

PATRONS AND FRIENDS

DAVID KONSTAN

IN A LECTURE ENTITLED "Poets and Patron," in which Nicholas Horsfall argues forcefully that Horace and Virgil *did* write to order under the regime of Augustus and Maecenas, however subtle and refined those orders may have been, Horsfall comments on the passage in *Satire* 1.6 in which Horace describes how he was summoned back by Maecenas nine months after his initial introduction and enrolled, as the Latin phrase has it, "in the number of [Maecenas'] friends" (*in amicorum numero*). Says Horsfall: "The line between *amicus*-friend' and *amicus*-client' should not be drawn, now or at any point later in the relationship."¹ Horsfall goes on to suggest that the phrase, *in numero amicorum*, refers to a formal list of clients:

the existence of a written register of clients cannot, I think, be proved, but the work of the *nomenclator*, or, worse still, of the imperial *officium admissionis*, will have been unimaginable without some semi-formalised register. Horace was now on the *numerus*, and should have had no problems with the *nomenclator*.

In other words, Horace was in the door, his name officially included among the privileged clients of Maecenas who had access to him, and the keeper of the list knew to admit him.

I do not wish to engage here in the question of whether Horace was or was not technically a client of Maecenas'. The relationship between patron and client was a semi-formal one at Rome, and obligations are not always clear or easy to define. It is possible that Maecenas acted as Horace's patron not only in the loose modern sense of benefactor of the arts, but also in the more traditional sense in which obligations were felt to obtain in both directions between patron and client.² For an understanding of the institution of Roman patronage, we may cite the crisp formulation by Richard Saller. Saller lists three conditions that are constitutive of clientship in general: (1) reciprocal exchange; (2) the existence of a personal relationship; and (3) asymmetry, as opposed to friendship between equals.³ To these, Paul Millett has added a fourth, namely that the relationship is at least potentially exploitative.⁴ Horsfall's argument seeks to demonstrate that the relationship between

This paper is the annotated and slightly revised version of the George Walsh Memorial Lecture that I presented at the University of Chicago in October 1994; it is gratefully dedicated to his memory. Many in the audience raised important and helpful questions; in particular I wish to thank Rachana Kamtekar and Peter White for their suggestions.

1. Horsfall 1981, 5; cf. White 1978, 81–82.

2. Cf. White 1993, 25.

3. Saller 1989, 49; cf. Saller 1982, 8–11; Eisenstadt and Roniger 1984, 2.

4. Millett 1989, 16.

Maecenas on the one hand, and Horace and Virgil on the other, fulfills the fourth condition stipulated by Millett as well as the three laid down by Saller.

Horsfall may well be right. But the question I wish to address in this paper is whether this relationship between patron and client, however exigent and unequal it may have been or not been in this particular case, is what Horace is referring to when he speaks of being included in the number of Maecenas' friends. To put it simply: was the Latin word *amicus*, which we conventionally translate as "friend," simply a synonym, in some contexts, for client or patron?⁵ Or did it retain its meaning as "friend," with all the implications of a personal and mutual relationship based on reciprocal respect and freedom, that we associate with the concept of friendship?

I shall be arguing in favor of the latter hypothesis, namely, that when Horace, or other poets or political figures in a position of dependency upon a patron, referred to the patron as a friend, or employed the language of friendship in respect to patrons, they meant to indicate that their relationship to the patron was precisely a relation between friends. Friendship is, I shall suggest, distinct from clientship. Thus, I shall be in disagreement with Horsfall when he affirms that "the line between *amicus*-friend' and *amicus*-client' should not be drawn, now or at any point later in the relationship." For *amicus*, I believe, means only "friend," and does not mean "client" at all.

This is not to say that the role of friend and that of client are incompatible. As I have said, I am inclined to agree with Horsfall that Horace might properly be described as a client of Maecenas', at least in certain respects.⁶ This relationship may even have entailed that Maecenas could, on occasion, make demands upon Horace in his role as client-poet that Horace would have felt morally obliged to honor not solely on the basis of friendship but because he acknowledged certain responsibilities pertaining to his status as Maecenas' client.⁷ As I have said, I shall not attempt here to pronounce upon the nature of these latter obligations, or how Horace may have perceived them. What I am insisting on is that in addition to whatever duties and considerations of status Horace may have recognized in his relationship with Maecenas, he also regarded himself as Maecenas' friend.⁸ And friendship was something other than clientship.⁹

5. See Gold 1987, 134: "The word *amicus* . . . is a nicely ambiguous word which applies equally well to political allies or personal intimates, to the patron or the client"; cf. pp. 40, 71, 104.

6. White 1993, 32 points out that Porphyrio (third century A.D.), in a note on Horace's use of *amicus* in *Epode* 1, remarks: "It seems out of place for Horace to call himself the friend of Maecenas when he ought to say 'client'" (tran. White). White adds: "Porphyrio clearly conceives of the word 'client' not as an eccentric or invidious substitute for 'friend,' but as the proper name for the relationship." While a more rigid social stratification in the later empire may have made Horace's use of *amicus* seem presumptuous, Horace himself, whether client or not, means to represent himself as Maecenas' friend.

7. See, however, White 1993, 97-100, 206.

8. Cf. White 1993, 3; also 14: "It is in terms of social and cultural affinities that poets can count as the equals of great men like Maecenas and Messalla and can practice the kind of reciprocity which we associate with friendship. Thus a genuine ground of rapport does exist between them, and the affect-laden language which pervades their discourse is probably to be interpreted as an effort by both parties to neutralize those status differences which do still stand between them." Saller 1982, 29 cites Tac. *Dial.* 9.4 for the idea of "the advocate as patron-friend"; but the meaning is in fact (as Saller himself makes clear) "patron and friend."

