Herod and Augustus: A Look at Patron-Client Relationships

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The relationship between Augustus Caesar and Herod the Great typifies the patron–client relationship that Rome used as a system of foreign policy. This article explores their relationship: how it came about, its wider implications, and, most important, how this system can explain Rome's ostensible "hands-off" policy regarding its client states.

The scholarship on the relationship of ancient Judea with the Roman Empire can seem contradictory. When mentioning Judea, Roman historians correctly refer to Rome's stringent "hands off foreign policy." The kingdoms under Rome's influence, Judea included, were autonomous, yet pledged loyalty to Rome. By contrast, Near Eastern historians conclude that a "totalitarian" Roman Empire "invaded" Judea, using it as a satellite nation and buffer state. Any sovereignty was token and in name only. How can both these conclusions be correct? The answer lies in a peculiar system prominent in the ancient world and used by the Roman Empire: the patron–client relationship. This system allowed the Roman government to give autonomy to client kingdoms in practice and name while still maintaining virtual full control. This synthesis of ideas is best represented in the relationship between Augustus Caesar and Herod son of Antipater. After 40 B.C. Herod was technically a sovereign king over the relatively small kingdom of Judea, but the politics of the day required Herod's loyalty to whoever was

Robert D. Hunt *is a graduate student pursuing a master's degree in Ancient Near Eastern Studies at Brigham Young University. His studies include Second Temple Judaism, early Christianity, and ancient law. He plans on continuing to a Ph.D. program when finished at BYU.*

in power in Rome. This relationship began with his father, Antipater, and the Roman general and statesman Pompey. The patron-client relationship, an integral part of Roman domestic politics, provided one of the most important frameworks of Roman society.[1] The Romans also used it as a type of international affairs system. Understanding this relationship helps reconcile the positions of Roman and Near Eastern historians.

Patron–Client Relationship

Most members of Roman society were both patrons and clients; members of the lower class were clients of the middle and upper classes, and the middle class of the upper aristocracy.[2] Among the aristocracy "wealthy families were clients of wealthier families."[3] The relationship between these classes underscores two main principles that governed this system: reciprocity and asymmetry. Patrons and clients engaged in the reciprocal, personal trading of goods and services. This trading relationship was long lasting and differed from the marketplace. Additionally, the participants had an unequal relationship distinguishing a patron–client relationship from a friendship.[4] This relationship "is one of the most characteristic features of Roman life lasting, in some form, from the origins to the downfall of the city and beyond."[5]

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[1] Erich S. Gruen, *The Hellenistic World and the Coming of Rome* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 158.

[2] Richard Saller, *Personal Patronage under the Early Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), vii.

[3] John Crook, *Aspects of Greek and Roman Life* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1967), 93–94.

[4] See Saller's discussion on this, 1–6; also E. Badian, *Foreign Clientelae: 264–70* B.C. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1958), 10–11.

[5] Badian, 1. Badian remarks that "Romulus created it and Justinian provides for it. . . . The client may be described as an inferior entrusted, by custom or by himself, to the protection of a stranger more powerful than he, and rendering certain services and observances in return for this protection. This state the Romans called '*in fide alicuius esse*'" (1).

Fides, literally faith, trust, or trustworthiness, was considered by Romans a moral quality. In some instances it meant good will;[6] clients were expected to trust and maintain loyalty to their patrons. In return, patrons cared for and supported their clients. *Fides* describes such loyalty and represents reciprocal trust between patrons and clients.[7] This trust came as patrons and clients exchanged favors or goods which were referred to as *officia* and *beneficia*. Generally, *beneficium* was the favor given to the potential client before the relationship was established, and *officia* were the gifts traded between both patrons and clients after the relationship solidified.[8] Patrons and clients traded these favors as the outward expression of their *fides*.[9] In many cases, the favors traded were not of equal value. Clients were required to pay back only what they could afford. More specifically, one favor might be repaid with a completely different and unrelated favor or favors that were impossible to quantify, such as political maneuvering or judicial defense.[10] More important than what was exchanged was the reciprocal nature of these favors. Differentiating between these terms clarifies the patron–client system.[11]

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[6] Peter Garnsey, *Social Status and Legal Privilege in the Roman Empire* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970), 227, n. 60. See also Badian, 2; he writes "[*fides*] implies trust, and therefore trustworthiness: it is a term of moral obligation and of moral judgement, with the religious implications such terms often have."

[7] See Crook, 94.

[8] Ibid., 94–96. These explanations are general and the ancient sources display exceptions. For instance, there are examples of *beneficia* and *officia* being used to describe favors and goods traded between those of equal social standing, but in general, these two terms set off a patron–client relationship. For present purposes the above explanations will be used to differentiate these two terms.

[9] Saller, 15.

[10] Ibid., 15–20.

