Poetry & Patronage in the Early Imperial Era: Through The eyes of Martial

by

Richard Austin ASTRIC002

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Department of Modern and Classical Languages
School of Humanities
University of Cape Town
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Declaration

This work has not been previously submitted in whole, or in part, for the award of any degree. It is my own work. Each significant contribution to, and quotation in, this dissertation from the work, or works, of other people has been attributed, and has been cited and referenced.

Richard Charles Austin Date: 15/02/05

SUPERVISOR'S APPROVAL OF SUBMISSION OF DISSERTATION FOR EXAMINATION

I confirm tha I have see /have not seen the final version of RCD Austin's name) dissertation an ~~d their is~~ submitted for examination (with)without my approval.

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation has three main aims: firstly, to establish and confirm Martial's status as a client; secondly, to confirm his reliability as an eyewitness in regard to the functioning of patronage in Roman society; and thirdly, to consider the intention behind the epigrams directed toward the emperor. This study hopes to show that, whilst allowing for the devices which are inherent to poetry, Martial's epigrams do have some merit as brief sketches of the complex social machinery of patronage. Additionally, it will be made evident that the many epigrams dealing with his working relationships with various patrons and benefactors offer ample evidence for the practical origins of his discontent with his own clientage.

The essay is divided simply into three related components. Remaining largely in the theoretical realm, the first chapter explores the nebulous workings of patronage, as well as *amicitia*, a closely related concept. The discussion considers the ideals behind these complex concepts, and their practical functioning in Roman society. A clear understanding of both of these social phenomena is essential so as to lay the necessary groundwork for the more specific examinations of function.

By contrast, the second chapter shifts the discussion into the application of such relationships in reality. Thus, the chapter begins by considering whether or not notions of patronage were even applicable to poets. In this section I uphold the argument that poets could in fact become clients, drawing evidence (with caution) from the *Epigrams*. The question is thus answered by looking at what Martial himself says about clientage and the necessary obligations involved. A contrast may be drawn between Martial's hopes and dreams for his own life, as opposed to the realistic prospects of a client in Rome. Additionally, while Martial has much to say about his own living conditions, any conclusions drawn from his comments must be tempered by considerations of intent.

Having acquired an understanding of client life through Martial's eyes, the third chapter begins with an overview of the specific conditions of literary patronage during Domitian's reign. With the necessary framework in place, I consider the possible function of his epigrams in the context of his pursuit of imperial patronage. Some controversial

interpretations of such poems see in them veiled and ambiguous references in regards to Domitian's legislation and his personal behaviour. Consequently, the epigrams concerned are analysed for their possible ironic content, and the implications thereof considered.

Finally, some general conclusions are drawn regarding Martial's depiction of the "reality" of patronage, both under the emperor and in Roman society at large. For, it is evident that while his idyllic dream of a poet's life differs significantly from the reality of his life in Rome, his poetry offers an insight into the differing modes of communication between patron and client, and as such constitutes a valuable and under-rated resource for patronage studies.

CHAPTER 1:

Personal Patronage: From the Republic to early Imperial Rome

The system of patronage in Roman society – the nature of its mechanisms, and more importantly, its precise functioning – has been an area of contention throughout in the last century and continues to be so in the early twenty-first century. In order best to appreciate the position of the poet (or indeed, anyone else) within this system, it is necessary to attempt to have an understanding of the complex social machinery of ancient Rome. As it underpinned most forms of personal and social interaction, patronage can be said to have woven the fabric of Roman society together, in that all levels of society depended upon its continued functioning. Although patronage as a serious subject of study has become topical again in the last few years (e.g. Eilers 2002, Nauta 2002, Lomas and Cornell 2003), the thorough study in the last twenty years remains Richard Saller's *Personal Patronage under the Early Empire*. However, the intricacies of this social institution continue to be re-shaped, as researchers try to unravel its functioning in Roman society, with the predictable result that no one can offer a single definition of patronage without all manner of complications arising.

The purpose of this first chapter is to develop a detailed understanding of the social mechanism of patronage so as to uncover the position and value of poets such as Martial in the early empire, and ultimately the importance of the emperor as the most potent literary patron of all. Therefore, it is not the intention of this chapter to define patronage,[1] but rather to study the reality faced by those existing in the world of literary patronage, their obligations, their hopes and dreams. Having said this, however, some consideration of patronage relationships is unavoidable if we are to create the necessary basis for the latter path of inquiry. I hope to clarify the system of patronage as Martial understood it through an exploration of the complex variants of inter-personal relationships.

The Romans' own presentation of the custom of personal patronage had its origins in the dawn of Roman history, associated with Romulus, mythical first king and in many ways the archetype of all things Roman. At least, this was the view of later Roman historians in explaining the status quo of their own time. According to Dionysius of Halicarnassus,[2] he divided the people of Rome

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[1] In any case a futile quest since there was ultimately no one single form of patronage *per se*.

[2] Dion. Hal. *Ant.* 2.9-2.11. I attend only to the general formation here; for a discussion of the various obligations involved see below, pp.3-4. I have used the Loeb editions of all texts quoted, except where noted.

into two distinct halves, the first of which comprised the landed aristocracy (the patricians) and the latter which included the common workers and farmers (the plebeians). Romulus is also credited with establishing a system of mutually beneficial exchange between the early patricians and plebeians in the form of patronage. The purpose of such association was no doubt to provide unquestionable justification for the natural order of things in Roman society, and hence has come under some scrutiny.[3] Dionysius' sources for this information are uncertain, and indeed his comments may be regarded as his own formulations. He echoes traditional patrician sentiments[4] on certain aspects of patronage, for example the claim that all plebeians were originally clients bound to their patrician betters, a somewhat suspect claim which certainly conformed to the aristocracy's inherently conservative view of Rome's "natural" division of the orders.

It is most likely that patronage developed gradually rather than being formed by one individual at one specific moment. While the Romans may have adapted the various customs of patronage from their Greek counterparts,[5] Drummond suggests that Dionysius is actually "describing the rights and obligations of patrons and clients as they became established by custom, not as laid down by specific enactment".[6] Mythologizing the origins of patronage thus only served the purposes of the patrician order in preserving and justifying their continued dominance of the social, legal and economic spheres of everyday Roman life.

The two basic units of the patronage relationship were the *patronus* and the *cliens*. It would seem prudent to trust in the common translation of these terms, since after much debate within the last twenty years,[7] both "patron" and "client" have remained the most reliable parallels in English.[8] By the nature of the institution, the client was the inferior party, relying as he did upon the continued good will of his patron. The best he could hope for from a life dominated by his social betters was to take "advantage from submission in a society in which low-standing social strata had no lands and no protection before the courts" (Eisenstadt & Roniger, 1984, p.57).[9] It should be noted however that because patronage itself is an umbrella term for a number of related social

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[3] See Drummond (1989) for a brief overview and discussion of the doubtful authenticity of Dionysius' claims for the origin of patronage, esp. pp.89-93.
[4] E.g. Cicero *De Republica* 2.16.
[5] cf. Dion. Hal. *Ant.* 2.9.2.
[6] 1989, p.91.
[7] cf. Saller, 1982, pp.8-11, and Nauta, 2002, pp.12ff.
[8] See Nauta (2002, p.12ff.) in which he upholds the continued use of these terms.
[9] For example, patrons were required to represent and defend their clients in law (Dion. Hal. *Ant.* 2.10.1).

relations, it will be necessary to briefly examine and differentiate between the two which primarily concern us here.[10]

Patrocinium and *clientela* seem to have differed essentially in the manner in which relations between the two parties were contracted. The first was closely tied to the act of *manumissio*, in which a slave became a *libertus*, who nonetheless remained subject to certain conditions. For example, as slaves were costly to maintain, it made economic sense to manumit them, because then their former masters were no longer directly obligated with their upkeep. Moreover, patrons could continue to extract services from their former slaves, and they in turn were in a position to earn far more for their former masters in business relationships.[11] Furthermore, the earnings of slaves who were only manumitted informally returned to their masters after they died, because in the eyes of the law, they had remained slaves (Treggiari, 1969, p.16). Even men who had been formally freed might have to satisfy one final condition upon death: if they had acquired property, the patron might be entitled to a share of the proceeds from its sale after their death.[12]

Eisenstadt and Roniger identify the *patronus-libertus* link (1984, p.52) as one of the earliest forms of patronage, in which freedmen were obligated to engage in various economic services to assist their patron in reaching office, paying any fines he had incurred, and generally performing services (*operae*) for them, possibly as part of a "debt" they owed for being set free (Eisenstadt & Roniger, 1984, p.55). Treggiari (1969, p.75), citing the *Digest*,[13] states that the obligation to work for the patron arose from an oath that was sworn *after* manumission. Depending upon the skills the *libertus* possessed, anything from clerical work to physical labour was expected of him, as well as any number of odd services required by the patron. Former masters also had legal right to punish *liberti* who failed to fulfill their obligations, while the latter had few legal rights and therefore little option but to do what was needed.

Patrons in return were to provide representation for those subordinate to them in terms of financial arrangements, their relations to the gods, and even controlled their marriages and other social customs (Eisenstadt & Roniger, 1984, p.55). In effect clients lacked any real agency in Roman society, and thus many of the necessary formal undertakings of life in Roman society were restricted to their *patroni*, without the support of whom they could not proceed. Loyalty (or

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[10] For this approach I follow Eisenstadt & Roniger, 1984, pp.52-58.
[11] See Eisenstadt & Roniger, 1984, p.54, and p.7 below. See also Treggiari, 1969, pp.87-106.
[12] Treggiari, 1969, p.16.
[13] 38.1.31 (Modestinus).

fides) was essential to the continuing exchange of services, and so clients were unlikely to ever appear against their patrons in law or in public,[14] as such actions would have been seen as "acts of treason, impious and 'unlawful' behaviour" (Eisenstadt & Roniger, 1984, p.58). For clients, to act without showing the necessary *obsequium* was to give offence, entrenching the inferior parties further in social 'debt' to their betters.

The former master, now acting as patron, remained the senior partner in every sense, whereas the freedman remained (financially at least, and often legally as well as socially) bonded to his former master, and thus reliant upon him. This form of patronage may be seen as the most unequal and therefore (probably) the one most open to abuse, as clients had little or no legal recourse should such abuse occur. In addition to this, the services (or rather, obligations) of this type of *cliens* may have been hereditary and thus could have been maintained over several generations. However, this was not without limit, as in early times families which abused this connection were liable to censure.[15] Recently however, the notion that client-bondage in general could be inherited has come under attack from Eilers (2002, pp.61-83), who feels that *voluntary* relationships could not have been extended this way. This seems very reasonable, but in the case of *patrocinium* the involuntary nature of its origin may well have dictated terms for several generations of clients.

Clientela, the second common form of patronal relationship, was similar to *patrocinium* in that it linked the powerful and those of inferior social, economic or legal status. However, such *clientes* were often men of free-birth who approached would-be patrons for a variety of reasons. The *patronus* in this case was likely be an office-holder of some sort, or have held some sort of legal advantage over the client.[16] This relationship may have been initiated through an act of self-commendation called *applicatio*, by which the prospective client hoped to attract the favours of an influential patron. This idea of self-commendation has, however, been contested recently by Koenraad Verboven (2003),[17] in a review of Claude Eilers' monograph, *Roman Patrons of Greek Cities* (2002), on the grounds that there is little evidence in literary and other sources for such a practice.

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[14] cf. Dion. Hal. *Ant.* 2.10.3 where he explicitly states that *both* parties could be punished for violating the code of conduct, although in reality it is likely that the burden fell primarily on the dependent plebeian *clientes*.
[15] At least according to Eisenstadt & Roniger, 1984, p.54, but I was unable to locate the source for this.
[16] Atkinson, J.E., pers. comm. Nov 2004.
[17] Verboven, K., 2003, *BMCR* 06.19, p.iv.

It is this latter form of the patronal relationship, *clientela*, which is of greater relevance when we consider the position of the writers and poets, many of whom were not ex-slaves themselves. According to the *Commentariolum Petitionis*, which is plausibly ascribed to Quintus Cicero, there were three divisions or tiers of *clientela*: those who came every morning to the house of the great man to show their respect for him, in the hope of some kind of *officium* or favour, but who might also have had other patrons to visit (*salutatores*); those who came to escort their powerful *amicus* to the Forum before leaving on other business (*deductores*); and finally those devoted to a single patron, who remained with him all day in the hope of being rewarded for whatever service they might possibly be able to provide, much like the freedmen of the previous form of patronage (*adsectatores*).[18] Martial and other poets like him would probably have drifted between the first two tiers, as I shall argue in the next chapter.

What did the *cliens* and *patronus* actually do for each other? The *cliens* provided "various tangible or intangible services or gratifications" for his superior (Sullivan, 1991, p.116). Clients were likely to have provided minor services as messengers, clerks, poets, entertainers at dinner,[19] spies, thugs, guards, soldiers in the army (if the patron was an actively campaigning general) and physical labourers.

As mentioned earlier in our brief survey of the variations of *clientela*, the client was expected, at the very least, to make an appearance at the *salutatio*, the morning greeting to the patron, where any number of supporters and dependants gathered outside the house of the great man. It was this daily ritual which most openly reinforced the patron-client link and ultimately the social hierarchy of Rome itself. The very visible spectacle of this gathering in itself was a sign of the prestige and influence that the *patronus* possessed; the greater the number of visitors crowded his doorstep, the greater the prestige.[20] Having a high number of *foreign* clients, even under the principate,[21] enhanced *dignitas* although they conferred no political advantage (Brunt, 1987, p.393).

Arriving in time for the *salutatio* meant rising early, especially if one had to travel some distance, and yet the possibility remained that on some occasions, the *cliens* would not even be admitted,

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[18] Wiseman, 1982, p.29.
[19] See for example Martial *Ep.* 4.68.
[20] Dion. Hal. *Ant.* 2.10.4, cf. Nauta 2002, p.13.
[21] Tac. *Ann.* III.55.

as Martial complains bitterly.[22] However, by Martial's time, a kind of dole might be paid to supporters of the more generous benefactors.[23] Clients received the dole in one of two forms; either money (100 *quadrantes*), or a hamper of food, the *sportula*. Saller (1989, p.57) suggests that the order in which the visitors were received by the patron also indicated their status,[24] just as the status and prestige of the great protector was reflected by the very number and importance of those who congregated outside his house.

Amongst the crowd of *salutatores*, there no doubt stood several *deductores*. After having completed their morning's greetings to their patron, they would proceed to accompany him to his business in the forum, however long it took. They might ask for and listen to his advice regarding business matters, as they themselves might have concerns in the forum (of which the *patronus* often retained a share). Of course, like all clients they no doubt sought direct financial assistance as well, but they probably had a greater chance of receiving such help than the poorer *adsectatores,* who followed the great man on his business all day long in the hope of any possible favour or gift of food. These most desperate of all *clientes* are presumed by Wiseman (1982, p.30) to have had only one patron, but this must remain open to debate.

Turning to the patron, his principal duties included the protection and assistance (especially in matters of finance) and the promotion of his *clientes*' interests in the courts of law and in his capacity as an office-holder of some sort.[25] Triumphant generals often rewarded their loyal supporters with lands, rights and money. The more common civilian patron might supply a gift of a small dole or food (such as fruit or bread) or other items of similar value, particularly for the *adsectatores*. Saller (1983, p. 253) argues that although such gifts were often modest, they were probably more than enough to sustain temporarily hungry and/or needy clients. At the other end of the scale, those supporters of whom the great man was most fond might even be given free lodging[26] – subject to continued loyal service (Wiseman, 1982, p.29), but this was probably a privilege accorded to relatively few. More often, a patron's more esteemed *clientes* (or *amici*) might hope to receive an invitation to a *cena*, a prospect of particular interest to Martial as I shall discuss later.

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[22] M. *Ep.* 10.82, cf. 1.108, 2.5, 10.70, and 10.74.
[23] *Ep.* 1.59, but see especially 10.74, *l.*4 for the value of the entire exercise in Martial's eyes.
[24] However, there is little in the references he gives to *Ep.* 10.74, 10.78 and 10.82, to support this; nonetheless it is *a priori* plausible. See Chapter 2, p.8ff.
[25] Dion. Hal. *Ant.* 2.9.1 & 2.10.1, cf. Eisenstadt & Roniger, 1984, p.57.
[26] See for example the case of the young poet Archias, Cic. *Pro Archia Poeta* 5-6.

Of course, being in the superior position from which to grant such favours (such as invitations to a *cena*) or support as they saw fit, benefactors could also tighten their control over their clients or punish them by denying them access to those same services. Thus, the "real power of patrons" lay in their ability to refuse goods or access to other essential material items or finance (Wallace-Hadrill, 1989, p.73). Thus, many dependants were kept on tenterhooks by their patrons with irregular gifts or valuables, cheap food and wine, or simply by promises of future benefits, and at worst, continuous excuses. While there was some moral and social pressure for a patron to maintain his end of the arrangement, the lowly client had no legal rights by which to enforce appropriate conduct on his superior's part. Ultimately, all that clients of low social standing and means had was "...*observantia*, the offer of *officia*, the hope of *beneficia* – the reality, that is, of the patron-client relationship" (Wiseman, 1982, p.31).

Patrons were also seen as men who could facilitate upward mobility for their clients, in that they acted as their representatives in society. Although they were more likely to promote others to their own interest, they could campaign for the sake of their supporters. This, however, depended upon two things: the need for support to be sufficiently urgent and, more importantly, politically, socially or financially expedient. While it was in theory the responsibility of the *clientes* of a *patronus* to assist him in campaigning (particularly by not voting against him!),[27] the ambitious patron often turned to a different category of supporters, men with whom he maintained both purposely (and occasionally) genuinely cordial relations in the form of *amicitia*.

Prospective "clients" from the equestrian order and others of lesser social standing also often sought out distinguished supporters, but rather than placing themselves automatically in the dreaded inferior position of *clientes*,[28] they instead relied upon another variant of inter-personal relations, which was somewhat similar to *clientela*. *Amicitia* refers to a kind of established "friendship"[29] between members of various levels of the upper classes. One of our chief sources for information on this relationship is the republican statesman Marcus Tullius Cicero, particularly in his *De Amicitia*. For Cicero, *amicitia* had in principle an origin in 'true' friendship, pointing out that the word itself was derived from the word *amor* (love),[30] and that it was special in that it was not merely for reciprocal interest, based as it was on *fides* and *veritas*. These were

[27] Cf. Dion. Hal. *Ant.* 2.10.3 where he states that it was in fact unlawful to do so.
[28] Cic. *Off.* 2.69.
[29] While "friendship" is perhaps *not* the most accurate translation for this particular social institution, for our purposes it sufficiently distances this concept from the more traditional vertically oriented and asymmetrical arrangements discussed above and below.
[30] Cic. *Am.* 26.

the key elements of this "friendship" and without which the relationship might lapse into *clientela* (Eisenstadt & Roniger, 1984, p.61). These principles formed the moral core which held the entire system together, which "bound the friends together in bonds of obligation and honour" (Brunt, 1987, p.355).[31]

Like *clientela* and *patrocinium*, *amicitia* involved exchanges and *officia* (duties), but this was not governed as rigidly as the two former sets of relations, an inherent feature of its ostensibly more relaxed nature. While *amicitia* remained in origin conceptually separate from patronage itself, there was often a high degree of overlap between the two, particularly as *amicitia* was commonly expected to involve the exchange of gifts and "benefits" as well as political alliance and support. Those who participated in such relationships usually referred to each other as *amici*, whilst remaining aware of any pertinent differences in social standing. Thus, in Saller's (1989, p.57) words, "...the status-conscious Roman did not allow the courtesy [of the term '*amicus*'] to obscure the relative social standings of the two parties."

Brunt's careful formulation that Cicero allows for genuine friendship between "men who were not completely equal in rank"[32], reveals that this was not always the case. The necessary implication therefore is that *amicitia* was often used as a veil for *clientela* in connection with the lower orders, whilst amongst the upper orders it was far more likely to mean actual friendship or at least political alliance. Indeed, as Brunt (1987, p.361) states, in all likelihood the vast majority of the plebeian men who attended the morning *salutatio*, "were *amici* only by courtesy". However it is unlikely that patronage and *amicitia* were confused by the Romans, for it would seem unlikely that anyone of sufficient status, such as an *eques*[33] would accept such a veiled clientship unless, however, he were overly reliant upon the support of a much wealthier *amicus*.

This has led Wallace-Hadrill (1989, p.77) to remark that although Roman manners distinguished between *amici* and *clientes*, they generally used "the same language of friendship, trust and obligation". Scholars generally seem to agree on the reasons for the choice of the word "*amicus*" to describe both patron and friend. Saller (1982, p.11) sees it as a deliberate choice because it was ambiguous in its meaning, due to the fact that it was a part of the more horizontally arranged system of *amicitia*. It was this use of the language of *amicitia*, which provided patronage with the

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[31] Brunt, 1987, "*Amicitia*", pp.351-381.
[32] Brunt, 1987, p.361. See also p.361 no. 43 and Cic. *Am.* 71ff.
[33] E.g. Martial, *Ep.* 2.55.

subtle disguise which the Roman elite appreciated. This was no doubt particularly true for those of the upper orders who were dependant upon others for support might have resented the notion of their own clientage.[34] Few of our literary sources, particularly the poets, use the labels *patronus* and *cliens* in referring to their relationship with their benefactors. These words "had fixed connotations of inequality" (Nauta, 2002, p.15) and implications of "social inferiority and degradation" (Saller, 1982, p.7).

Additionally, Saller (1982, p.10) suggested that "the language of social subordination may have seemed arrogant when used by the patron" and this seems especially likely if we bear in mind that a Roman patron had to try to maintain at all times *civilitas*, that is, the behaviour expected of "a citizen amongst other citizens" (Wallace-Hadrill, 1982, p.33),[35] which thus necessitated the avoidance of terms which had unmistakably asymmetrical connotations. Therefore, for the most part, the title *amicus* can be said to have functioned as a euphemism by which the vertical nature of the patron-client bond could be disguised.

In support of this we might look at the actual practice of some of the more powerful patrons of the republican era. Some members of Rome's elite preferred to classify their *amici* in simpler terms which also denoted importance and relative social status, with the ultimate effect of confirming the superior status of the established *magni amici*. Seneca, the philosopher and moralist (writing under Nero in the mid 1st century AD) tells us that Gaius Gracchus and Livius Drusus devised three separate sub-divisions for those *amici* who paid them with visits or morning salutations.[36] We may detect some similarities between these sub-divisions and those of the author of the *Commentariolum Petitionis*. There were firstly those who might be perceived of as "peers",[37] the *amicitiae pares,* and who were seen in private, probably because they offered the best services or returns for their *amicus/patronus*. They were also perhaps the closest approaching *amici* in the modern sense, and thus these men were the most likely type of *clientes* to have had multiple patrons (or 'friends') simultaneously. If so, then they corresponded to Q. Cicero's division of *clientes* called *salutatores*.

The second group was also comprised primarily of *salutatores*, but these were seen as *amicitiae inferiores*, or "lesser *amici*" who were allowed inside their benefactor's house in small groups for

[34] See Brunt, 1987, p.395ff for more on this.
[35] Wallace-Hadrill, 1982, pp.32-48.
[36] *De Beneficiis*, 6.33.3ff.
[37] Saller, 1982, p.11.

the morning greetings (Saller, 1982, p.11). They were also likely to have multiple *patroni*. The third and final group was composed of the humblest *amici* who waited outside and hoped to be admitted, usually in large groups. Such *amici* would have included those termed *adsectatores* by Q. Cicero, mentioned earlier.[38]

Indeed, over time *amicitia* and *clientela* seem to have become more and more interwoven, until it is difficult to distinguish where one type of relationship ends and another begins. As the terminology of *amicitia* was preferred for its subtler forms of reference between the different strata, the more explicit *patronus* and *cliens* are found only comparatively rarely. The usage of the equestrian poet Martial conforms to this. As many of his epigrams are directed towards such "friends", we must accept that *amicitia* will have played as large a role in his daily interactions as that of the more rigidly asymmetrical patronage. However, as the epigrammatic evidence for Martial's interactions with his various *patroni* and *amici* will be considered in far more detail in Chapter 2 we shall say little more about it here. Having overviewed the basic functioning and inherent social stratification of patronage and *amicitia*, we may now consider in detail a typical example of their application in practice - the *cena*.

Dinners were a common benefit provided by the patron, but an invitation was by no means assured for the *cliens*, unless he had become especially favoured as an *amicus*. The three tiers of *clientela* discussed previously, were most visible if they were seated separately, or were served different qualities of food and drink (Saller, 1982, p.11).[39] Different *amici* might find themselves similarly favoured or neglected. Although such discrimination was no doubt frowned upon in terms of etiquette by moralists, there is some evidence that such practice was common, at least in terms of implementation at the dinner-table.[40] However, the lowly client had to often compete with many others in order even to *receive* an invitation to dinner, and it seems that they were not easily been given, a fact about which Martial frequently complains.[41] Even wealthier clients sometimes had to pay for the privilege,[42] and were also then expected to entertain their patron.

At this point we must make a short but necessary digression to consider the issue of supposed "parasites" who were particularly quick to exploit any possibility of an invitation to dinner.

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[38] See p.6.
[39] But see Wiseman, 1982, p.30, who feels that dinner invitations were particularly for *adsectatores* – see p.16.
[40] If we can (cautiously) consider the 'evidence' of Martial, then *Ep.* 3.49, 3.60, 4.68, 4.85.
[41] Martial and competition for dinners: *Ep.* 1.23, 2.18, 2.37, 2.79, 5.47, 6.48, 6.51, 9.85 and 10.18.
[42] See again Martial *Ep.* 4.68 as well as 5.47 and Saller, 1982, p. 128.

Wiseman (1982, p.30) suggests that, as their portrayal in Roman comedy was so common, they were very much a part of Roman reality. On several occasions, Martial complains of the behaviour of such people – he talks of men waiting for unsuspecting "victims" on popular walkways, in the public baths (a common complaint of Martial's) and even the public ablution blocks, while others acted as excessively complimentary "friends".[43] Martial continues by saying that, once at dinner, some abused the privilege further by stealing food or even the implements themselves,[44] (such as silver spoons) which were presumably of some value. Still others feigned reluctance, as if to indicate that they had multiple invitations to dinner, yet ultimately chose to honour Martial with their presence, whilst simultaneously they made themselves out to be modest *amici* for whom the honour of being invited was *almost* too much![45]

In his discussion of the issue of parasitism, White (1982, p.58) cautions against gauging "the role of the rich man's friend and companion" by the values of the "modern observer". The value of this for our study is intrinsic, in terms of appreciating what the diverse customs of patronage actually offered the humbler *clientes*. White believes that "a significant difference in social organization accounts for the difference in perception" between Roman society and our own (p.58). The crux of this difference lay originally in attitudes towards work at the top of Roman society, in which paid work was frowned upon, and a man was expected to derive interest from capital at work elsewhere. Hence, in a society where respectable professions often paid little or nothing, "few professions evolved", and as so few (particularly of the elite) worked, it would have been difficult to "say who was a parasite and who was not" (White, 1982, p.58).

Despite White's claim, Wiseman (1982, p.30) actually suggests that such parasites might generally be identified as "a specialized sub-class of *adsectatores*", who were motivated by physical hunger. Further, he supposes that part of the 'price' for their admission to a dinner would be to entertain the host and his more esteemed guests by making fools of themselves (ibid. p.30) – thus simultaneously humiliating themselves in explicitly revealing their desperation to partake of a meal – any meal – and thereby reinforcing the superiority of their social betters. The cynical and status-conscious Martial (at least, in his poetic *persona*) seems to have had no difficulty identifying those who were parasites, although Martial may have been just as keen to distance himself from the very same charge.

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[43] cf. *Ep.* 2.11, 2.14, 2.27, 2.40, 6.48, 9.9, 9.14 and 9.19.
[44] e.g. *Ep.* 7.20, but see also 2.37 where Martial was the benefactor giving the dinner.
[45] See especially *Ep.* 2.69.

However, it must be remembered that an invitation to dinner from a social superior could also be seen as a mark of honour for the more ambitious (or simply hopeful) *cliens*. We cannot be sure that some of those who tried so hard to be invited did so for purely financial reasons. Having said this, Wiseman (1982) does point out that "mere angling for a dinner invitation is not in itself evidence for social dependence on the host" (p.41) – otherwise, Martial would appear to have had more than fifty patrons, which would seem highly improbable. At any rate, we may conclude that, as the etiquette that (loosely) governed the giving of benefactions such as the *cena* almost entirely favoured the *patronus*, it would seem that some of those in the inferior position were determined to gain benefits however they could.