9. For clarity's sake, let me state here what will be evident at the end of this paper: a person might of course claim friendship with a patron, or believe himself to be a friend when in fact he was regarded as

What was friendship, then, in ancient Rome? For, even if my claim were to be granted in advance, that friendship and clientship were distinct roles or social structures—not that I am asking for such agreement without argument at this point—it would not do to assume that Horace meant by friendship exactly what we understand by the term today. The question is particularly relevant to the present discussion, because if friendship in ancient Rome had a strong element of obligation and deference associated with it, as a number of excellent scholars have maintained, then friendship might turn out to be so close to the patron-client relationship in its general characteristics that it would hardly be worth the effort to draw a line between them. Richard Saller, for example, has recently observed:

To discuss bonds between senior aristocrats and their aspiring juniors in terms of “friendship” seems to me misleading, because of the egalitarian overtones that the word has in modern English. Though willing to extend the courtesy of the label *amicus* to some of their inferiors, the status-conscious Romans did not allow the courtesy to obscure the relative social standings of the two parties. On the contrary, *amici* were subdivided into categories *superiores*, *pares* and *inferiores* (and then lower down the hierarchy, humble *clientes*). Each category called for an appropriate mode of behaviour, of which the Romans were acutely aware (Pliny, *Ep.* 7.3.2, 2.6.2; Seneca, *Ep.* 94.14). Resemblances between the behaviour of aristocratic *amici inferiores* and *clientes* suggest that *amici inferiores* can appropriately be analysed under the heading of patronage.¹⁰

The first part of this paper will be devoted to showing that, however much the ancients discussed the problem of friendship between people of different social status and power—and they did—they understood by friendship something quite different from relations of domination and dependency. Thus, friendship was not entirely assimilable to the structure of clientage, and when the two coexisted, as they often did, there was always a certain tension between them. This left room for appeals to the nature of friendship as a means of exposing the coercive aspects of contemporary patron-client relationships. In the second part of the paper, I shall examine two cases in which this latter strategy is applied by Roman poets.

I begin, then, by situating classical friendship in its historical context and tradition. Discussions of friendship in classical antiquity were heavily influenced by Aristotle's analyses in the *Nicomachean Ethics* and the *Eudemian Ethics*, where he treated the concept of *φιλία*. Now, *φιλία* is commonly translated as “friendship,” and in many contexts this is quite accurate, but in Greek of the classical period the term had a wider meaning as well.

nothing more than a dependent. My point is that such a claim was vulnerable to exposure precisely by appeal to the basic sense of *amicitia* as a relationship of mutual benevolence.

10. Saller 1989, 57. It has been claimed (e.g., Perkin 1969, 46–51) that in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries friendship embraced relations of patronage; cf. Wood 1992, 58 concerning social relations in colonial America: “Indeed, every variety of personal attachment and connection, no matter how unequal, could be described as friendship.” Wood goes on to say: “‘Friendships’ . . . were euphemisms for all sorts of dependencies” (ibid.), but the term “euphemism” introduces a tacit shift in the argument. Cf. p. 71: “The great planters were the protectors, creditors, and counselors—‘friends’—of the lesser farmers. . . . They boasted of their paternalism, declaring, as the wealthy Charles Carroll of Annapolis did in 1759, ‘how commendable it is for a gentlemen of independent means . . . to be able to advise his friends, relations, and neighbors of all sorts’”; Carroll, at all events, distinguished his friends from both kin and casual acquaintances.

Most generally, *φιλία* designated love, affection, or sympathy of any sort, and could be applied to relations between parents and children, fellow citizens, members of a common species, for example all of humankind, or even the relatively casual affection that arises among people engaged in a common enterprise, such as comrades-in-arms or fellow passengers on a sea voyage.¹¹ Aristotle distinguished among these several types by labelling them “kinds” or “species” (εἶδη), and treated what we would call friendship proper as a subset of the larger genus.¹² In all cases, Aristotle placed the emphasis upon fellow-feeling as opposed to formal obligations. To be sure, friends normally would assist one another in time of need, and the failure to do so might impugn the depth of feeling that was supposed to have existed on the part of an ostensible friend. In this indirect way, one could say that services of a sort were expected of friends, and that friends who let one down in an emergency were not true friends at all. But such a view is not specific to Aristotle or to the ancient Greeks and Romans. It is perfectly in accord with the conception of friendship that most people hold today. Yet we do not believe that the essence of friendship lies in the mutual exchange of services, or that friendship is by nature utilitarian and practical.¹³

Neither, I believe, did the Greeks and Romans, despite the prevailing opinion among scholars who are well versed in ancient ethical values. I quote a passage from Malcolm Heath’s discussion of Sophocles’ *Antigone* as representative of the common view: “*φιλία* is not, at root, a subjective bond of affection and emotional warmth, but the entirely objective bond of reciprocal obligation; one’s φίλος is the man one is obliged to help, and on whom one can (or ought to be able to) rely for help when oneself is in need.”¹⁴ But while there are numerous passages in classical literature that affirm the utility of friends in times of crisis and complain about the unreliability of fair-weather friends, these sentiments point to an expectation of selfless devotion on the part of a true friend, even as they lament its absence. Aristotle had listed as one of the fundamental conditions of friendship, alongside the mutual recognition of good will on both sides, the disposition to wish the good of the other for the other’s own sake (*Eth. Nic.* 8.2 1155b31). There is nothing paradoxical or idealistic in this claim: *φιλία* is just love, and love is by its nature disinterested, whatever practical causes may have entered into the birth of it.

There are two other features of friendship that are evident in Aristotle’s discussion of the subject, although he does not explicitly include them in

11. Cf. Millett 1991, 41.

12. Friends in the narrower sense are identified as φίλοι (substantive), a term that is not usually applied to those associated by other forms of *φιλία*. The Latin *amicitia* is normally more specific than *φιλία* (Meisner 1950, 5), but on occasion is used in a more latitudinous sense.

13. Saller 1982, 12 remarks that the paradox by which “friendship was ideally to be based on mutual affection with no thought for profit,” while at the same time “a necessary part of friendship was a mutually beneficial exchange of goods and services,” is common to many societies. Saller 1982, p. 12, n. 20 cites Pitt-Rivers 1971, 138–39: “while a friend is entitled to expect a return of his feelings and favor he is not entitled to bestow them in that expectation”; cf. Allan 1989, 20 on ideas of instrumentality and friendship in modern Britain.