[11] Ibid., 8. Also note that these terms (specifically *fides*) "denote a close relationship on a moral (i.e., extralegal) basis; the legal element may or may not be the sort of *potestas* the patron has over his freedman or the victorious general over the surrendered enemy" (Badian, 10).

When describing those involved in this relationship, Romans used different words, chiefly *patronus, cliens,* and *amicus.* The usage depended upon the user's social status. The upper class would downplay their superior role by using the term *amicus* instead of *cliens,* which usually implied inferiority.[12] The middle and lower class, on the other hand, would publicize the honor paid their patron. This advertisement of their loyalty most often came in the form of inscriptions, dedicated to their patron and announcing their *fides.* A middle or lower classman was duty-bound to advertise his loyalty, and being the client of an important figure could actually bring prestige.[13] By contrast, the word *amicus* did not carry any negative connotations and, as a result, aristocrats used this more neutral word when describing their clients.[14] There were those, however, who were *amici* to each other but were not in a patron–client relationship. When two equals, for example two senators of high rank, engaged in such a "friendship" (*amicitia*), no subordinate role was assumed. Using this word enabled those in a superior position to tactfully define their position.

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[12] Badian, 7.

[13] The extant literary sources, most often written by the upper class rarely use the words *patronus* and *cliens* to describe the patron–client relationship. Saller postulates that this reflects the derogatory nuances of these two words. An aristocrat would be less likely to use them than a middle- or lower-class counterpart, so as to avoid blatantly broadcasting superiority to others. Thus, two senators would not use these two words in describing each other as that would be a "tactless advertisement" of one's superiority over the other. Similarly, Augustus, superior to all, did not use these words to describe those around him, all of whom were subordinate. Conversely, *patronus* and *clientes* are ubiquitous in inscriptions erected by dutiful, lower-class clients. See Saller, 9–10.

[14] The use of this word led to different levels of *amici,* i.e., *amicitae inferiores* and *amicitae minores.* "Seneca claimed that the practice could be traced back to C. Gracchus and Livius Drusus, who divided their friends/followers into three groups: the first comprised peers who were received in private; the second included those lesser *amici* permitted into the *atrium* in groups for the morning salutation; the lowliest group was made up of humble clients who were admitted en masse and might be humiliated by being kept out of the house by slave *nomenculatores*" (Saller, 11).

Patrons and clients filled certain roles in this system. The patron acted as a mentor to his client helping him financially and advising him in his vocation. Beyond this, benefits between patron and client extended to the political sphere (of those so inclined), each one supporting and helping the other's career where possible. The client was also a companion to the patron as he grew older and protected his family and reputation after the patron's death.[15] The client typically remembered the patron in his will.[16] Domestic Roman patron–client relationships, in many cases, were the basis for Rome's international relations.

Patrons and Clients Internationally

As Roman policy and military influence spread throughout the Mediterranean world, Roman client states and client-kings were born and the patron–client relationship evolved to become a part of Rome's foreign policy. Official treaties (*foedera*) with countries "played . . . a small and insignificant role in the story of Rome's eastern advances," as Rome established the principle of *amicitia* or friendship with these countries.[17] This friendship was based on the trust earned by the foreign country as *beneficia* and *officia* exchanged hands.[18] This trust or *fides* was the foundation for all of Rome's international relationships and treaties in peace or war.[19] This type of relationship gave Rome very "elastic" relations with countries, allowing it to interfere or ignore certain situations to its benefit. Erich Gruen helps elucidate such international relations. He writes:

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[15] Saller, 27.

[16] Edward Champlin, *Final Judgments: Duty and Emotion in Roman Wills 200 B.C.–A.D. 25* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), 144, 153–54.

[17] Gruen, 54.

[18] Badian, 155–57.

[19] Coleman Phillipson, *The International Law and Custom of Ancient Greece and Rome* (New York: Arno, 1979), 117; see also 390–93.

> *Amicitia* represented an informal and extralegal relationship, not requiring a treaty, a pact, or any official engagements. . . . *Amicitia* could be entered into in a variety of ways. Military co-operation . . . made the partners *amici*. A state that sought Roman assistance and was accepted into fides [trust] would henceforth be adjudged an *amicus*. Even former enemies, once defeated in war and agreeing to terms, would take on the new status: peace treaties resulted in *amicitiae*. Further, almost any diplomatic intercourse, any friendly exchanges between states, could create the relationship.[20]

By calling these states *amici*, Rome downplayed the relationship's asymmetry. In time, Rome became the patron of the Mediterranean world. *Amici* or *clientes* supported her economically and militarily, and, as Rome reciprocated in kind, client kingdoms benefitted from Rome's patronage. These kingdoms retained effective autonomy and freedom while paying their *officia* to Rome.[21] This autonomy had its limits; client-kings were subordinate to Rome when it came to their own foreign relations.[22]