As Roman society changed, patronage was bound to change too. How much it had changed between its institution and the late Republic is impossible to say, since we lack sufficient evidence for the earlier period with which to compare. In Wallace-Hadrill's view, "the reputation of patronage had suffered due to the influx of wealth after the Punic Wars".[46] However, in the view of Dionysius[47] the power held by *patroni* only really began to be undermined when the Gracchi were troubling the great houses of the nobility with their proposed reforms, in the late 2nd century BC. In particular the introduction of secret voting in the assemblies was "deliberately aimed to free the voter or juror from patronal pressure in registering his opinion" (Wallace-Hadrill, 1989, p.70). One of the most famous of the Gracchan reforms, the grain dole, also undermined reliance on the generosity of the *magni patroni*, as the State could then provide where individuals could not (Wallace-Hadrill, 1989, p.70). Naturally, these changes were cause for alarm for all patrons concerned with maintaining the status quo and ensuring their power and influence.

One of our best sources for the etiquette of the highly flexible and nebulous inter-personal relationship that is patronage in the late Republic is the conservative Cicero. Although he was a *novus homo*, his progression through the *cursus honorum* by his own merits made him a powerful friend and patron to many. In his "*De Officiis*", he ponders a theoretical discussion, based on Greek philosophy, and *exempla* which set out the appropriate behaviour, *mores* and values of the *patronus*, as well as the operation of exchange itself, and which he had several reasons to

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[46] Wallace-Hadrill, 1989, p.71.
[47] *Ant.* 2.11.3. But cf. Brunt, 1987, p.387, who argues for the gradual decline of patronage well before the Gracchi, suggesting that Dionysius was writing for the approval of an inherently conservative audience.

produce.[48] We learn of the value of *officia* and *beneficia*, and *gratia*, all of which were concepts integral to the working of patronage in Roman society.

Officia were favours of variable kinds made by a patron to a favoured *cliens*, often gifts or loans of money, or even valuables but linked by the fact that they all had measurable value – and were expected to be repaid in the future, although not always in kind (Saller, 1982, p.16). In theory they were provided strategically to those from whom the patron stood to make a profit or benefit of some kind, although prestige for the superior was gained in the process of the act itself. *Beneficia* were very similar, but in theory were made without return in mind, and therefore were especially prevalent between *amici*, but unofficially, a return was inevitably expected at some stage. Crucially, in Roman thought, acceptance of either of these (publicly, at least) automatically put the receiver in an inferior position to the gift-giver. Etiquette demanded that *gratia*, or gratitude, be shown by those receiving gifts and thus the exchange would be appropriately sealed.

Of course, we cannot simply assume that the Ciceronian ideals actually corresponded to the reality of patronage in Republican Rome, but they can be seen as guidelines by which we might gauge the workings of a successful series of inter-personal relations. The very fact that Cicero wrote with such concern[49] about the proper manner in which personal patronage was to be conducted indicates that, on the whole, those very ideals were *not* being maintained in Roman society at that time.[50] Cicero's love of moralistic sermonising notwithstanding, the very real possibility remains that a steady decline in the strength and nature of the patronal relationship had been occurring ever since its fabled institution, but perhaps particularly so during the late Republic (Wallace-Hadrill, 1989, p.69).

According to Cicero, patronage as a system of social order was deteriorating because of Roman society's increasing pursuit of wealth,[51] as *equites* often made and possessed greater fortunes than those in the senatorial order. Cicero's celebrated prosecution of the Sicilian governor Gaius Verres provides a ready example of the danger and arrogance that such wealth brought with it. Cicero found himself up against a very influential and resourceful opponent, whose relentless

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[48] See Dyck, 1996, p.21.
[49] cf. Cic. *Off.* 2.69-71.
[50] Although it could be argued that this is speculation based on negative evidence, it is in all likelihood a fairly safe assumption, and in any case hardly a new one – cf. Wallace-Hadrill, 1989, p.69.
[51] Cic. *Off.* 2.69.

attempts to bribe[52] witnesses and members of the Court pointed to a wider corruption of the Roman justice system and of society at large.

Cicero at this time was himself a candidate for the aedileship and tells of Verres' attempts to control the outcome by the use of his fortune,[53] and Cicero intimates that he had recently done so elsewhere.[54] However he pointedly tells us immediately thereafter that the power of "the people of Rome" ensured that he avoided being cheated of his office (*In Verrem* 1.25) – a poignant (and indeed, convenient) illustration that patronage could still serve its purpose if the disease of corruption could be removed. Nonetheless, material wealth had gradually begun to make inroads into the Senate (for those not born to the top echelon of Roman society), and this naturally carried with it power and influence, a fact which Cicero clearly reviled:

corrupti mores depravatique sunt admiratione divitiarum
(*De Officiis*, 2.71)

For Cicero, the true spirit of patronage was clearly fading fast, but we should bear in mind that is the very nature of the conservative to call for a return to the ways and *mores* of old. The unwillingness of the wealthy to put themselves under obligation in receiving *beneficia* and the increasing disdain in doing so was of serious concern for Cicero. His damning judgement of this growing reluctance is expressed in the last line of 2.69 of his *De Officiis*:

patrocinio vero se usos aut clientes appellari mortis instar putant

Seneca, writing more than a century later,[55] also felt most strongly about the mores behind the exchanges or *beneficia* which featured in *amicitia*, stressing that *gratia* was of paramount importance if a gift was to be appreciated, and a debt or favour acknowledged.[56] He despaired of those who, wishing to hide their perceived inferiority in receiving such *officia* in public, refused to do so unless in private, thereby publicly snubbing their would-be benefactors.[57] The ultimate result was that such *amici/clientes* risked being seen as ingrates:

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[52] Cic. *Verr.* 1.19, concerning an attempt to block Cicero's election to the aedileship.
[53] Cic. *Verr.* 1.22 and 1.25.
[54] Cic. *Verr.* 1.21, concerning the election of the new president of the Extortion Court, reportedly much to the delight of Verres, the implication being that the "*right* man had been chosen for the job".
[55] Griffin, (1961, p.399) assigns the date of *De Beneficiis* to after AD 56 (owing to the explicit mention of Caninius Rebelis who died in that year), but before AD 62 when Seneca retired.
[56] Sen. *Ben.*, 2.22.
[57] Sen. *De Beneficiis*, 2.23.1.

dum opinonem clientium timent, graviorem subeunt ingratorum.
(*De Beneficiis* 2.23.3)

In his review of Eilers, Verboven (2003, p.4), having dismissed Eilers' support for *applicatio* or self-commendation,[58] takes both Cicero and Seneca's comments to indicate that due to "the duties arising during gift-giving ... one could easily end up as a client if one became *beneficiis obligatus*"(p.4). He makes it clear that it was not "*beneficia* alone" which would suffice "to create patron-client bonds" (p.4), and that *amicitia* remained (in theory) separate from this state of affairs, but that if some sort of dependence upon gifts and support of a "great friend" developed, a more patronal relationship *was* initiated. Because clients were held to be inferior to those who acted as patrons, the fear of public acceptance of *officia* (and, therefore, *commitment*) to such obligations is somewhat understandable.[59]

Cicero is also concerned with the dominance of potential wealth as the determining factor[60] for assistance from would-be patrons, but not only in inter-personal patronal relationships. By this he means that rich men would be more inclined to assist each other financially in the hope of a quick and handsome return themselves, whilst neglecting to help the less fortunate masses, who lacked the ready means to repay loans, and which thus necessitated a longer period of repayments before reaching resolution.

Sed quis est tandem, qui inopis et optimi viri causae non anteponat in opera danda gratiam fortunati, et potentis?
(*De Officiis* 2.69)

He also touches upon civic patronage, to which he was no stranger, in which whole groups or communities (usually Italian countryside towns, but sometimes colonies or whole families within the city) were provided with assistance in some manner.[61] This could include loans to individuals or families, legal representation, construction of buildings for the public good, and so forth (Lomas & Cornell, 2003, p.3). Although this study is not ultimately concerned with this variant of patronage, it is clear that Cicero perceived a decline in all forms of the institution.

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[58] See note 17 above.
[59] However, Verboven (2003, p.4) comments that "any prospective client was free to reject the bond, but only at the risk of being branded as an ingrate", which as we have seen was not to be taken lightly.
[60] Cic. *De Officiis*, 2.69.
[61] Cic. *De Officiis*, 2.72ff.

It is fitting that at this point we contrast the historian's view of the supposed 'decline' of patronage with that of the conservative statesman. As we have already noted, Wallace-Hadrill (1989, p.69) feels that patronage had suffered in several aspects from the time of the late Republic onwards. Due to electoral abuses by those with abundant wealth, (such as the dictation of votes of those dependent upon a wealthy and powerful patron) counter-measures had been introduced to combat such abuse in the form of legislation, and coupled with the social reforms of the Gracchi,[62] these innovations served to at least partially erode the platform upon which patronage had traditionally been based. He concludes that patronage was "a system in flux" and competing with other, newer forms of social relations – "and certainly in decline" (Wallace-Hadrill, 1989, p.71).

Patronage was further weakened with the arrival of the principate. Following the work of Gelzer (1969), Wallace-Hadrill (1989, p.79) demonstrates that clients lost out just as much as their patrons in Octavian's gradual drive towards autocratic rule. The "only significant service of the client" (Wallace-Hadrill, 1989, p.79), was the vote he could make for his patron in elections. During the republic, this was the one thing a *cliens* could offer his *patronus*, but with the introduction of secret voting, he might choose to use it elsewhere, thereby undermining the chances for the election of his own patron in the process. However, once the principate had been firmly established, elections were effectively meaningless, (or else determined by imperial will) and so the power of the client's vote was rendered null and void. Thus, clients were just as effectively disenfranchised as their betters, for whom "the mounting restrictions on aristocratic displays such as triumphs, gladiatorial games, public buildings in the city, even the striking of personal badges on coins, had done much to erode the traditional self-presentation of the nobility" (Wallace-Hadrill, 1989, p.79).[63]

Eilers (2002), in a chapter entitled "The Decline of Patronage" (pp.161-190) proposes that as the chances for public office and the building of reputations lay increasingly in the hands of the emperor, those members of the highest orders who had previously been in a position to award them now could not, and so the need to impress fellow senators decreased. Ultimately, it became undesirable and even dangerous to cultivate too large a following under the early Empire, because

[62] All of which are discussed earlier on, see pp. 14ff.
[63] cf. Eck, 1984, pp.129-167.

the patron could then easily put himself under suspicion of sedition by nervous emperors (such as Domitian), quick to imagine rivals arising to take the principate for themselves.

Another piece of 'evidence' for the continuing decay of literary patronage under the empire is supplied by Pliny, in a famous letter[64] concerned with the death of Martial around AD 104, in which he laments what he feels is the virtual collapse of the patronage by his time. After complimenting Martial's character and ability, he states that Rome's distant ancestors (*antiqui*) had traditionally rewarded (by gift or support of some kind) or honoured those poets who had distinguished themselves in their work, but then proceeds to stress (at least, in his view) that returns of this nature were virtually no longer a feature of the Rome of his day:

nostris vero temporibus ut alia speciosa et egregia ita hoc in primis exolevit.
(*Epist.* 3.21)

Concerning writers such as Cicero and the comment made by Pliny in particular, Saller makes the point that "decline was such a common motif in Roman writing that it must always be treated with suspicion" (1983, p.255). While this is probably fair comment, it seems irrefutable that patronage was very much affected by concentration of dominance and power to a very few with the coming of the principate. While members of the aristocracy scrambled to curry favour with those in power, they made sure that their own endeavours did not endanger them. At the same time however, although the emperor was in effect, 'the ultimate patron', this seems to have been more of an honorary title than a practical one, although an exception may be made for Domitian, whose literary patronage will be discussed in detail in Chapter Three.

The fact remains, however, that patronage did flourish for a long time before the major phases of decay in the late Republic and early Empire. It was a feature so embedded in Roman society that it may be seen as an ideological construct upon which the Roman hierarchical system maintained its structure. The nobility and later the wealthy were seemingly expected to engage and fully immerse themselves in this complex system of interpersonal relationships, as we can gather from the views of such leading men in the State as Cicero (in Republican times) and later, Seneca and Pliny (both under the principate).

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[64] Plin. *Epist.* 3.21

It has been claimed that "patronage was as central to the structure of Roman society as feudalism was to medieval [society]: it constituted the dominant social relationship between ruler and ruled" (Wallace-Hadrill, 1989, p.68).[65] Conversely, Nauta (2002, p.13) following Brunt (1987), remarks that patronage need no longer be seen as of "paramount importance for the political history of the Roman Republic". At the very least, we must be able to say that patronage both underlined and promoted the continued divisions between the elite and those dependent upon them, and yet paradoxically, by forcing the two to work together, the status quo was maintained. It should also be acknowledged that, as the system "happened" to favour the elite, it seems in all likelihood to have been specifically designed to maintain stability in a starkly divided society. Even Nauta (2002, p.26) allows that "... *ancient* Roman society can be characterised as a 'patronage system'" at heart.[66]

By its very nature, patronage was an unequal relationship, in that the patron was in a position to award his many dependants with gifts or favours while they offered various menial services in return, often in the mere hope that the great man would reward their efforts. Of all things, the patron-client bond cannot be called philanthropic, despite Cicero's desires to see both *amicitia* and patronage in this manner. It was only natural, then, that change should occur in due time, as the system lay open to abuse from those in control of the relationships. The 'decline' of patronage can instead be seen as a natural and indeed necessary shifting of power, following the needs of a turbulent Roman society saturated with wealth, and later a society under firm (but autocratic) organization. However, at the same time as the power of Rome's elite dwindled in the face of the *princeps*, so did the options of the lesser men who sought a living through dependence. This in turn stimulated further change, but which is beyond the scope of this study.

This admittedly brief survey of the functions and complexities of patronage, lays the basis for understanding some of the daily conditions within which clients – and particularly Martial – lived and wrote; more specific details relevant to the experience of those who engaged in literary patronage will be elaborated upon in the chapter which follows. By understanding the systems of patronage at work in Martial's day, we shall be able to see not just how and what he wrote, but *why* he wrote what he did, and therefore appreciate more fully his comments concerning everyday life in Roman society under the early principate.

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[65] Parentheses my own.
[66] His quotation marks, but my italics.

CHAPTER 2:

Poetry and Patronage: The Evidence as presented by Martial

In the previous section, I have attempted to provide a platform for a study of the social systems within which poets such as Martial had to create a niche for themselves. Before we can proceed, however, we need to consider the connection of poetry with patronage. Thereafter a general discussion of the position of the poet as *cliens* relative to the patron (or patrons) shall follow, and finally we shall focus specifically upon Martial and his "voice" as regards the obligations of patrons (and "friends"), and his own. The first half of this chapter will consider the external evidence for the patronage of poets in imperial Rome, and the second the 'evidence' from the epigrams of Martial as part of a personal 'internal' perspective from the poet's point of view. There will be, however, some degree of overlap between the two.[67]

The position of poets within the patronage system has been discussed in the last twenty years, by White (1978, 1982), Saller (1982, 1983) and Nauta (2002). White's controversial 1978[68] article seems to deny that poets even operated within the system of patronage *at all*. Rather, he suggests that their endeavours were confined to more private arrangements within the more personal and fluid system of *amicitia*. He takes this position primarily because he believes that in order for men to take up poetry as a career, their basic needs must already have been met; hence they should have less need of formal patronage than others, and would instead rely on the strength of their friendships (*amicitiae*) (White, 1978, p.87-89). Finally, he contends that if they did acquire patrons, they became just as any other clients – in other words, that there was no such thing as literary patronage *per se* (White, 1978, pp.76-78). From my examination of Martial's expectations regarding *amicitia* and patronage, and White's argument, it appears that his conclusions are questionable.[69] This is necessary so that we can best view the evidence given to us by Martial, armed with some sense of critical objectivity.

Most patrons would not have taken poets as clients unless they felt that would receive some sort of benefit from doing so. Therefore, poets had to convince their would-be supporters of the value

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[67] It is impossible not to make *some* use of Martial's epigrams as support for the various arguments represented in this first half of the chapter.
[68] White, P., 1978, "*Amicitia* and the Profession of Poetry in Early Imperial Rome", *JRS* 68, pp.74-92.
[69] Cf. Saller, (1982, 1983), but despite the somewhat lengthy discussion which follows, it is certainly *not* the main purpose of this chapter to provide a rebuttal of the work of White.

of engaging their services. Under the principate traditional routes to glory through public careers or military conquest were largely cut-off or restricted, and even when these were possible, they predominantly occurred under the auspices of the emperor himself.[70] While the consulate was the best a man could hope for, it was only a shadow of its former self. The reigning emperor often took the consulship himself (nominally, at least), and sometimes several times in a row. Suetonius tells us for example that Nero held four consulships, each lasting only two to six months (*Nero* 14), whereas Domitian is said to have held no less than seventeen consulships, but most for no longer than a few days (*Dom.* 13). Thus, the honour of holding this office was somewhat cheapened by the imperial stranglehold on it, and it is also possible that some proud aristocrats were not prepared to grovel for a term as consul.

For some, the consulate was in any case always going to be out of reach, but there were other ways a man might boost his reputation and status in and around Rome, at least socially. For example, he might actively engage in trying to create and promote an image of himself as both learned and wealthy, so as to suggest to his peers (who, in theory were *always* watching in public), that he had at his disposal both *otium* (leisure) and culture, as well as the necessary social rank. A way of doing this was to become a patron of a poet, and the more established the poet, the better for his reputation. White (1982, p.59) suggests that the common desire for well-bred persons was to be seen to possess *elegantia*, "smartness and correct taste". And, as far as suitable entertainment (at occasions like dinner parties) was concerned, poets were by association one of the best choices in this regard.

That "the presence of poets added distinction to the great man's entourage" (White, 1982, p.60) was not the only reason for their relative popularity amongst members of the senatorial order. Clearly, the elite must have valued the abilities of poets and writers, insofar as they were able to represent their patrons favourably both to captive audiences at the *cena* and to the general public in their published work. Under the principate, where self-promotion had to be largely restrained for fear of offending the emperor,[71] this became especially important in the elite's competition for status amongst their peers. Prominent placement in dedications or by being addressed directly in published epigrams (such as those of Martial) acted as advertisements of their eminence to their peers within the limited spheres allowed to them.

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[70] See Eck, 1984, pp.129-167.
[71] Particularly those emperors depicted as jealous and insecure by sources such as Suetonius, e.g. Nero.

I believe that we *can* see such behaviour as a form of imitation of the emperor's cultivation of *dignitas* and *elegantia*, although they could not hope to compete with him.[72] White (1982, p.52) rightly draws attention to the emperors' "dazzling displays of largesse" as regards financial rewards for poets: e.g. Horace received a Sabine farm from Augustus. Even if very few poets attained a reputation such as Virgil's, patrons valued the role a poet could play in promoting the *dignitas* of his *patronus*. Therefore, under the principate poets were likely to have been highly desirable as *clientes*.

The humble client-poet needed to ensure his livelihood, although this varied greatly, as we shall see. Poets could not directly trade their craft for money (as other clients fulfilling such services as builders or messengers might do) without being labelled *mercenarii*. They nevertheless fulfilled a prominent function in raising a man's position and reputation among the elite, particularly in terms of supposed refinement. Those who had a poet in their entourage of *clientes* were encouraging others to view them as both appreciative of the fine arts (and by association, learned) and as sufficiently wealthy to be able to invest in a luxury such as poetry which promised no immediate or guaranteed (or even durable) returns!

Poetry was not ordinarily directly commissioned by patrons for cash, as this could lead to the charge of prostituting one's abilities, as the satirist Juvenal[73] says of Statius.[74] No poet would have wanted to find himself in such a position. Rather the poet hoped for some sort of material return for his efforts, quite often in the form of gifts, food, a daily dole, and invitations for dinner. In addition to these, a poet might hope for recommendations of his work to others, an audience for readings, and access to distribution networks such as bookshops and in marketplaces.

Poets might also hope to receive more generous support from friends alongside the more formal relationship of patronage. Several epigrams indicate the workings of *amici* in the case of Martial (e.g. Stella and Pliny the Younger). The latter's correspondence is an important source for any discussion of the client-poet relationship, although Pliny may have been exceptional since he was known to have been a fairly liberal patron of the arts.[75] In dealing with poets and writers he

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[72] This would in any case have been unwise and undesirable, as Martial reminds an addressee in *Ep.*1.9.
[73] Juv. *Satires* 7.82-87.
[74] Statius, an epic poet, was a contemporary and rival of Martial. This attribute seems contestable, since Martial never mentions Statius in his epigrams. Perhaps this is a generalization following the assumed competition for Domitian's favour and support at court.
[75] See *Ep.* 3.21, in which he complains of the lack of generous support for the literary arts in his day. Pliny himself is of course well-known for his generosity – see *Epist.* 2.4.

appears to have differentiated between his friends and his clients. Friends were given assistance in the polite and personal manner appropriate to their status and circumstances, whilst clients were bound more clearly to adhere to the etiquette of patronage.

Pliny's relationship with Martial was categorized by White (1978, p.80)[76] as one of *amicitia*, rather than *clientela*, because Martial was an *eques*. For other less well-known writers of lower social standing *clientela* was the more likely relationship. The principal source for Martial's relationship with Pliny remains the senator's famous letter dealing with the poet's recent demise.[77] It was, therefore, written well after Martial had become an established poet, with the reputation and desirable association to match. Pliny makes sure to mention the assistance he gave Martial regarding the transport costs from Rome to his retirement in the Spanish countryside, and thus seems keen to stress the personal nature of their relationship:[78]

Prosecutus eram viatico secedentem; dederam hoc amicitiae, dederam etiam versiculis, quos de me composuit.

Pliny's description of this favour does indeed *seem* more fittingly labelled as an act of a generous *amicus*, but Martial hardly mentions him at all in the twelve books of his epigrams.[79] While I am hardly implying that White's (1978, p.80) basis for his judgement of Martial's relationship with Pliny was solely based upon the exact choice of the word *amicitia* in this letter, it must be remembered that Pliny was unlikely to acknowledge directly and overtly any vertical relationship, even if corresponding with a fellow patron. The very fact that Pliny emphasises the financial assistance he gave to Martial on one occasion only should alert us to the possibility that theirs was not a particularly close relationship at all.[80] This idea is strengthened when, in the same letter, he subsequently 'justifies' his support for Martial to the addressee of the letter, Cornelius Priscus:

Quaeris, qui sint versiculi, quibus gratiam rettuli.

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[76] This is White's general argument regarding the expression of the relationship between men of the upper orders of Roman society, and thus including both Martial (an *eques*) and Pliny (a senator).
[77] *Ep.* 3.21., probably written c. AD 104, by which time Martial is presumed to have died.
[78] *Ep.* 3.21 *ll.* 4-5.
[79] *Ep.* 5.80, 7.84 and 10.19.
[80] Wardle, D., pers. comm. Feb. 2004.

He then quotes the bulk of an epigram (*Ep.* 10.19, *ll.*12-21) addressed to him by Martial. Pliny seems eager to prove that Martial had deserved his support (to his correspondent), particularly since Martial was seen by some as an enthusiastic supporter of the previous regime under Domitian.[81] This view was undoubtedly shared by Pliny, as a member of the formerly 'oppressed' order of senators under Domitian, and the letter was written in AD 104, a mere eight years after Domitian's rule. Thus, although having proudly reproduced the lines referring positively to himself (which no doubt pleased his own vanity), and having praised Martial's accomplishment as a poet, he makes sure to end the letter with a patronising comment as regards the durability of the latter's work:

At non erunt aeterna, quae scripsit. Non erunt fortasse, ille tamen scripsit, tamquam essent futura.

Perhaps, in referring to the often limited longevity of epigram as a genre,[82] Pliny was also anxious to remind his addressee that he had not forgotten Martial's unfortunate association with Domitian. Yet, despite such comments, attachment to Martial's fame as a popular poet cannot have been wholly undesirable. Perhaps in emphasising what (little) he had done to help Martial, he was also "merely trying to reflect some glory onto himself."[83]

So, perhaps Pliny's favour to Martial should not be taken as typical of a patron of the arts' support, but, as we have seen in the example above, such *beneficia* were not always restricted to *amici*. Therefore, based upon the evidence of this letter, there are several reasons that their relationship should not be categorized as one of *amicitia*, but rather, one of patronage. In any case, since Pliny became an exceedingly wealthy man during the course of his lifetime, his considerable financial support for a number of young protégés and other less fortunate clients was a luxury he was able to afford. Obviously, not all were so fortunate. We must accept that those who made successful careers out of writing needed continual support and promotion, and that they could not always rely on the good will of their *patroni*, since for every Pliny there must have been many more of those who were not prepared to (or simply could not) invest in supporting the arts.

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[81] See especially Books 8 and 9, produced towards the end of Domitian's rule in the mid-90's.
[82] Wardle, D., pers. comm. Jan. 2005. Of course, this is a generalisation; Pliny may actually be referring specifically to Martial's works, presumptuously dismissing their potential for longevity.
[83] Wardle, D., pers. comm. Feb. 2004.

This brings us to White's (1978, p.88) second contention (and the underlying premise for his first): that most serious poets did not require a patron because their own economic status must have been assured from the start. To be fair, this is at first glance a more than reasonable suggestion, simply because we know that many of the more successful poets such as Catullus, Horace, and indeed Martial himself, were at least of equestrian status, and thus possessed assets in land worth at least 400 000 HS.[84]

At the same time, as White (1982, p.53) put it, "since poetry was primarily an avocation of propertied gentlemen, its direct potential for producing income was bound to be slight". The implication of this statement is that with such wealth at hand, they already possessed the necessary *otium* to make their craft a full-time occupation, and therefore, such men generally did not need to search for serious financial assistance. In reality, however, we should bear in mind that not all equestrian poets[85] (not to mention those poets of lower social rank) can have enjoyed such good fortune. Certainly as far as Martial was concerned, comfortable living and *otium* were *ideals* to be aspired to, and which he mentions from time to time in the hope that he would rescued from his life of fruitless toil.[86] Poets could not simply sell their work (as discussed earlier on p.3), even to book-sellers for distribution, and they received nothing in the way of profits from the sales of their work (at least, not as far as is known). Martial makes it clear in *Ep.* 11.3 that he made no monetary gain from the proceeds of the sales of his works:

Non urbana mea tantam Pipleide gaudent
otia, nec vacuis auribus ista damus,
sed meus in Geticis ad Martia signa pruinis
a rigido teritur centurione liber,
dicitur et nostros cantare Britannia versus. 5
quid prodest? Nescit sacculus ista meus.
at quam victuras poteramus pangere chartas
quantaque Pieria proelia flare tuba,
cum pia reddiderunt Augustum numina terris,
et Maecenatem si tibi, Roma, darent! 10

While Martial boasts that he is both famous and a popular poet, he claims in line 6 that he receives virtually nothing in the way of pecuniary recompense, and ends by pleading for a new

[84] As is well-known, the equestrian census required one to have at least 400 000 sesterces in land/property. Saller (1983, p.250) adds that the poets Lucan and Silius Italicus (the latter of whom was a contemporary of Martial's) "possessed senatorial fortunes", i.e. at least 1000 000 sesterces.
[85] On this, see particularly Tennant, 2000, pp.139-156.
[86] Admittedly we must be careful in using Martial as a source for client life – see p.25 below.

magnanimous patron to appear in Rome. Book 11 appeared at the end of AD 96,[87] by which time Martial was well established as a poet, but still we find him scratching for new sources of generosity. One implication therefore is that, if by this time Martial still needed to canvass sponsors, the situation can only have been worse for many other lesser-known or younger poets. Thus it would seem that, for many poets, there was little choice but to become clients of a great man and thus supplement their income,[88] and so prevent them from having to resort to other, less dignified forms of work, which were regarded with disdain by the Roman elite.