14. Heath 1987, 73–74.

the definition. The first is that friendships are formed on the basis of individual association, as opposed to ties of kinship or citizenship or some other formal status. Brothers or fellow-citizens do of course feel affection for one another, but this normally arises from the fact that they are relatives or members of the same community. Friends, however, come into contact with each other in accidental ways: Aristotle singles out mutual advantage, pleasure, and admiration for one another's character as the three typical bases for the formation of affection between friends.¹⁵ Aristotle does not emphasize the element of personal choice in the selection of friends as opposed to relatives, but later writers note the importance of the elective or voluntary character of friendships. For example, in a fragment of one of the declamations attributed to Quintilian (308.21–23 Winterbottom) in which a friend is contesting an inheritance claimed by blood relations of the deceased, the speaker declares: "The name of friend in itself seems to me even holier [than that of relative]. For the one comes from the intellect, comes from a decision; the other chance bestows, a circumstance of birth and things that are not elected by our will."¹⁶

The second quality of friendship that Aristotle emphasizes throughout his analysis is the equality of the partners. Again, he does not include equality among the defining properties of the relationship, and indeed he briefly discusses friendship between social superiors and inferiors. Here, Aristotle resorts to his doctrine of proportionality, suggesting that friends are honored in accord with the degree of their worth (*Eth. Nic.* 8.8 1158b25–26). There are problems with this thesis that we need not enter into here: I mention only the consequence that the better partner in a friendship should then love the other less and the worse partner more, which together with Aristotle's claim that the essence of friendship lies in loving rather than in being loved (*Eth. Nic.* 8.9 1159a27–28) would seem to imply that the better man is the worse friend. Aristotle's concern is to preserve somehow the element of balance or equality even in friendships between people of unequal status.

I can see no necessary connection between the premise of reciprocal altruism and that of equality of social station.¹⁷ I believe that they were associated above all in the ideology of the Athenian democracy, in which friendship took on a paradigmatic role as the ideal instance of the bond

15. Aristotle does not say that two people who are useful to each other are *eo ipso* friends, but rather, as I understand the argument, that they may become friends *on the basis* of mutual utility (or pleasure or character); they do so when a certain kind of *φιλία* arises between them as a result of their association. This point is often missed in analyses of Aristotle's theory; see Nussbaum 1986, 355: "Pleasure, advantage, and good character are three different bases or original grounds of *philia*; they are not the goal or final (intentional) end of the relationship." Cf. also Wadell 1989, 56–57; Konstan 1994.

16. Cf. Claudius Ptolemy *Tetrabiblos* 4.7, where three species of friendship and enmity are based, respectively, on choice (*προαίρεσις*), utility (*χρεία*), and pleasure and pain (*ἡδονὴ καὶ λύπη*). *Προαίρεσις* here seems to indicate the free personal choice of a friend, but it may be an echo of Aristotle's doctrine of *προαίρεσις* in relation to virtue (*Eth. Nic.* 3.2 1111b4–7), and thus ultimately reflect Aristotle's category of friendship based on character or *ἦθος*; in Hellenistic and later Greek *προαίρεσις* may have the sense of "conduct" or "character."

17. Contrast Wolf 1966, 16: "When instrumental friendship reaches a maximum point of imbalance so that one partner is clearly superior to the other in his capacity to grant goods and services, we approach the critical point where friendships give way to the patron-client tie." Wolf cites, somewhat inconsequentially, Pitt-Rivers' (1954, 140) definition of patron-client relations as "lop-sided friendship."

between free citizens who understood themselves to be equals and acknowledged no hierarchical distinctions among themselves. I would go further and suggest that the emphasis on mutual assistance among friends in the texts of the classical period reflects neither the necessity for cooperation in an economy of smallholders, nor the melding of ethical and economic categories characteristic of pre-modern societies in general, as some economic historians have held,¹⁸ but rather an additional way of representing the members of the democratic city-state as social equals: reciprocity here is a sign that all citizens are equally dependent upon their peers. No one, in this image of social relations, stands above the rest as patron, none is uniquely in a position of dependency.¹⁹

The image does not necessarily reflect social reality. In a study of politics in fourth-century Athens, Barry Strauss remarks: "there are many polities, including Rome, where friendship is a euphemism for patron and client." This point we shall have occasion to challenge in the sequel. Strauss continues:

But the Athenians, unlike the Romans, did not speak of patrons and clients at all, and the reason was not merely euphemism. Athenian culture placed an extraordinary emphasis on personal autonomy, and the average Athenian had the economic wherewithal to protect his status. . . . There was nevertheless substantial inequality in Athenian society, and in politics there are always more underlings than chiefs.²⁰

Thomas Gallant, observing that "The social image of equality often masks a social praxis of inequality," speculates that relations of clientship must also have existed in the classical city-state.²¹ Paul Millett, in turn, points out that there is no evidence to suggest that such relations exerted "any pronounced influence on the ordering of society" comparable to their central role at Rome.²² Whatever the truth may be, the conception of friendship in the classical democracy was embedded in an ideology of equality.

With the rise of the Hellenistic kingdoms, the focus of treatises on friendship undergoes a palpable change. The authors are now concerned centrally with relations between powerful figures, whether dynasts or wealthy aristocrats, and their retinues. At the same time, the problem of mutual assistance recedes into the background, to be replaced by a new concentration on the dangers of flattery and insincerity among those who aspire to friendship with potentates. Essays by Plutarch and Maximus of Tyre on how to distinguish flatterers from friends are exemplary of this new set of concerns. The formal institution of an inner circle of friends who served the Hellenistic monarchs as a personal council of advisors doubtless contributed to the interest in proper relations between superiors and inferiors under the rubric of friendship.²³ These official councils and the circles of hangers-on, courtiers, and honest associates who attended upon the powerful in the Greek

18. Gallant 1991, 98, 143; Millett 1991, 109–26.

19. I discuss this point in more detail in Konstan forthcoming.

20. Strauss 1986, 22–23.

21. Gallant 1991, 145.

22. Millett 1989, 16.

23. See Herman 1980, 111–13; cf. Dio of Prusa 3.86–87.

world of the eastern Roman empire did not give rise to a vocabulary of clientship like that at Rome, and one may doubt that the institutions were wholly comparable. What is important for our purposes is that the problem of right relations between the mighty and their attendants was sometimes cast as a problem of friendship.