Rome the Patron and Judea the Client

Rome's patronage of Judea began when Pompey the Great, in 63 B.C., intervened in a civil war that plagued Judea and successfully

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[20] Gruen, 55, 61. Badian also remarks on this idea of treaty. He writes, "*Deditio* [surrender] . . . it is a voluntary arrangement: the weaker party may refuse to offer and the stronger to accept it. The relation of dependence is formed only by the acceptance of the offer. . . . *Deditio* . . . gives the recipient [the conqueror] complete power. But by accepting it, he morally binds himself not to make extreme use of it" (5–6). Thus, Badian differentiates between *deditio* (surrender) and *fides,* which implied entrusting oneself to another as a client. See Badian, 9.

[21] Senatorial provinces and Imperial provinces were distinct from one another and client provinces paid their *officia* accordingly. "Cicero remarks that *imperatores* who receive conquered peoples into fides become their *patroni* by ancestral tradition" (Gruen, 163). We also note that a client-king was able to gain honor among his own people by showing loyalty to Rome.

[22] Phillipson, 104.

besieged Jerusalem for three months. Two Hasmonaean[23] princes were vying for power over Palestine: the rightful heir and high priest, Hyrcanus II, fought for control against his insurgent brother, Aristobolus, who had seized the throne in 67 B.C.[24] Both Hyrcanus (aided by Antipater, his chief advisor and Herod the Great's father) and Aristobolus appealed to Pompey for assistance. Pompey favored Hyrcanus. After his victory Pompey reinstated Hyrcanus as high priest,[25] and Hyrcanus and Antipater pledged their *fides* to Pompey and became his clients.[26]

Judea now joined a number of other client states in the East. Pompey set up an "inner ring of client kingdoms" that acted as

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[23] The Hasmonaeans had defeated the Greek Seleucids during the Maccabean war and, consequently, became the ruling dynasty of Judea. Hyrcanus and Aristobolus were the sons of Queen Alexandra, who ruled after her husband died. When Hyrcanus was given the position of High Priesthood, which at this time was combined with the position of king, Aristobolus rebelled and defeated Hyrcanus at Jericho. Hyrcanus agreed to retire into private life but after much persuasion from Antipater fled to Nabatea and allied himself with the Arab king Aretas, Aristobolus' enemy. Afterwards, Hyrcanus besieged Jerusalem with Aretas' help. See Joseph. *AJ* 14.1–2; *BJ* 1.6.

[24] In 66 B.C., Pompey sent Scaurus, one of his officials, to Damascus to intervene in this internecine conflict. Scaurus favored Aristobolus and ordered Hyrcanus and Aretas to lift the siege of Jerusalem, forcing Hyrcanus to remain in exile. In 63 B.C., however, both Aristobolus and Hyrcanus met Pompey in Damascus, where Pompey postponed a decision until he dealt with Aretas, who had rebelled against the Romans. Using the delay to solidify his position, Aristobolus fortified the city Alexandrium. Pompey was not to be fooled and ordered Aristobolus to discharge his troops. Aristobolus then fled to Jerusalem, which was besieged despite Aristobolus' leaving the city to enter into negotiations with Pompey. Aristobolus' supporters in Jerusalem did not follow his lead and resisted the Roman forces. Jerusalem was taken, and Pompey, no doubt curious about the Jewish religion, entered the Holy of Holies. He left everything intact and ordered the priests to cleanse the Temple and resume their practice, but incurred the wrath of the Jews for entering their most sacred spot. See Joseph. *AJ* 14.2–4; *BJ* 1.6–7; Dio Cass. 37.15.3–16.4; Plut. *Pomp.* 41; Flor. 1.40.30.

[25] Joseph. *AJ* 14.4.4; 15.6.4; 20.10.1; *BJ* 1.7.6; Strabo 16.2.46 (where Strabo mistakenly calls Hyrcanus, Herod).

[26] Antipater remained Hyrcanus' chief advisor and, with further political machinations, became the real political power in Judea.

buffer states against possible invasion from "northern tribesmen" or by the Parthians, who constantly threatened Rome's eastern borders.[27] Additionally, Rome's reliance on these states was not just strategic but financial. Pompey instituted a tribute system that enriched not only Rome but also Pompey's personal treasury. He also set a precedent for dealing with Judea. "He . . . probably realised, as several emperors were later to discover, that the Jews would be a continual nuisance if brought within the Empire. The subtler methods of indirect control, through amenable high priests, were worth trying."[28] In this way, the Jews were given autonomy under their high priest, who took on a more political role.

