in particular, would enrage those who were friends of both Pliny and Classicus. The third situation, the conflict of coinciding obligations, is not an uncommon one; Pliny devotes a number of letters to resolving such painful choices³⁸. Thus, a Roman senator, especially a senior one who was sensitive about his good reputation, would proceed with great care in such situations so that, in upholding his patronal responsibilities, he would not unnecessarily jeopardize other connections³⁹.

³⁷ Cf. *ep.* VII, 33, 7: *non advocati fidem sed inimici amaritudinem implese*.

³⁸ E. g., *epp.* I, 7 and IV, 17.

³⁹ The situation might be quite different for an ambitious junior senator hoping to make a name for himself. A good example is Aquilius Regulus (PIR² A 1005); see also R. SYME, Tacitus, Oxford 1958, 100–101.

Finally, there is the idea of patronage as a burden. *Nam cum est omnium officiorum finis aliquis* (III, 4, 8), Pliny writes. When he has accepted a certain number of such requests, he may, without losing his standing, free himself from further burdens, especially if the new requests conflict with other responsibilities. This idea would appear to contradict the statement made above; namely, that the patronal relationship had to be exercised continuously in order to be maintained⁴⁰. The contradiction is a real one, and is essentially between patronage in theory and patronage in practice. Theoretically and ideally, a patron is obliged to defend and protect his client under all circumstances; in fact, however, as Pliny recognizes, situations will arise when his responsibilities to Baetica will conflict with his duties to other friends and clients⁴¹.

There is, furthermore, an element of impatience to be found in this letter. Pliny is being called upon to instigate a major trial on behalf of his litigious clients for the third time in six years⁴². Not only that, but he can also easily envisage a fourth case in the near future (III, 4, 3). Their demands have become a burden to him.

This conclusion raises the question of what return Pliny received for his investment of time, talent and energy. Two answers are offered in the letter under discussion. First, he says that, in acting for the provincials, he will earn their *gratia*. It is not easy to determine how this *gratia* would have been expressed, but there is no evidence that it brought Pliny any material profit⁴³. Nor does it appear likely that patrons were able to gain any direct political advantage from the client-community as they had in the late Republic. Second, and most significant, is the fact that Pliny stresses that he has won the *consensus* of the Senate, the universal approval of his colleagues. The real profit for the patron of a community was, then, the enhancement of his prestige and reputation. Patronage was, indeed, an honor, but one which required sacrifices.

This discussion of III, 4, has suggested a number of conclusions about the nature of patronage of communities in the principate. First, the patronal relationship consisted of a variety of formal and informal ties. Secondly, the formalization of the relationship depended upon a number of factors, of which the status and origin of the prospective patron appear to be the most important. Thirdly, Roman tradition and the imperial ideology assigned the patronage of communities to the duties of the good citizen toward his state and society. Hence, prestige was acquired by fulfilling all obligations successfully. Fourthly, in reality, Pliny admits, patronage was a necessary burden; it

⁴⁰ See above 375 f.

⁴¹ Cf. *ep.* VI, 18, discussed below, 378 f.

⁴² Cf. *epp.* I, 7; VII, 33 and III, 4.

⁴³ This problem is discussed below, 382 ff.

brought the patron little material or political advantage in comparison to his expenditure of time, talent and energy.

To this point, we have seen Pliny functioning in a formal relationship (as *patronus Tiferni Tiberini*) and in a relationship with the Baetici which had formal and informal aspects. But, whether formal or informal, both connections appear to belong to a general patronage of communities. One of the formal aspects of Pliny's relationship to the Baetici, and an aspect which with time and services eventually led to the general, if informal patronage, was the office of *patronus causae*. Pliny also served as the *patronus causae* of another community, Firmum, about which he writes in a letter to (Statius) Sabinus:

Rogas ut agam Firmanorum publicam causam; quod ego quamquam plurimis occupationibus distentus adnitar. Cupio enim et ornatissimam coloniam advocacionis officio, et te gratissimo tibi munere obstringere. Nam cum familiaritatem nostram, ut soles praedicare, ad praesidium ornamentumque tibi sumpseris, nihil est quod negare debeam, praesertim pro patria petenti. Quid enim precibus aut honestius piis aut efficacius amantis? Proinde Firmanis tuis ac iam potius nostris obliga fidem meam; quos labore et studio meo dignos cum splendor ipsorum tum hoc maxime pollicetur, quod credibile est optimos esse inter quos tu talis exstiteris (VI, 18).