In discussions of friendship in the Hellenistic and Roman periods, the central issue is trustworthiness or sincerity among friends, and especially on the part of the subordinate partner in the relationship, who had the motive to exploit flattery in the hope of personal gain. The opposite of flattery was frankness or liberality of speech, in Greek, *παρρησία*. In the classical period, when citizens derived their equality from their participation in a democratic city, *παρρησία* designated the right of free speech, and pertained to anyone who enjoyed full civic status at Athens. The shift in the meaning of *παρρησία* from freedom of speech to personal candor, from a political right to a private virtue, is coordinate with the change from egalitarian city-state to a regime of powerful rulers in a position to dispense patronage.²⁴ The friend is no longer the type of the ideal citizen; now, he is a man of individual courage and integrity, able to put the interests of a superior ahead of his own and thus in a position to correct the errors of a prince or nobleman, and to help him to make just decisions as opposed to encouraging his base and selfish desires.

Such was the image, at least. The preoccupation with the line between flattery and honesty may have reflected not just the danger represented by self-interested courtiers, but also the anxiety over powerful pressures upon the aristocracy to engage in ever more servile forms of deference toward wilful and capricious rulers, such as Caligula or Domitian. Between the lines of these treatises we may perhaps detect as much of a concern with the compulsion to flatter tyrants as with the insinuating strategies of parasites at the tables of the rich.²⁵ However that may be, the relevant matter here is that the discussion of the dangers and seductions of flattery at court was presented in the context of a potential abuse of friendship.

For Plutarch as much as for Aristotle, a true friend looked to the welfare of the other rather than his own. Equality, and the mutual exchange of help associated with it, were not pertinent to relations with kings and generals, though they continued to be important ideals in regard to friendships within one's own class, and the very treatises that concentrate on courtiers and flatterers might appeal, in specific contexts, to the classical egalitarian model and its expectations. But the constitutive elements in Aristotle's definition of the affection characteristic of friendship—mutual good will and selfless regard for the other—continued to inform the literature and, one supposes, actual attitudes regarding bonds between unequal partners.²⁶

24. See Hunter 1985, 488.

25. See Bartsch 1995, 24–25.

26. Contrast the description of friendship at court provided by Charles de Saint-Evremond (1666, 308–9) in his essay, "Sur l'amitié," composed in 1689: "The usual relationship of kings and their courtiers is a relationship of interest. Courtiers seek fortunes of kings; kings require services from their courtiers. However, sometimes the crush of business, or disgust with splendor, forces Princes to seek in the purity of

It has become customary to interpret Roman friendship in terms of a *quid pro quo* exchange of benefits and services, and indeed the Romans were acutely aware of the importance both of generosity on the part of the prosperous and the burden of gratitude this imposed upon the beneficiaries of such largesse. Seneca wrote a treatise in seven books called *De beneficiis*, or "On Benefactions," emphasizing to the point of tedium the reciprocity that underlies such transactions.²⁷ What is sometimes overlooked in analyses of Seneca's treatise, however, is the scarce role that friendship plays in it. Apart from a few casual references to friends, Seneca examines the relationship between benefactions and friendship only in the final book, and there it is simply to respond to a sophisticated conundrum: can friends benefit one another, given that the possessions of friends are traditionally supposed to be held in common? It turns out that generosity is indeed possible between friends, just as it is between wise men, who, it is said, are wholly independent and therefore do not need services of any kind (*Ben.* 7.12). It is a relief, no doubt, to learn that we can be helpful to our friends, but Seneca's brief digression concerning friends and wise men shows all the more that the topic of benefactions was in principle quite independent of friendship. When it comes to services and gratitude, friendship turns out to be nothing more than the occasion for a clever paradox.²⁸

nature the pleasures they do not have in their *grandeur*. . . . Worn out by suspicions and jealousies, they seek to open a heart that they show to the world as hard. The flatteries of adulators make them wish for the sincerity of a friend, [which] they make of . . . confidants called favorites, persons dear to Princes with whom they relieve the pressures of their secrets; with these, they wish to taste all the pleasures that familiarity of association and freedom of conversation may endow on private friends. But how dangerous are these friendships to a favorite who dreams more of love than of watching his own conduct! Wishing to find his friend, this confidant meets his master; [his] familiarity is punished as the indiscreet freedom of a servant who forgets his place. Courtiers whose conduct is always governed by interest know how to please, and their prudence makes them avoid whatever shocks and displeases. He who truly loves his master does not listen to his [own] heart" (trans. Silver 1995). This position is too cynical for the classical theorists and satirists alike, who never detached frank speech from the responsibilities of a friend, whatever his social role. For friendship between poets and princes in Germany, see Meister 1950, 27–33; on friendship and patronage in sixteenth-century England, see Bray 1990.

27. On *beneficia* and friendship in Horace, see Kilpatrick 1986, xxii; on the ideas of *officium*, *beneficium*, *meritum*, and *gratia* generally, Saller 1982, 15–22; cf. 30: "there is no evidence that the importance of the reciprocity ethic as described by the language of *beneficium* and *gratia* diminished in private relationships in the Principate." True, but this discourse is distinct from that of friendship.

28. The distinction between *amicitia* and *quid pro quo* reciprocity confirms the idea that Roman friendship was based on sentiment as opposed to being a purely political or practical arrangement (see Brunt 1988, 351–81). Rather than friendship being a code word for political collaboration, it was a personal bond that was able to survive disagreement and conflicting ambitions in the public sphere. For a more moralistic modern view, see Kinsley 1994, 50: "Of course politics shouldn't swallow up all of life, and of course in a democracy it is good for political opponents to respect or even admire each other. But surely, if politics is more than just a game or a job it should affect how you choose to live your life, including whom you choose to befriend."