Through his actions in the East, Pompey became the patron of the kingdom of Judea. His emergence and subsequent patronage of the East is worth observing here, as it provided the model of patronage for future Roman heads of state. Pompey's campaign in the East was unique in at least three regards. First, he exercised powers in the field without accountability to a senatorial commission. (Later, Augustus used similar powers in his rise to become *princeps*.) Second, his newfound client-kings paid him tribute, which made him incredibly rich virtually overnight. This vast wealth remained in the imperial budget up to and beyond Augustus' principate. Third, his settlement laid a foundation for Rome's relations with foreign governments, which his successors followed. "Rome henceforth administered the civilized, that is, Hellenized, areas of the *oikoumene* directly, while turning over the nonassimilated fringe to the mercies of client-kings."[29] Later

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[27] These client states included "Bosporus, Colchis, Armenia Minor, Paphlagonia, Galatia, Cappadocia, Commagene, the Syrian and Cilician princedoms, and Judaea, with Armenia and its dependent Sophene thrusting deep into Parthian territory as an additional protection" (Robin Seager, *Pompey: A Political Biography* [Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1979], 54).

[28] John Leach, *Pompey the Great* (London: Croom Helm, 1978), 96.

[29] Gruen, 659–66.

Pompey remarked that he had found Asia a frontier province but left it at the heart of the empire.[30]

Julius Caesar defeated Pompey at the battle of Pharsalus in 48 B.C., and by so doing inherited Pompey's patronage.[31] The patron–client relationship between Judea and Rome thus continued with Julius Caesar. After Pompey's murder in 48 B.C.,[32] Caesar set out on a campaign to Egypt. Hyrcanus and Antipater displayed their *fides* by giving aid to Caesar. Hyrcanus and Antipater persuaded Alexandrian Jews to ally themselves with Caesar, and Antipater led a contingent of Jews in Caesar's army.[33] Hyrcanus and Antipater's *officia* did not go unnoticed, as Caesar reciprocated with his own *beneficia*. He confirmed Hyrcanus' appointment as high priest and made Antipater governor of Judea; he also allowed Hyrcanus and Antipater to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem that Pompey had destroyed.[34] Caesar's patronage did not last long since, on the Ides of March, 44 B.C., Caesar was assassinated, throwing Rome into civil war. The emergent victors were Mark Antony, Octavian, and Aemilius Lepidus.[35]

Herod the Great

Antipater appointed his sons Phasael and Herod as governors over Jerusalem and Galilee respectively.[36] When Antipater was murdered in 44 B.C., Herod continued in his father's political

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[30] Plin. *HN* 7.99: "*quam extremam imperii habebat provinciam mediam fecit*"; Flor. 1.40.31: "*Asiam ultimam provinciarum accepisse eandemque mediam patriae reddidisse.*"

[31] Plut. *Pomp.* 68–71; see also Joseph. *AJ* 14.7.8; *BJ* 1.9.1.

[32] After his defeat Pompey fled to Egypt, where he was beheaded by the Egyptian monarch. See Plut. *Pomp.* 71.

[33] Joseph. *AJ* 14.8.1–2; *BJ* 1.9.3–4.

[34] Joseph. *AJ* 14.8.3; *BJ* 1.9.5–1.10.4.

[35] Plut. *Caes.* 66–69.

[36] Joseph. *AJ* 14.9.1–2; *BJ* 1.10.4.

footsteps. When the Second Triumvirate—a coalition government consisting of Octavian, Marc Antony, and Lepidus—was formed in Rome, Mark Antony gained control of the eastern provinces and Egypt. Herod, who possessed his father's political acumen and adopted his pro-Roman tactics, now pledged his allegiance (*fides*) to Marc Antony.[37] Antony, in turn, as Herod's patron, furthered his political career by confirming Antipater's appointment of Herod as tetrarch in 41 B.C.; the following year, accompanied by Octavian, he supported Herod in the Roman Senate as it proclaimed Herod king of Judea.[38] Antony's support of Herod in the Senate reveals additional *officia* exchanging hands. As a client, Herod came to Antony with large sums of money. Antony in turn promoted Herod politically in the Senate. To be sure, Herod's relationship with Antony was profitable, albeit frustrating. Antony's obsession with Cleopatra, the queen of Egypt, caused him to gift some of Herod's land to her. Herod, as a dutiful client and honoring his *fides* to Antony, was powerless to resist Antony's "generosity."[39]

Augustus and Herod

Herod's loyalty to Antony was tested further when Antony and Octavian struggled for ultimate power over Rome. As Antony prepared for battle against Octavian, Herod, the faithful client, rushed to his aid with money and troops. This support displayed Herod's *fides* to Antony. The Roman leader had different plans for

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[37] Herod initially gained the trust of Antony through a substantial sum of money; see Joseph. *AJ* 14.12.2.

[38] Joseph. *BJ* 1.14.4.