In this letter, we find two different relationships to the community of Firmum. Sabinus was born in Firmum; this may be deduced from Pliny's notice that Sabinus is interceding with him on behalf of his *patria*. SHERWIN-WHITE has suggested that Sabinus »may well be patronus, like Pliny at Tifernum«⁴⁴. As will be demonstrated below⁴⁵, it was very unusual for a senator to be co-opted as the formal *patronus* of his *patria* at this time; hence, without definitive evidence to the contrary, it is unlikely that Sabinus was ever designated *patronus* there. Nor was there any need to do so, for his obligation to (or patronage of) Firmum was natural, being determined by birth. It was, in fact, parallel to the situation of Herennius Senecio toward Baetica and required no formalization.

Pliny's status is more ambiguous. First, he has agreed to act for the community as *patronus causae* (*ut agam Firmamorum publicam causam*). His relationship to them is then comparable to the one which he enjoyed in his early dealings with the Baetici; namely, the conclusion of the legal issue would also terminate the formal relationship⁴⁶. He does suggest, however, that he might

⁴⁴ SHERWIN-WHITE, Letters of Pliny, 375.

⁴⁵ Cf. 379 ff.

⁴⁶ See above, 370 ff.

have had a somewhat more enduring relationship in mind, for he writes: *Proinde Firmanis tuis ac iam potius nostris obliga fidem meam*, suggesting thereby, that his relationship to the Armani is comparable to Sabinus'. Nevertheless, should Pliny's position in respect to the Firmani develop from that of *patronus causae* to that of *patronus municipii*, it would, in contrast to Sabinus' situation, probably be formalized in some manner.

Pliny's attitudes toward his potential clients and toward the bond itself are revealing. By his own admission, he is fully occupied with other duties, this will be an additional burden. He is, however, willing to accept, he writes, because a friend has petitioned him to do so and the duties of friendship are binding. Here again, Pliny notes the burdensome nature of the service. He has accepted because the Firmani have merited his services and Sabinus' request is an honorable one. He will, thereby, enhance his reputation by accepting. Good citizenship is stressed then on all sides.

Pliny's benefactions to his home town of Comum are well attested, both in his own letters and in the inscriptions which have been found there⁴⁷. Though both varieties of evidence provide considerable detail about his career in the imperial government and his numerous benefactions to the municipality, it is nowhere stated in these documents that he was, in fact, a *patronus* of the community⁴⁸. As a consequence, there is good reason to believe that Pliny never enjoyed a formal patronage of Comum. Indeed, there is no substantial evidence for the hypothesis that it was at all customary for senators (note the limitation) to become *patroni* of the *patriae*.

Let us first, however, consider Pliny's benefactions to Comum. As these are well known and frequently discussed a simple enumeration should suffice⁴⁹. He spent HS 1 100 000 for the construction and maintenance of a library. He built public baths for the town the cost of which is unknown, though he does add that he contributed an additional HS 300 000 for their decoration plus capital of HS 200 000, the interest on which should be used for maintenance. He set up an *alimenta* program for the support of boys and girls of poor families in Comum, and an additional HS 1 860 000 for the upkeep of those slaves freed by his testament. He also provided capital sufficient, through interest earned on it, to pay one third of the salary of a teacher of grammar and literature. There were other smaller donations which need not be mentioned here. The magnitude of the benefactions does not, of course, prove that Pliny was the *patronus* of Comum, but it certainly suggests a very strong relationship between the two parties.

⁴⁷ *Epp.* I, 3; 8; II, 8; III, 6; IV, 13; V, 7; 10; VII, 11; 18 and CIL V, 5262 – 5263; 5667; and AE 1972, 212.

⁴⁸ The critical inscription is CIL V, 5262. It appears to have been set up in Comum after his death and contains no reference to this office.

⁴⁹ DUNCAN-JONES, *Economy*, 29 ff.

Further support for the hypothesis that Pliny was the unofficial patron of Comum may be deduced from his attitude toward the town. In one letter especially, he uses an expression which conforms exactly to Cicero's vocabulary of patronage as analysed by GELZER⁵⁰. In making his gift to Comum of a salary for a teacher, he comments: *nihil gratius (praestare) patriae potestis* (IV. 13. 9).

Hence, both the fact that he confers benefactions on Comum similar to those conferred on Tifernum, where he was officially *patronus* and the use of the vocabulary of patronage to describe his generosity indicate that the relationship was essentially patronal, even if he was not a formal *patronus* of the town.