Occasionally, in Rome as today, the term "friend" was employed of partisan supporters; the Romans were quite aware that this was an extension of the ordinary significance (Quintus Cicero *Comment. Pet.* 16, Sen. *Ep.* 3.1; cf. Cic. *Rosc. Am.* 111 on friendship as a pragmatic connection). Much more commonly, political allies were referred to by the locution *noster* or *nostri* ("ours"), e.g., Cic. *Att.* 8.9a = Shackleton Bailey 160.1.12–13 (*Gnaeus nostrum*) and passim, while *amicus* was reserved for intimates, e.g., *Att.* 8.11D = Shackleton Bailey 161D.18–19 (*nec mihi nec fratri meo nec cuiquam amicorum*). Cicero also uses terms such as *familiaris* and *necessarius* (cf. the use of the abstract noun *observantia*) of acquaintances he feels inclined or bound to help; where the relationship is not intimate, Cicero does not normally in his letters apply the word *amicus*. I regret that I cannot present here a full survey of this vocabulary in Cicero, but I hope to publish such a study in the near future.

Candor in the presence of powerful figures was a risky business, which is why only the genuine friend, altruistically motivated, could be relied upon to demonstrate it. It was often wise, under conditions of absolute monarchy, to conceal one's true emotions; hence, an ideal of sincerity and inner integrity became closely attached to the notion of friendship. All sorts of people might find themselves in positions of dependency upon the great. Only the friend was honest and forthright, of course within the limits of courtesy demanded of people of inferior social position toward their betters. The reason why the true friend ran the risks attaching to frankness or *παρρησία* in the face of a lord was the force of affection or *φιλία*: not Heath's "entirely objective bond of reciprocal obligation," but an emotional commitment, as it was conceived by the ancients, that prompted the highest degree of magnanimity toward the other.

In the balance of this paper, I shall examine two cases of the relationship between patronage and friendship at Rome, one derived from a satire by Juvenal, the other from one of Horace's poetic epistles. I have selected these two poems because they are hard cases for my thesis concerning the distinction between friendship and patronage, and I shall attempt to show that here too, friendship represents a personal bond of mutual frankness and allegiance, and that it is distinct from the quasi-formal relationship of dependency between patron and client.

I begin with Juvenal's fifth *Satire*, in which Juvenal tries to discourage a middling aristocrat called Trebius from pursuing the friendship of a wealthy patron named Virro. Juvenal advises his addressee (5.12–19):

Consider in the first place that when you've been summoned to take your seat you've received the full value for your former services. The reward for your great friendship is a meal. Your king reckons it so; however infrequent, that's how he reckons it. If after two months it pleases him to beckon his forgotten client so that the third cushion won't go vacant on an empty couch, he says: "Let's get together." The sum total of all your prayers! What more do you desire?

Juvenal goes on to describe Trebius awakening anxiously at the crack of dawn so as to be among the crowd that greets Virro at his door each morning: a standard feature in accounts of popular patronage, where the conventional payment for such a show of support is a basket of goodies.

Friendship and clientship are clearly in intimate proximity here. Is the "great *amicitia*" (i.e., "friendship with the great") to which Juvenal refers, then, simply another name for Trebius' status as devoted client? To answer this question, it is well to remember that Juvenal means to be funny, and he is. His satires, in my judgment, have more the flavor of a stand-up comic's routine than of fire-and-brimstone denunciations of modern vice. Trebius is not a pauper looking for a handout or a free feed at Virro's table, though that is the image that Juvenal enjoys assigning him. Trebius evidently conceives of himself as a friend of Virro's. Juvenal is at pains to disabuse him of this impression, and to lay bare the fact that he is just a client, as humble and indifferent in the eyes of Virro as the mob that lines up to salute him each day.

In the balance of the poem, Juvenal provides a hilarious account of the meal at the great man's house. "What a meal!," he begins (24). Trebius will

get the kind of wine that would strip the paint from a car (if I may modernize Juvenal's image: Juvenal says that fresh wool wouldn't soak it up), while Virro drinks the vintage stuff from gilded and bejewelled cups—a brew too fine to waste on a sick friend (32). This same is true for the quality of the food. The slaves will be irritable and uppity, “indignant at serving an old client” (64). Juvenal has a word for Virro himself (107–13):

No one's asking for what Seneca used to send to his modest friends, or noble Piso, or what Cotta was in the habit of bestowing, for once upon a time the glory of giving was in higher esteem than titles and offices. We just request that you dine in a civil manner. Do that and go be, like so many now—go be a rich man to yourself, a poor man to your friends.

Of course, if someone were suddenly to grant Trebius a million dollars, then “out of nothing, what a great friend of Virro's you would become!” (134). He'd be all over you at dinner. And don't have any legitimate children, who might have a claim as heirs on your fortune: “A sterile wife makes for a charming and dear friend” (140). Poor friends get the rotten mushrooms (146). And do you know why? Simply to torture you, Trebius.

To yourself you seem a free man and the companion of a king at dinner; but he thinks you've been caught by the aroma of his kitchen. Not a bad guess, either. [161–63]

Juvenal concludes his tirade thus (170–73):

He's smart to use you like this. If you can put up with all that, you deserve it. One of these days you're going to let him shave your head and pound it, you'll lose all fear of submitting to the stinging whip—you'll be worthy of these banquets and of such a friend.