Having considered the evidence above, we can finally confront the last of White's claims: that, if they did have a patron, poets became ordinary clients like any other (1978, p.76). It can quite easily be shown that the evidence (at least that which we may take from Martial, the poet whom White (1978) himself used as his principal source) will not support this claim. This will be clearly illustrated whilst discussing the major obligations and demands of the client-poet, and although poets shared some obligations in common with other clients, they also had special needs[89] and wants peculiar to their trade, and their patrons too desired public services which only they could provide. In any case, this particular belief of White's seems almost contradictory when we consider his comments elsewhere in the same article about the relative improbability of poets engaging in patronage at all![90]

Like others under obligation to a *patronus*, the poet was expected to perform certain basic duties for his patron. Invitations to dinner or to attend at birthday celebrations were in reality demands for entertainment by the poet. Tasks included escorting the great man on his business in the forum, clearing the way as *deductores*,[91] carrying litters if need be, and supporting a patron in court or in public as part of a deliberately sympathetic audience and were amongst the commonest of services performed by *clientes*. Some of the more common demands placed upon the client-poet must occupy our attention so that we can appreciate the additional obligations which he would also have had to endure. One particular duty particularly stands out in Martial's epigrams concerned with such obligations. Early in the morning of almost every working day, poets jostled with doctors, teachers, and labourers for position and importance outside their

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[87] Citroni, M. 1989, "Marziale e la Letteratura…", *ICS* 14, pp.201-226, cited in Nauta, 2002, p.442.
[88] See Nauta, (2002, p.30) who feels that in terms of patronage "recompense for poetry could not be conceptualised as payment".
[89] See p.12 below, where the discussion moves *to what a patron could do* for a client-poet.
[90] As noted again by Saller (1982, p.28, n.91).
[91] See *Ep.* 11.24 as an example in which Martial complains of the time wasted in performing this task.6ty

shared patron's residence, sometimes having travelled some distance to do so. This was the infamous morning *salutatio*.[92]

Men travelled through cold and dark to wait for the timeous (or more likely, leisurely) appearance of their benefactors at the thresholds of their dwellings, so that they might vie for his support. Up to the early Domitianic period, clients who made the journey were rewarded with the daily dole,[93] replaced in about AD 87 by Domitian with the *sportula*.[94] Martial complains of this change in Book 3, which, following Citroni's[95] dating was issued before mid-AD 88, but makes no mention of it in Book 2[96] (issued in about AD 86) so the change must have occurred some time between the two. Despite this change and the tiresome and loathsome effort involved, in the eyes of the needy client, the possibility of generous reward was a powerful lure. A morning's greetings missed meant an opportunity lost.

Saller (1989, p.57) suggests that the individual status of each client in relation to the patron played a role in terms of the order of acceptance. Where would Martial have stood in the *salutatio*?[97] A client of equestrian status would receive greater priority than men of lesser socio-economic status, who were less likely to be able to offer similar *officia* to the *patronus*. As a consequence they may have been positioned closest to the threshold among the multitude of clients. However, on the basis of Martial's epigrams dealing with the *salutatio*,[98] we cannot be sure. For example, in the third line of 10.74, he says only that he stands *"anteambulones et togulatos inter*", without indicating any sort of pre-existing order. It seems more than likely that the status-conscious Martial would have played upon this feature if it existed.

Moreover, when we consider our earlier discussion of the situation of most poets, unless they were of relatively high reputation or fame, they would probably not have ranked amongst the most important individuals seeking an audience with the *patronus*. Therefore, unless they had

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[92] Discussed briefly earlier on in Chapter 1.
[93] Said to be 100 *quadrantes*, or about 6 and a quarter *denarii*, and useful for daily survival purposes.
[94] *Ep.* 3.7, 3.14, 3.30 and 3.60. The *sportula* was a hamper of food, which had been replaced by the dole under Nero. However, this provision was later overturned under Domitian, much to Martial's (and presumably others') annoyance.
[95] Citroni, 1989, esp. pp.214-225, cited in Nauta, 2002, p.442.
[96] *Ep.* 2.57 mentions a man's attempt to "buy" a dinner. Officially, at least, the *sportula* could not be bought, since it took the form of a hand-out, although this does not mean that it wasn't "sold" by unscrupulous patrons. However, I do not believe that this epigram represents Martial's first reference to the change made by Domitian, unless this epigram is a later addition to Book 2.
[97] As an *eques*, Martial may in theory have been near the threshold, but since equestrian clients were by no means uncommon, this cannot be so readily assumed, especially for more powerful *patroni*.
[98] *Ep.* 1.70, 1.108, 10.70, 10.74 and 10.82 amongst many others. See Chapter 1, p.5ff.

private means of their own (like Catullus and Lucan), or had already secured adequate funding from an alternate source or patron (as had Statius under Domitian), the need for something on which the client-poet could subsist became so much the greater. Martial's consistent grumbling in this regard places him firmly in the latter group, a factor to which we shall return later.

Obviously, then, even the Roman poet of fair social rank could ill afford to miss the *salutatio*, and therefore had little choice but to make the journey on a regular, if not daily, basis. By the same token, a client who failed to make the necessary appearance to give greetings to his *patronus*, was unlikely to receive funding soon after, in that dereliction of this duty was often viewed as a serious snub, and the client, then, by extension, less than worthy of the patron's continued support. For a poet like Martial this could prove serious, both in terms of the loss of immediate monetary support and in terms of reputation. After all, patrons were unlikely to support someone who would not perform the minimum display of loyalty and respect required. At the very least, he risked missing an invitation to the evening *cena*.

Like other *clientes*, poets often hoped to be invited to dinner by a generous patron, but they could also attempt to instigate future invitations in their writing.[99] Since they provided entertainment in written form, they might be expected to entertain the host and his guests as well, reciting poetry of their own on some occasions and that of the patron on others, although this service could also be performed by the host's slaves. It would seem that poets in particular were more often pressed to "pay" for their dinners in front of the other guests – a fact which made the invitation somewhat ambivalent as a *beneficium*. On the other hand, by the very fact that they were often expected to do so, they might be able to secure such invitations more readily[100] than others, who also sought them, sometimes quite unscrupulously.[101]

Poets would be expected to perform much the same duty at birthday and other occasions for gift-giving, such as the *Saturnalia*, which was seen as the ideal time for a poet to present a gift of poetry to his patron (Saller, 1982, p.123). Here we may take another example of the client-poet as a breed apart from the rest of those pulling at the patron's purse – for this was where the "poet

[99] See for example 2.16 – and perhaps 1.54 - although Martial (as always) is admittedly cynical about the very practice that he himself is engaging in elsewhere e.g. 2.11, 2.27, and 2.37, where Martial himself is the patron.
[100] Cf. White, 1982, p.76 "... as an entertainer, Martial could count on invitations." It is interesting to note that a patron might view a dinner invitation as a sort of reward or *officium* to favoured clients, while conversely a client might view the same occasion as both a reward and a chore!
[101] See Chapter 1, p.11ff.

distinguished himself from the ordinary crowd by sending a *libellus*[102] of poems" (Saller, 1983, p.252). The number of poems - depending on the poet's intentions - would vary, sometimes a single poem written for the occasion, or a collection, or perhaps even an entire published book, presumably with the necessary dedications befitting the event (Nauta, 2002, p.107). It was regarded as something of an honour to have one's name mentioned in verse, and was clearly (at least in some cases) an opportunity for flattery on the part of the poet.[103]

Other occasions for which the poet might be singled out to provide this service included anniversaries and memorials, although these sorts of *officia* were just as likely to be performed within the framework of *amicitia*. Epigrams 6.28 and 6.29 form a pair dedicated to the deceased Glaucias, a freedman of Melior, who was evidently well-known. As they are very similar in form and content, it is only necessary to reproduce the first epigram here:

Libertus Melioris ille notus,
tota qui cecidit dolente Roma,
cari deliciae breves patroni,
hoc sub marmore Glaucias humatus
iuncto Flaminiae iacet sepulchro:
castus moribus, integer pudore,
velox ingenio, decore felix.
bis senis modo messibus peractis
vix unum puer applicabat annum.
qui fles talia, nil fleas, viator.

This epigram, like the dedications to the dead slave-girl Erotion (*Ep.* 5.34 and 5.37) seems likely to have been commissioned by the patron concerned, Melior. Therefore, it seems reasonable to suggest that its appearance in Book 6 occurred after use elsewhere, perhaps in the form of recitation at the funeral. It is equally possible that this same epigram originally appeared somewhere on the marble structure mentioned in *l.*4.[104] Although this may have been one of Martial's more sombre duties, it probably also lent him some *gravitas* as a poet, which was an important attribute to have in the eyes of potential sponsors.

Bearing in mind the demands of the *cena* discussed earlier, poets were also occasionally expected to attend the readings of their patrons or *amici superiores*, either to provide a show of support in

[102] A *libellus* was literally "a little book" or a short collection of poetry or prose, usually on papyrus, and considered handy in terms of being portable.
[103] Martial's apparent flattery as regards Domitian is one of the main *foci* of the next chapter.
[104] This no doubt raises the question of the origin of many of the epigrams, something which is dealt with in Chapter 3, p.11ff.

terms of a receptive audience, or to the lend an air of critical approval as would-be literary peers.[105] Invitations to dinner were often merely pretexts for the unleashing of a patron's literary efforts (either his own or someone else's) and Martial reveals on more than one occasion his distinct distaste for submitting to this particular obligation.[106] The last few lines of the following epigram, concerning an overly zealous supporter of Martial's poetry, neatly illustrate his complaint:

sollicites, capiet cenula parva duos,
ille leget, bibe tu; nolis licet, ille sonabit:
et cum "Iam satis est" dixeris, ille leget.

(*Ep.* 7.51, *ll.*12-14)

Martial warns potential guests that the host, Pomponius Auctus, will torture them with the endless recitation of his (Martial's) poetry. The ultimate implication is that the interminable recitation will be so badly given, that the dinner would not be worth attending at all. Obviously, we must consider that while Martial was in all likelihood very proud of his ability as poet, he dreaded the mangling of his verses by enthusiastic hosts or patrons. His own choice of career as a poet, however, meant that Martial was liable to suffer this additional burden.

Finally, we come to a service which the poet might offer over and above the obligations he was already required to fulfill, and the one most celebrated by Martial: his supposed ability to give the patron some kind of immortality in verse, which had in theory the chance to survive and be read many years after the individual(s) concerned had died. Essentially, the client-poet attempted to feed the ego of his *patronus* in offering such a service, as neither he nor his subject could be absolutely sure that his efforts would indeed survive (Nauta, 2002 p.142). A poet could only boast of such a service to his patron if his reputation could confer a benefit to his patron, by enhancing his reputation for good taste. As a poet particularly favoured by some members of Rome's elite (e.g. Stella, Pliny, Regulus), Martial's reputation would have aided him in his claim to immortalize those to whom he mentioned in his verses,[107] but other, lesser poets could not have been so bold.

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[105] I use the term "literary peers" because Martial sarcastically refers to one such person (Ligurinus) as a poet (3.44), and infers that the persons addressed in 5.73, 7.3 and 10.21 are authors whose ability and/or work was not to his liking.
[106] See *Ep.* 1.63, as well as 3.44, 3.45 and 3.50, (all three of which concern Ligurinus), 5.73, 7.3 and 10.21.

[107] Bearing in mind Martial's use of what might be considered obscenity to modern readers, although this does not generally seem to have negatively affected his reputation. We should also remember that most modern notions of appropriateness might not necessarily mirror those of ancient Rome's nobility.

Having considered the poet's more common obligations to his patron, what did the *patronus* do for his literary companions in return? We would do well to remember that "poets attached themselves to the houses of the great in the first place because there was nowhere else for them to go" (White, 1978, p.85). If in fact, we consider for a moment the endless nagging of Martial for good food, loans, clothing and repairs to his humble abode, Saller would seem correct in stating that "...poets looked to their patrons for basic material support" (1983, p.249). If carefully cultivated, the *magnus amicus* could in fact provide just what the client-poet needed to make his career so much more comfortable. This is contrary to the main thrust of White's 1982 article, 'Positions for Poets in Early Imperial Rome'[108] in which he makes his belief clear that poets could not rely on their craft in a true patronage relationship, as the irregular awarding of gifts and loans could not have supported them through lean times. Our over-view of what a poet could expect from a patron should go some distance towards proving that a client-poet could in fact make a living from their chosen career.

All poets shared certain desires – *fama*, *otium* and, of course, to be read by those with the greatest influence and the largest purses. Some client-poets were able to achieve some sort of continued support under their patrons, particularly those (e.g. Horace with Maecenas, Martial with Stella) for whom the use of the word *amicus* came to be less of a euphemism and thus was used more often in earnest.[109] A few received *beneficia* of a substantial nature, including permanent (or at least life-long) gifts of property, as in the case of Martial and his farm in Spain. However, most of the time a poet could not be sure what his efforts might achieve – and from time to time Martial complains of being short-changed in this regard.[110]

The hard fact remained that for many of those who chose to follow literary careers, but lacked the necessary money or influence, a powerful friend was needed who would be able to make the openings they needed in order to be heard at recitations and to be read, possibly by providing financing for the copying (by slave scribes) of the poet's work. More importantly, as White (1978, p.85)[111] stresses, "it was through *their* connections that they found readers", in other words, it was largely thanks to their patron's relations with other clients, his peers and betters that poets were able to be read in the first place.

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[108] White, P., 1982, "Positions for Poets in Early Imperial Rome", in *Literary and Artistic Patronage in Rome*, Gold, B.K., (ed.), University of Texas Press, Austin, pp.50-66.
[109] As discussed in general in Chapter 1.
[110] See especially *Ep.* 5.36 where Martial makes it clear that the patron is not fulfilling *his* end of the bargain.
[111] Italics mine.

Thus Martial talks of sending his work to L. Arruntius Stella,[112] a prominent friend (and undoubtedly a patron to Martial as well) who would not only house it in his private library, but "give it to be read",[113] in other words, make it available by having copies made, or by lending it out to other friends. Seemingly beneficent *patroni* might further promote their client's work by actively praising their abilities at public readings, functions which the client-poet usually lacked the sufficient clout and economic strength to organise and promote by himself. For White (1978, p.85) and Saller (1983, p.248) this was the prime value of patrons of the arts, though we may quite reasonably suspect that in doing so, such men were quick to see the advantage for themselves in hoping that others would see their cultured association with the arts, and thus increase their own prestige. The incentive to praise the work of one's client-poet at a public reading was no doubt doubled if the poet in question had already established for himself a good reputation.

At recitations sponsored by their powerful associates, poets would also have the chance to make other useful and potentially powerful connections, though presumably not without limit. While poets could quite conceivably write for more than one patron, they were bound by "social reality" in that they had to be careful to avoid offending a supportive patron if they actively wrote for another, with whom there might have been a disagreement of some kind (Wiseman, 1982, p.34). Presumably the host would have invited those receptive to his displays of *elegantia*, but if we remember once more that the active pursuit of prestige formed a large part of the lives of the well-to-do, it is more than possible that others of high social standing would also have attended, despite their potential enmity, possibly expecting reciprocal behaviour in future. Thus, it is also likely that patrons prepared for such occasions by employing other clients and freedmen to keep the audience in check whilst simultaneously creating a receptive atmosphere (Wiseman, 1982, p.38).[114]

Aside the from the myriad possibility of gifts (discussed below) given in exchange for the poet's efforts, some more generous patrons provided for their protégé's basic needs by supplying housing or even slaves, as in the case of the famed Greek poet Archias, who Cicero[115] tells us was suitably accommodated by L. Crassus – provided that he wrote what his patron wanted, of course.

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[112] This Stella, of both high birth and means, became praetor in AD 93 and suffect consul in AD 101 (PIR^2 A. 1151). He seems to have been particularly favoured by Martial, see for example *Ep.* 1.44, 5.59, 6.21 and 12.2.
[113] *Ep.*12.2 (trans. Shackleton-Bailey).
[114] The basis for this suggestion lies in Wiseman's speculation as to how an audience subjected to "six substantial volumes on Epicurean atomic theory" might be restrained from reacting adversely (p.38)!
[115] Cic. *Pro Archia Poeta* 5-6.

Thus, such a client-poet was in effect obligated by his patron's generosity to boost the reputation of his sponsor, and if need be, flatter him. Our understanding of the etiquette expected between *amici* and the client-patron bond suggests that the case of Archias should in theory belong firmly to the more formal category of attachment (*clientela*), though such benefits cannot be ruled out as features of *amicitia* as well.

Until now, this chapter has remained largely general in its discussion of the poet's life under the system of patronage. To continue to do so would be unreasonable, because our principal resource is none other than Martial himself. Therefore, we will look more closely at his own position, beginning with Martial's origins and status, and then discussing his commentary on many aspects of patronage and *amicitia*, as they affected him during the course of his career. Therefore we must again consider his comments about patrons, *amici*, other clients and those he would term outright parasites. We shall briefly look at his commonest grievances as far the services he was obligated to perform were concerned, as well as overviewing a catalogue of what Martial, as an established poet from the late 80's onward, expected and actually received from his friends and his sponsors.

Marcus Valerius Martialis tells us that he originated from Augusta Bilbilis in the province of Spain:

Municipes Augusta mihi quos Bilbilis acri
monte creat, rapidis quem Salo cingit aquis,
ecquid laeta iuvat vestri vos gloria vatis?

(*Ep.* 10.103, *ll.*1-3)

He makes sure to identify himself with the town by the use of "*vestri*" in the third line when boasting of his own fame. After comparing himself with his model, Catullus, he tells us that he has spent most of his adult life in Rome (where the vast majority of his epigrams were completed and published):

quattuor accessit tricesima messibus aestas,
ut sine me Cereri rustica liba datis,
moenia dum colimus dominae pulcherrima Romae:

(*Ep.* 10.103, *ll.*7-9.)

As Book 10 (the first edition) has been dated to late AD 95,[116] Martial would thus have arrived in Rome as a young man around AD 61. His was a reputable family, and he had been educated accordingly, as he suggests in epigram 9.73:

at me litterulas stulti docuere parentes:
quid cum grammaticis rhetoribusque mihi?

(*Ep.* 9.73, *ll.*7-8)

The fact that Martial was educated by a *grammaticus* and a *rhetor* (and that they could afford to send him to Rome) indicates that his family was of at least moderate means.[117] His first success as a poet can be traced to a series of brief epigrams, the *Liber De Spectaculis*, dedicated to the inauguration of the Colosseum, and published around 80 AD.[118] Thus, fame and success had not come quickly, since he had already spent the better part of twenty years in Rome by this date. After this, he began steadily publishing volumes of epigrams every few years, although the last was compiled in his native Spain, to which he had retired. Although he claimed to be *toto notus in orbe*,[119] it would seem that he never really achieved the life of *otium* he desired in Rome. Even his early epigrams reveal a man growing in confidence[120] (and perhaps even arrogance)[121] concerning his own abilities, but in constant need of increased support so as to meet the demands of living in Rome, which was said to be more expensive than in the provinces. Ultimately, his efforts were rewarded late in life, when a generous patron provided him with a property to return to Spain to retire, where, despite his stated intention to return to Rome, he died.

As Saller (1983, p.251) notes, Martial's exact financial condition during his first decade or so in Rome is unknown, and we cannot even be sure that he was "already in possession of his equestrian census" when he arrived in Rome. However, the evidence from one of his epigrams (*Ep.* 3.95) suggests that he *had* attained equestrian status by at least the mid-80's:

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[116] Nauta, 2002, p.442, i.e. before Domitian's assassination in mid-96. A second edition appeared in AD 98, with the necessary expunging of those epigrams which had praised the now damned emperor.
[117] This was an expensive undertaking, as Pliny suggests in emphasising his favour of covering the costs of Martial's return many years later (*Epist.* 3.21).
[118] Following Citroni, 1989, pp.214-225, cited in Nauta, 2002, p.441.
[119] *Ep.* 1.1.
[120] e.g. *Ep.* 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4 (in which he addresses Domitian) 1.35, 1.53, 3.69, 3.95, 5.15 and 7.12
[121] e.g. *Ep.* 1.29, 1.66, 1.70, 3.9, 8.3, 7.11, 8.18 and 10.70.

ore legor multo notumque per oppida nomen
non expectato dat mihi fama rogo,
est et in hoc aliquid: vidit me Roma tribunum
et sedeo qua te suscitat Oceanus.

(*Ep.* 3.95, *ll.*7-10)

Martial implies here (*ll.*7-9) that as a result of his fame throughout the Empire, he has been awarded the military tribunate. This post could only be awarded to those who qualified for equestrian status beforehand, which he implies in the next line (*l.*10), by referring to the seats set aside for equestrians at the games and in the theatre. The usher Oceanus appears in several of Martial's epigrams[122] chasing pretenders or chancers out of the equestrian seating area, and was most likely a figure from real life. More importantly of course, it reveals that Martial was by this stage recognised as an *eques* with the necessary property qualification.

Nevertheless, he seems to have pursued every conceivable financial opportunity within his reach, with some limited success. In Book 2,[123] we find him first requesting and then celebrating the confirmation by Domitian of the rights of a father of three,[124] which is otherwise known to us as the *ius triorum liberorum.*[125] As far as is known, Martial himself was not married, nor did he have any children, despite some debate over this in past years, based in part on his occasional light-hearted references to one in his epigrams (see 2.92 below). What is telling, though, is his particularly wild celebration[126] in receiving this privilege (confirmed in 3.95), and evidently it was a major personal triumph, something which hints at his otherwise less than secure financial status:

Natorum mihi ius trium roganti
Musarum pretium dedit mearum
solus qui poterat. valebis, uxor.[127]
non debet domini perire munus.

(*Ep.* 2.92)

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[122] e.g. *Ep.* 6.9
[123] See *Ep.* 2.91 where the request is made, and 2.92, where he celebrates his success.
[124] Originally awarded to him by Titus at an earlier date, perhaps in AD 81. Cf. Daube, 1976, pp.145-147.
[125] This was the set of privileges awarded to those who had produced three children, under the *Lex Julia* of 18 BC and *Lex Papia Poppaea* of AD 9. See Daube, 1976, p.145.
[126] This also alerts us to the issue of Martial's supposed flattery of Domitian, discussed in detail in Chapter 3.
[127] *Uxor* here is used of course jokingly by Martial to underline his appreciation of this privilege, which meant that he would not have to burden himself with marriage or children.

Under the terms of the moral legislation of Augustus, members of Rome's elite were encouraged to marry and produce three children. As an *eques*, Martial was therefore ostensibly not affected by this particular piece of legislation, except in one way: the *ius trium liberorum* now allowed him "to take up legacies which he would otherwise have had to forfeit" (White 1978, p.90). Therefore we may infer from his celebration in this regard that the *potential* difference for Martial was substantial in terms of easing the economic burden of living in Rome. As Saller (1982, p. 125) has pointed out, "paradoxically, to hunt legacies was base, yet to receive legacies was an honour". Thus they were sought after, both in terms of the immediate financial benefit they promised, and for the appearance of being favoured by members of Rome's wealthy elite, typically in the hope that others would leave them something too.

Although Martial is always quick to sneer at the (mis)fortunes of the generally detested legacy-hunters,[128] he often expresses his desire for the legacies of others to finally 'become available'. In fact, his reaction to being freed to receive these underlies his own less than desirable economic position. The implication is, therefore, that Martial's future (at least at the time of his early books, some time in the mid-80's) was far from financially secure.[129]

In terms of property, Martial had at some stage been given a farm in the district of Nomentum by a generous patron[130] and he also owned some sort of accommodation in Rome itself, where he wrote most of his books. Neither of these properties generated him any real income, especially since the former was said by Martial to be rather small and unproductive (*Ep.* 10.94), and whilst living within the latter, he complains that it is uncomfortable, and apparently quite drafty (*Ep.* 8.14)! In epigram 5.62 he talks of a 'suburban villa' which he claims he is too poor to furnish, suggesting that his guests do this for him. At various times he also mentions having household slaves (*Ep.*1.107), who performed duties such as the actual writing and copying of his work, and these would also have cost him money in terms of continual upkeep. In fact, it is very easy to see how possessing the *equivalent* value of 400 000 sesterces (mainly in property) was not enough in itself if he was to have any chance of a dignified lifestyle at all.

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[128] See *Ep.* 2.76, 4.56, 8.27, and 11.44, but note also 11.67. Martial's seemingly unabashed hypocrisy here is not unsurprising, and may possibly reflect the common practice of his day.
[129] Having said this, Martial seems to have had no difficulty in admitting poverty despite being an equestrian – see *Ep.* 5.13.
[130] Presumed by Sullivan (1991, p.4) to be Seneca, see *Ep.* 7.31.

Bearing in mind that Martial, despite his success and reputation, still could not live as comfortably as of his fame might hope, (at least, as far as he would have us believe) the prospects for other, less successful poets must have seemed even gloomier. Since he was seemingly without independent means, Martial had to make his craft work for him. If we are to trust the evidence of his epigrams, he seems to have taken the role of *amicus* and ultimately that of *cliens* to a multitude of patrons, many of whom are mentioned at various times within his books. However, to what degree can we trust Martial's voice in the epigrams as being representative of the life of a *cliens*?

Therefore, before we can interpret the evidence presented in his epigrams, it would seem prudent to consider two issues. Firstly, was Martial in fact, a client? On the basis of our earlier findings in relation to poets and patronage, I support the arguments which uphold his position as a *cliens*. Hence, we shall revisit this question only insofar as it affects or concerns our view of Martial as a client. Predictably, the main voice of dissent regarding Martial's clientage is none other than White (1978), but the foundations of his particular argument are shaky to say the least, and having in part been covered in Chapter 1, shall occupy us only briefly here.

Essentially, White's argument (1978, p.79-80) is based chiefly on the lack of the word *patronus* in Martial's (and others') writing, which he believes can be explained on two counts. Firstly, for White (1978, p.79) "a *patronus* is the man who has manumitted a slave" (as found in *patrocinium*), "the formally designated sponsor of a town or corporation" (a community leader who supplies *officia*), "or a lawyer who has undertaken a defence" (again a feature of *patrocinium*).[131] Most crucially for White (ibid.)[132] "the word does *not* denote the man who maintains a circle of friends and dependants", and if poets were to be included as such, he feels that they could more accurately be described as *amici*, since "in Latin the same sort of language is used in speaking of friendships with literary figures as for other forms of *amicitia*" (ibid, p.78).[133]

Consequently, his second reason is that notions of asymmetry were made too readily apparent by the use of *patronus* and *cliens* in literature intended for (and sometimes, written by,) the educated

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[131] White's understanding of the concept of a patron seems limited strictly to the archaic variants of patronage as supplied by Dionysius of Halicarnassus (*Ant.* 2.9-11).
[132] Italics mine.
[133] This seems a very sweeping statement and White (1978) unfortunately fails to supply evidence from the relevant primary sources for this claim.

members of Rome's elite.[134] He therefore attempts to draw distinction between the use of the word *amicus* in the veiled sense used by supporters and their inferior partners, and in the sense of actual *amicitia*. His arguments have been rejected and comprehensively dismissed by Saller (1983, p.255-6), and Nauta (2002, p.12ff, p.50ff) who also points out that the poor *amicus* was essentially in no better position than the common *cliens*, at least if we believe what Martial and Juvenal have to say (pp.15-16).

Aside from White's inherent methodological flaw of basing his claim on the dubious strength of *negative* evidence, we may remember that polite Roman society, particularly at the highest levels, preferred the use of the language of *amicitia* simply because it was less revealing in terms of the relative positions of power between the writer and the addressee. Certainly, Martial's epigrams were very public, and in some case intended for the very people whose support he needed, and thus he could not afford to flout convention when so many of his supporters (actual and potential) might be offended. Nauta (2002, p.55) points to three poems, all from Book 10, which seem to indicate very clearly that Martial was in fact a client – 10.58, 10.70, and 10.96. The second of these is particularly revealing:

Quod mihi vix unus toto liber exeat anno
desidiae tibi sum, docte Potite, reus.
iustius at quanto mirere quod exeat unus,
labantur toti cum mihi saepe dies.
non resalutantis video nocturnus amicos, 5
gratulor et multis; nemo, Potite, mihi.
nunc ad luciferam signat mea gemma Dianam,
nunc me prima sibi, nunc sibi quinta rapit.
nunc consul praetorve tenet reducesque choreae;
auditur toto saepe poeta die. 10
sed nec causidico possis inpune negare,
ne si te rhetor grammaticusve rogent.
balnea post decimam lasso centumque petuntur
quadrantes. fiet quando, Potite, liber?

(*Ep.* 10.70)

Martial addresses an *amicus*, Potitus (possibly a pseudonym) who accuses him of laziness. Martial counters this with a thorough chronological listing of all the obligations which take up his time, beginning in lines 5-6 with his most hated task, the *salutatio*. He is keen to stress it as a waste of time, noting that when he arrives in the early morning, his "friends" are not there to

[134] As discussed earlier in Chapter 1, p.9.

respond. At the same time, owing to the defensive nature of his response, we must allow for a somewhat distorted picture from Martial here. Note for instance the jump from the first hour to the fifth in line 8, as Martial attempts to fill the day. Towards the end in line 13, he mentions retrieving the miserly dole at the tenth hour (which Nauta (2002, p.55) sees as "... a particularly degrading symbol of his dependence"), and therefore implying that the day is effectively over, leaving him no time to write a new book of epigrams.