This conclusion raises the problem of the distinction between patronage and benefaction. During the principate and in the context of the patronage of communities, the difference was one of form rather of substance. GELZER and BADIAN have demonstrated how relationships based on *fides* (and both patronage and benefaction are included) developed; namely that under Roman notions of gratitude there was »... a tendency for a benefit conferred to establish a permanent obligation«⁵¹. This obligation was expressed in the continuing performance of *beneficia* (by the patron) and *officia* (by the client). Caesar was apparently the first to distinguish between benefactors in general and a subgroup of benefactors who bore the formal title of *patronus*⁵², but both relationships continued to be based on *fides* (and not on *ius* and benefactors and *patroni* continued to perform the same services.

If it is accepted that these *beneficia* conferred on the community (and on members of the community, cf. I, 19) indicate that Pliny did act as an unofficial patron of Comum, we must still account for the fact that his position (as well as that of Herennius Senecio in Baetica and Statius Sabinus in Firmum) was never formalized. Certainly, his services to Comum would have merited such an honor. An explanation for this phenomenon, as far as one can be given, must consider both the origin and status of the *patronus* and the development of patronage as an institution.

Inscriptions testify to the existence of 123 *patroni* of communities between the principates of Augustus and Trajan⁵³. Of these, 73 were senators, 27 were members of the equestrian order and 23 belonged to the municipal aristocracy – a rough proportion of 3:1:1. In other words, 60% of the known *patroni* were senators. When the origin of these patrons is considered, some inter

⁵⁰ GELZER, 80–81.

⁵¹ BADIAN, 8–9; GELZER, 69 ff.; P. VEYNE, *Le pain et le cirque*, Paris 1976, 74 ff.

⁵² See the *Lex Ursonensis* (ILS 6087) cc. 97 and 130 discussed by NICOLS, *Gemeindepatronat*

⁵³ The data can, with an effort, be derived from HARMAND. See also F. ENGESSER, *Der Stadt patronat in Italien und den Westprovinzen des römischen Reiches bis Diokletian*, Diss. Freiburg 1957 (unpublished) 224–226.

esting results emerge. Of the 73 senators who were *patroni*, only 9 were patrons of their *patriae*. On the other hand, 21 of 27 knights and 11 of 23 municipal aristocrats did receive this honor from their hometowns. Of the 9 senators who were *patroni patriae*, 5 of them lived during the Augustan Age⁵⁴, two of them were provincials⁵⁵, one of the nine is a questionable identification⁵⁶ and the last one was a member of the equestrian order who was adlected into the Senate at an advanced stage in his career⁵⁷. Generally speaking then, senators did not tend to become patrons of their *patriae* in the period between the principates of Augustus and Trajan. From this point of view, the formal patronage of *patriae* was most common for members of the equestrian order.

There is some confirmation for this conclusion. Pliny's grandfather-in-law, Calpurnius Fabatus (PIR² C 263), also came from Comum, was a member of the equestrian order and, as might be predicted on the basis of the above analysis, he was, as an inscription testifies, an official patron of Comum (ILS 2721).

In order to account for this phenomenon, the development of patronage as a formal institution (i. e., *patronus* by virtue of a *decretum decurionum*) must be examined. BADIAN has described the various means by which *clientela* could be established, of these, only two are relevant to this discussion⁵⁸. Initially, both *deditio* and *applicatio* could be, executed by formal oral agreements and, in the case of *applicatio*, perhaps too by the exchange of *tesserae* (e. g., ILS 6093). The idea of bestowing such honors as that of *patrocinium* by a resolution of »senate and people« may have been derived from Hellenistic models but had become common enough in Caesar's day to merit regulation⁵⁹. The evidence is by no means certain (only 14 inscriptions mention *patroni*⁶⁰), but it appears to be the case that the pattern mentioned above (namely, that knights were usually, and senators rarely, *patroni* of their *patriae*) was already established in the late republic.

It is unclear why communities chose to honor fellow-citizens in a manner which they had previously used to attach powerful outsiders to themselves. That they did so suggests that there was a different basis for the institution in respect to senators and to equestrians. As senators had traditionally received such honors from outside communities in connection with their administrative

⁵⁴ PIR² A 1178, A 65; PIR¹ P 802, T 104, V 187.

⁵⁵ PIR² A 182, J 279. The former belongs to the reign of Gaius and the latter to that of Claudius.

⁵⁶ H.-G. PFLAUM, *Les procuratoriennes équestres sous le haut-empire romain*, Paris 1950, 175, 2.

⁵⁷ PIR¹ 181. He was an equestrian officer with Vespasian in 69.

⁵⁸ BADIAN, 2 ff.

⁵⁹ Cf. n. 52.