Of course, Virro is no friend at all to Trebius. It is all a charade, and it is going on largely in Trebius' head. Friends do not exploit and humiliate each other the way Virro is doing to Trebius: this is the implication of Juvenal's irony throughout the satire.²⁹ But neither is Trebius a sincere friend of Virro's: while Virro seeks to make a display of his power, Trebius is out for profit in the form of high-class grub. On the surface, Juvenal castigates Trebius for failing to recognize that Virro has outclassed him in the game of give and take, and exacts total servility in exchange for chicken feed. But deeper down, Juvenal is exposing Trebius' failure to recognize his own motives when he disguises his pursuit of wealth or influence in the language of friendship. Friendship is no such sordid business. While Virro and Trebius, each for their own reasons, may play at calling themselves friends, the real relation is one of sheer utility. What is more, it is Trebius who loses out by this crass misrepresentation. Virro has no illusions about it at all. He knows that his connection with Trebius rests on patronage, and, in addition,

29. Cloud 1989, 208 observes that “Juvenal . . . uses *amicus* in a consistently derogatory or ironic manner throughout the book” (i.e., Book 1 of the *Satires*), but this is always in reference to the pretensions of dependents masquerading as friends; the irony resides in the tension between the behavior of the satirized characters and the connotations of *amicitia* as a relationship based on mutuality and generosity. As Seager 1977 shows, *species* is the term of art in Tacitus for a pretense of friendship; for the ideal, cf. *Hist.* 1.15 (a speech by Galba addressed to Piso): “fidem libertatem amicitiam, praecipua humani animi bona, tu quidem eadem constantia retinebis, sed alii per obsequium imminuent; inrumpet adulatio, blanditiae et pessimum veri adfectus venenum, sua cuique utilitas” (cit. Seager 1977, p. 44).

on patronage of the most nakedly commercial variety. This is exactly why he takes delight in humiliating Trebius at his table. Where patronage is simply recognized for what it is, as with the crowd that gathers at his door in the mornings, Virro gives what he gives and that's an end of it.

I have cited all the passages in which friends or friendship are mentioned in this satire so that the evidence can be assessed fairly. In my judgment, the entire point of the poem rests on the distinction between friendship and clientage: it exposes the hypocrisy of those who pretend to be friends while seeking their own benefit, and reveals that such a game always works to the advantage of those in power. Trebius is the victim of his own illusion. Because he calls himself a friend of Virro's, he continually expects to be treated as an equal and with selfless generosity. Virro, in turn, does everything possible to emphasize the difference in status between himself and Trebius at his dinner party by means of a systematic double standard in the menu. Juvenal is out to make Trebius recognize the plain meaning of this treatment: in Virro's eyes, Trebius is no friend.

To say, then, with Richard LaFleur, that in Juvenal "the union between patron and client has become . . . venal, contemptuous, even hostile" is fair enough; what is misleading is LaFleur's suggestion that the term *amicus* "is equivalent to either *cliens* or *patronus*."³⁰ Juvenal's whole point, as I understand it, depends on the distance between the two ideas.

Horace had a good deal to say, in the first book of his epistles and elsewhere, about his relationship to Maecenas and relations with patrons generally.³¹ By and large, he defended the simple life as the best antidote to the kind of dependency that association with the wealthy might induce (e.g., *Epist.* 1.7 to Maecenas, and 1.17 to the would-be client Scaeva). But it is in the eighteenth epistle, addressed to Lollius, that the question of patronage is crossed with the language of friendship, and it is to that poem that I now turn.

Horace begins by reminding Lollius, a man of an exceptionally free or independent temper (*liberrime*, 1), that the friend is a mean between two extremes: that of the flatterer or parasite at one end, who is as far from being a friend as a prostitute is from a respectable wife and mother, and rough boorishness at the other end of the spectrum, which likes to pose as freedom (*libertas*, 8) and virtue. The doctrine of virtue as a mean (9) derives from Aristotle's *Ethics*, where indeed friendship—or rather, a middling disposition that Aristotle says resembles friendship but has no proper name of its own (4.6 1126b20, 1127a 11; cf. 2.13 1108a27–30)—is defined as midway between flattery (*κολακεία*) and surliness or quarrelsomeness.³² But the Aristotelian framework is supplemented or informed by the subsequent evolution of the discourse of friendship that was noted earlier. For *libertas* here corresponds to the Greek *παρρησία* or frank speech which Plutarch and others recommended as the hallmark of the true friend.³³ In addressing

30. LaFleur 1979, 171.

31. Baker 1988, 229 offers a most interesting interpretation of *Satire* 2.8 as an example of "the permanent freedom for frank exchange that obtains between friends."

32. Cf. Hunter 1985, 483–84.

33. See Scarpat 1964 for full discussion.

Lollius as *liberrime*, Horace is underscoring not only his credentials as a free Roman aristocrat but also his inclination to express himself with candor.³⁴

Because Lollius is disposed to assertiveness rather than servility, Horace spends the bulk of the poem recommending an accommodating manner.³⁵ In a relationship of clientage, he points out, one must exercise caution: a rich friend (*dives amicus*, 24), whatever his own vices, will rightly reprove one who has ruined himself by love affairs or gambling, for he can afford what his impoverished companion cannot. "Yield to the gentle commands of your powerful friend" (*potentis amici*, 44–45), Horace counsels. Be good company: if he wants to hunt, don't stay home writing poetry. In a practical vein, Horace advises Lollius to avoid becoming infatuated with the household slaves of his august friend (*venerandi . . . amici*, 73), and to screen others whom he would introduce into the man's household so as to avoid fakes and slanderers. Horace sums up the situation with a general observation: "Cultivating a powerful friend seems nice to those who have not experienced it; one who has fears it" (86–87), and he reminds Lollius once again that he will have to be accommodating: "Sad types hate a cheerful fellow, jocular types hate a sad sack; fast people hate a sedentary fellow, relaxed types hate one quick and clever" (89–90). In curbing Lollius' tendency to gruff independence, Horace seems to push him rather far in the opposite direction, to the point of endorsing the kind of assumed expressions and attitudes characteristic of the flatterer.