[39] Joseph. *AJ* 15.4.1–2. Fortunately for Herod, "Antony, in spite of his association with Cleopatra, was convinced that the policy of the western great power required a Jewish-Palestinian as well as an Egyptian state; and so he never allowed the queen of Egypt, in spite of an embarrassing amount of insistence on her part, to obliterate Herod's country" (Michael Grant, *Herod the Great* [New York: American Heritage Press, 1971], 14).

Herod: he sent him back to Palestine to deal with the Arabs who had recently become somewhat rebellious and refused land payment to Antony. The patron–client relationship shows its true colors here. Herod, as the client, was duty bound to follow Antony's instructions, and he returned to Palestine to oppose the rebellious Arabs. Herod's gifts of both troops and money and his handling of the "Arab" problem represent *officia.* Herod was duty bound to support his patron, Antony, in this way.

Herod's political luck changed for the worse when Octavian routed Antony at Actium on September 2, 31 B.C.[40] Herod now had to choose between loyalty to his defeated and nearly vanquished patron, Antony, or maneuver himself into position to find Octavian's grace. Herod chose the latter and traveled to Rhodes to meet Octavian. Always the shrewd politician, Herod boldly approached Octavian with bags of gold and without his diadem, to show humility and submission. Instead of downplaying his role with Antony, he emphasized it. He assured Octavian he would give the same service and loyalty to Octavian if given the chance to prove himself. Octavian was impressed and confirmed the appointment Antony had given Herod. Herod had found a new patron.[41]

Herod further showed his *fides* as he "lavishly" entertained Octavian at Ptolemais and gave him supplies for crossing the desert on his way to Egypt to meet Antony. He then continued this display of faithfulness escorting Octavian through Syria. On Octavian's return, Herod again played the dutiful host and escorted him north to Antioch.[42]

All of this political maneuvering, escorting, and entertaining proved to be something like a trial period for Herod, as Octavian tested him to see what kind of a client he would be. Herod passed the test. In 30 B.C., after handily defeating Antony and Cleopatra,

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[40] Dio Cass. 50.12–34; see also Joseph. *AJ* 15.6.1.

[41] Joseph. *AJ* 15.6.5–7; *BJ* 1.20.1–4.

[42] Joseph. *AJ* 15.6.7; *BJ* 1.20.3.

Octavian rewarded Herod for his efforts. Octavian returned to Herod all of the territory that he lost to Cleopatra through Antony and, in addition, gave land to Herod that had not been part of the Kingdom of Judea since Pompey had diminished it.[43] He also confirmed Herod as king. The exchanging of these favors initiated the patron–client relationship between Octavian and Herod.

Octavian now replaced Antony as Herod's patron. Herod was a sovereign king but, as the client of Octavian, always maintained personal loyalty through him to Rome. Octavian now ruled the Roman world, and Herod, as his client, acquired a limited amount of power. This appointment to power was the favor that came as a result of this patron–client relationship. Thus, Herod showed *fides* by escorting Octavian and entertaining him. Octavian, after securing his position by defeating Antony, rewarded this *fides* by entering into a patron–client relationship with Herod. This example clearly shows the reciprocal nature of this system. Octavian received Herod's loyalty and support and, in turn, bequeathed to Herod power over his kingdom.

Herod's main duty as ruler over his newly confirmed kingdom—defense—also shows the reciprocating nature of this system. As a client-king, Herod had responsibilities after his confirmation of power: defending the frontiers of Rome was one of the functions of a "client monarch."[44] Octavian did not want another Parthian problem in the East, and the loyalty of the Arabs in the southeast was tenuous at best. The business of such international politics was transient and risky, and in a foreign crisis Octavian wanted someone on his frontiers whom he could trust implicitly. The trial period Herod went through after Actium may have been Octavian's "testing ground," and Herod had sufficiently

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[43] Joseph. *AJ* 15.7.3; *BJ* 1.20.3. This land included Hippos on the eastern shore of the Galilee; Gadara beyond Jordan; Jericho, which included palm and balsam groves in the Jordan Valley; Samaria, Straton's Tower, Joppa and Anthedon. Suetonius mentions such behavior from Augustus. See Sue. *Aug.* 48.

[44] Grant, 14.

demonstrated his *fides* to Octavian. Herod was now responsible to aid Rome when necessary and give tribute to help its finances.