There are many other examples amongst his epigrams of Martial acting very much as a hopeful client, such as the various requests or hints for better lodgings,[135] loans,[136] clothing[137] and gifts to exchange for money (silver-plate[138] being a favourite in this respect). He talks of both attending and giving sparse dinners, using cheap fare (*Ep.* 10.48), complains of the loss of the dole for attending the *salutatio* when the *sportula* returned, and hints or jokes endlessly about the possibility of being included in some wealthy associate's will.[139] Despite Martial's tendency to give exaggerated accounts of money in general, the consistency with which this theme occurs should leave us in no doubt as to the importance of a continual inflow of money if he was to maintain his lifestyle in Rome, which he himself complains of being particularly costly. In short, he expected services, money, legacies, gifts, as well as honour as a poet and respect as an individual" from his patrons and friends alike, particularly as his reputation and self-confidence increased (Sullivan, 1991, p.117).

Like other client-poets, Martial had to perform certain services, for example, the morning salutations, escorts to the forum, attendance at recitations and dinners, and generally promote his patron's interests.[140] White (1978, p.76) probably put it best when he said that Martial "endlessly complains of having to waste his time on duties and attentions". In particular, on several occasions in his books,[141] Martial is seen to hint at or even openly voice his dislike for what he felt was often a waste of time and effort for the morning *salutatio,* and sometimes an entire epigram, directed at a patron to whom he was obligated to pay such respects, is concerned with this particular obligation:

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[135] Eg *Ep.* 8.14.
[136] Eg *Ep.* 2.30, 2.44, 4.37, 5.82, 6.20, 10.14 and 12.25.
[137] Eg *Ep.* 2.43, 2.46, 2.85, 3.36, 6.82, 7.36, 7.92, 8.28, 9.49, 9.100, 10.14 and 10.73.
[138] Eg *Ep.* 7.53, 8.33, 10.14, 10.57 and 12.36.
[139] Martial's focus on these sorts of topics has led some to believe that he was obsessed with money (e.g. Sullivan, 1991, p.122).
[140] Cf. pp.7-12.
[141] *Ep.* 1.70, 1.108, 2.5, 3.46, 5.22, 9.100, 10.70, 10.74, 10.82, 12.26, 12.68 etc.

Si quid nostra tuis adicit vexatio rebus,
mane vel a media nocte togatus ero
stridentesque feram flatus Aquilonis iniqui
et patiar nimbos excipiamque nives.
sed si non fias quadrante beatior uno 5
per gemitus nostros ingenuasque cruces,
parce, precor, fesso vanosque remitte labores
qui tibi non prosunt et mihi, Galle, nocent.

(*Ep.* 10.82)

The target is once again Martial's *amicus* Gallus,[142] although clearly the relationship had remained on poor terms. In this epigram Martial squarely adopts the position of a *cliens* and stresses that the entire exercise wears him out and provides neither of them with any sort of gain – not even "*quadrante ... uno*" (*l.*5). Gallus here is treated very much as an inattentive *patronus*, and it is possible that this relationship (if indeed it was real) had reverted into one of a more overtly vertical nature. A similar attitude to his duty as a client is expressed in the next epigram, on escorting a patron to the forum:

Exigis a nobis operam sine fine togatam :
non eo, libertum sed tibi mitto meum.
"non est" inquis "idem." multo plus esse probabo:
vix ego lecticam subsequar, ille feret.
in turbam incideris, cunctos umbone repellet : 5
invalidum est nobis ingenuumque latus.

(*Ep.* 3.46, *ll.*1-6, continues for several lines)

It is worth noting that in this case, Martial intends sending a freedman to do this in his stead! Of course, we cannot take this literally, but presumably the anonymous patron at whom this was directed will have appreciated Martial's humour whilst noting his client's reluctance to fulfill this obligation. If, however, Martial had no particular recipient in mind, we may speculate that he was using the opportunity to openly bemoan the demands upon a *cliens* such as himself, which in private many other clients would have no doubt agreed upon. However, few would have repeated this in public, for fear of being seen as an *ingratus homo*,[143] and possibly even having their sponsorship terminated.

[142] See *Ep.* 3.27 below, on p.28.
[143] Cf. Chapter 1, p.15.

While Martial can sometimes be found hunting for a dinner invitation[144] (the appeal of 'free' food was not to be under-estimated) he is equally loathe to attend poor or blatantly unequal suppers, especially where the host treated himself to better fare (in terms of both food and drink)[145] in full view of his guests. A brief example will suffice:

Nos bibimus vitro, tu murra, Pontice. Quare?
prodat perspicuus ne duo vina calix.

(*Ep.* 4.85)

The opacity of Ponticus' murrine cup was intended to hide the superior wine he was drinking, but from Martial's comment we may deduce that this was a well-known trick. A similar epigram appears in Book 3:

Veientana mihi misces, ubi Massica ponis:
olfacere haec malo pocula quam bibere.

(*Ep.* 3.49)

Here the host tries to disguise the difference between the wine drunk by his guests and that which he keeps to himself by attempting to mix or dilute the poor wine he serves them. Martial tells us in *Ep.* 1.103 that wine from the area of Veii was known for its poor quality, when he accuses a stingy *amicus* of "... *Veientani bibitur faex crassa rubelli*" (*l.*9).[146] Massic by contrast was considered a fine wine. Once again, Martial is only too quick to see through the ruse. Such practices seem to have been a common experience for guests. He is doubly damning about occasions when the host would also insist on abusing his guests by reciting his own, inferior poetry.[147] Martial himself seems to have hosted on the odd occasion modest dinners (e.g. *Ep.* 2.37), and thus he is equally damning about those whom he considered parasites, the sort which hunted for unearned and undeserved dinners.[148]

For Martial on the other hand, once a man engaged his service as a poet, he was obligated to give something in return, as he indicates very clearly in *Ep.* 5.36:

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[144] E.g. *Ep.* 1.23, 1.54, 2.18, 2.79, 3.27.
[145] E.g. *Ep.* 1.20, 1.43, 1.99, 2.43, 3.12, 3.82, 3.60, 4.68, 6.11 6.88, 8.22 (unsatisfactory or insufficient food), 1.18, 3.49, 4.85, 6.11, 10.19, 10.49 and 12.28 (inferior wine).
[146] See Howell, 1980, pp.318-319.
[147] Cf. *Ep.* 3.44. 3.45 and 3.50. See p.11 no.40.
[148] E.g. *Ep.* 2.11, 2.14, 2.27, 2.69, 6.48, 6.51 and 7.20.

Laudatus nostro quidam, Faustine, libello
dissimulat, quasi nil debeat: inposuit.

The implication is that Martial may have been commissioned to address an epigram to someone who hoped to see his name in print and reputation enhanced by association with one Rome's most well-known poets. What form the commission was to take is impossible to say from this epigram alone, though in all likelihood it comprised the usual gifts Martial often mentions in his epigrams.[149] Martial is notoriously picky in terms of the *beneficia* he believed he should receive in exchange for his services. He had certain expectations as to the kinds of gifts he should like to receive and complains quite loudly when they are trivial or worthless, as in *Ep.* 8.33 and 8.71.

Quattuor argenti libras mihi tempore brumae
misisti ante annos, Postumiane, decem;
speranti plures (nam stare aut crescere debent
munera) venerunt plusve minusve duae;
tertius et quartus multo inferiora tulerunt;
libra fuit quinto Septiciana quidem;
besalem ad scutalam sexto pervenimus anno;
post hunc in cotula rasa selibra data est;
octavus ligulam misit sextante minorem;
nonus acu levius vix cocleare tulit.
quod mittat nobis decumus iam non habet annus:
quattuor ad libras, Postumiane, redi.

(*Ep.* 8.71)

In a somewhat exaggerated example, Martial depicts the declining value of the gifts[150] of silver-plate he is sent each year from a patron, Postumianus (which again, is likely to be a pseudonym). By this stage, in late AD 93,[151] Martial was confident of his abilities as a poet and of his *fama*, without which he would probably not have dared to dedicate Book 8 to Domitian. Thus he probably felt that his renown merited more careful consideration and effort from his friends and patrons alike.

At any rate, it seems that the more valuable the gifts were, the more Martial celebrated them. He was apparently given a small estate, as indicated in *Ep.* 11.18, which would have been a rare gift, but he complains of its miniscule size! He preferred items such as expensive clothing, or those of

[149] Cf. *Ep.* 2.30, 2.43, 2.44, 2.46, 2.85, 3.36, 4.37, 5.82, 6.20, 6.82, 7.36, 7.53, 7.92, 8.28, 8.33, 9.49, 9.100, 10.14, 10.57, 10.73, 12.25 and 12.36.
[150] For a similar comment, see *Ep.* 11.105.
[151] See Nauta (2002, p.130, no.128) for this date.

practical use such as roof-tiles and more commonly, silver-plate, because it was both valuable and directly transferable as money. One obvious way for a poet to show *gratia* in return for the various *beneficia* bestowed upon him by friends and patrons was to either address a poem to them, or mention them in verse. Once his latest works were released as books, they were in effect immortalized. Being an established poet, Martial had some backing to his claim to make men immortal in his verse, and he clearly believed it.[152] As we have seen, though, he could not always convince his patrons and *amici* of this gift.

Therefore, Nauta (2002, p.13) feels that, based on the evidence at our disposal, Martial led the life of a client, even if he did not necessarily engage in what White would call "true patronage".[153] We should also recognise that in questioning Martial's status as a *cliens*, and arguing that instead he had only to live off the fruits of *amicitia* with his wealthy associates, White effectively also questioned both the authority and the reliability of Martial as an eyewitness to the social and economic realities facing the average client (whether of a literary vocation or another) in a patronage-based relationship.

Let us now focus upon the issue concerning the reliability of Martial's comments on the (often seemingly miserable) life of the client: how seriously can his comments on patronage and its particulars be taken, given that he wrote to entertain, often through the humour of exaggeration and deliberate misrepresentation? Can we assume that in writing as he did Martial was attempting to convey the reality of patronage in Rome as he himself perceived it? Nauta (2002, p.31) believes that even if Martial was attempting to paint a picture of life as *cliens* in Rome, we must recognise that the poet would in effect be communicating with the patrons concerned as well as with his readership. If this is true, then Martial's representation of the relationship between himself and the patron concerned was very important, because he could very publicly influence the way in which specific patrons were seen. For example, Martial could act as a public voice of sympathy for a prominent person, whom it was known misfortune had struck,[154] although, like any other commiseration or celebration, we may detect varying degrees of sincerity.

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[152] Pliny makes a somewhat patronising comment regarding Martial's belief in the immortality of his verse in *Ep.* 3.21. Cf. Howell (1995, p.93).

[153] I take this to mean that Martial's relationships with his many sponsors in his later years appeared ostensibly to be a blend of the two, although he almost certainly *must* have engaged in client-patron relations proper in order to have survived and have prospered in the early part of his career.

[154] Such as the death of a loved one or favourite, as in *Ep.*6.28 and 6.29, discussed on pp.10-11 above.

The value of such services, then, as Sullivan (1991, p.117) correctly points out, rested quite heavily on "his [Martial's] reputation as a poet, a loyal subject and a constant friend". This seems particularly true for epigrams which appear overflowing with positive comments for a *patronus* or *amicus*,[155] and where Martial often tends to make use of the respective patron's real name,[156] so as to publicly reward their generosity. The following epigram provides a particularly exuberant example:

Si quis erit raros inter numerandus amicos,
quales prisca fides famaque novit anus,
si quis Cecropiae madidus Latiaeque Minervae
artibus et vera simplicitate bonus,
si quis erit recti custos, mirator honesti, 5
et nihil arcano qui roget ore deos,
si quis erit magnae subnixus robore mentis:
dispeream si non hic Decianus erit.

(*Ep.* 1.39)

This epigram concerns an esteemed friend and patron to Martial in the early years,[157] Decianus. This name is found several times in Book 1, and Book 2 opens with a dedication in his name, but after an epigram in which Martial complains (*Ep.* 2.5) that Decianus was never at home to receive the poet's salutations, he is not mentioned again. Here, however, Martial lavishes praise upon him, picking him out as one amongst *raros amicos* (*l.*1), and learned in the appreciation (and thus, support) of the arts by association with Minerva (*l.*3), the patron goddess of the arts. He further compliments him as a man of undeniably good character (*l.*4), using a strongly worded oath *dispeream* (*l.*8) to underline his credulity and end the epigram. The epigram's sincerity seems somewhat undermined by the appearance of the sharply ironic tone of *Ep.* 2.5, which appeared "soon after" Book 1 (Nauta, 2002, p.442). For reasons unknown, the friendship rapidly deteriorated in the time period between the two books, although not before Martial had written the dedication to Book 2.

By contrast, in many of those poems which are of a less than complimentary nature, Martial tends (for good reasons) to give patrons pseudonyms. Obviously, open slander would have been short-

[155] *Ep.* 10.73, 12.2, 12.3.
[156] *Ep.* 1.7, 1.8, 1.25, 1.39, 1.107, 5.11, 6.25, 6.38, 12.21, 12.31.
[157] Before AD 85 and up to AD 86. Citroni, (1975), pp.ix-xxi, cited in Nauta, 2002, p.441.

sighted and may have led to censure.[158] Martial thus had to be very careful, and when one considers that the poem mentioned above is found in Book 5, which was dedicated to the emperor himself, (and consequently devoid of the usual obscenity to be found in most of his books), we should begin to suspect Martial's motives for claiming the fictionalization of the subjects in his epigrams in the first place.

In fact, the epigram concerned is worthy of our full attention in this regard:

Quintus nostrorum liber est, Auguste, iocorum
et queritur laesus carmine nemo meo,
gaudet honorato sed multus nomine lector,
cui victoria meo munere fama datur.
"quid tamen haec prosunt quamvis venerantia multos?" 5
non prosint sane, me tamen ista iuvant.

(*Ep.* 5.15)

Being part of a book dedicated to the emperor, it is not surprising to find Martial respectfully addressing him through the use of the title "Augustus" in line 1. It was quite likely Martial's dearest hope (and ultimately his greatest ambition)[159] that this book would indeed be read by (or to) Domitian himself, so that the poet might finally be supported by Rome's most eligible patron, thus enabling the poet to enter a life of *otium*. More importantly, it is within the very next line that Martial asserts that no one has been hurt by his verse. This claim makes doubly good sense, since as we have already seen, he was keen to be seen in a favourable light by the emperor, whilst simultaneously avoiding Domitian's (potentially fatal) ire concerning those who wrote libellous verses.

In the last two lines (*ll.*5-6), Martial attempts to head-off skepticism (which would *surely* have arisen in any of his long-standing readers) as to the true personal value for himself, of the epigrams written in praise of various patrons and other dignitaries. His reasoning seems less than convincing, and ultimately, less than sincere, especially since the vast majority of his epigrams dealing with various aspects of patronage (and therefore indirectly, as well as directly of patrons) have a resoundingly negative quality! Again, we may safely suggest that this is purely for show; Martial was concerned only with convincing potential sponsors, or even the emperor (or, as was

[158] Suet. (*Dom.*8.2) tells us that Domitian punished authors who produced works defaming distinguished people. Some of Martial's addressees were prominent figures (e.g. Stella, Pliny) and so he had to be careful in his choice of pseudonyms as regards his more negative poems.
[159] Imperial patronage, and Martial's views and hopes concerning it will be dealt with in the next chapter.

more often the case, his *ab epistulis* or other similar member of staff who often read the endless stream of letters, verses and notices *for him*), of the sincerity of his claims. In fact, if we allow that Martial had any chance of being believed by the emperor at all, Domitian simply could not have read much of his previous work for this ploy to succeed. Thus, Martial must have known that the chances of Domitian actually reading this book were slim to begin with, even though it was explicitly dedicated to him.

Epigram 5.15 is only one example of Martial's declaration of the overall well-intended and innocent nature of his work,[160] although addressed to blushing matrons, or young maidens, or "chaste readers", but the overall intention is much the same – to convince the casual or unknowing reader of his fair and honourable nature, despite the appearance of some (if not *most*) of his epigrams, and again we may treat such claims with the same degree of suspicion. The implication is therefore that Martial was well aware of how some of his more biting witticisms might appear to the wrong people because, despite the use of fictitious names, *they were actually intended to cause embarrassment*. It is possible that, particularly as his fame increased, this often suited his intentions. By the use of false names, he was able to make his grievances with certain patrons public,[161] whilst simultaneously shielding himself from prosecution because of the very protective nature of this device.

Concerning the issue of false names, it would seem sensible to devote some attention to Martial's use of pseudonyms, to establish a pattern for their use in his work. We shall begin by looking at those epigrams in which the names used appear to be based upon 'real' people, and then we may consider those names which may have been chosen merely to create a target for Martial's frustrations. In regards to the former, we may speculate that, based upon the repeated appearance throughout his books of particular names, certain pseudonyms were fixed to specific *patroni* or even so-called *amici* who continued to disappoint him. Here, a dinner invitation or the lack thereof, is the cause for disappointment:

Numquam me revocas, venias cum saepe vocatus:
ignosco, nullum si modo, Galle, vocas.
invitas alios: vitium est utriusque. "quod?" inquis.
et mihi cor non est et tibi, Galle, pudor.

(*Ep.* 3.27)

[160] Cf. *Ep.* 3.68, 3.86, 3.99 and 7.12. Effectively, Martial had to apply this claim to the majority of the books (1-9) he had written and published during Domitian's rule, yet note 11.15, published after his death.

Gallus is a friend who partakes of suppers at Martial's invitation, but does not return the favour. The more horizontal relationship of *amicitia*, rather than patronage, is suggested here because Gallus often dines at Martial's invitation. This name appears several times in the *Epigrams*, which would only have been sensible if each case was intended to implicate the same *amicus*. This in turn suggests that Martial is addressing a real acquaintance of his, although he may be using a pseudonym. At the same time, the terse comments regarding the failure to deliver this very common *officia* could no doubt be applied to any number of *patroni* and *amici*. Thus the epigram may well have served a second purpose as a warning to other hosts who might "neglect" to offer Martial invitations to dinner,[162] which of course suited his own needs very well!

Other names used by Martial seem more likely to have been made up entirely to express his ire regarding certain common practices or behaviours. One example of this is the conspicuous Zoilus,[163] for whom Martial reserves some of his most scathing attacks. The following epigram is a comparatively mild example of this:

Has cum gemina compede dedicat catenas,
Saturne, tibi Zoilus, anulos priores.

(*Ep.* 3.29)

Here the status-conscious Martial haughtily decries the rapid upward social mobility of former freedmen or even slaves, who often amassed vast fortunes as businessmen. In explicitly referring to the rings the *libertus* wears as having once been chains, Martial strips Zoilus of the very dignity he wishes to attain. Once a *libertus* possessed the necessary 400 000 sesterces he became eligible for equestrian status – and was thus legally entitled to the various privileges Martial shared and prized as a member of that order. Clearly, Martial saw this phenomenon as a threat to his own status, and by extension, to his idea of his own self-worth. Another piece attacking Zoilus is far more violent:

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[161] Within reason of course, but if Martial truly operated in the manner suggested above, his sense of propriety was no doubt equal to the task.

[162] Martial often complains about reciprocity (or more particularly, the lack thereof) on the part of patrons and *amici* in his *Epigrams*. This is unsurprising since his quality of life probably depended upon the material benefit he derived from various *officia* or *beneficia*. Cf. *Ep.* 1.66 (in jest), 2.68, 2.79, 3.27, 3.34, 3.60, 4.60, 4.66, 5.36, 5.42 (but cf. Howell, 1995, p.128), 5.56, 7.46, 7.86, 11.50, etc.

[163] Cf. *Ep.* 2.19, 2.81, 3.82, 5.79, 11.30, 11.54 and several others. Admittedly the possibility remains that this was a stock name used by Martial as a safe outlet for his frustrations with stingy or unhelpful patrons.

Numquam divitias deos rogavi
contentus modicis meoque laetus:
paupertas, veniam dabis, recede.
causa est quae subiti novique voti?
pendentem volo Zoilum videre.

(*Ep.* 4.77)

Martial purposefully saves the identity of his 'victim' until the penultimate word of the last line, ending the epigram with a wish for Zoilus' death. If the name 'Zoilus' was a pseudonym for a real enemy of his, Martial would have needed to be very cautious in choosing to publish such an epigram, especially if the target moved in his own circle of acquaintances, but this is admittedly speculative. It would seem more likely that Zoilus was a convenient fiction towards whom Martial could direct his most vitriolic anger.[164]

His obvious loathing for Zoilus aside, this epigram is also notable for another reason altogether: Martial's claims that he is "content with moderate means" (*l.*2) and a tongue-in-cheek dismissal of poverty (*l.*3)! This sudden about turn is made all the more ironic as this poem is immediately preceded by an epigram in which Martial expresses his dissatisfaction when loaned only half of that which he had asked:

Milia misisti mihi sex bis sena petenti:
ut bis sena feram, bis duodena petam.

(*Ep.* 4.76)

Martial jokingly suggests to his unnamed addressee that he will ask for double the desired amount in future. The juxtaposition can hardly have been accidental; perhaps Martial was aware of accusations concerning his apparent fixation with money and his desired life of comfort and *otium*. At any rate, Martial appears to have had no qualms about hinting at, or even asking outright, for money, as seen by the number of epigrams requesting loans.[165]

We must briefly return to the question of function. What, if anything, did Martial intend his epigrams to achieve, above and beyond entertainment? Saller claims that "... Martial was writing satirical epigrams, not autobiography. Consequently, his poetry cannot be taken at face value as a

[164] A later epigram featuring Zoilus, *Ep.* 11.30, is by far the most explicit, in which Zoilus is labelled as a *fellator* (*l.*2). The coarse directness of the epigram (as opposed to its content) would seem to reinforce the notion that Zoilus is most likely not one single person *per se*, but perhaps rather a pseudonym used when Martial wanted to lash out at one or more people who had angered him.
[165] See p.21, no. 70.

direct reflection of Roman life" (p.246). In other words, Saller believes that Martial had no intention of presenting a realistic view of Roman society, especially since, in his view "Martial chose stereotypical characters and situations, which were familiar to a wide audience, and exaggerated, distorted, and poked fun at them" (1983, p.246). Above and beyond this, the poet himself claimed that the characters and names presented in his epigrams were fictional, especially as far the many cases of negative comments about various patrons or *amici* were concerned, as he makes clear in *Ep* 5.15.

If Martial was in effect commenting on those around him, as patrons or *amici*, whether directly or indirectly, we may counter Saller's stance with some confidence. Saller claims that Martial chose "... stereotypical characters and situations, which were familiar to a wide audience... and poked fun at them" (1983, p.246) and that this is a reason why the modern reader should *not* to be able to trust in his voice. However, when we consider the evidence for the sources of these "stereotypical characters" as we just have, it seems that Saller has unintentionally stated *exactly* what Martial was doing all along. In other words, Martial's use of pseudonyms must have been recognizable to the audience for whom such epigrams were intended, because they had at one stage more-or-less real, known, *living* counterparts. Thus his ostensibly fictional caricatures of both patrons and parasites can probably be taken (on at least some occasions) somewhat more seriously (in serving a communicative purpose) than they have been in the past by some literary historians.

We may also bear in mind Sullivan's general note in this regard: patronage featured so heavily in Martial's poetry for the simple reason that it "provided him with subjects" (1991, p.128). The truth of this is plain to see, since poems concerned with some or other aspect of patronage clearly account for the vast majority of Martial's extant work. It is clearly, then, the dominant theme in his poetry. Sullivan has also claimed that regarding patronage, "Martial looks at the institution solely as it affects him" (1991, p.117), and while this may at first have seemed far too absolute a claim, having looked through his work, it appears mostly to be true.

Martial had always hoped for more from the system of personal patronage, but as Saller says "despite many gifts from patrons and friends, Martial never found his ideal in Rome... instead, to make ends meet, he had to waste time and endure the humiliations of a client until he sold his Nomentum farm and returned to Spain" (1983, p.254). It seems in all likelihood that Martial was

both frustrated and ultimately disappointed with the system of patronage, in that while he remained in Rome, he could never escape the role of client, despite his claim to be *toto notus in orbe*. In *Ep.* 12.68, he states explicitly that the unending obligations of life as a client drove him out of Rome:

Matutine cliens, urbis mhih causa relictae,
atria, si sapias, ambitiosa colas.
non sum ego causidcus nec amaris litibus aptus
sed piger et senior Pieridumque comes;
otia me somnusque iuvant, quae magna negavit 5
Roma mihi: redeo, si vigilatur et hic.

Martial's consistent complaints about the time-consuming labours of the *salutatio* and similar duties right until his last book, seem to indicate that he never really profited from these endeavours, despite his efforts. Thus, Nauta (2002, p.147) believes that he ultimately remained "outside of the charmed circle of senators and favoured equestrians... and could only be "placed" as a traditional client poet, offering fame, to be rewarded with money", until his retirement to Spain, in about AD 101 or 102. There he at last began a life of leisure and ease on some property[166] given to him by another of his patrons, Marcella, and from whence he issued the last of his works, Book 12.

Despite claims to the contrary, I contend that Martial *can* provide much insight into the life of a client in Rome. He expresses the frustrations of those subjected to the role of the social subordinate to the wealthy and to members of the senatorial order; yet he is also quick to put his gradual increase in reputation to effective use, either to defend his own expectations, or to attack enemies. He is also occasionally selfish, revealing much about his own desires for a better life in Rome, but in this regard he cannot have been alone. While we should be careful to avoid blindly accepting his claims and caricatures of Roman patrons and their attendant clients, there remains much useful information as to the workings of patronage on the personal level. His epigrams also offer us much insight into some of the possible modes of communication between *patroni*, *clientes* and *amici*, both literary and informal.

[166] Described in *Ep.* 12.31.

CHAPTER 3:

Domitian and Literary Patronage: Martial's Relationship with Domitian

As has been demonstrated in the previous chapter, the choice of a career in poetry by the *inferior* partner in the client-patron bond was clearly an economically hazardous one. If we are to even consider Martial as a (potential) client-poet of the emperor, we need i) to establish that the *princeps* was ever truly available as a *patronus* of sorts for an *Eques* like Martial, and ii) to consider how the poet might have acquired such a relationship. Then we may ask what the emperor stood to gain from supporting a poet. It is from Martial's poetry that the answers to these questions will be sought.[167]

The first half of this chapter will discuss the value of Domitian as a potential benefactor for Martial, and the latter's efforts to secure imperial benefactions, whilst the second will focus upon the internal evidence of the *Epigrams* themselves on the relationship between poet and *princeps*. Then I will analyse examples of the various imperial themes of the *Epigrams*, and consider the case posed by Garthwaite (1993) and others for the existence of subversive material within the *Epigrams*. Thus the structure of this chapter is influenced by that of the last third of Nauta's *Poetry for Patrons* (2002). The eventual conclusions of this particular investigation, however, vary considerably from those of Nauta.

Martial's repeated pleas for a return to a golden age of literary patronage[168] inevitably were aimed at the highest level of Roman society, ultimately directed beyond the senatorial order to Domitian himself, who in Sullivan's words, was the "only potentially reliable source" of support, since "no one was as rich as the emperor".[169] We cannot be sure as to how many of the epigrams addressed to the *dominus* were ever actually read by or (more likely) *to* him. Clearly some were, since Martial tells us on various occasions (noted in the previous chapter) that favours and requests of different sorts had been granted and or approved. Even on the occasions for which there is no recorded follow-up, it is probable that his appeals had at least reached Domitian's court via one of his trusted freedmen,[170] but had then met with a less accommodating response. If we bear in mind

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[167] For reasons of space, I have restricted consideration of Martial's possible imperial patronage to the rule of Domitian only.
[168] e.g. *Ep.* 1.107, 5.19, 8.56 and 10.87.
[169] 1991, p.41 and 121.
[170] See the discussion on p.7ff below as to which of the imperial staff might handle such correspondence.

Martial's increasing popularity and reputation in Rome during the period of Domitian's rule, then this kind of occasional, indirect contact seems all the more likely.[171]

In any case, the *prima facie* evidence from Martial seems to indicate that the emperor was no more reliable as a source of funding than the ordinary civilian patrons he was constantly trying to cultivate, because Martial is seen constantly to seek his attention (and ultimately, support) *throughout* the 10 books published in Domitian's lifetime.[172] Because of the seemingly limitless wealth of the emperor, endless petitions for his patronage were likely, but not every request could be accepted. Indeed for many of those attempting to secure the emperor's support for their literary efforts nothing would have been forthcoming. It is, therefore, unsurprising that Martial's struggle in this regard seems to have been unending.