⁶⁰ For the 14, cf. ILLRP II, 475. The proportion of senators to non-senators is roughly the same as in the first century A. D., namely, 4:1 (11 senators, 3 non-senators).

activities and as the mutual obligation, or *pietas* (cf. IV, 13, 5), between the two was self-evident, it may have been felt that the additional honor of *patronus patriae* would add little to their prestige and might even have been considered an insult. For wealthy men of only local importance, the situation was different. In the first century most of them probably had little opportunity for gaining prestige beyond holding municipal offices. It may be that the communities felt that an especially generous benefaction had to be acknowledged with a special honor⁶¹; hence, they coopted them as *patroni* just as if they were powerful outsiders. In this case, however, the basis of the honor was rather *actio gratiarum* (cf. *Pan.* 4, 2), than *pietas*. But, regardless of how one explains it, it is evident that considerations of status and origin were relevant to the conferral of patronage already in the late republic.

This conclusion does not mean that attitudes toward this kind of patronage remained stable thereafter. In the second century, two changes took place. First, senators are now found as *patroni patriae*. Of the 294 patrons known, 148 were patrons of their *patriae* and of the 148, 31 were senators (20 Italians, 11 provincials). Second, it was really among the equestrians and municipal aristocrats that *patronatus* became frequent for though the absolute number of senatorial patrons increased, the relative share slipped from 60% to 40%⁶². These figures suggest that the traditional basis of patronage had changed. The connection with a powerful outsider was, with the extension of citizenship and the increasing number of provincial senators, less important than the *actio gratiarum*. This marks an important stage in the evolution of patronage, for as time went on, the honor was increasingly used not only to express thanks, but also to formalize the relationship between the community and its most important member(s).

Throughout this discussion, attention has been given to the question of what services (beyond that of advocacy) the patron performed for his clients. Indeed, the impression one receives from the sources, both literary and epigraphical, is that patronage involved the exchange of the patron's talents and wealth for enhanced prestige. Certainly, the accumulation of prestige was of great importance to the Roman aristocrat and perhaps even more so to a *homo novus* like Pliny. Nevertheless, the doubt remains about whether there might not be other advantages for the patron, advantages which Pliny, for one reason or another, leaves unmentioned. This is unlikely. First, Pliny is not at all reluctant to acknowledge the reciprocal nature of the relationship: *reddam vicem si reposces, reddam et si non reposces* (II, 9, 6) is a frequently repeated idea in the letters concerning patronage (cf. II, 13, 1). Nor, and

⁶¹ Such benefactions are mentioned on the earliest inscriptions referring to patrons of non-senatorial status, cf. ILLRP 523, 617.

⁶² These figures, like those mentioned in n. 53, can, with an effort be derived from HARMAND. See also, ENGESSER, *Stadtpatronat*, 226 ff.

somewhat surprisingly, does Pliny suppress the monetary advantage of patronage. In a letter concerning rebates for wine merchants, Pliny notes that he expected his *beneficium* to encourage the merchants: *et in futurum omnes cum ad emendum tum etiam ad solvendum allici videbantur* (VIII, 2, 7). There is then no hesitation to mention potential return for services rendered. Admittedly, he might have withheld information about illegal or immoral profit, but his abhorrence of such payments, mentioned in V, 13, seems genuine. Consequently, if such advantage is not mentioned it is reasonable to believe that Pliny did not receive it. Again, the motivating factor for the patron was primarily prestige⁶³.

This was certainly not the case in the late republican period when client-communities helped to provide the material and human resources for the political struggles of the Roman nobility. Citizen-communities (note the limitation) could be expected to vote for their patrons in elections, to provide soldiers for their campaigns, and even if they did not render active support, they were not usually compelled to act against the interests of their patrons⁶⁴. The cases of Pompey and Picenum and of Antonius and Bononia are well-known examples of this phenomenon.

In Augustus' »restored republic«, the exercise of patronage was regulated »in the public interest«. Although Augustus was concerned to render such politically dangerous relationships harmless, he did not want to destroy an old manifestly useful tradition. By acquiring control over elections, monopolizing the military, and putting an end to open political contention, the emperors gradually but effectively deprived the patron of the traditional return on his investments⁶⁵. There is, however, another side. The emperors encouraged a new ideology in which patronage and benefaction, both of which created obligation between two parties, now were defined in terms of civic virtue. Generosity toward a community (*amor liberalitatis*, I, 8, 9; cf. VI, 34) and equitable administration of provinces (VIII, 24; X, 3 a), the two benefactions which most commonly led to a formal or informal patronage, became the leading qualities of a senator and *optimus civis*. To make this concept work, however, required that the emperor himself recognize and support it. In fact, the same ideology was applied to his own position. In his Panegyricus to Trajan, Pliny remarks on several occasions that the *optimus princeps* (note the parallel to *optimus civis*) is one who accepts his position reluctantly, knowing full well the toils, troubles, difficulties and pains which await him, but having only one desire; namely to serve the state (*Pan.* 2, 4, 7, 21, 79)⁶⁶.