Inscriptions for Herod bearing the titles φιλορωμαῖος (friend of the Romans) and φιλοκαίσαρ (friend of Caesar)[45] show that Herod fully embraced his new role as Octavian's client. As a client-king, it is surmisable that Octavian favored Herod with the honorary designation *amicus et socius populi Romani.*[46] Herod was friend and ally to Octavian and, as such, friend and ally to the Roman People.[47] In reality, as mentioned before, the term *amicus* designated Herod as a client. Herod, although a client-king, was sovereign over his kingdom while subordinate to Octavian.[48] It is this fact that seems to contradict itself. Using the patron–client relationship as a foreign relations strategy, Rome successfully managed this contradiction. Roman generals, politicians, and aristocrats became patrons over similar leaders in the nations surrounding Rome. As Rome's influence spread throughout the Mediterranean world, this relationship reached the highest levels of leadership. Both in Rome and its surrounding states, sovereign kings and politicians retained their sovereignty while becoming

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[45] OGIS 414=IG III 550, Ὁ δῆμο[ς] βασιλέα Ἡρώδην φιλορωμαῖον εὐεργεσίας | ἕνεκεν καὶ εὐνοίας τῆς ἑαυτόν. OGIS 427=IG III 551, [Ὁ δ]ῆμος | [βασι]λέα Ἡρώδην Εὐσεηβῆ καὶ φιλοκαίσαρα | [ἀ]ρετῆς ἕνεκεν καὶ εὐεργεσίας. Recently two other inscriptions were discovered that also may relate to this issue. See Y. Meshorer, "A Stone Weight from the Reign of Herod," *Israel Exploration Journal* 20 (1970): 97–98; A. Kushnir-Stein, "An Inscribed Weight from Ashdod: A Reconsideration," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 105 (1995): 81–84; see also Benjamin D. Meritt, "Greek Inscriptions," *Hesperia* 21 (1952): 370.

[46] Grant makes this assumption, apparently on the basis of Herod's clientage. See Grant, 97.

[47] The use of the designation "friend" (*amicus*) instead of client portrays Octavian's wisdom in deflecting outward praise and downplaying Herod's subordinate role.

[48] Herod was a sovereign king. If any Roman legions existed in Judea at all, they were few and only there to keep internal order. See Eliezar Paltiel, *Vassals and Rebels in the Roman Empire: Julio-Claudian Policies in Judaea and the Kingdoms of the East* (Bruxelles: Latomus Revue D'Études Latines, 1991), 24.

subject to their patrons. As Badian writes, "it was *clientela* in its private aspects that enabled Rome to assert and maintain that dominance over ostensibly independent states, which she claimed by virtue of the extension of this same category of Roman thought to the sphere of international relations."[49]

These inscriptions also portray a unique aspect of Octavian as patron. Cicero writes that by tradition Roman generals became patrons to vanquished enemies and that this patronage was hereditary.[50] However, the enemies' surrender was not to the general, but rather to the Roman People, with the general acting as representative of the Roman People. The client state became *amicus* to the Roman People and client to the general or politician. Any formal treaty or *foedus* was made with the Roman People through the conquering leader.[51] This is seen in Judea with both Pompey and Julius Caesar. By contrast, through his victory at Actium and later political maneuvers, Octavian became *princeps* over the Roman Empire and as such held a unique and singular position. When the lines between Octavian's role as private patron and his public function blurred, the significance of being *cliens Augusti* far outstripped the formal status of *amicus popli Romani*.

As the Principate evolved under Octavian, the emperor's role as patron became more defined. The emperor began distributing various types of favors (*beneficia*). Locally and internationally the emperor gave political, religious, and military advancements and positions.[52] Certain provinces became "imperial provinces." This meant they were under the emperor's jurisdiction[53] with the

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[49] Badian, 165.

[50] Cic. *Off.* 1.35.

[51] See Badian, 156.

[52] See Saller, 42–45.

[53] These provinces were Gaul, Syria, Cyprus, and Egypt. The Senate and people received the remaining provinces. Augustus took all the provinces with armies. The "term *provincia* meant both a sphere of operation and a geographically defined area. The Roman presence in the Near East at this moment consisted of a single 'provincia' called Syria." Judea was its own kingdom. "Under the constitutional arrangements made in Rome in January 27 B.C. Syria

emperor acting as governor.[54] The beneficiaries of this patronage, the client-kings, would then have gratitude (*gratia*) towards the emperor and would be expected to reply with favors (*officia*) of their own. Additionally, the client-king's subjects were clients to the king and, by extension, to the emperor.

A loyal client showed his *fides* to his patron through political support. After Actium, Octavian needed such displays of support to establish his position in the Senate. Patrons could expect support from their clients not only in calamity but in their day-to-day responsibilities. Badian writes:

> In providing him with the means for capturing popular favour . . . *clientela* abroad were of very real value to the prominent Roman wanting a public career. But beyond this concrete importance there was the reputation they gave him: for power, in Rome, was indissolubly linked with standing and prestige, and these were advertised by foreign *clientela* as much as by the attendance of Roman clients. Foreign envoys attending his levee no doubt added distinction to the crowd; the introduction of envoys and even of kings into the Senate was a public advertisement of his standing among the allies; and Roman senators serving in the provinces could see visible reminders, in stone and bronze, of the benefits he had conferred on cities, nations and kings, and of their fulsome gratitude.[55]

Herod, of course, had no persuasive power in Rome's Senate and so he found other arenas to show his support: the provinces. Certainly, Octavian needed not only support at home in the Senate, but also loyalty from the provinces and his client-kings.