Understandably the emperor was a busy man; even when on campaign or quelling a rebellion (as Domitian had to do in suppressing the revolt of Saturninus in AD 89), his duties included listening to the daily reports from the frontiers, complaints and requests from various individuals and groups, greeting and meeting a multitude of foreign emissaries from Rome's allies and border territories, accounts from his personal staff and his key appointments at the *fiscus*, and he often had to sign piles of documents, read and dictate letters, preside over court cases and consider plans for new building projects, aside from a myriad of other duties.[173] In addition to the requirements of his imperial position as a literary patron which necessitated paying some attention to literature, Domitian had personal aspirations to be a poet: "Domitian... displayed a novel devotion to poetry, which he would read aloud in public".[174]

Aside from reciting poetry in public, he is said by some of our ancient sources[175] to have tried his hand at writing it himself. Details of Domitian's own efforts are meagre, but his published works are spoken of with high regard by his contemporaries,[176] but this was no doubt to be expected while Domitian lived. *Epigram* 5.5 has been taken (by Nauta (2002, p.327), and Coleman (2000,

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[171] Despite his reputation, Martial does not ever claim to have presented his works to the emperor personally – though he implies that other petitioners might have done so – *Ep.* 8.31 and 8.82. See p.12 no. 48 below.
[172] It is generally thought that Book 10 was originally published in AD 95 before Domitian's death the following year, but that it was hastily withdrawn and re-edited in the wake of his *damnatio memoriae* in the years which followed. See Sullivan, 1991, p.320 for the approximate dating of these editions.
[173] cf. Millar, 1977, pp. 203-272.
[174] Suet. *Dom.* 2.2. See Coleman, 1986, ANRW 32.5 pp. 3088-3095 for a discussion of Domitian's probable works.
[175] E.g. Quintilian *Inst.* 10.1.91, Statius *Ach.* 1.16, Silius Italicus 3.619-621, and Valerius Flaccus 1.12-13.
[176] Most notably Quintilian, 10.1.91: *Quid tamen hic ipsis eius operibus in quae donato imperio iuvenis secesserat subliminus, doctius, omnibus denique numeris praestantius*?

p.28), amongst others) as proof that at least one such work of the emperor's was in the public domain: Martial is saluting an epic concerned with Domitian's own life-threatening experience on the Capitol during the upheaval of AD 69:[177]

Sexte, Palatinae cultor facunde Minervae,
ingenio frueris qui propiore dei –
nam tibi nascentes domini cognoscere curas
et secreta ducis pectora nosse licet -,
sit locus et nostris aliqua tibi parte libellis,
qua Pedo, qua Marsus quaque Pedo erit.
ad Capitolini caelestia carmina belli
grande cothurnati pone Maronis opus.[178]

(*Ep.* 5.5)

As one might expect of the son of an emperor, Domitian was well educated, the evidence for which arises from the various brief snippets found in the principal sources.[179] Suetonius provides no less than three quotes which reveal Domitian's study of the classics of his day.[180] In cultivating the appearance of a learned and artistically minded young man, whose devotion to poetry had had to give way to imperial duties, the image may also have served a subtler function in terms of the imperial ruler-cult, although greater focus upon this aspect must wait until later.[181]

His association with the arts has been seen as a mere guise by the hostile Tacitus (cf. *Hist.* 4.86.2), most probably because a serious poet would not have abandoned his art so readily, as Coleman suggests.[182] But Tacitus's hostility to Domitian is part of his own pose of aversion to imperial autocracy[183] and was undoubtedly motivated by his own sufferings under Domitian: the execution at Domitian's order of an influential friend and senator, Helvidius Priscus[184] in AD 93, and Domitian's treatment of his own father-in-law, Agricola.[185]

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[177] Suet, *Dom.* 1.2. For the importance of this to Domitian, and the impact upon Martial's his work, see below, p.21ff.
[178] It has been suggested by Coleman (2000, p.28) on the basis of this epigram that the epic on the Capitoline War was not composed by Domitian but by his librarian Sextus, the addressee of *Ep.* 5.5, although Nauta (2002, p.327) rejects this.
[179] For a neat summary of these, see Coleman, K., 1986, "The Emperor Domitian and Literature", *ANRW* 2.32.5, pp.3087-3115, esp. p.3091-3095.
[180] Suet. *Dom.* 9.1 (a line from Virgil), 12.2 and 18 (lines from Homer).
[181] Unfortunately, the scope of this essay allows only for limited exploration of this subject (but see p.22ff below). See Scott, K., 1936, *Imperial Cult under the Flavians*, Berlin.
[182] 1986, p.3088.
[183] cf. Griffin, 1995, pp.33-57.
[184] Suet. *Dom.* 10.3.
[185] Tac. *Agr.* 39. Domitian is portrayed as having reacted with "affected pleasure and secret disquiet" to Agricola's military successes. He even alludes to Domitian's (indirect) involvement in hastening the latter's death after along illness, by poison via his imperial freedmen (43.2) but admits lacking the necessary evidence for this.

As Coleman[186] (1986, p.3088) reminds us however, Domitian will have been well aware that pretensions to artistic ability had been a notorious feature of the rule of Nero, the last member of the previous dynasty. Since Suetonius (*Dom.* 2.2) pointedly tells us that Domitian abandoned active practice of the art shortly after accession, his choice has been interpreted by some[187] as in line with the Flavian policy of distancing themselves from disreputable aspects of the Julio-Claudian dynasty. They were to be (in appearance, at least) the antithesis of everything their predecessors had been. Having accepted his administrative responsibility, Domitian's consequent neglect of his artistic pursuits, (if indeed he had any to begin with) can be seen as both inevitable and perhaps even desirable.

Whether or not Domitian was ever a poet seems ultimately not to have mattered to those who sought his patronage; for it was the image he cultivated which seems to have made a lasting impression upon literary men such as Martial. Nauta (2002, p.327) feels that Domitian's early forays into poetry before his accession and the resulting association with the arts meant that he would automatically be seen as a more receptive patron of the literary arts than most emperors. Of course, this does not necessarily mean that he actually was. However, he had good reasons to at least appear appreciative of the arts.

Like most emperors, Domitian intended to leave his mark on Rome via various programmes designed to beautify the city and improve the facilities available to Rome's citizens and also to advertise the emperor's generosity and concern for his people. By virtue of his unique position, and the virtual monopolization of elite self-advertisement[188] the emperor was obligated to take the lead in 'community patronage', a process by which redistribution of various *beneficia* and money from the *fiscus* (accrued through taxation, successful campaigning, and other methods) to the benefit of various individuals in the forms of posts or offices, and to the people of the *urbs* in the form of new facilities and amenities.[189] Domitian's (possible) early literary efforts therefore only served to strengthen the illusion of education and intellectual refinement, with the necessary consequence that the eyes of all those engaged in the literary arts would turn to him.

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[186] 1986, p.3088.
[187] Bardon, H., 1940, *Les Empereurs et les lettres latines d'Auguste à Hadrien*, Paris, p.284, cited and reiterated in Coleman, 1986, p.3088.
[188] This had been the status quo since Augustus. Note for instance the gradual restriction of triumphs to Augustus and other members of the imperial family, such as Tiberius. See Eck, 1984, pp. 129-167.
[189] Suet. *Dom.* 5 talks of the Flavian temple, a stadium, and a concert hall.

More compelling evidence for Domitian's actual support for the arts lies in his decision to establish two new sets of games which included 'literary contests', the Capitoline Games (every four years from 86) and the so-called Alban Games or Quinquatria (almost annually from 88 onwards), the latter held at his Alban Villa in tribute to his patron goddess Minerva.[190] This must have been taken as a deliberate policy of active encouragement of the arts, particularly public recitation of poetry and prose speeches, and thus should leave us with very little doubt as to Domitian's appeal to those seeking some form of literary patronage.

In creating and promoting these competitions modelled on earlier Greek festivals and competitions, Domitian was in a sense imitating the philhellenist Nero, who had himself established poetry contests in his *Neronia* (Nauta, 2002, p.328) – and thus doing what Vespasian and Titus seem to have avoided. Suetonius alludes to Nero's legacy by mentioning a detail that "...when presiding over these functions, he [Domitian] wore buskins, [and] a purple robe in the Greek fashion."[191] The truth of this allegation is ultimately unrecoverable, but if generally held or 'known' at the time by those aspiring to literary careers, it might have been taken by some as yet another sign of an emperor appreciative of the Greek arts, and by extension, receptive to applications for his literary patronage.

However, as we have noted above,[192] Domitian had at some stage[193] abandoned his own active literary pursuits in favour of statesmanship, and so he seems to have appeared as a benefactor promoting the arts rather than as an actual participant on stage, as Nero had been. This had been seen an unacceptable transgression in a society where performers such as actors were often placed into the same category as charioteers, or worse still, gladiators, the latter group counting criminals and even disgraced citizens among their ranks. Domitian's moral legislation acted to strengthen traditional Roman *mores* by banning actors from appearing on stage,[194] whose influence, it seems, was felt to have been subversive. Likewise, the members of Rome's elite were similarly

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[190] Suet. *Dom.* 4.2.
[191] Suet. *Dom.* 4.4. Buskins (thick-soled boots) had traditionally been associated with tragic actors in ancient times; needless to say, Suetonius can hardly have been unaware of such an association, particularly if one bears in mind his further mention of Domitian's subsequent restrictions upon actors. Jones (1996, p.131) merely ascribes Domitian's behaviour here to his philhellenism.
[192] See pp. 2-3.
[193] See Coleman (1986, p. 3088, no.5 and p.3090) regarding uncertainty as to when exactly Domitian discontinued his literary efforts.
[194] Suet. *Dom.* 7. Jones & Milns, (2002, p.138) say that they were often accused of obscenity, citing Suet. *Aug.* 45.4.

restricted from appearing in public performances.[195] Domitian even expelled an ex-quaestor from the Senate on the grounds that he was "over-fond of acting and dancing".[196]

As the public presentation of poetry and oratory were apparently held in higher esteem, these forms of expression did not suffer the same treatment. However, the brevity and mundane thematic concerns of the epigram (as established by Catullus and others) meant that this subtype of poetry was evidently not considered to be amongst the elevated forms of poetry, such as the epic works of Horace under Augustus, and later, Statius under Domitian. In any case, since Martial was of equestrian status, his participation in an event such as the Alban Games was precluded. This must lead us then to consider just which avenues were available for Martial in his cultivation of the *princeps* as a patron and benefactor. Domitian was no doubt besieged by letters and *libelli* on a daily basis for assistance of some kind,[197] but those whose livelihood depended largely on their wits rather than their financial resources had to make their approach more subtly. So how could Martial initiate communication with or become known to his *dominus et deus*?

Fortunately we have plenty of evidence from the work of Martial himself as to the *wording* used in apparent 'communication' with Domitian,[198] but in order for any kind of discourse to take place, Martial needed to make sure that his work reached the emperor. As Nauta (2002, p.340) notes, the quality of Martial's interaction with Domitian - whether direct (unlikely) or indirect, is unknown, due to conflicting statements from various epigrams.[199] In dealing with ordinary patrons, Martial could meet with them face to face, on occasions such as the *salutatio* and by invitation to dinner,[200] but with the emperor such opportunities were far less likely.

Of course, it is possible that Martial did at least occasionally have some kind of direct access to the emperor, since in theory *libelli* could be handed to him at the *salutatio*,[201] but Martial might not even have been physically present on such occasions, and we cannot be sure that Domitian was ever an actual patron to Martial. Nauta (2002, p.340) rightly sees the role of imperial freedmen in this regard as critical, for as 'gatekeepers' they could control or deny access to the emperor, and no doubt intercepted most petitions directed to him. We can easily relate to this

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[195] This was in all likelihood a re-enforcement of an earlier Tiberian restriction, a *senatus consultum* from AD 19. See Bradley, 1989, p.85.
[196] Suet. *Dom.* 8.2.
[197] cf. Millar, 1977, p. 240ff.
[198] *Ep.* 1.4, 2.2, 5.1, 5.15, 5.19, 7.1, 7.5, 8.80, etc.
[199] But see p.2 no. 5 above.
[200] As seen earlier in the preceding chapter, e.g. *Ep.* 10.74.
[201] cf. Millar, 1977, p.241-242 for a discussion of the evidence supporting this possibility.

experience in the modern day in our encounters with administrative officers and other civil servants who fulfill much the same role.

Did the emperor have the time to read all the communications addressed to him, including literary works? We cannot know just how much Domitian actually saw with his own eyes, but according to Nauta (2002, p.342) "the sources represent him as doing so", although he does not seem to supply the evidence for this, and in turn suggests that it may merely be "an authenticating fiction". Nauta (ibid.) feels that all communications by literary correspondents with the emperor were likely to be handled by the *a studiis*, "the freedman concerned with the emperor's education and cultured appearance". Until relatively recently, there has been little agreement as to what responsibilities this post entailed. Wallace-Hadrill (1983, p.83) says that he was responsible for "the emperor's liberal studies" especially his reading material, which would no doubt include *libelli* of poetry. He might also be seen as "a studies adviser" from whom the emperor could draw expertise, because he "needed subordinates to mediate their contacts with the literary world".[202] Thus for Martial to make progress he had to make inroads with members of the "inner circle" of imperial freedmen charged with such duties. In return for their assistance Martial could offer them the same honour he offered to all his hopeful addressees: a mention by name in his next book.

Supportive of this strategy are the epigrams which are addressed to known favourites of Domitian's staff and imperial household, and thus individuals who had close, regular contact with the emperor. In *Epigram* 5.5, which he addresses to Sextus, the emperor's *a bibliothecis*, Martial explicitly states that the librarian's ready access to the emperor is the reason he has addressed him. Not content with merely reaching the *princeps*, Martial suggests that his 'little books' be placed alongside such luminaries as Catullus[203] and Marsus, and additionally, that Domitian's work on the Capitoline War[204] ranks alongside that of Virgil's Aeneid! Clearly, Martial was thinking of the "end user" (the emperor) in making use of such flattery.

The next epigram, 5.6, is addressed directly to Parthenius, asking for his help in getting Martial's book to Domitian, a highly valued service for which Martial might have been "paying" via the early (and therefore prized) mention in his book. Martial may even have performed the services of a *cliens* for Parthenius, who was one of Domitian's most influential and powerful close attendants as his *cubicularius*. An epigram written after Domitian's death is also directed to him,

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[202] Wallace-Hadrill, 1983, p.86.
[203] A famed epigrammatist and a predecessor after whom many of Martial's epigrams were modeled.
[204] As discussed briefly above on pp. 3-4.

which suggests that his relationship with Martial continued to have some value.[205] Similarly we have 7.99, addressed to Crispinus, also a close companion of the emperor, and from whom Martial again requests a favorable comparison with his predecessors Catullus and Marsus to the *princeps*. Although the poem is at the very end of the book, it was still a distinguished position for its addressee, and this is most probably how Martial fulfilled his end of the bargain.

A more direct approach by Martial to the emperor may be found in the imperial dedication at the beginning of Books 5 and 8. The latter stands out because it takes the form of a separate preface to the book. Prefaces often conveniently served as defenses or justifications for the work of the poet which was to follow, particularly for works of satire.[206] For the imperial dedication of Book 8, Martial may have needed permission (Nauta, 2002, p.386), as is suggested by the epigrams above which are addressed to the imperial freedmen. The sycophantic tone of the preface is undeniable, something to which we must return later. After Martial addresses the emperor directly after greeting him by his full range of titles, he abases both himself and his work at the feet of his *dominus*, talking of his *libelli* being suppliant to the emperor. He attempts to make a physical connection too:

...cum pars libri et maior et melior ad maiestatem sacri nominis tui alligata sit, meminerit non nisi religiosa purificatione lustratos accedere ad templa debere.

Martial builds the image of the *princeps* as an especially sacred being, and imagines his book coming into contact with the emperor, thus establishing (he hopes) a privileged connection with his *dominus*, and ultimately, some show of favour. *Epigram* 8.1 then follows immediately after, in which he again states matter-of-factly that his work is destined for Domitian:

Laurigeros domini, liber, intrature penates,
disce verecundo sanctius ore loqui.
nuda recede Venus; non est tuus iste libellus:
tu mihi, tu, Pallas Caesariana, veni.

This epigram is in fact worth remarking upon for a number of reasons, (such as the association of the emperor with the gods, most notably Domitian's favourite Pallas/Minerva), but it is the

[205] *Ep.* 11.1. Parthenius was later implicated in the assassination of Domitian, and for this handed over to the Praetorian Guard, at whose hands he perished in mid-97. Book 11 was thus produced before this, in late AD 96 (cf. Nauta, 2002, p.442).
[206] Cf. Parker, G., 1991, *The Prose Prefaces of Martial and Statius: A Study in Literary Purpose* (unpublished thesis), University of Cape Town.

implication of Martial's wording that is of greatest interest here. By simply *stating* (as opposed to hopefully hinting) that his book is about to enter (*intrature*, *l*.1) the emperor's palace, he implies that his works were both known and read (and hence, approved of) by Domitian. Nauta (2002, p.378) has suggested quite logically that there ought to be *some* truth to this, since in a book dedicated to the emperor (and hence with the hope of actually being *read* by him), Martial was hardly likely to be lying! Simultaneously, someone of Martial's wit was doubtless aware of Domitian's desire to make his person and functions sacred, as indicated by the emperor's ambitious building programmes in the city and the association with Jupiter on various coins[207] minted at this time. Thus he may have hoped to increase his chances of a favourable response by using language which promoted the emperor's ideal. The obsequious language in which Martial dedicates his work to the emperor was to have its own consequences for Martial's reputation,[208] particularly after Domitian's death, when associations with the damned emperor became most undesirable.

Nauta, however, feels that these two imperial dedications are explained by their different subject matter (2002, pp.349-50): both are also free of obscenity, as a moralizing *princeps* like Domitian would prefer. This has been seen by some commentators as merely a shameless masquerade on the part of Martial, because the books both preceding and in between the two *libelli*, and those which follow them contain considerable amounts of what may be deemed as obscenity. However Nauta (ibid.) suggests that we can see in this a "model of negotiation" based upon what Martial may have felt what was admissible to the court, rather than a "model of compliance" as has been stressed by Martial's detractors. In practice this may have meant that Martial also had to satisfy the possible constraints set by 'gate-keepers' such as Parthenius, in order for his books to gain access to the *princeps*.

The many constant stresses and pressures which affected and distracted the *princeps* were bound to affect his predisposition. In order to secure a positive reception and all of the potential rewards that positive impression might bring with it, Martial had to minimize the presence of any material that might offend Domitian and do what he could to ensure that the work reached Domitian at an opportune moment. For this he had to rely on the actions of the favoured imperial freedmen, whose assistance, as suggested above, may have come at a not inconsiderable price.

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[207] See p.23 below.
[208] As discussed in Chapter 2, p.5 regarding Pliny's comments on Martial in *Ep*. 3.21.

What was the nature of the books presented to Domitian? Peter White attempts to tackle this problem in his article "The Presentation and Dedication of the *Silvae* and the Epigrams".[209] He sees the epigrams arising in part out of the after-dinner entertainment for the host and the other guests sometimes given by poets (of which Martial makes mention on a few occasions)[210] and involving the recitation of either his own or the host's poetry (White, 1974, pp.42-43). In the case of the former, the possibility of oral presentation before a more formal collection therefore appears quite logical, but there may also have been another more physical form of presentation.

He reasons that the publishing of epigrams in a *libellus* had its attendant frustrations – they took time to compile, by which time, some or most of the material included might not be topical anymore. Moreover "it carried an overload of names to be glorified" (White, 1974, p.48) and thus it is reasonable to suggest that for those hoping to achieve recognition in Martial's work, the distinction was necessarily lessened. Therefore, by the time of publishing, many allusions might already have become too obscure to be appreciated by a wider audience.[211] The implication therefore is that they had already appeared elsewhere, in the context in which they were originally intended.

Thus, he confronts the phenomenon of the so-called 'cycles'[212] found in several books of Martial's *Epigrams*, and suggests that they are re-assimilated left-overs of small packets or special collections (*libelli*) sent to individual patrons on special occasions (such as birthdays, important appointments or promotions, during the *Saturnalia* and other holidays) before being published for a general audience in the form of an actual *liber* (White, 1974, p.44). The appearance of the imperial cycles then by extension might also be understood in this light, for example the strongly repeated theme of the 'lion-and-hare' spectacle found in Book 1.[213]

By the same token, White (1974, p.58) suggests that the seemingly haphazard use of dedications to introduce some books, but not others, suggests that they may have served as introductions to private collections issued by Martial to specific recipients before later re-packaging in book form. The tantalizing implication, then, is that the two actual dedications to Domitian (at the beginning

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[209] White, P., 1974, "The Presentation and Dedication of the Silvae and the Epigrams", in *Journal of Roman Studies* 64, pp.40-61.
[210] *Ep.* 3.45 and 3.50.
[211] By "wider audience" I mean all potential readers who were not included or directly mentioned as subjects in his books.
[212] Dealt with in more detail in the latter half of this chapter.
[213] *Ep.* 1.6, 1.14, 1.22, 1.48, 1.51, 1.60 and 1.104. For a neat discussion of their possible propagandistic value, see Sullivan, J.P., 1991, *Martial: The Unexpected Classic*, Cambridge, esp. pp.29-30.

of Books 5 and 8) were originally attached to smaller packets of epigrams Martial might have sent directly to the emperor, through the channels discussed above.[214]

White's general explanation for the arrangement of the texts might go a long way to explain the lack of context for some of the obscure and indeed virtually anonymous comments Martial makes on various people (not all of them necessarily *patroni*, of course). Nauta[215] generally rejects the notion of such collections on at least three counts. Firstly, since some of the common addressees/targets of the *Epigrams* were fictional to begin with, such epigrams were unlikely to have originated from earlier collections prior to publication, e.g. the epigrams attacking Zoilus.[216] The implication therefore in this case, is that, for example, one can not talk of a 'Zoilus cycle' as such, or for that matter any other epigrams which have the names of fictional addressees in common.

Secondly, regarding the imperial cycles, Nauta dismisses the idea that most of the imperial cycles found in Martial were originally presented as a whole in small packets, because he believes that the 'cycles' are too weakly linked in terms of specific themes,[217] and that their thematic assembly would have taken too long to present timeously (Nauta, 2002, p.373). At most, Nauta is willing to concede the possibility of Martial producing small packets in his early days as a poet (e.g. the lion-and-hare cycle of Book 1), since in his view, from this time forth Martial was effectively 'established' as a poet (Nauta, 2002, p.374).[218] In any case, there is little in the way of evidence for such free-standing collections by Martial, since as White (1974, p.57) himself admits, "none of the innumerable collections of occasional verse published between Catullus and Martial has survived."

Finally, Nauta (2002, p.363) does not believe that such collections were originally presented orally to the *princeps* by Martial, especially since the latter never claims to have done so (and surely would have if he had). However, he allows that Martial may have attended a dinner party

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[214] See above, pp. 7-8. The first epigrams of Books 4, 6 and 7 also serve as dedications to Domitian.
[215] 2002, p.363.
[216] Nauta, 2002, pp.371-2. The repeated appearance of Zoilus is discussed in Chapter 2, p.28.
[217] cf. Nauta, 2002, p.372-373, for a brief overview concerning the epigrams celebrating Domitian's return from the Sarmatian expedition.
[218] However, Nauta (2002, p.374) does concede that those epigrams concerning the dedication of the locks of Earinus found in Book 9 (*Ep.* 9.11, 9.12, 9.13 9.16, 9.17 and 9.36) may have been especially composed for presentation before publication in that volume. On this cycle, see below, pp. 39-41.

at Court.[219] Epic poets such as Statius, whose work would have been regarded as more tastefully elevated than that of the epigrammatist Martial, were more likely to have received this honour.[220]

Therefore, since Martial did not recite his poetry at Court, we may be quite sure that an invitation to attend dinner in person with the *princeps* (via one of his intermediaries) was equally unlikely. Thus, we are forced to return to Martial's most immediate and practical outlet for attracting the emperor's attention – his own writing. As far back as his earliest published books in Rome Martial made known his feelings towards the most powerful man in Rome – in the *Liber De Spectaculis* (published around AD 80) this was Titus, elder brother and predecessor of Domitian. The imperial motifs used by Martial here are the same ones seen in his later books produced under Domitian, including the wonders of the imperial games,[221] and association of the *princeps* with Jupiter, and at one point, using "*deus*" as a synonym for the emperor.[222]

Martial first addresses Domitian as *princeps* directly (in the second person) in Book 1 of his *Epigrams* (1.4), using words such as "*Caesar*" (*l.*1) and "*ducem*" (*l.*4) (as opposed to *dominus* and *deus*, which feature in Martial's later books) and in the next epigram (1.5), he goes so far as to put words in the mouth of his subject:

Do tibi naumachiam, tu das epigrammata nobis:
vis, puto, cum libro, Marce, natare tuo.

After this, he does not do so again, at least not without great care (cf. 5.15). The response Domitian gives to Martial in *Ep.* 1.5 is most significant, in that the implication of his direct address to Martial implies some sort of relationship between the two, although phrased in a manner which suggests that this is imagined. Over and above this, we may see Martial hinting at the support he desires from the emperor. Moreover, his presentation of this communication between the two is largely faithful to our understanding of such a power relationship – informal jocular content aside – since it is vertically oriented, with Martial in the position of suppliant, having to take what he can get, in this case, (imagined) rejection. Obviously, we cannot take this

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[219] Although see Watson, L., & Watson, P., 2003, *Martial: Select Epigrams*, Cambridge, pp.10-11, who feel that, based on the evidence from the *Epigrams* "M was *never* on such intimate terms with the emperor as to be invited to dinner" (emphasis mine).
[220] See p.6 above. Nauta however, feels that Statius *did not* perform publicly for Domitian, pp. 356-363.
[221] *Lib. Spect.* 1, 5, 6A, 6B, 20, and so forth.
[222] *Lib. Spect.* 16B (in particular, note that Titus's power is placed above that of Jupiter's!), 17, etc. However, Martial's later use of *deus* in reference to Domitian can be traced to the latter's demand for this term as a form of address. See below, p.16.

as proof of any real relationship between the *princeps* and the poet, but rather as an indicator of Martial's desire to establish such a relationship of patronage, whilst acknowledging the status differential which would come with it.

In 6.10, Martial arguably comes closest to asking Domitian outright for some kind of recognition. This is done indirectly through the device of a dialogue with the goddess Minerva in the last four lines (9-12):

dic, precor, o nostri dic conscia virgo Tonantis,
si negat hoc vultu, quo solet ergo dare?
sic ego: sic breviter posita mihi Gorgone Pallas:
"quae nondum data sunt, stulte, negata putas?"

Much has been made of 5.19, in which, after duly praising Domitian in his capacities as *dux* (*l.*5) and *princeps* (*l.*6), Martial ostensibly complains of the lack of generosity of modern 'friends', before directing his complaint to *Caesar* (*l.*15), suggesting that the emperor might be a true 'friend' to one such as Martial in such barren times, whilst quickly praising his virtues.

quatenus hi non sunt, esto tu, Caesar, amicus:
nulla ducis virtus dulcior esse potest.

(*Ep.* 5.19 *ll.*15-16)

However, Martial, perhaps fearful of overdoing things, is quick to cover himself, ending the epigram with a joke at his own expense:

iam dudum tacito rides, Germanice, naso
utile quod nobis do tibi consilium.

(*Ep.* 5.19 *ll.*17-18)

Martial's timidity here might be explained by Book 5's intended destination, and that it was written with the knowledge that Domitian had become censor only a few years earlier.[223] This attitude seem to permeate many of the imperial epigrams which follow: most epigrams concerned with Domitian conform to a formula by which Martial either praises the image or powers of the emperor (*Ep.* 6.4), or indirectly addresses him via wishes for greater success (*Ep.* 6.87) or thanks him for *officia* (including those yet to be granted), such as the confirmation of the *ius triorum*

[223] c. AD 85.

liberorum.[224] Such pieces generally make use of the more reverent "*dominus*"[225] and over time, the more sycophantic "*deus*", and it is particularly here where Martial has attracted accusations of sycophancy and blatant flattery. His ready employment of these titles, either separately[226] or together[227] in addressing Domitian, present Martial as someone who was more than willing to 'tow the line' of the regime. Therefore, at this point, a word or two is in order regarding Martial's use of these particular titles.