At this point in the epistle, Horace makes an abrupt turn. Suddenly, he suggests to Lollius that he study philosophy and learn to live in peace, free of desire, fear, and hope of vain things. In what appears to be an open invitation to the Epicurean way of life, Lollius is urged to discover what helps to eliminate anxiety (*curas*) and "what will restore you as a friend to yourself" (*te tibi reddet amicum*, 101), and whether it is fame and money or rather the quiet path that affords tranquility.³⁶ The latter, Horace assures his friend (*amice*, 106), is his own way: he prays to retain what little he possesses and to live "for myself" (*mihi vivam*, 107). Jupiter, Horace concludes, may be beseeched to give what is his to bestow or withdraw—wealth and years; as for a calm mind, Horace will furnish himself with that.³⁷

34. Contra Kilpatrick 1986, 29, who supposes that Lollius is "prone to moments of irrational behavior"; cf. Bowditch 1994, 411 on Lollius' "lack of restraint." Gold 1987, 130 says that Horace has invented for Lollius "the personality of a hothead," but indicates that the situation he faces is one of bad patronage.

35. See Hunter 1985, 481.

36. On the topos of friendship with oneself, see Gantar 1976.

37. The art of frank criticism, or *παρρησία*, was discussed in a treatise by the Epicurean philosopher Philodemus, a contemporary and associate of Horace and Virgil, who had freedom of the villa of the Piso family in the town of Herculaneum on the slopes of Mount Vesuvius. Philodemus' interest was in the practice of criticism within the Epicurean school as a means of educating disciples and of keeping even sages on their toes. He was leery of excessive harshness as well as of indulgent mildness, and sought to illustrate a proper application of frankness that would take account of a person's temperament, background, status, and other factors. The object was to improve people, not reprove them. Frankness or *παρρησία* is, as Philodemus treats it, strong medicine, and must be used with care; ideally, only someone already wise or, in the language of the group, perfect or realized (*τέλειος*) is in a position to employ it properly. I suspect that this is part of the reason why Horace recommends the study of philosophy to Lollius: once he has learned to be at peace with himself, he will be able to be candid with others without making a false step or giving needless offense. The wise man, perhaps, can sustain a true relation of friendship with men in power, as Philodemus himself presumably did with Piso. Till then, frankness will win only reproach, while an ingratiating

Horace's epistle to Lollius is not a handbook for the accomplished courtier. Rather, it is an open attack on the profession. Horace demonstrates that the behavior expected of a client is incompatible with genuine independence and frankness, as represented by the ideal of *libertas* or *παρρησία*; the advice he offers on tailoring one's interests, activities, and moods to those of a powerful friend runs counter to the noble nature of Lollius. What Horace represents as a client's virtues are designed to appall and discourage the young aristocrat. Having concluded his precepts on the art of accommodation as he began them, with the injunction to adapt oneself always to the disposition of one's reverend associate, Horace is prepared to offer Lollius what he regards as the honorable alternative: abandon the empty passion for wealth and esteem, and learn to live as a friend to yourself, in the tranquility that only a philosophical life can offer. This is Horace's own way, as he makes clear as well in the seventh *Epistle*, addressed to Maecenas.

What connection, then, is presupposed between friendship and patronage in this poem? I should like to suggest that it is essentially the same as that which was seen in Juvenal's satire. Association with the powerful tends to undermine the very basis for friendship, which resides in honesty, selflessness, and reciprocity. Such relations are commonly entered into with profit in mind, compromising the inferior partner from the start. An unblinkered examination of the conditions for maintaining such an advantageous tie exposes the distance between it and a relationship between true friends. To call such a connection with a powerful figure friendship is hypocritical, and masks the aspects of self-interest and exploitation that this kind of patronage entails.

Lollius, of course, imagined his patron as his friend. So too did Juvenal's Trebius. Doubtless the language of friendship tended to hide some of the objectionable compromises incumbent on courtiers then as now, when people boast of having bankers or politicians as their friends. But the point has always been to cover over the unequal relationship by assigning to it a name that implies openness, candor, lack of fear, and absence of self-interest.³⁸ That is what friendship meant to Horace, and what he knows it means to Lollius, too. By showing what it requires to pay court to a "powerful friend," in Horace's formulaic phrase, Horace shows that such a relationship is not friendship at all. And that is the purpose of his epistle.

For Horace, then, as for Juvenal and, indeed, for writers on friendship generally in the Greek and Roman tradition, to be a friend meant to engage

manner is demeaning; best, then, to give up consorting with powerful friends altogether, which is the object lesson of Horace's homily. (For Horace's possible use of Philodemus' pedagogical theories in his *Art of Poetry*, see Armstrong 1994.)

38. Cotton 1984, 266 cites Pliny's *Panegyricus* to Trajan (85.8): "So great a capacity do you have for putting your friends under obligation that no one but an ingrate could fail to love you more," and comments: "the over-embellished argument is its own undoing; it destroys the very relationship it set out to establish. For friendship is the happy mean and delicate balance which an infinite and unilateral *facultas obligandi* is all too apt to upset." Wallace-Hadrill 1979, 40 takes a more positive view of the relationship, though he describes the emperor's behavior as "condescension." (Thanks to Mary T. Boatwright for these references.) At *Panegyricus* 44.7, Pliny suggests that friendship with Trajan depends on being virtuous and thus similar to him (*similes* sc. to Trajan).

in an elective and mutual relationship based on altruistic generosity that transcended differences of status. Where earlier conceptions of friendship, during the period of the Athenian democracy, emphasized the social equality of the partners, later thinkers put the stress on integrity and frankness, which was incumbent upon friends without regard for rank and station. Such a relationship was compatible with the hierarchical structure of clientship, provided that the partners took care to preserve the honesty and mutuality that friendship entails. But the idea of friend was never reduced to that of patron or client.

People of humbler station might of course enjoy thinking of themselves as friends of the rich and powerful. All living social categories, including those pertaining to patronage, are subject to such strategic deployments. There was accordingly a tense dialectic between *amicitia* and clientship. But the rhetorical tendency to assimilate the two ideas could be disrupted by irony or satire just because they remained implicitly distinct. Euphemisms work by collapsing meanings that are socially acknowledged to be antithetical. Fudging semantic boundaries requires effort, however, and the results are unstable. Thus, if pretensions to friendship with a patron in ancient Rome were just a pose—and the inequality of the relationship made true friendship difficult though by no means impossible to achieve—then they were vulnerable to being unmasked by the critic or satirist. The means of exposing such social climbers was to reveal the distance between the servility that ordinary clientship required (or might require) and the spirit of candor and decency—of *παρρησία* or *libertas*—that at all times, and irrespective of social standing, remained the hallmark of relations between friends.