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became . . . a province of Caesar as opposed to a province of the Roman people." This means that the governors of this province were "appointed by the Emperor and were called *legati.*" There were also three legions in Syria, as opposed to probably less than a legion in Judea. See Fergus Millar, *The Roman Near East: 31 B.C.–A.D. 337* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993), 31–32. See also Crook, 72.

[54] Saller, 41–42.

[55] Badian, 161–63.

Herod helped promote his new patron's political agenda and prestige. He sent a donation to Nicopolis, which was being constructed near Actium to commemorate Octavian's victory against Antony and Cleopatra.[56] Also in 28 or 27 B.C., Herod introduced the Actian Games in Judea to be held every four years.[57] These actions were intended as propaganda to portray Octavian in a good light. In 27 B.C., Herod showed additional political support. On January 16 of that year, Octavian initiated a constitutional reform, part of which included changing his name to Augustus.[58] During this year Herod rebuilt the capital of Samaria and renamed it Sebaste, the Greek word for Augustus. He also included a temple to Roma and Augustus.[59] It is likely that Herod renamed the city and temple to promote Augustus politically by acknowedging his support for this action. Assuredly, this had only little influence in the Senate in Rome, but such propaganda would not have gone unnoticed in the provinces.

As previously stated, clients broadcast their loyalty and devotion to their patrons with inscriptions. Herod did this on an enormous and unprecedented scale. The aforementioned designations Herod took, φιλορωμαῖος and also φιλοκαίσαρ, were found on inscriptions. Herod, however, went beyond simple slabs of stone carved with honorific writings—he created "inscriptions" of a different kind with a gigantic building program. He named buildings and cities after his patrons. From 37–35 B.C., he rebuilt and re-fortified a citadel in Jerusalem and named it Antonia after his pa-

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[56] Joseph. *AJ* 16.5.3; see also Strabo 7.7.5-6; Paus. 5.23.3, 7.18.9, 10.38.4; Plut. *Ant.* 62.

[57] Joseph. *AJ* 15.8.1.

[58] Dio Cass. 53.16. The exact meaning of this name-title is unknown but there were many political and religious undertones in such a change. Octavian was proclaimed *Imperator Caesar Augustus* by the Roman Senate; later other powers were confirmed upon Augustus, namely in 23 and 19 B.C. See Dio Cass. 53.22, 54.10.

[59] Joseph. *AJ* 15.8.5, 15.10.1; *BJ* 1.3.7, 1.21.2. See also Strabo *Geog.* 16.2.34.

tron at that time, Mark Antony.[60] Herod expanded and refurbished his palace in Jerusalem. He named two of the "apartments" Caesareum and Agrippium.[61] Herod built a theater in Jerusalem and adorned it with inscriptions commemorating Augustus' victories and great feats.[62] The rebuilding of the Samarian capital, Sebaste, and its temple, as well as its subsequent renaming have been mentioned. In 22 B.C., Herod began building a city on the Mediterranean coast and finished it twelve years later. He named it Caesarea, to honor not just his immediate patron, Augustus, but possibly also Julius Caesar, who initiated Herod's prosperity through Antipater. He named the lighthouse tower Drusion, after Augustus' son-in-law Drusus. Inside the city was a temple to Augustus.[63] Moreover, he set up temples to Augustus in non-Jewish cities throughout his kingdom.[64] Indeed, it was as the historian Josephus writes: there was no place in Herod's kingdom without something built for Augustus' honor.[65] By naming cities and buildings after his patrons Herod announced his devotion to them and fulfilled one of the responsibilities of a client.

While Herod's building program was under way, he worked to build his political position. Unfortunately for Herod, his political woes did not cease once he gained Octavian's support after Actium. Judea's neighbors to the south-east, the Nabateans, had never truly been conquered by Judea or Rome.[66] They made their presence felt

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[60] Joseph. *AJ* 15.8.5; *BJ* 1.21.1.

[61] Joseph. *AJ* 15.9.3; *BJ* 1.21.1. Marcus Agrippa was Augustus' loyal confidant and friend and also second in power only to Augustus; he and Herod also became friends. (See Joseph. *AJ* 16.2.1–3; *BJ* 1.21.8.) Herod's devotion to Agrippa led him to name one of the Temple gates Agrippa. (See Joseph. *BJ* 1.21.8.)

[62] Joseph. *AJ* 15.8.1.

[63] Joseph. *AJ* 14.4.4, 15.8.5, 15.9.6; *BJ* 1.21.6–7; see also Sue. *Aug.* 60.