As discussed in the previous chapter, *dominus* was an acceptable form of address between social unequals, such as might be made to wealthy *amici*, although it was somewhat awkward and indeed less polite to use it of one's *patronus*, where parallels with the slave-master relationship might become uncomfortably close. According to Roller (2001, p.254), in correspondence between ordinary citizens in society the word *dominus* "... was commonly used to address or refer to someone whom the speaker wished to present as his social superior. It constituted an attempt to gratify the addressee, and marked the speaker's deference to him." A term inherently associated with inequality, Martial does not often use it in reference to ordinary patrons, naturally preferring the language of *amicitia*.[228] When he does do so, it is out of frustration, as at *Ep*. 2.68, which seems to represent the end of relationship which has soured:

Quod te nomine iam tuo saluto,
quem regem et dominum prius vocabam,
ne me dixeris esse contumacem:
totis pillea sarcinis redemi.
reges et dominos habere debet
qui se non habet atque concupiscit
quod reges dominique concupiscunt.
servum si potes, Ole, non habere,
et regem potes, Ole, non habere.

Note that Martial invokes the damning title of "king" on no less than three occasions here, somewhat overshadowing the use of *dominus*. Both titles are used *against* the patron Olus, whom Martial accuses of attempting to exert his dominance in the relationship. However, *dominus* could also be used as a "courteous form of address between persons not involved in any sort of social relationship, who were perhaps even unknown to each other."[229] Indeed, for ordinary individuals

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[224] Discussed earlier in Chapter 2, pp.16-17.
[225] This first appears in reference to Domitian in *Ep*. 4.30.
[226] Select examples: *deus*: *Ep*. 4.1, 5.3, 7.8, 8.8; *dominus*: *Ep*. 4.30, 5.2, 7.5, 8.1.
[227] *Ep*. 5.8, 7.2, 7.34, 8.2, 9.66.
[228] As discussed earlier in Chapter 2 concerning preferred forms of address between *clientes*, *patroni* and *amici*.
[229] Roller, 2001, p.255.

petitioning the emperor, this was almost the expected manner of showing one's deference and respect. Martial's relationship with Domitian may perhaps be seen in this light, but the use of this term in tandem with *deus* in the epigrams directed toward the emperor, would seem to negate such a view. As we have seen in discussing Pliny's letter earlier,[230] Martial's use of such titles did not go unnoticed, and his reputation was somewhat tarnished as a result. Thus, as far as regards flattery in terms of address alone, Martial is said by some of his more modern critics to have 'excelled'. His almost slavish praise of Domitian is also the area around which much debate has arisen, and hence one that requires some of the closest scrutiny. What could have prompted him to make use of this servile formula?

It should be remembered that as a poet dealing with the kind of subjects he did, Martial no doubt felt the need for greater caution after Domitian became perpetual censor in late AD 85.[231] This might also explain the first appearance of the dual title *dominus et deus* in epigram 5.8 (in the form of *domini deique*) in the same book which, as Martial makes clear in the first two epigrams, was intended to be fit for reading by the emperor. Martial's use of the dual titles in reference to Domitian seemingly stem from the emperor's demands to be addressed in this manner,[232] which in turn point to latter's desire to be recognised as a living god. He had been preceded only by Caligula in this regard. Domitian's motive in demanding recognition as a *deus* was undoubtedly to secure unquestioning obedience from Rome's elite, particularly after the Saturninus revolt. Both his father, Vespasian, and his brother, Titus, had been deified after death, and were worshipped as *divi*,[233] but worship of the living was distinctly un-Roman. His demands were problematic, particularly for the Senate – but not necessarily for a poet such as Martial. In his commentary on Book 5, Howell (1995, p.80) sees Martial as being "happy to oblige" Domitian's demands to be called *deus*,[234] and Kay similarly states that Martial "had been liberal in supplying Domitian with the titles he liked."[235] He was hardly alone in doing so of course, the epic poet Statius being a notorious example of the writers of his day. However, Martial has attracted censure for his use of this dual title and although Martial later recanted its use after Domitian's

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[230] Chapter 2, pp. 5-6.
[231] Jones (1996, p.73) argues this date on the basis of numismatic evidence.
[232] As Suetonius tells us in *Dom.* 13.2.
[233] Having died, emperors could acceptably become divine, but for a man to demand recognition as a living *deus* was seen by the Romans as ludicrous, and therefore unreasonable. A parallel may be seen in the Macedonian Alexander's own demands to be seen as a living man-become-god: although accepted by many of the Easterners whom his army had conquered, his own Macedonian countrymen steadfastly refused him this final conceit.
[234] A similar sentiment is expressed by Sullivan, 1991, p.138.
[235] Kay, N.M. *Martial Book XI: A Commentary*, London, 1985, p.66.

death,[236] his about-turn is seen by some commentators[237] as hypocritical and unconvincing, or more fittingly, a case of 'too little, too late'.

Although the use of the title *deus* itself was common to the writers of imperial panegyric, in reference to the living its connotations were, like *rex*, anathema to the collective Roman psyche. This at least, has been the dominant view of scholarship on this matter for some time, but recently, some new arguments[238] on a related manner, the worship of the emperor's *numen*, have questioned the extent to which this crossed over to direct worship of the emperor himself. The exact definition of this concept has always been troubling.[239] The emperor's *numen* is his supernatural power, his divinity, or as Fishwick put it, "that which makes a god a god",[240] but Gradel (2002, p.235) argues for an additional sense: since the word was inherently attached to divinity, "it could, at least in the imperial age, denote the deity himself or herself, and thus be a synonym for '*deus*'." He argues for this understanding on the basis of the dedication of two municipal altars[241] to the cult of the *numen* of Augustus, where rituals were performed in front of 'cult images' in the form of statues[242] of the emperor (and later his successor, Tiberius). He explains their significance as follows: "In cults of 'normal', omnipresent gods their presence in the rituals presented no problem. But the emperor was not omnipresent, a fact which was commonly recognized; hence probably the relative importance of the emperor's image in cults..."[243] Hence, the emperor's image stood for, and represented his *numen*.

The implications of this are obvious: if the *numen* of the emperor was physically represented by the cult image in the form of statues bearing his likeness during rituals of worship, then by extension (if we remember Gradel's definition) his divinity was represented by his mortal form. Thus, worshipping the emperor's *numen* was virtually equivalent to worshipping him directly – as a living god. By way of substantiation, Gradel introduces a passage from Horace, *Carmina* (4. 5.29-36):

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[236] See *Ep.* 10.72, where Martial disavows his earlier use of flattery.
[237] E.g. Sullivan, 1991 and Howell, 1995. See the discussion below on p.46ff.
[238] By Gradel, 2002, *Emperor Worship and Roman Religion*, pp. 234-250.
[239] See Gradel, 2002, pp. 234-236 for a brief overview of the different arguments for its precise meaning.
[240] Fishwick, 1991, p.383.
[241] The *ara numini Augusti* in Narbo and Forum Clodii, dated to AD 12 and AD 18 respectively.
[242] Gradel, 2002, pp. 243-244.
[243] Gradel, 2002, p.244.

condit quisque diem collibus in suis,
et vitem ducit ad arbores;
hinc ad vina redit laetus et alteris
te mensis adhibet deum;
te multa prece, te prosequitur mero
defuso pateris, et Laribus tuum
miscet numen, uti Graecia Castoris
et magni memor Herculis.

Direct worship is implied in line 32, when Horace imagines that each peasant "invokes thee [Augustus] as god".[244] If we can take this passage as indicative of direct worship of Augustus during his lifetime through the worship of his *numen*, then Domitian's demand for recognition as a living god may be seen as merely trying to simplify the entire ritual, by foregoing the veil of mystery afforded by such '*numen* worship.'[245] Consequently, the significance regarding criticism, both ancient and modern, over Martial's choice of address in praising Domitian is readily apparent. If direct worship of the emperor was already reflected in epic poetry in the time of Augustus, then perhaps in using the obsequious *dominus et deus* in his *Epigrams* almost a century later, "Martial was not committing more than a crime of taste in the eyes of some of the old-fashioned elite."[246] Ultimately however, his perceived loyal association with Domitian was to count against him in the period which followed the emperor's assassination and subsequent removal from memory, as I have argued Pliny's letter suggests.[247]

We must remember however, that thus far we have concerned ourselves with but one aspect of a larger charge laid at Martial's door; that of deliberate and willful flattery. Therefore we must also confront the much-debated issue of Martial's flattery (*blanditia*) toward Domitian throughout his work. In recent years, various ironic readings of some of Martial's most flattering epigrams have been made, most notably by Garthwaite (1990, 1993 and 1998),[248] in which the intent behind their deliberate construction and juxtaposition has been questioned. Nauta (2002, pp.411-419) has attempted to temper such claims (and the backlash which followed from some quarters) by making some level-headed suggestions about the inherent nature of flattery. He makes the point that "it was well understood in Antiquity that honorific acts could easily have the effect of

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[244] This is the translation of Bennett, (Loeb), 1947.
[245] However, we should perhaps recognise that Gradel sketches what appears to have been a largely provincial phenomenon (the two altars he refers to were based outside of Rome, in provincial towns), and thus, Domitian was bound to encounter resistance as he tried to extract a more direct form of worship from the city populace, never mind the urbane and sophisticated members of Rome's elite.
[246] Wardle, pers. comm. Dec 2004.
[247] *Ep.* 3.21, discussed on pp. 4-5 of Chapter 2.
[248] For a discussion of the ironic interpretations of Martial's use of flattery, see below p.33ff.

ridiculing the person who was ostensibly honoured" (ibid, p.414) and thus, as regards imperial panegyric, that "in a sense, intention did not matter: when a subversive meaning had been recognised (at least when it had been publicly recognised), the damage to the emperor's reputation had already been done" (Nauta, 2002, p.415). Thus, if Martial did have any less than flattering intentions, he would have to have been extremely careful as to their deployment in his poetry.

On the issue of sincerity (or the possible lack thereof) Nauta is again most insightful. In the context of Martial's apparent flattery in the epigrams he produced in the latter half of Domitian's reign, he suggests that "... if what people[249] say is quite obviously coerced, or if it quite obviously furthers their interests, people may find it easier to stick to their convictions, because they have such a good reason for their insincerity. If this is the case, they will consider their praise as 'flattery'."[250] Therefore one cannot discount the notion of strategic insincerity on the part of Martial, especially after Domitian's assumption of the censorship in AD 85. Martial had good reason to be cautious, since we are told that in exercising his power, Domitian actively sought-out and punished writers of defamatory tracts, although Suetonius does not provide any names.[251]

Flattery was of course a far from tasteful method of attempting to attract the emperor's favour, especially in the eyes of the elite, from whom Martial no doubt continually hoped to draw potential patrons. However, even for a poet of Martial's status, it was certainly no less relevant.[252] Outright flattery was of course the most direct route one might take to acquire the emperor's *beneficia*, but as this was seen by the upper *ordines* as a trait of the "lesser" cultures of Greeks and Orientals whose seemingly ready acceptance of autocratic rulers was well-known, it was very much frowned upon and therefore regarded as the route of last resort for any poet, particularly for one with standing. However, this did not seem to deter Statius and others. Martial seems to have been included among their number by some modern commentators,[253] although his is a far from clear case. The comments of Juvenal (though bearing in mind his notoriously satiric persona)[254] provide us with evidence of the contempt that fellow poets struggling for survival seem to have had for peers who so readily offered *blanditiae* to patrons, though as so often he may merely have

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[249] By "people" I take Nauta to mean any writer.
[250] Nauta, 2002, p.419.
[251] Suet. *Dom.* 8. Unfortunately Suetonius does not provide us with any definite sense of chronology here.
[252] On Martial's seeming about-turn after Domitian's death, see p. 47 below.
[253] See Macaulay's comments in Sullivan, 1991, p.304, as well as Scott, 1936, p.89.
[254] See Waters, K.H., 1970, "Juvenal and the Reign of Trajan", *Antichthon* 4, pp.62-77.

been expressing the expected societal views of his peers and reputation.[255] In Roman society, then, the use of flattery was not an option for the respectable poet who nevertheless needed to appear loyal to his patrons if he was to retain their support.

Despite the negative connotations of flattery, Martial seemed undeterred in the many panegyrical epigrams directed to Domitian, which no doubt sought to attract the emperor's favour. Perhaps the use of inflated language may have become the norm under Domitian's autocracy, but this alone cannot exonerate Martial's choice of words in many of the epigrams celebrating the emperor.[256] His later praise of Domitian as god-like, or even as Jupiter himself on earth, was seen by Scott (1936, p.89) as purposely fulfilling this function of the so-called court poets, although admittedly to a lesser extent than the epic poet Statius (we have already seen however that access to the *princeps*, was by no means assured). Nauta (2002, p.432) himself sees Martial as a court poet, at least in the later years of Domitian's rule, based on the high number of imperial poems found in books 8 and 9.

However, such works of praise may have been seen by Martial as a practical means to gain access to the favour of the emperor, a path well-trodden before his time by the great epic poets of the Golden Age of Roman literature, including Horace, Virgil and Ovid.[257] Martial's true attitude towards this expected, but ostensibly unacknowledged[258] service has recently been questioned by Luke Roman (2001),[259] who in essence believes that Martial struggled with his 'duty' as a poet writing under (and in support of) the now well-established imperial order and his own desires for literary autonomy as a poet and social commentator. It will broadly suit our purposes to consider very briefly his observations here.

Broadly speaking, the work of Catullus and Horace fulfilled the demands of the new order, whilst simultaneously attempting to maintain, in Roman's words, the poets' claims to "the immortality of the work, the writer's ethical autarky, eschewal of motives of financial enrichment, avoidance of the appearance of dependence on the patron, and disdain for recitation".[260] Roman (2001, p.119) points out that Horace and his peers were writing during a period of transition in which

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[255] See below, pp.21-22.
[256] *Ep.* 4.1, 4.8, 5.1, 5.3, 5.5, 5.8, 5.65, 6.10, 7.2, 7.5, 7.6, 7.8, 7.56, 7.60, 7.61, 7.74, 7.99, 8.1, 8.2, 8.8, 8.15, 8.24, 8.39, 8.54, 8.78, 8.80, 9.3, 9.6, 9.8, 9.34, 9.36, 9.65, 9.83, 9.91 and 9.101.
[257] Hor. *Carm.* 4.5 (cited above on p.17), Virg. *Ecl.* 1.8, and Ovid *Ex Ponto* 4.13.24.
[258] That is, by the emperor, unless he chose to reward such panegyric with praise.
[259] Roman, L., 2001, "The Representation of Literary Materiality in Martial's Epigrams", in *JRS* 91, pp113-145. Roman's exhaustive examination far exceeds the bounds of our own field of enquiry.
[260] 2001, p.118.

literary support for the newly emerging regime was of paramount importance in the ideological struggle for power between Augustus and the Senate. Naturally, the endeavours of those writing in service to the new regime were fittingly supported by powerful figures that had vested interests in seeing the new order become firmly established, such as the celebrated equestrian literary patron Maecenas, one of Augustus' close associates. By the time Martial was writing a century later however, the original reason for generous literary sponsorship had largely (but not completely) disappeared, and with it, the generous patrons of the early Empire.

However, under Domitian, imperial panegyric as a tradition was somewhat revived by the *princeps*' divergence from the restraint of Vespasian and Titus and his energetic promotion of ruler-cult as a vehicle for underlining his power. Perhaps for Martial the writing of panegyric was indeed loathsome,[261] but as a once esteemed form of literary communication with the emperor, Domitian's encouragement of court poetry presented an opportunity to acquire the *otium* he craved. However, Roman (2001, p.118) sees the inner tension of earlier writers such as Catullus as being consciously inverted by Martial and Juvenal. That is, although Martial still held in high esteem the virtues of literary autonomy, the economic realities of his existence[262] (particularly, the lack of benevolent *patroni*) compelled him (at least, as far he would have us believe) to direct his energies to publicly attracting the very kind of economic support his predecessors themselves sought, but hardly deigned to openly acknowledge.

Sullivan (1991, p.138) suggests that there is another reason for Martial's choice of panegyric – that of the promotion and reinforcing of the worship of the emperor. In his view, "Martial lent his poetic services to the imperial cult from the outset of his known career."[263] This certainly seem true for the bulk of his career under Domitian, whose choice in actively promoting his own ruler-cult, not least of all through literary forms, arose largely from the trend of identification with Jupiter which had marked the last twenty years of imperial rule. His own traumatic experiences in his formative years were also a factor. Thus we must digress briefly in order to appreciate the prominence of such traditions under Domitian. Fears (1981, p.71) put it best when he stated that "the reign of Nero... was central in the re-establishment of Jupiter as the dominant divine figure in official imperial ideology". His successors were quick to follow suit, and in the turbulent year

[261] Although he recanted his words of praise for the previous regime in an epigram (10.72) written in Nerva's reign, it is admittedly difficult to tell whether Martial was being any more truthful in his approach than he was beforehand.
[262] As discussed earlier in Chapter 2.
[263] Sullivan, 1991, p.138.

which followed, Galba, Otho and Vitellius all used images of one form or another of Jupiter to legitimise their own brief rule (Fears, 1981, p.76).

Nero's eventual successor, Vespasian, is said to have received word of two omens in connection with Jupiter portending his rule,[264] and thus also utilising Jupiter to legitimise his claim to power. It has subsequently been suggested that "with Vespasian can be seen the beginnings of the 'Jovian theology' of imperial power"[265] and indeed after his accession he continued to honour Jupiter, as evidenced by coinage issued during his reign on which the image of Jupiter appeared, under the legend "*Iovis Custos*" (Fears, 1981, p.76). Titus followed suit, but it was only with the advent of Domitian's rule that the "Jovian theology of power" (Fears, 1981, p.77) was to be fully realised.

A second, and perhaps key factor which may have intensified Domitian's religious fervour toward Jupiter, was that of an incident which occurred toward the end of the civil war of AD 69. The young Domitian had narrowly avoided capture by the forces of Vitellius by hiding in the Capitoline temple while his father advanced upon the city, and this experience was to have a profound effect upon him. In the opinion of Fears, Domitian "sincerely believed that Jupiter had saved his life" (1981, p.77) and thus can surely be seen as a primary cause of his intense devotion to Jupiter once he was in power. Domitian stressed his connection with Jupiter from even the earliest years of his reign, especially on coinage from AD 81-84, where different forms of Jupiter were celebrated, such as *Conservator* (Scott, 1936, p.91).[266] After the Capitol had burnt down in AD 80, he restored the temple of Jupiter *Optimus Maximus*.[267] He built a shrine to Jupiter *Conservator* as thanks for his miraculous escape from capture,[268] which itself was replaced in AD 85/86[269] by a temple to Jupiter *Custos*, built in his honour (Nauta, 2002, p.331).

Once in power, Domitian established "a Flavian heaven",[270] appointed priests and erected buildings for his deified father and brother[271] the latter only part of the many building operations instigated during his rule which were also intended to beautify the city, and which Scott (1936,

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[264] Suet. *Vesp*. 5.7.
[265] Wardle, 1996, p.221.
[266] See *BMC* Dom. 287§ (p.360) dating from 81-84 AD. For Jupiter's importance and identification with Domitian in Martial's poetry, see below, pp.28-30.
[267] As mentioned by Martial in *Ep*.9.3.
[268] Cf. Suet. *Dom*. 5
[269] *LTUR*, Vol. 2, p.308.
[270] Scott, 1936, p.89.
[271] Suet. *Dom*.4.

pp.89-90) believed was essentially a very physical way of reinforcing the Flavian world-view. A shrewd individual, he no doubt saw the immense value in acting as the head of the religious sphere of the Roman state – especially in attaching himself to, and ultimately becoming identified as, Jupiter – since by implication it made his very word sacred, and thus, more difficult to question. Sullivan similarly concludes that Domitian's aim was "to consolidate for once and for all the autocracy of the principate" (1991, p.138).

Thus, incredible social and propagandistic forces were at work which demanded Martial's compliance, but another inescapable factor further encouraged Martial to take up imperial encomium. As we have already noted in Chapter 2, it seems readily apparent that critics of Martial's flattery of the emperor have failed to fully appreciate the impact daily economic concerns may have had on the creative output of the poet. Writing imperial encomia may therefore have held appeal as a possible solution to such problems, albeit an unsavoury one. If we can accept this, we might also be able to perceive an explanation for any potentially subversive intentions on Martial's part. If epigrams flattering various patrons can be viewed as opportunistic, should those flattering Domitian be any different? However, before we can move to that debate, we must discuss the many panegyrical epigrams Martial produced.

Even the most general survey of Martial's books reveals epigram after epigram celebrating Domitian or his achievements in some form or another, whether it is his control over nature in the amphitheatre,[272] or in the wild (*Ep.* 4.30, 8.55) or the emperor's martial prowess, e.g. his campaigns and subsequent victories over the Chatti (*Ep.* 2.2, 4.3, 9.101), Dacians (*Ep.* 4.3, 5.3, 6.10, 6.76, 7.7, 8.15, 9.101), Sarmatians (*Ep.* 7.2, 7.6, 8.15, 8.50, 8.78, 9.101) and the resolution of the revolt of Saturninus (*Ep.* 4.11). His privileged connection to the gods, particularly his association with Minerva (*Ep.* 5.2, 5.5, 6.10, 7.1, 7.2, 8.1, 9.3) comparison with Jupiter (*Ep.* 6.83, 7.60, 8.24, 9.20), or even direct identification with Jupiter the Thunderer (*Ep.* 5.6, 6.10, 7.56, 7.99, 8.15, 8.39, 9.39, 9.91),[273] and his own divinity in general (*Ep.* 4.8, 5.1, 7.99, 8.55) are also routinely stressed. Martial is also quick to commend the *princeps* for his legislative reforms, for example the measure (*Ep.* 5.8, 5.14, 5.23, 5.25, 5.27, 5.35, 5.38 and 5.41) that restored 14 rows of seating to the exclusive use of the equestrian order (Howell, 1995, p.84).

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[272] See p.11 no. 47 above, but also *Ep.* 4.2 (dealt with below), and 4.74.

[273] Note that in instances such as 1.6, 8.4, 8.26 and especially 8.39, Martial's hyperbolic praise reaches its zenith in placing Domitian's abilities and eminence above that of the gods themselves. See below, p.28.

Following the order suggested above, let us begin with an epigram celebrating Domitian's control over nature. The lion-and-hare cycle of Book 1, identified earlier, both celebrates the marvels of the wild animal displays of the day and promotes the notion of the emperor's *numen*[274] as the ultimate source of power controlling the spectacles, and by extension, men.[275] Similarly, the following epigram is a typical example of an overt celebration of the emperor's control over nature, amid suggestions of supernatural ability:

Spectabat modo solus inter omnes,
nigris munus Horatius lacernis,
cum plebs et minor ordo maximusque
sancto cum duce candidus sederet.
toto nix cecidit repente caelo:
albis spectat Horatius lacernis.

(*Ep.* 4.2)

The *absolute* power of the emperor is here stressed very simply, and the presumably fictional target of the epigram serves to illustrate the inescapable impact of the emperor's legislation upon the individual.[276] Martial simply appears to be "towing the line" here, but it is only reasonable to consider that Martial's illustration of Domitian's *supernatural* ability to enforce the reforms he has introduced, carries with it a sinister undertone of the absolute nature of the new order, especially when one considers that Book 4 was probably published around AD 88.[277] Accusations of retrospective projection here seem unreasonable simply because it is hard to believe that the author himself (especially Martial, with his love of double entendre) was unaware of any possible dual readings of own his material, given the very time and context in which he was writing.

Throughout the books produced in the Domitianic years, we find Martial paying tribute in some form or another to the *imperator*'s military exploits. It may in fact be his most common imperial theme. He repeatedly makes references to the supposedly successful forays against the Dacians and the Chatti in the years AD 85 and 86, and later, in Books 7 and 8, to the Sarmatian expedition of AD 92. Suetonius reminds us twice of Domitian's desire to be seen as a superlative military commander, stating that the war against the Chatti was unprovoked and therefore unnecessary,[278]

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[274] As loosely defined above on p.17.
[275] Scott, 1936, p.119. However, as this cycle has already been dealt with in detail by Sullivan (1991, p.28ff) and Howell (1980 pp. 101-105), we shall make use of a slightly different example here.
[276] Although he may have had a 'real' person in mind in using the name 'Horatius', the point is surely to illustrate the idea that Domitian's supernatural power could not be resisted by anyone.
[277] Nauta, 2002, p. 110 and p. 442. This was within two years of Domitian having assumed the censorship.
[278] Suet. *Dom.* 2.1 and 6.1. Contrast with *Aug.* 21.2 where Suetonius stresses Augustus' diplomacy and deliberate avoidance of unnecessary conflict.

but for his actions both in that campaign and that against the Dacians, he is recorded as having celebrated a double triumph. One of Martial's most notorious pieces on Domitian's triumphs concerns the settlement with the Dacians involving the 'crowning' of the Dacians' representative (and thus hostage of Domitian's), Degis, in Rome in AD 89:

Accola iam nostrae Degis, Germanice, ripae,
a famulis Histri qui tibi venit aquis,
laetus et attonitus viso modo praeside mundi
affatus comites dicitur esse suos:
'sors mea quam fratris melior, cui tam prope fas est 5
cernere tam longe quem colit ille deum.'

(*Ep.* 5.3)

The epigram's especially slavish praise of Domitian as a *deus* who should be loved by even his enemies, furthers the idea that Martial was in fact willingly fulfilling the role of imperial panegyrist.[279] In particular Martial's apparent willingness to exaggerate Domitian's actual achievements (it was only until Trajan's rule that Dacia was subdued) makes it difficult to defend such a charge. Just how much of the true nature of Domitian's "success" was known by the general public is uncertain, but the very existence of such hyperbolic epigrams[280] makes it possible that Martial wrote with some understanding of Domitian's actual settlement with the Dacians.[281] At the same time, in light of Martial's constant claims of indigence,[282] it should be remembered that this epigram is found in one of the two Books officially dedicated to Domitian, and hence must be understood as being part of a larger programme, designed at securing the emperor's attention and hopefully his support. If Martial thought he was about to receive some form of imperial patronage, it may explain his readiness to write so many imperial victory epigrams, a theme dear to the emperor's heart.

Martial also occasionally blends the more common imperial themes together. For example in the first epigram of Book 7 Martial praises both the *imperator*'s might in matters of warfare and his devotion to his divine patron:

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[279] As considered previously on p.20ff. above.
[280] See especially *Ep.* 6.76.
[281] Domitian had recognised the position of Decebalus as king of the Dacians, who was given support in the form of skilled workmen. In return, Dacia could be regarded as a client-kingdom (CAH Vol. IX (2nd ed.), p.63, no. 306).
[282] *Ep.* 2.30, 2.43, 2.91, 2.92, 3.7, 3.37, 3.60, 4.37, 5.13, 5.44, 5.56, 5.62, 5.78, 5.81, 5.82, 8.14 and 8.56. Such claims notably peak in Book 5 (c. AD 89, cf. Nauta, 2002, p.442). Was Martial struggling for financial support at this time?

Accipe belligerae crudum thoraca Minervae,
ipsa Medusaeae quem timet ira comae.
dum vacat haec, Caesar, poterit lorica vocari:
pectore cum sacro sederit, aegis erit.

(*Ep.* 7.1)

Using the imagery of a breast-plate, Martial suggests the physical presence of Domitian's might as a warrior and commander, in somewhat Homeric fashion. In so doing, he is not only extolling the *imperator*'s military prowess, but, in the description of the protective armour Domitian specifically chooses, he also attempts to draw into the physical world of men the *princeps*' connection to the mythical and the divine. This is done particularly cleverly as the breast-plate is transformed; it is now not just armour, but an incarnation of the mythical *aegis* of Minerva herself.[283] In this way, both attributes work together to enhance each other for the *dominus et deus*, so that his command may be seen as being divinely guided and therefore, invincible. The next epigram (7.2) expands on this theme, with Martial again suggesting the infallibility of the emperor whilst he wears the sacred armour.