Brown University

REFERENCE LIST

- Allan, Graham. 1989. *Friendship: Developing a Sociological Perspective*. Boulder.
- Armstrong, David. 1994. The Addressees of the *Ars Poetica*: Herculaneum, the Pisones and Epicurean Protreptic. In *Mega nepios: il ruolo del destinatario nell'epos didascalico* (= MD 31), ed. Jenny Strauss Clay, Phillip Mitsis, and Alessandro Schiesaro, 185–230. Pisa.
- Baker, Robert J. 1988. Maecenas and Horace *Satires* II.8. *CJ* 83:212–32.
- Bartsch, Shadi. 1995. *Actors in the Audience*. Cambridge, Mass.
- Bowditch, Lowell. 1994. Horace's Poetics of Political Integrity: *Epistle* 1.18. *AJP* 115:409–26.
- Bray, Alan. 1990. Homosexuality and the Signs of Male Friendship in Elizabethan England. *History Workshop* 29:1–19.
- Brunt, Peter A. 1988. *The Fall of the Roman Republic*. Oxford.
- Cloud, Duncan. 1989. The Client-Patron Relationship: Emblem and Reality in Juvenal's First Book. In *Patronage in Ancient Society*, ed. Andrew Wallace-Hadrill, 205–18. London.
- Cotton, Hannah. 1984. The Concept of *indulgentia* Under Trajan. *Chiron* 14:245–66.
- Eisenstadt, S. N. and Luis Roniger. 1984. *Patrons, Clients and Friends: Interpersonal Relations and the Structure of Trust in Society*. Cambridge.
- Gallant, Thomas. 1991. *Risk and Survival in Ancient Greece: Reconstructing the Rural Domestic Economy*. Cambridge.
- Gantar, Kajetan. 1976. Le préhistoire d' *amicus sibi* chez Horace. *Les Études Classiques* 44:209–21.

- Gold, Barbara K. 1987. *Literary Patronage in Greece and Rome*. Chapel Hill.
- Heath, Malcolm. 1987. *The Poetics of Tragedy*. London.
- Herman, Gabriel. 1980. The Friends of the Early Hellenistic Rulers: Servants or Officials? *Talanta* 12/13:103–49.
- Horsfall, Nicholas. 1981. *Poets and Patron: Maecenas, Horace and the Georgics, Once More*. North Ryde.
- Hunter, R. L. 1985. Horace on Friendship and Free Speech (*Epistles* 1.18 and *Satires* 1.4). *Hermes* 113:480–90.
- Kilpatrick, Ross S. 1986. *The Poetry of Friendship: Horace, Epistles I*. Edmonton.
- Kinsley, Michael. 1994. True Lies (Review of James Carville and Mary Matalin, *All's Fair* [1994]). *The New Yorker* 26 September 1994: 48–53.
- Konstan, David. 1994. Forthcoming. Friendship and the State: The Context of Cicero's *De amicitia*. *Hyperboreus* 2.
- . Forthcoming. Reciprocity and Friendship. In *Reciprocity in Ancient Greece*, ed. Christopher Gill, Norman Postlethwaite, and Richard Seaford. Oxford.
- LaFleur, Richard A. 1979. *Amicitia* and the Unity of Juvenal's First Book. *ICS* 4:158–77.
- Meister, Karl. 1950. Die Freundschaft zwischen Horaz und Maecenas. *Gymnasium* 57:3–38.
- Millett, Paul. 1989. Patronage and its Avoidance in Classical Athens. In *Patronage in Ancient Society*, ed. Andrew Wallace-Hadrill, 15–48. London.
- . 1991. *Lending and Borrowing in Ancient Athens*. Cambridge.
- Nussbaum, Martha C. 1986. *The Fragility of Goodness*. Cambridge.
- Perkin, Harold. 1972. *The Origins of Modern English Society, 1780–1880*. Toronto.
- Pitt-Rivers, Julian A. 1971 [1954]. *The People of the Sierra*.² Chicago.
- Saint-Evremond, Charles. 1966. Sur l'amitié. In *Oeuvres en Prose*, vol. 7, ed. René Ternois. Paris.
- Saller, Richard P. 1982. *Personal Patronage Under the Early Empire*. Cambridge.
- . 1989. Patronage and Friendship in Early Imperial Rome: Drawing the Distinction. In *Patronage in Ancient Society*, ed. Andrew Wallace-Hadrill, 49–62. London.
- Scarpato, Giuseppe. 1964. *Parrhesia: Storia del termine e delle sue traduzioni in latino*. Brescia.
- Seager, Robin. 1977. *Amicitia* in Tacitus and Juvenal. *AJAH* 2:40–50.
- Silver, Allan. 1995. Personal is Private, Impersonal is Public. In *Public and Private in Thought and Practice*, ed. Jeff Weintraub and Krishan Kumar. Chicago.
- Strauss, Barry. 1986. *Athens After the Peloponnesian War: Class, Faction and Policy 403–386 B.C.* London.
- Wadell, Paul J. 1989. *Friendship and the Moral Life*. Notre Dame.
- Wallace-Hadrill, Andrew. 1979. *Civilis Princeps: Between Citizen and King*. *JRS* 72:32–48.
- White, Peter. 1978. *Amicitia* and the Profession of Poetry in Early Imperial Rome. *JRS* 68:74–92.
- . 1993. *Promised Verse: Poets in the Society of Augustan Rome*. Cambridge, Mass.
- Wolf, Eric R. 1966. Kinship, Friendship, and Patron-Client Relations in Complex Societies. In *The Social Anthropology of Complex Societies*, ed. Michael Banton, 1–22. New York.
- Wood, Gordon S. 1992. *The Radicalism of the American Revolution*. New York.