⁶³ See *ep.* VI, 33, for another example.

⁶⁴ Cf. GELZER, 96 ff.

⁶⁵ On this point, see PREMIERSTEIN, *Werden und Wesen*, 112–116.

⁶⁶ Cf. above, 370 f.

Though the emperor now controlled the traditional sources of patronal power, and encouraged a new ideology stressing service instead of material and political profit, he did, apparently, find it necessary to support the ideology with more concrete incentives. In his *Panegyricus*, Pliny comments: *Prodest bonos esse, cum sit satis abundeque, se non nocet; his honores his sacerdotia, his provincias offers, hi amicitia tua hi iudicio florent* (44. 7). In other words, the *optimus civis*, as demonstrated by his benefactions, derives material and/or political advantage not from the direct support of his clients, but from the emperor himself. As long as the latter was willing to support, encourage and reward the patronage of communities and other benefactions the values, as described by Pliny, would persist.

This conclusion should not be interpreted to show that, by exercising a formal or informal patronage of communities, an ambitious senator could expect to receive the consulate in due course. For, though the emperor might encourage senators to perform this service, there was no commitment on his part. Nor was it necessary for him to make such a commitment as communities would naturally seek out those senators who were known to have influence with him (cf. *ILS* 6106). Rather, patronage of communities belongs, as does oratorical ability, to the useful and the decorative. Both, though potentially dangerous to the old as well as the new government, were turned to the service and ornamentation of the state. They provide, indeed, the public justification for wealth and honors received at the emperors' hands, but would be useless to anyone who did not have the appropriate loyalties and connections.

Conclusions

Traditionally, the cooptation of a *patronus* had been used to bind a powerful outsider to the community and was frequently connected with *beneficia* arising from a senator's administrative activities. In the principate, however, *patronus* had, by extension, become a title or dignity which communities conferred as an *actio gratiarum*. In this extended sense, it was also appropriate for native benefactors of non-senatorial status. Technically speaking, *patronatus* refers strictly to the status of an individual who has been officially coopted *patronus* by a community (cf. Pliny at Tifernum). And because the conferral of the title was closely connected to the ideas of benefaction, gratitude and obligation, the community could use the honor to encourage or reward benefactors just as the benefactor could expect his prestige and *dignitas* to be enhanced by the community.

There was, however, no simple connection between *beneficia* conferred and the bestowal of the title. Whether a community extended *patronatus* to a benefactor depended upon a number of factors. First the *beneficia* had to be

appropriate to the title. Second, as has been demonstrated, the status of the benefactor and his previous connection to the community determined the degree of formality; in the early principate, senators generally became the official *patroni* of communities to which they had no natural ties and did not accept the title in their *patriae*. The reverse was the case for equites. But, whether the *beneficium* was conferred by a *patronus* or by a benefactor, a sense of obligation between the two parties was developed. Third, Pliny's relations with Baetica, Firmum and Comum indicate that the patronage of communities consisted of a variety of formal and informal ties which had to be exercised continuously. The conclusion cannot be deduced from the epigraphical evidence alone.

Furthermore, it has been shown that the attitudes toward this form of patronage were contradictory. This was primarily due to the irreconcilability of theory and practice. Theoretically, of the services of the patron to his community were part of his duties as a good citizen. His reward was the prestige and reputation gained by exercising civic virtue. In practice, Pliny considered the burden of the benefactions, in both a material and political sense, could, in certain situations, be greater than the reward to be gained. This resulted from the fact that Augustus and his successors had deprived the patron, as they had the orator, of the traditional return on his services in order to bring the potentially dangerous relationship under their control. To perpetuate the useful and traditional aspects of the institution (namely, public benefactions), the emperor himself had to provide his loyal supporters with suitable compensation for undertaking this burden.

Some general conclusions might be drawn from this analysis. First, the attitudes described here explain in part the intellectual and moral background to the enormous (and virtually unparalleled) outpouring of private capital for public welfare in the second century. As Pliny says: *oportet privatis utilitatibus publicas, mortalibus aeternas anteferre* (VII, 18, 5). Secondly, it is salutary to describe how divers and mutable the patronal relationship was and how the exercise of patronage was defined and limited by a number of variables including status and origin. And, finally, the patronage of communities was, like oratorical success, one of those services which was both the public justification of wealth and honors as well as the proof of influence.

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