Domitian himself made public his devotion to the goddess through the issue of coins in AD 84 representing the emperor wearing the *aegis* (Scott, 1936, p.169),[284] the construction of a temple of Minerva in AD 86[285] (as part of the Forum Transitorum), and the initiation of contests in her honour. Martial highlights this relationship in several passages, but which may again be neatly illustrated by a single phrase from 5.5.[286] The opening line refers to the '*...Palatinae ...Minervae*' and thus very succinctly cements the association between the emperor's earthly abode on the Palatine and his divine protector. Earlier at 5.2 he makes use of Domitian's military title, Germanicus,[287] whilst placing him metaphorically on par with the 'Cecropian girl', which, like Pallas, was an Athenian synonym for Minerva, but also an allusion to her origins in Greek mythology. In 6.10, having praised Domitian's piety in giving temples to Jupiter, Martial exploits the emperor's well-known association with Minerva to ask for some show of support from the emperor.[288] Finally, lines 3-4 of epigram 8.1 talk of Pallas as the "patron of Caesar":

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[283] Although there remains some uncertainty, the *aegis* is generally recognised as being a protective garment or shield used by Minerva, fashioned with the head of a Gorgon, Medusa. It was supposed to terrify the foes of the wielder.
[284] *BMC* Dom. 286* (p.359).
[285] *LTUR*, Vol. 2, p.308.
[286] The same epigram addressed to Sextus the imperial librarian, discussed above on p.8.
[287] About which, see below, p.30.
[288] See above, p.14.

Laurigeros domini, liber, intrature penates
disce verecundo sanctius ore loqui.
nuda recede Venus; non est tuus iste libellus:
tu mihi, tu, Pallas Caesariana, veni.

The epigrams cited above reflect the first of three divine associations commonly employed by Martial in poems which extol Domitian's virtues. Aside from Domitian's privileged association with Minerva, the second celebrated association is that of the emperor's identification as Jupiter, and the third may be seen in the tradition by which his predecessors had been deified. More particularly, in the case of Domitian, these were family members.

The second association with the Olympian order, and arguably far more significant than those which deal with Minerva, is Martial's repeated identification of the emperor with Jupiter. These epigrams can generally be divided into two sub-types; the first includes those which associate or compare Domitian with Jupiter in some form or another, the second includes those which identify the emperor *as* Jupiter himself on earth. As Jupiter was considered to be the head of the Olympian pantheon, this was a far more natural association for emperors, (as opposed to Domitian's personal and idiosyncratic choice of Minerva) and, as we have seen above, a traditional motif for panegyrists. A prime example of the emperor being compared with his heavenly counterpart can be found in the first book, in the form of Epigram 1.6:

Aetherias aquila puerum portante per auras
illaesum timidis unguibus haesit onus:
nunc sua Caesareos exorat praeda leones
tutus et ingenti ludit in ore lepus.
quae maiora putas miracula? summus utrisque 5
auctor adest: haec sunt Caesaris, illa Iovis.

Not content with merely associating Caesar with Jupiter, Martial attempts to match the achievement of his *deus* with that of Jupiter's. Martial was unlikely to have written of Domitian in such hyperbolic terms unless he felt relatively assured of how the emperor would respond to such addresses, and suggests that this was not the first time Martial had written to Domitian in this way (cf. Nauta, 2002, p.382). Epigrams in which some form of Jupiter is literally used in place of the emperor are plentiful;[289] for example the first two lines of 8.15:

[289] *Ep.* 5.6, 6.10, 6.83, 7.56, 7.60, 7.74, 7.99, 8.15, 8.39, 9.24, 9.28, 9.36, 9.39, 9.65 and 9.91.

Dum nova Pannonici numeratur gloria belli,
omnis et ad reducem dum litat ara Iovem,

Here, Domitian is essentially represented as a living Jupiter-on-earth, as well as undisputed leader (like his Olympian equal) of the Roman people, returning from the Sarmatian campaign in early AD 93[290] and offering thanks to his namesake and protector. Suetonius tells us that unlike his expedition against the Chatti, this was a necessary war in revenge for the massacre of a Roman legion some years before, but ironically Domitian chose not to celebrate this success with triumph, offering instead a laurel crown to Jupiter Capitolinus.[291] Martial's reference to *omnis... ara* perhaps imagines a grand scale of offerings to Jupiter for the safe return of Domitian to Rome, just as he may have presented his laurel crown to Jupiter Capitolinus at the altar before the temple. Although many hypostases of Jupiter were recognised by the Romans, Martial often makes use of the Thunderer, for example 7.99:

Sic placidum videas semper, Crispine, Tonantem
nec te Roma minus quam tua Memphis amet:
carmina Parrhasia si nostra legentur in aula,
- namque solent sacra Caesaris aure frui -
dicere de nobis, ut lector candidus, aude
"temporibus praestat non nihil iste tuis,
nec Marso nimium minor est doctoque Catullo."
hoc satis est: ipsi cetera mando deo.

This is another poem in which Martial tries to ensure smooth passage of his book to a receptive Domitian. He begins playfully by juxtaposing the title Thunderer (*l.* 1) with an adjective "*placidum*", thus asking Crispinus, a wealthy freedman of Domitian's, to choose the moment well. Next he refers to the sacred ears of the emperor (*l.* 4) finally ending the poem with Domitian's favoured title of God (*l.* 8). The epigram thus appears to have two intended functions, to flatter both Crispinus and Domitian himself. At the same time he positively associates his own labours with that of his esteemed forebears Marsus and Catullus (*l.* 7), in a conscious effort to impress both his primary addressee and of course the seemingly literary-minded Domitian.

The third divine association is that of the emperor with his deified forebears. Both of Domitian's predecessors, his father Vespasian and brother Titus, had been posthumously deified. They were therefore *divi*, as the practice beginning with the consecration of Julius Caesar had laid down for

[290] cf. Nauta 2002, p.372 for this date of return.
[291] Suet. *Dom.* 6.1.

emperors who could secure the posthumous approbation of the Senate and their successor. There are several references to the *princeps*' deceased and deified relatives in Martial's epigrams, all of which served to reinforce the Flavian programme of ruler-cult. The last four lines of 8.53, an epigram dealing with the death of a lion at one of the *venationes* given by the emperor, are typical:

Unde tuis, Libye, tam felix gloria silvis?
a Cybeles numquid venerat ille iugo?
an magis Herculeo, Germanice, misit ab astro
hanc tibi vel frater vel pater ipse feram?

(*Ep.* 8.53. *ll.*13-16)

Vespasian and Titus are imagined as watching and even participating from the heavens, and Domitian's association with the demi-god Hercules is neatly emphasised alongside another of his titles, Germanicus. This was also originally of Julio-Claudian origin,[292] but assumed by him after his initial 'triumph' over the Chatti. Because Domitian had taken to extremes, like Nero, the deification of imperial children, we even find Martial attributing meteorological phenomena to one: an earlier epigram[293] tells how "these snows come from Caesar's child", a reference to Domitian's deceased infant daughter by his wife Domitia[294]. Domitian's deified relatives represented another opportunity to praise the emperor's divinity, and hence, another avenue by which he could approach (and appease) the emperor, however ephemeral its origin. Notably, Domitian himself is not referred to as a *divus* (at least not by Martial), which may perhaps be explained by a passage from Tacitus, *Annals* 15.74:

Reperio in commentariis senatus Cerialem Anicium consulem designatum pro sententia dixisse, ut templum divo Neroni quam maturrime publica pecunia poneretur. Quod quidem ille decernabat tamquem mortale fastigium egresso et venerationem hominum merito, sed ipse prohibuit, ne interpretatione quorundam ad omen ac votum sui exitus verteretur: nam deum honor principi non ante habetur, quam agere inter homines desierit.

The logic is clear: to be pronounced a *divus* might indicate the desire for the death of recipient of that honour, which was normally voted only to emperors who were already deceased. Domitian may perhaps have been fully aware of such an interpretation, and so it might have been fatal for

[292] Germanicus was a title first granted to Drusus and his descendants in perpetuity.
[293] *Ep.* 4.3, *l.*8. trans. Shackleton-Bailey.
[294] The emperor's wife, whom he divorced and then later took back. See Suet. *Dom.* 3.

any speaker or writer to speak of the emperor in this way. However, as we have seen above,[295] Domitian insisted upon the title of *deus*. Unsurprisingly this violation of precedent is included by Suetonius as one of the pretexts for the emperor's eventual assassination in AD 96.

Finally, we may turn to Martial's comments upon Domitian's legislation, in the social (e.g., regarding seating in the theatre, the substitution of the dole with hampers of food or dinners) and moral (e.g., the banning of castration) spheres, which seem somewhat ambivalent.[296] In Book 5 he offers comment in a series of epigrams (or 'cycle') upon the law restoring 14 rows of seating for use by the equestrian order at the Theatre.[297] This privilege, conferred by the *Lex Roscia Theatralis* of 67 BC and confirmed by Augustus' *Lex Iulia Theatralis*, was reinforced by Domitian with an edict in his capacity as censor. Howell (1995, p.84) assumes that the sheer number of epigrams on this subject indicate that the edict was recent, but this seems unconvincing. Sullivan's comment that the "status-conscious Martial welcomed the revival and enforcement of the *Lex Roscia Theatralis* which ... kept out the riff-raff, who threatened his own well-merited status" (1991, p.145) seems a more likely suggestion for Martial's readiness to comment upon the edict.

Indeed Martial's attitude to the growing importance of wealthy freedmen is easily detected in the cycle of epigrams on this subject (*Ep.* 5.8, 5.14, 5.23, 5.25, 5.27, 5.35, 5.38 and 5.41),[298] in which he seems to repeatedly express his approval of the new state of affairs. For example 5.35 throws into sharp relief Martial's conservative attitude toward would-be social climbers:

Dum sibi redire de Patrensibus fundis
ducena clamat coccinatus Euclides
Corinthioque plura de suburbano
longumque pulchra stemma repetit a Leda
et suscitanti Leito reluctatur,
equiti superbo, nobili, locupleti
cecidit repente magna de sinu clavis.
numquam, Fabulle, nequior fuit clavis.

[295] On p.16.
[296] See especially Books 6 and 9.
[297] For the interpretation of an entirely different cycle in this book, see Garthwaite, J., 1998, "Putting a price on praise: Martial's debate with Domitian in Book 5" in *Toto Notus in Orbe*, ed. Grewing, Stuttgart, pp.157-171.
[298] Note that 5.41 is included the cycle by Howell (1995, p.84), but not by Sullivan (1991, p.145).

Martial takes delight in the unmasking of a social inferior and his ejection from the Theatre. By stressing the man's considerable wealth in the form of properties and the profit he makes from leasing them, he makes a sideswipe at the increasing number of wealthy freedmen and even slaves, for whom it grated him to have to defer to in times of need; and ends with a damning assessment of the victim's 'true' station in society. The rest of the poems in this series are very similar in nature, although 5.23 is especially bald, as the poet makes explicitly clear the importance of the necessary sum (400 000 sesterces) for equestrian qualification.[299]

While it was easy for Martial to praise elements of Domitian's reforms which directly benefited him, others posed problems. As early as Book 3 Martial complains of the adverse effects of the change in the law regarding the dinner dole instigated by Domitian,[300] in which the giving of cash was forbidden. It is notable that he makes his less ambivalent complaints indirectly, towards stingy patrons (such as at 3.7, 3.14, 3.30 and 3.60) rather than to the emperor:

Centum miselli iam valete quadrantes,
anteambulonis congiarium lassi,
quos dividebat balneator elixus.
quid cogitates, o fames amicorum?
regis superbi sportulae recesserunt. 5
"Nihil stropharum est: iam salarium dandum est."

(*Ep.* 3.7)

Once Martial had established himself as a poet seeking Domitian's favour and support, as we have argued the dedication and language of Book 5 suggests, it was not sensible for him to criticize his patron directly. Whether he could demonstrate even ambivalence is disputed by modern critics. A cycle of poems in Book 6 offers a good opportunity to examine the respective arguments.[301] Around AD 90, in his capacity as censor, Domitian revived the *Lex Iulia de adulteriis coercendis*, originally introduced by Augustus in 18 BC. In 6.7, Martial writes of a woman flouting the recently revived law:[302]

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[299] Though note 5.25, which also mentions the 400 000 needed, but with an entirely different purpose in mind. See Howell, 1995, p.108ff.

[300] Suet *Dom.* 7. Essentially the dole of 100 *quadrantes* (in any case a meagre amount in itself) was replaced with the uncertain offerings of the host's dinner. This was of course problematic for those who depended upon the dole to see them through their daily needs.

[301] First identified in Garthwaite, J., 1990, "Martial, Book 6, on Domitian's Moral Censorship", *Prudentia* 22, pp.13-22.

[302] This is part of a series including *Eps.* 6.2, 6.4, 6.7, 6.22, 6.39, 6.45, 6.90 and 6.91, about which see Garthwaite (1990, pp.13-22). Nauta (2002, p.442) suggests a dating of late 91 AD for Book 6.

Iulia lex populis ex quo, Faustine, renata est
atque intrare domos iussa Pudicitia est,
aut minus aut certe non plus tricesima lux est,
et nubit decimo iam Telisilla viro.
quae nubit totiens, non nubit: adultera lege est. 5
offendor moecha simpliciore minus.

Is Martial attempting subtly to deride the revival of the law as outmoded through the use of hyperbole,[303] or is he using its re-introduction merely as "...a springboard for a witty attack upon an individual", as Watson and Watson (2003, p.231) suggest? Their counter-suggestion to Garthwaite's proposal relies heavily upon their assumption that Martial was specifically targeting a real life acquaintance of some sort, and therefore may be somewhat naive. In Garthwaite's view,[304] Martial is purposefully ambiguous here: while ostensibly damning an adulteress, he appears to be ridiculing the attempt to control the behaviour of the people, as Domitian intended with his moral legislation. However, it is the juxtaposition of this epigram in a cycle of such poems which merits further examination.

Garthwaite (1990, p.14) identifies the first two epigrams of the cycle preceding 6.7 as 6.2 and 6.4. Both of these pieces, however, praise Domitian's moral reforms *without* apparent hesitation or ambiguity:

Censor maxime principumque princeps,
cum tot iam tibi debeat triumphos,
tot nascentia templa, tot renata,
tot spectacula, tot deos, tot urbes,
plus debet tibi Roma quod pudica est. 5

(*Ep.* 6.4)

Garthwaite (1990, pp.15-16) suggests that the high moral tone of the first pieces seems to him to have "a deliberately ironic intent" when 6.7 is taken account, and therefore that Martial is ridiculing "the attempt to legislate morality" by Domitian. If this line is pursued, then, most of the other epigrams in the cycle (6.22, 6.39, 6.45 and 6.90) might have the same effect, in that they share similar descriptions of (usually successful!) attempts by people, real or imagined, to sidestep the new[305] legislation.

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[303] Garthwaite, 1990, pp. 15-16.
[304] 1990, p.15.
[305] As indicated by 6.7 in which Martial says that less than 30 days have passed since the law's revival.

Nauta (2002, p. 431), makes the counter-argument that "mocking the transgressors of the law reinforces rather than undermines its validity, and that the satire is directed not at the emperor, but at such people as do not allow themselves to be ruled by him". I am not convinced by his line of reasoning, which seems rather unlikely given Martial's generally cynical tone. Additionally, Nauta's own observation is that Domitian's revival of the law was merely a vain attempt to restore to Rome a time of "moral rectitude" (2002, p.432), but for which he evidently presumes Martial to have been loyally supportive. However, if we continue to look at the cycle as Garthwaite (1990, p.16) suggests, then the likelihood of Martial's sincerity in this regard is ultimately undermined by the last epigram, which delivers a dramatic shock to the reader, thanks to its sharply divided structure:

Sancta ducis summi prohibet censura vetatque
moechari. gaude, Zoile; non futuis.

(*Ep.* 6.91)

If we are to accept (with caution) Garthwaite's suggestions thus far, then 6.91 must logically be seen as the death-blow to any real consideration of sincerity on Martial's part regarding this particular attempt at moral reform. Martial attacks a stock target, Zoilus,[306] on the same charges of defying the law, but deliberately chooses to do so in a particularly blunt manner, which, in light of the earlier epigrams concerned with the law, should make us question his possible motive. I believe that the answer lies in looking at the whole. The unexpected coarseness of the second line, particularly through the use of the final word, completely and utterly destroys the moral status quo established by the first line. The use of Zoilus appears merely convenient, safely allowing Martial to criticise Domitian's seemingly unwelcome legislation. The poem's positioning immediately after the relatively conservative stance of 6.90 seems unlikely to be an accident, and indeed its proximity could be seen as in fact enhancing the effect of 6.91.

What I find difficult to comprehend, is how exactly Martial expected to escape censure from the *princeps* for such a piece published in his books when they were supposedly *toto notus in orbe*. Perhaps Martial relied upon his reputation as an epigrammatist of risqué epigrams to excuse any offence they might give, occasionally giving them the form of an epigram,[307] but if Martial was trying to subvert Domitian's attempts at moral reform, he was either very bold, or very assured that the intention of such epigrams would pass unnoticed to the casual observer. But what about

[306] Cf. *Ep.* 2.19, 2.81, 3.82, 5.79, 11.30.
[307] Discussed earlier in chapter 2. cf. *Ep.* 3.68, 3.86, 3.99, 5.2 and 7.12.

his most important reader, the emperor? Are we to take Suetonius' comments about Domitian's strictly limited choice of reading material as absolutely true?[308] Even so, Martial's possibly subversive tone in Book 6 seems out of place when we remember that this volume had been immediately preceded by the scrupulously chaste Book 5, which was explicitly dedicated to Domitian.

Nauta has attempted to explain Martial's attitude to this particular moral reform, by suggesting that Martial's resistance to Domitian lay largely on an ideological plane (2002, p.432). He believes that another tension between writer and emperor may be found, one in which Martial's own identity as a provocative and explicit writer clashed with Domitian's identity as censor and thus, as a social reformer for the good of the Roman Empire itself (Nauta, 2002, p.432). The result of this tension in his view therefore, was a satire which served to affirm that "the law could not abolish the reality that provided the matter for his epigrams" (Nauta, 2002, p.432). These arguments only seem to complement Garthwaite's conjecture, and so we must await other comprehensively plausible explanations as to exactly what kind of reception Martial expected for his dangerously ambiguous comments upon the practicalities of the new moral order.

The response to Garthwaite's reading of Martial's work has been less than rapturous,[309] but aside from one case of general dismissal,[310] no real alternatives have been offered, and he has certainly been most vociferous. In 1993 he argued for a largely subversive attitude on the part of Martial in book 9, taking the form of three interrelated imperial cycles.[311] The first of these cycles concerns the familiar theme of moral reform, lauding Domitian's legislation regarding castration and eunuchs, and by extension his own morality, whilst the second intertwining cycle concerns examples of moral hypocrisy on the part of certain individuals. Finally, the third revolves around Martial's repeated identification of Domitian and his page, the *delicatus* Earinus, with that of the emperor's Olympian counterpart Jupiter and his own mythical cup-bearer, the castrated Ganymede.

At the root of Garthwaite's argument lies his claim that Martial makes allusions to the righteous nature of Domitian's moral reforms whilst fully aware of the emperor's well-known fondness for

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[308] Suet. *Dom.* 20 tells us that Domitian confined his reading to Tiberius' notebooks and memoirs.
[309] Cf. Sullivan, 1991, p.145, Nauta, 2002, pp. 427-435, and Watson & Watson, 2003, p.231.
[310] Cf. Howell, 1995, p.156, who feels that Garthwaite has read too much in Martial's inconsistency in epigrams dealing with Domitian's reforms and those epigrams which reveal people flouting them.
[311] Garthwaite, J., 1993, "The panegyrics of Domitian in Martial Book 9", *Ramus* 22, pp.78-102.

the eunuch Earinus, and therefore plays upon the nature of their relationship (real or imagined), deliberately juxtaposing the epigrams on this subject with those praising the emperor as a man of moral purity, which Garthwaite names collectively as a "theme of moral hypocrisy" (1993, p.85).[312] This claim of subversion is particularly noteworthy for our purposes, necessitating that this issue be considered in some detail. A brief overview of the key epigrams of these cycles will allow us to make some comments in this regard.

The first epigram of the cycle initially takes the form of traditional imperial panegyric using the by-now familiar associations. In 9.1, references to the Rhine and the title Germanicus are used as a reminder of the emperor's military successes. In the second epigram in the cycle (9.3), the emperor is identified with Jupiter, and Minerva is duly included, although here Martial raises Domitian above all of the gods, especially Jupiter, in terms of services rendered to them, concluding that their 'debt' to the emperor could never be repaid. The next epigram in the cycle, 9.20, takes a similar tone in relating the birth of the *princeps*, whilst 9.24, repeating the identification of 9.3 above, is perhaps the most typical example:

Quis Palatinos imitatus imagine vultus
Phidiacum Latio marmore vicit ebur?
haec mundi facies, haec sunt Iovis ora sereni:
sic tonat ille deus cum sine nube tonat.
non solam tribuit Pallas tibi, Care, coronam; 5
effigiem domini, quam colis, illa dedit.

Epigram 9.91, like 9.3, again insists on the earthly Jupiter's eminence over that of his heavenly opposite, but 9.93's ritualistic manner of revealing Domitian's many titles (including, once again, Germanicus) has been seen by Garthwaite (1993, p.82) as a purposeful link back to 9.3, and hence a reminder of the views expressed there:

Addere quid cessas, puer, immortale Falernum?
quadrantem duplica de seniore cado.
nunc mihi dic, quis erit cui te, Catacisse, deorum
sex iubeo cyathos fundere? "Caesar erit."

(*Ep.* 9.93, *ll.*1-4)

[312] Domitian's law outlawed the creation of eunuchs, but this did not prevent people from continuing to possess them. However, it is notably ironic that in banning their creation in a bid to improve the public morals, Domitian saw no problem in *keeping* one himself – suggesting both hypocrisy and inconsistency in the application of his policy, which surely undermined his integrity as censor.

Finally, 9.101, which Garthwaite (1993, p.82) has identified as the last epigram in this cycle, stands out by virtue of both its length and its comprehensive summary of all of the preceding epigrams. He singles out two lines (*ll.*21-22) as being of particular interest:

templa deis, mores populis dedit, otia ferro,
astra suis, caelo sidera, serta Iovi.

Here Martial clearly stresses the emperor's achievements in 'providing the people with morals', implying that Domitian had passed specific moral legislation as censor, ostensibly successfully. The sincerity of Martial's praise here must immediately come into question, especially if we remember the questionable intent behind earlier epigrams concerning the efficacy of the emperor's moral legislation (such as those on the subject of the revived laws on adultery) in Book 6. Simultaneously, while Martial's sycophantic tone seems at its worst, Garthwaite (1993) believes that the meaning of the entire cycle is subverted by two similar cycles found in the same book.[313]

Four epigrams (9.27, 9.47, 9.70 and 9.79) make up the second cycle in which each "presents an individual who poses as a watchdog of public morality whilst practicing the very vices he condemns" (Garthwaite, 1993, p.85). The second of these is the most succinct example:

Democritos, Zenonas inexplicitosque Platonas
quidquid et hirsutis squalet imaginibus,
sic quasi Pythagorae loqueris successor et heres;[314]
praependet sane nec tibi barba minor.
sed, quod et hircosis carum est et turpe pilosis, 5
in molli rigidam clune libenter habes.
tu, qui sectarum causas et pondera nosti,
dic mihi, percidi, Pannyche, dogma quod est?

(*Ep.* 9.47)

Martial begins by building a picture of a man trained in diverse schools of moral thought, proceeding to briefly sketch a stereotypical image of the philosopher (*ll.* 2 and 4), but then accusing his target, Pannychus of hypocritical behaviour as a pathic (*ll.*5-8), thus destroying the implied image of stern respectability with which philosophers were usually accorded. For Garthwaite (1993, p.85), however, the most interesting juxtaposition in this cycle occurs where

[313] *Ep.* 9.27 9.47 9.70 ; 9.5, 9.7, 9.11, 9.12, 9.13, 9.16, 9.17 & 9.36.
[314] Martial uses the stereotype of the learned but lecherous 'philosopher' elsewhere at *Ep.* 1.24 and 9.40.

9.27, which continues the theme of deceptive appearances, immediately precedes an epigram talking of the stage actor Latinus, who claims a virtuous life in reality, as opposed to that of his licentious stage-character.[315] Let us begin with 9.27:

Cum depilatos, Chreste, coleos portes
et vulturino mentulam parem collo
et prostitutis levius caput culis,
nec vivat ullus in tuo pilus crure,
purgentque saevae cana labra vulsellae,
Curios, Camillos, Quintios, Numas, Ancos,
et quidquid usquam legimus pilosorum
loqueris sonasque grandibus minax verbis,
et cum theatris saeculoque rixaris.
occurrit aliquis inter ista si draucus,
iam paedogogo liberatus et cuius
refibulavit turgidum faber penem,
nutu vocatum ducis, et pudet fari
Catoniana, Chreste, quod facis lingua.

Once again Martial builds the stereotypical picture of a philosopher, although some of his risqué analogies (in lines 2-3) perhaps hint at what is to come towards the end of the epigram, in lines 11-14. The very next epigram (9.28) almost comes across as an apology or defense for Martial's own work, perhaps projected onto another whose work might potentially be perceived in a dim light by the censorious Domitian:

Dulce decus scaenae, ludorum fama, Latinus
ille ego sum, plausus deliciaeque tuae,
qui spectatorem potui fecisse Catonem,
solvere qui Curios Fabriciosque graves.
sed nihil a nostro sumpsit mea vita theatro
et sola tantum scaenicus arte feror;
nec poteram gratus domino sine moribus esse:
interius mentes inspicit ille deus.
vos me laurigeri parasitum dicite Phoebi,
Roma sui famulum dum sciat esse Iovis.

Here the deceptive appearance is reversed, in that someone whose life appears to be licentious (on stage) professes a virtuous life in reality. Aside from this general thematic link with 9.27, there seems to be another similarity: both epigrams invoke the images of 'stern philosophers',[316] but

[315] *Ep.* 9.28.
[316] *Ep.* 9.27, *ll.*6-7; 9.28, *ll.*3-4. Notably the last line of the epigram sees Latinus proclaim himself a servant of the emperor, which is curious since Domitian had pointedly banned actors from appearing from stage, although he allowed them to perform in private houses.

each to opposite effect in proving the morality or immorality of their subjects. Such placement can not have been accidental, and thus Garthwaite's theme of moral hypocrisy looks to have some merit, although it must be noted that 9.47 and 9.70 do not appear to have such 'companion pieces'. The last epigram included in this cycle, 9.79, returns instead to a celebration of the high moral character of Domitian. Although Garthwaite (1993, p.84) singles out only two lines (*ll.*7-8) as being of critical importance, I believe that the entire epigram is needed to put his argument into proper perspective:

Oderat ante ducum famulos turbamque priorem
et Palatinum Roma supercilium:
at nunc tantus amor cunctis, Auguste, tuorum est
ut sit cuique suae cura secunda domus.
tam placidae mentes, tanta est reverentia nostri, 5
tam pacata quies, tantus in ore pudor.
nemo suos - haec est aulae natura potentis -,
sed domini mores Caesarianus habet.

Curiously, despite having unmistakably ridiculed would-be philosophers and moralists of his day earlier in Book 9, Martial ostensibly salutes Domitian's austere character and his effect upon the *mores* of his servants and by extension, the people of Rome (referred to in *ll.*1-6). Again, it is difficult to believe Martial's sincerity in this regard, epigram 9.79 following as it does within a short space of epigram 9.70, which Martial ends with an indignant tone toward a hypocrite who decries the lack of morals in his day. Skeptics could argue that Martial merely intended for 9.79 to reflect all the more positively upon the success of Domitan's legislation, by contrast with earlier epigrams exposing moral hypocrites, but if we follow Garthwaite's logic, Martial would seem unlikely to have missed an opportunity to subtly ridicule yet another aspect of Domitian's moral reforms.

At this point, Garthwaite turns to the third and most controversial cycle. He returns to two early epigrams, 9.5 and 9.7, which follow closely behind the panegyric epigrams of 9.1 and 9.3. In these poems Domitian's legislation is once again lauded, and the sycophantic tone is similar, but crucially they differ in terms of specific content, since the former is concerned with adultery and the latter with Domitian's edict forbidding castration. Both Garthwaite (1993, p.85) and Nauta (2002, p.428) question Martial's choice in commemorating this law in Book 9 since at least a

decade had gone by since the edict had been passed.[317] However, for Garthwaite, the inclusion of this topic was more than deliberate, and hence 9.7 is included in its entirety here:

Tamquam parva foret sexus iniuria nostri
foedandos populo prostituisse mares,
iam cunae lenonis erant, ut ab ubere raptus
sordida vagitu posceret aera puer.
immatura dabant infandas corpora poenas.
non tulit Ausonius talia monstra pater,
idem qui teneris nuper succurrit ephebis,
ne faceret steriles saeva libido viros.
dilexere prius pueri iuvenesque senesque,
at nunc infantes te quoque, Caesar, amant.

Martial goes out of his way to praise his *dominus* for his edict ending the practice of castration, yet only four epigrams later (9.11), he celebrates the transition into 'manhood' of Earinus, the young eunuch and companion of the emperor, the first 11 lines of which are also very revealing of Martial's intentions for another reason:

Nomen cum violis rosisque natum,
quo pars optima nominatur anni,
Hyblam quod sapit Atticosque flores,
quod nidos olet alitis superbae;
nomen nectare dulcius beato,
quo mallet Cybeles puer vocari
et qui pocula temperat Tonanti,
quod si Parrhasia sones in aula,
respondent Veneres Cupidinisque;
nomen nobile, molle, delicatum
versu dicere non rudi volebam:

(*Ep.* 9.11, *ll.*1-11)

The epigram is very interesting for two reasons: Firstly, Martial's choice to highlight both Domitian's edict in 9.7 and the maturing of the emperor's eunuch in quick succession seems strangely incongruous, unless we can see in his arrangement a purposeful questioning of the integrity of such legislation. Secondly, and reinforcing the idea of a purposeful inversion on Martial's part of the celebration of manhood in 9.7, 9.11 makes pointed references to the myth of Attis, a youth who castrated himself as a result of mother goddess Cybele's desire to possess him

[317] The edict has been dated to the beginning of the reign, circa AD 81/82 by Schoene, (1967, p.160ff), cited in Garthwaite, (1993, p.100, no.21). For the implications of this, see below, p.44.

for herself.[318] In fact, 9.11 is only the first in a remarkable sequence (including 9.12, 9.13, 9.16, 9.17 and 9.36) in which Martial invariably compares Earinus favourably with Ganymede. This cycle has been seen by Garthwaite (1993, p.85) as deliberately echoing the topics of 9.5 and 9.7, especially the latter.

Consilium formae speculum dulcisque capillos
Pergameo posuit dona sacrata deo
ille puer tota domino gratissimus aula,
nomine qui signat tempora verna suo.
felix quae tali censetur munere tellus! 5
nec Ganymedeas mallet habere comas.

(*Ep.* 9.16)

The cycle culminates in 9.36 with the extended comparison of Earinus with Ganymede, by which Martial continues to stress the similarities of the relationship between the cup-bearer and Jupiter:

Viderat Ausonium posito modo crine ministrum
Phryx puer, alterius gaudia nota Iovis:
"Quod tuus ecce suo Caesar permisit ephebo
tu permitte tuo, maxime rector" ait;
"iam mihi prima latet longis lanugo capillis, 5
iam tua me ridet Iuno vocatque virum."
cui pater aetherius "puer o dulcissime," dixit,
"non ego quod poscis, res negat ipsa tibi:
Caesar habet noster similis tibi mille ministros
tantaque sideros vix capit aula mares; 10
at tibi si dederit vultus coma tonsa viriles,
quis mihi qui nectar misceat alter erit?"

Martial's audience naturally understood Ganymede's status as both Jupiter's personal attendant and his lover,[319] and so Earinus' repeated comparison with him inescapably brings to mind all the attendant connotations. Thus, whilst acting officially as an epigram of praise, such comparison seems to undermine Domitian's intended image of austerity and moral purity. Similarly, if the hypocrisy of Earinus' transition is what Martial is suggesting, the intent behind the positioning of the first few poems in this sequence must come into question, falling as they do so closely after

[318] As noted by Garthwaite, (1993, p.87). Initiates of the cult of Cybele had to go through a rite of emasculation, in emulation of Attis, in a display of their piety to the mother goddess. Cf. Cat. *Ep.* 63. That Attis castrated himself is not problematic, it is simply the allusion to emasculation which is of relevance in referring to Earinus.

[319] Note that Martial pointedly uses the Greek "ephebo" in *l.*3. While an ephebe was nominally a young Greek male under the tutelage of an older Greek male, sexual relations between the two were a common feature of such relationships, the inference to which in the current context Martial's more learned readers would surely have appreciated. He uses this term in reference to sexually desirable youths in *Ep.* 9.7 above (p.40).

the epigrams (9.5 and particularly 9.7) concerned with moral reform forbidding castration, discussed above. Therefore, Garthwaite (1993, p.85) believes that in repeatedly comparing Earinus with Jupiter's cup-bearer, Martial "stresses two features about Earinus: first, that he was Domitian's catamite and, second that he had also suffered castration" (Garthwaite, ibid.).

For the first charge Garthwaite (1993, p.87) suggests that since Martial had already established the name Ganymede as a synonym for attractive slave boys on several previous occasions in his earlier epigrams,[320] the implication of a sexual aspect to Domitian's relationship with Earinus is unmistakable. Admittedly the 'evidence' Garthwaite (ibid.) provides seems rather thin on the ground, but perhaps we might find clues hinting at a sexual relationship, from elsewhere. One might remember Suetonius' claim that Domitian restricted his reading to "nothing but Tiberius' notebooks and official memoirs",[321] and if Domitian had taken as serious an interest in that emperor's rule, as Suetonius implies, might he not also have known something of Tiberius alleged activities on the island of Capri?[322]

Amongst many other things, Tiberius is alleged to have had sexual relations with young boys (whether free-born Romans or otherwise is unknown), although even if true, details of such activities were hardly likely to have been recorded in an official memoir. However, this in itself does not mean that Domitian did not have outside knowledge of these activities.[323] Although historians have warned against readily accepting Tacitus' image of Domitian as another Tiberius, the possibility that Domitian saw himself in that light cannot be completely dismissed.[324] Therefore, might his own acquisition of and subsequent relations with Earinus not be seen as part of a conscious emulation of the emperor whom he seems to have so admired? Tentatively, we might suggest that on the evidence of the Ganymede/Earinus cycle (presented above), Martial himself was not unaware of Domitian's admiration for Tiberius, and so alluded to this 'fact' whilst simultaneously hinting at the scandalous details pertaining to the latter's time on Capri, with which both he and his more sophisticated readers were quite possibly familiar. Again, however, I admit that the evidence used here is tenuously linked at best.

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[320] *Ep.* 2.43, 3.39, 5.55, in Garthwaite, 1993, p.101 no.25.
[321] Suet. *Dom.* 20.
[322] As related in Suet. *Tib.* 43-44. Admittedly, the substance of these allegations is ultimately impossible to prove, but their very number should suggest at least a grain of truth.
[323] At this point, however, it should be recognised that we are treading on highly speculative ground by effectively working with negative evidence. But imperial records insinuating such activities had to exist somewhere; where else would Suetonius (many years later) have gotten his information in the first place?
[324] As Griffin, (1995, pp. 44-45) reluctantly admits.

To return to Garthwaite's second charge, that Earinus had suffered castration, he firstly cites as evidence a passage from Statius[325] which indicates that Earinus had been made a eunuch only after coming to reside at the imperial palace:

Care puer superbis, qui praelibare verendum
nectar et ingentem totiens contingere dextram
electus, quam nosse Getae, quam tangere Persae
Aremeniique Indique petunt! O sidere dextro
edite, multa tibi divum indulgentia favit!
olim etiam, ne prima genas lanugo nitentes
carperet et pulchrae fuscaret gratia formae,
ipse deus patriae celsam trans aequora liquit
Pergamon. haud ulli puerum mollire potestas
credita, sed tacita iuvenis Phoebeius arte
leniter haud ullo concussum vulnere corpus
de sexu transire iubet.

(*Silv.* 3.4, *ll.*60-71)

Only after praising the boy's selection as cup-bearer (*l.*60) and his close proximity to the emperor (*ll.*61-62), does Statius tell of Earinus' castration (*ll.*65-71). This implies that Earinus only became a eunuch *after* joining the Domitian's entourage at the palace. The significance of this is greatly increased when one notes that *Silvae* 3.4 was in all likelihood only produced in AD 94,[326] more than ten years after the edict had been passed. Of course, it is not known exactly when Earinus had entered the palace, but if he was acquired by Domitian after he passed the edict, the emperor would be openly showing contempt for the very sort of thing he was trying to discourage by law.[327] He is equally unlikely to have arrived much before the edict,[328] for two very good reasons: Domitian became emperor in October AD 81, (and if we can trust Schoene's dating, his edict came into effect soon after),[329] and if Earinus had been taken to the palace at that time he would only have been an infant, particularly if he only dedicated his locks in early AD 94.[330] Secondly, Garthwaite suggests that the overt references to Attis in 9.11 (as discussed above) "strongly suggest[s] that the subject of 9.11 [Earinus] is similarly a *castratus.*"[331] Additionally, Garthwaite (1993, p.88) argues that if one looks closely at line 10, Martial stresses the features

[325] Garthwaite, (1993), p.100 no. 19.
[326] Nauta, 2002, p.444.
[327] Of course, keeping eunuchs was not illegal, but in banning their creation, Domitian would seem to be ostensibly showing his disapproval of their continued existence in the new, morally correct Rome.
[328] However, in the lines which follow (*ll.*72-73), Statius implies that this was before the edict had been decreed. If so, Domitian's subsequent decision to ban castration seems all the more hollow.
[329] See above, p.40, no. 151.
[330] Based on the dating for Book 9 (see Nauta, 2002, p.442), which would surely have followed soon after.
[331] Garthwaite, 1993, p.87.

which make subject "an effeminate and a catamite" – "... *nomen nobile molle delicatum*", just as he had done elsewhere when talking about the desirability of effeminate youths.[332] Thus Martial effectively completes the image of the emperor's cup-bearer as a sexual submissive.

Whilst having no problem with the idea that Martial hints at a sexual nature to the relationship between Domitian and Earinus, Nauta (2002, p.427) however plays down the potential implication of this first charge, noting that the former was by no means unusual, or even illegal.[333] Under the *Lex Scantinia*, which Suetonius tells us was actively enforced by Domitian,[334] only those men who engaged in pederastic relationships with *freeborn* Roman youths under the age of 16 were punished,[335] and not those with the children of slaves or of other non-Roman origin. However, like the latter implication of Earinus' apparent emasculation, the emperor's conspicuous inconsistency in terms of his policy must have raised eyebrows, and it is this inconsistency to which Martial deliberately draws attention. Returning then to Garthwaite, the final epigram in the cycle, 9.36, serves in his view "to bind together the cycles to Earinus and Domitian" (1993, p.92). Thus it is without much surprise that he concludes that the "intrinsic contradictions" of these two cycles must, at the very least, make the reader question the true "nature of the panegyrics and Martial's attitude to the emperor" (Garthwaite, 1993, p.87), and therefore, the long-standing image of Martial as an unabashed flatterer.

Generally speaking, the main objections to Garthwaite's interpretations seem to lie in the belief that Martial would hardly have risked his career, or indeed, his very life, on any possible misinterpretation of his epigrams celebrating the emperor's reforms.[336] This seems especially so in light of the emperor's well publicised moral stance (particularly in his active role as perpetual censor) and if, as Martial would have us believe, Domitian did in fact read his work, the risk of incurring imperial wrath seems simply too great. Thus, Garthwaite's readings of these epigrams as subversive are viewed as quite unlikely in the eyes of some recent commentators, particularly Howell (1995, p.156), and to a lesser extent, Sullivan, (1991, p.145), and Watson and Watson (2003, p.231).

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[332] *Ep.* 3.58, 4.7, 9.25, 9.55 and later, 12.75.
[333] So long as Domitian, or any adult Roman citizen for that matter, was not the pathic partner. Cf. Juv. *Satires* 2.36-44, although Williams (1999, p.120) believes that there was no specific provision under the *Lex Scantinia* for this.
[334] Suet. *Dom.* 8. 3: "*quosdam ex utroque ordine lege Scantinia condemnavit*".
[335] With a fine of 10 000 sesterces, (Quintilian 4.2.69).
[336] Jones & Milns (2002, p.141) suggest that Domitian was mild in his punishment of libellous authors (at first), although other writers who offended Domitian through their works were later put to death, e.g. Junius Rusticus and Helvidius the Younger, (Suet. *Dom.* 10).

Nauta's discussion of Garthwaite's suggestions is probably the most nuanced of recent years.[337] Rather than undervaluing the possibilities they present of Martial's resistance to the imperial programme (cf. Sullivan, 1991, p.145ff) or simply dismissing them outright (as in the case of Howell, ibid.), Nauta acknowledges those cases which seem stronger, or are at least too problematic to be dismissed out of hand (as in the case of the Earinus cycle in book 9),[338] and allows for the potential for ambivalent reading in Book 6, whilst offering another interpretation (although a somewhat underwhelming one).[339]

Having reached this point, it seems only reasonable that we might attempt to draw some general conclusions about Martial's poetry in relation to the emperor, and the intentions behind it. As we have noted, the allegations of sycophantic writing on the part of Martial have their roots in the many references in his *Epigrams* to Domitian either as Jupiter/'The Thunderer', or simply as '*deus*.'[340] This may perhaps be seen collectively as the single most damning piece of evidence against any potential revisionist view of Martial's work. Sullivan (1991, p.140) concludes therefore that by the repeated use of the latter title in particular, and the many epigrams praising the emperor's godly attributes in general, Martial made a considerable contribution to the growth of the imperial cult of Domitian, at the very least in terms of promotion.

On the other hand, it could be argued that Martial only wrote as much as on imperial themes as he felt he ought to, given that he directs only about seventy[341] of his epigrams to his *dominus*, of which even fewer[342] actively praise some or other attribute of his person. Interestingly, Books 8 and 9 contain the highest number of imperial poems, possibly because Martial was now in the final stages of strengthening his position in the relationship with the emperor (cf. Nauta, 2002, p.384). Similarly, Books 7 and 8 have the least number of ambivalent poems regarding laws passed by Domitian (cf. Nauta, 2002, pp. 432-433). Although we might bear in mind Garthwaite's interpretations of the cycles in Book 9, these books remain in sharp contrast with Book 6's ambivalent attitude toward the then newly revived adultery law. Perhaps, in seemingly advertising his link to the emperor in the published versions of his book,[343] Martial was trying to

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[337] Nauta, 2002, pp. 426-436.
[338] Nauta, 2002, pp. 427-430 (Book 9); pp. 431-432 (Book 6).
[339] Nauta, (2002, p. 432), discussed above on p.35.
[340] *Ep.* 4.1, 4.8, 5.3, 5.5, 6.3, 6.10, 7.2, 7.5, 7.8, 7.34, 7.56, 7.60, 7.99, 8.2, 8.8, 8.15, 9.28, 9.39, 9.66, 9.91, 9.93 & 9.101.
[341] This is the estimate of Sullivan (1991, p.136).
[342] *Ep.* 1.4, 1.6, 1.14, 1.70, 1.104, 2.2, 2.92, 4.1, 4.3, 4.8, 5.1, 5.3, 5.5, 5.7, 5.8, 6.2, 6.3, 6.10, 7.2, 7.5, 7.6, 8.2, 8.11, 8.15, 8.39, 8.50, 8.65, 8.82, 9.6, 9.8, 9.79, & 9.101.
[343] E.g. in the dedicatory prefaces to books 5 and 8.

make use of the knowledge of his association with the *princeps* to impress the public. For if it was believed that Domitian supported the poet, other prospective patrons might vie with one another to support him too.

I believe that Scott (1936, p.103) took things too far in claiming that Martial's encomia inescapably point to the poet as devotee to the imperial ruler-cult of Domitian. This simply cannot stand in the face of the many epigrams Martial produced on the subject, which can be read ambivalently and therefore serve at the very least to create doubt as to the author's sincerity and thus his 'true' attitude. Based upon Garthwaite's interpretations of the 'evidence' in book 6, it would seem that by the end of AD 90, Martial could be said to have become disillusioned with his '*magnus patronus*', if indeed he ever had received any support from Domitian.[344] Indeed, if we consider for a moment the possibilities offered by those same epigrams in books 6, 8 and 9 alone, it becomes clear that even if Martial is still expected to flatter, he will do so on his own terms, and ultimately be able therefore to express in one form or another his own sentiment. Perhaps, as his patience with Domitian (i.e., in waiting for support) wore thin, and as his mastery of style and arrangements improved, he felt able to subtly incorporate his own view of the rulings of the principate, and its *dominus et deus*.

Detractors such as Howell, Sullivan and Kay point to his seemingly quick and opportunistic praise for the changes wrought by the new regime under Nerva, in Book 10,[345] published in AD 95 and revised in AD 98, and Book 11,[346] published in AD 96. Book 10 was presumably revised after Domitian's sudden death in September 96,[347] and in removing those epigrams which had flattered or praised Domitian, Martial was driven by the new ideological order in which that emperor's memory was to be damned. Epigram 10.72 is singled out because in the first few lines (*ll.*1-3) Martial makes quite clear his apparent misery in fulfilling the expectations of the old order:

Frustra, Blanditiae, venitis ad me
attritis miserabiles labellis:
dicturus dominum deumque non sum.

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[344] Aside, that is, from the confirmation by Domitian of the privileges originally awarded him by Titus.
[345] *Ep.* 10.72.
[346] *Ep.* 11.2 & 11.4
[347] According to Suet. *Dom.* 17, Domitian was assassinated in a plot which involved several of his household staff, possibly including Parthenius, on September 18th, AD 96.

In publishing this epigram (which must have appeared only in the second edition of Book 10, released in AD 98), Martial no doubt sought to escape censure from those who saw him as supportive of the old order. *Epigram* 11.2 on the other hand makes references to the unsustainable demands for private moral rectitude as demanded by Rome's former ruler, and he sarcastically refers to his freedom from obeisance in not having to call Nerva "*dominus et deus*", but this is about as much of a condemnation of the previous regime as we get from Martial. It might be argued that being ever the professional, Martial was simply protecting his *own* reputation – his current and prospective patrons might be wary of a *cliens* who was quick to turn on their memory once they were dead.[348]

In the case of the latter charge, by which Martial is accused of overly enthusiastic praise for the new regime, we may see him as merely performing the task which by now (post-AD 96) had come to be expected of him. Martial was by this stage probably in his late fifties (if his birth was around AD 38-41 as most commentators suggest)[349] and consequently may have found it difficult to adjust to the demands of the new order. Kay[350] notes that in 11.4, Martial is careful to make use of only *dux* and *princeps* in talking about the new emperor, Nerva, which, as we have seen, are more fairly classed as terms of respect, rather than *blanditiae*. Even if we must accept the charge of flattery in the Domitianic era, this may still be tempered by two minor considerations: that Martial was a cynical opportunist who needed money for his expenses and life-style, and that, given the possibilities suggested by some epigrams of the later books, he may have preferred to flirt with danger in his later years, because he felt that his bold-faced flattery of the emperor was convincing enough to allow his more learned readers to appreciate the irony inherent in his *Epigrams*.

[348] Wardle, pers. comm. 2002.
[349] E.g. Sullivan, 1991, p.1.
[350] Kay, 1985, p.66.

CONCLUSION

Patronage has been a central feature of this study in the consideration of Martial's status as a client-poet. Logically, we began by exploring the variety of forms of patronage in relation to Roman society. Following this, focus was placed squarely on its impact upon the literary sphere. Martial's *Epigrams* provided plenty of evidence for our case study, revealing many insights regarding communication between client and patron. Close examination of Martial's life as a client led to the consideration of the emperor's role as a potential patron, and an exploration of the possible nature of that relationship.

The brief overview of patronage revealed a nebulous system heavily in favour of Rome's elite. The Roman form of patronage was reinforced by traditions which served the conservative patrician outlook. Patronage evolved gradually, as the obligations and rights of both the patron and the client were established by custom. Patrons, acting as sponsors, representatives, and guardians of their clients, essentially controlled the relationship, leaving the inferior clients dependent upon their continued good will and support. Clients could be divided into three groups, *salutatores*, *deductores* and *adsectatores*, each of differing importance and value to the patron. Clients had little or no legal standing in a system which by design favoured those acting as patrons.

Patronage varied in form and conditions: *patrocinium* was one of the oldest forms and was the most asymmetrical, involving freedmen bound by certain conditions (often financial) to their former masters. *Clientela* by contrast involved men of free-birth, who entered such relationships of their own volition. All forms of patronage centred on the exchange of *officia* (duties or obligations) and *beneficia* (gifts or benefits) between patron and client, by which (in theory) both parties benefited. In reality, however, these exchanges served to reinforce the socio-economic divide between *patronus* and *cliens*. Patrons could expect services or work to be performed for them in exchange for favours, or gifts of food or money. A common form of *beneficium* for clients, the invitation to the evening *cena* and the corresponding phenomenon of parasitism on the part of desperate clients, neatly illustrate aspects of the relationship.

The language of a related concept, *amicitia*, was often used to disguise the inequality inherent to patronage, especially since Roman sensibilities tended to prefer terms which were less overtly

asymmetrical. Thus clients and patrons might address one another as *amici*, regardless of the actual sincerity of such an address. Men were often engaged in multiple patronage and *amicitia* relationships simultaneously. Some patrons divided their *amici* into different groups, from whom different obligations or duties could be expected, and with whom we identified the various forms of clients listed earlier.

Amicitia in origin denoted a kind of formal friendship, by which the friends involved were mutually bound by loyalty and honour to one another. The ideals of this set of mutually beneficial relations of exchange were espoused chiefly in the writings of leading members of the senatorial class, from both the Republic and the early Imperial period. Cicero, himself a patron, was used as a key source in regard to the ethical ideals behind both patronage and *amicitia*. The acceptance of *beneficia* between *amici* automatically implied inferiority for the receiver, who was expected publicly to show *gratia* (thanks) in return.

Cicero was concerned by what he perceived as a decline in patronage. While decline was a common motif in Roman writing, patronage was nevertheless adversely affected by several factors. Firstly, the influx of wealth in Roman society, which allowed *equites* and freedman to make vast fortunes, and thus ending their dependence upon senatorial patrons; secondly, the use of secret ballots effectively freed the client to vote against his patron if he was so inclined; thirdly, the introduction of the grain dole undermined reliance on the generosity of patrons; and finally, the arrival of the principate, in which self-advertisement was monopolized by the *princeps*, and elections guided by his will, thus rendering the votes of clients virtually useless.

Having identified the key aspects of patronage we examined the case of poets as clients. I began by confronting the arguments of White, who has argued that poets operated within the more flexible system of *amicitia*, and not patronage, on the basis that men who chose poetry as a career could afford to do so because they were already financially secure. Thus poets relied on the strength of their friendships as opposed to being dependent upon the support of patrons. Finally, he asserted that if poets did acquire patrons, they became ordinary clients – in other words, they were not subject to literary patronage. The implication of White's assertion therefore, was that Martial, as a poet, could not be termed a client, which, as the evidence from Martial's work clearly shows, simply can not stand.

Using the evidence of a letter written by Pliny concerning Martial's death, I have argued that the relationship was one of patronage, that there was no close, personal friendship. Pliny supplies only one example of assistance given to Martial by himself, and even attempts to justify his support, probably because of Martial's reputation as a loyal flatterer of the emperor Domitian. Pliny's comments at the end of the letter also indicate his desire to distance himself from Martial. Yet, at the same time Martial's reputation as a popular poet may have motivated the opportunistic Pliny to stress their connection in the first place.

In confronting the second of White's assertions, that poets did not need financial assistance, I turned to the evidence from Martial's *Epigrams*. His many complaints regarding the basic duty of the *salutatio* suggest that he was very familiar with the life of client. However, his comments suggest that the *cena*, seen by most clients as a benefaction, was in fact an additional obligation for the poet, who might be pressed to perform for his fellow dinner-guests. Moreover, other services, specific to poets were expected, such as poetry commissioned by a patron in remembrance of a loved one. Martial also complains of having to judge the poetry of others. Thus, the exchange of *officia* and *beneficia* considered would seem indicative of patronage, although in some cases in forms specific to poets.

Having established that Martial's epigrams provide valuable insights into the experiences of client life, I investigated further his own origins and status. Being a poet by profession, Martial's celebration of the confirmation of the *ius trium liberorum* indicates a significant value for this privilege in his eyes. Martial's comments on the obligations of a client reinforce the idea that Martial was in fact himself a client, but subject to demands specific to his profession in addition to those expected of other clients.

Although Saller has doubted the value of Martial's evidence as to the everyday experience of a client, following Nauta, I have argued that Martial had to tread lightly, since his own patrons were among his potential readership. Martial's representation of the relationship between himself and the patron(s) concerned was of the utmost importance, since he could easily influence the way in which specific patrons were seen by his readers.

Martial's use of real and fictitious names sheds light on his poetic intentions. As Martial could ill afford to offend patrons, he used certain names that were less than complimentary, e.g. Zoilus.

Other pseudonyms, however, were based on real people of his day, and thus the epigrams which contain such names were a means of complaint unavailable to ordinary clients.

In the third chapter I argued that knowledge of Domitian's interest in poetry in the early part of his reign and his establishing of poetry contests may have encouraged poets and writers to try for his support. Martial was not eligible for such contests on account of both his social rank and chosen genre of poetry. Therefore Martial had to rely on his epigrams in their traditional book form in order to capture the emperor's attention. Although White has argued that the imperial dedications in Books 5 and 8 might be remnants of smaller collections implying some kind of privileged access to the emperor, I found no evidence for this; rather Martial's addresses to the imperial freedmen indicate that access was mediated by Domitian's close attendants, whose patronage he might well have been forced to seek.

I argued that any consideration of Martial's panegyric must be understood in light of Domitian's purposeful promotion of the imperial ruler cult. Domitian's role as censor and subsequent moral legislation (e.g. regarding the prosecution of libelous writings), coupled with his demands to be addressed as *dominus et deus* put pressure on Martial. Martial's own brand of humour was starkly satirical, and thus the role of panegyrist seems to have been one too which he was most unsuited. Additionally I have suggested that, if Martial's claims of poverty, often readily dismissed, were instead grounded in fact, he may have needed to seek support from the emperor.

Focus then fell upon three imperial cycles (in Books 5, 6 and 9), all of which ostensibly praise or support the emperor's legislation. In Book 5 Martial seems particularly pleased with the edict restoring equestrian seating in the theatre, but only because it benefited the status-conscious poet directly. The cycle concerned with Domitian's moral legislation in Book 6 however, was seen as more ambivalent. In the early part of the cycle, Martial talks of the morals of the Roman people being restored, following this with an epigram attacking a woman for attempting to get around the revived laws of adultery. However, the repeated use of further examples of people evading legislation on adultery suggests that Martial might instead be mocking the efficacy of the law itself. I have followed Garthwaite in concluding that Martial's aim here is not to act as a moral watchdog but rather to ridicule Domitian's attempt to legislate morality.

The imperial cycle of Book 9 is the most complex, consisting as it does of three smaller, interrelated cycles. The first of these cycles again ostensibly lauds Domitian's moral legislation,

including the edict banning castration and the enforcing of the *Lex Scantinia*. However, when taken in conjunction with the second cycle, Martial intentionally subverts praise for Domitian's legislation by highlighting individual cases of moral hypocrisy. When the third cycle was taken into consideration, Garthwaite's arguments seemed persuasive: having praised Domitian's legislation forbidding castration, Martial then chooses to highlight the emperor's relationship with his eunuch, Earinus. For Garthwaite, this was not only incongruous, but deliberately contradictory on the part of Martial. Furthermore, the repeated comparison with Ganymede, Jupiter's cup-bearer and lover, in various epigrams of the third cycle would seem to hint at the possibility of a pederastic nature to the relationship between Domitian and Earinus. A passage from Statius seems to indicate that Earinus suffered emasculation only after arriving at the palace. If true, Martial's consequent subversion of Domitian's moral legislation purposely played upon the inconsistencies of the latter's rule. This has led us to acknowledge a greater implication: that, rather than being an enthusiastic flatterer, Martial actively sought to subvert the meaning of those epigrams which were intended for a panegyrical purpose.

Finally, I considered the accusation of Martial's hypocrisy, which should be dismissed if those epigrams which praise one or another aspect of Domitian's rule or his person were in fact subversive. Martial's cynical opportunism drove him to seek out support from the emperor whilst simultaneously ensuring that he could criticize him as well.

Ultimately Martial's *Epigrams* leave no doubt that he was a client, and in his capacity as a poet, a valuable commentator upon the life he led as one. Whilst not every poem concerning some or another aspect of patronage can be taken at face value, recurrent features would suggest that such epigrams were at least based upon a reality recognisable to other clients and even patrons. That Martial was frustrated and unhappy as a client seems beyond question, but even if jaundiced on occasion, the nuanced insight he provides concerning the everyday experience of the many dependants of Rome is ultimately invaluable.

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