[64] Around 20 B.C., Herod built Panias as a temple to Roma and Augustus. See Joseph. *AJ* 15.10.3; *BJ* 1.21.3.

[65] Joseph. *BJ* 1.21.4.

[66] The Romans never conquered Petra, the Nabatean capital. The Nabateans, however, wisely entered into a trade agreement with Rome. See Paltiel, 26.

when, in 12 B.C., they encouraged and supported bandits from a Herodian controlled area north-east of Jerusalem, Trachonitis.[67] These bandits raided along the countryside. Herod disposed of them mercilessly, but forty of these bandits found asylum and a base in Nabatea and continued wreaking havoc by launching raids into Judea. Some of their raids even extended into Roman territory in Coele Syria. Although Herod destroyed these brigands in his own territory, he found his hands tied regarding any invasion into Nabatea to eradicate these robbers. As a client- king, Herod was responsible for order and peace in his kingdom but was forbidden to wage any conflict on a foreign power without permission. Seeking such permission, Herod called upon Caesar's governor in Syria, C. Sentius Saturninus. Saturninus ruled that Nabatea pay a tribute to Herod and any refugees be restored. Saturninus only permitted an invasion of Nabatea when the Arabs balked at these demands. Herod was successful in his campaign. Following protocol he wrote a letter to the Roman authorities informing them of his victory and explaining his subsequent actions. Rome, through Saturninus, acted as Herod's patron.

Herod's true patron, Augustus, heard a different story in Rome. Sylleus, the Nabatean ruler, had traveled to Rome before Herod invaded his kingdom. After hearing of Herod's invasion, Sylleus hugely embellished the account of the hostilities, weeping to Augustus that 2,500 men among the Arabs had been killed.[68] He accused Herod of such atrocities that Augustus angrily asked Herod's friends and enemies in his court only one question: had Herod invaded Nabatea? Josephus reports that Herod's friends and enemies were required to answer this one question in the af-

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[67] This account is found in Joseph. *AJ* 16.9. In 24/23 B.C., Augustus had taken Trachonitis, along with Aurantis and Batanea, from Zenodorus, an Iturean who controlled the area. When he failed to suppress these bandits, Augustus removed these lands from his power.

[68] Joseph. *AJ* 16.9.3. In fact, Herod had killed only a small portion of the bandits.

firmative. Without waiting to hear any more details, Augustus raged against Herod in a letter stating that while in the past he had used him as his friend, he now would use him as his subject.[69] These words must have stung Herod, who for so long had nurtured and cultivated a relationship with Augustus. Now Augustus was threatening to withdraw his patronage of Herod by stating that Herod was no long his friend (*amicus*), the term used by superior members of a patron–client relationship.[70] Sylleus' story supported Augustus' actions. Herod was Augustus' client and thus he could not conduct foreign campaigns without Rome's permission. Herod must have thought that his correspondence with Saturninus was enough. But he used a little too much leeway, as "[a]ll decision-making depended very immediately on representations made to the Emperor in person in Rome, as well as on letters addressed to him."[71] Augustus was reminding Herod of their relationship: he was patron and Herod was client. Herod "could not pursue independent external initiatives . . . [despite his] considerable freedom domestically."[72] Fortunately for Herod, after many supplications and letters, Augustus finally learned the truth and restored his relationship with Herod.

As mentioned previously, a patron–client relationship is, by definition, reciprocal, as favors or *officia* were exchanged between the two parties. Herod was a dutiful client and supported Augustus politically and financially. Augustus reciprocated.

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[69] Joseph. *AJ* 16.9.3.

[70] The use of the term "friend" is interesting. Josephus, writing in Greek, uses the word φίλος. E. Gruen writes that φίλος was the Greek institution equivalent to *amicus* when Rome began expanding its territory. See Gruen, *Hellenistic World*, 95; see also his full discussion on this subject 54–95. Rome used φίλος to describe the patron–client relationship it had with the Greeks. Again, see Gruen, *Hellenistic World*, 159. It is unknown whether Augustus wrote to Herod in Greek or Latin. If he wrote in Greek it is probable that he use the word φίλος.

[71] Millar, 41.

[72] Peter Richardson, *Herod: King of the Jews and Friend of the Romans* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1996), 229.

Herod's political appointments and increase in land have been mentioned. Augustus and Livia, his wife, sent 500 talents to Caesarea to pay for the celebration of the city's dedication.[73] Moreover, Augustus continued to give Herod additional lands, substantially increasing his kingdom. Some of this increase came in the situation with Zenodorus, mentioned above, when the Iturean lost some lands after the bandit problem. When Zenodorus died of a ruptured intestine, Augustus bestowed his remaining lands upon Herod. Herod had proved his loyalty, his *fides*, many times to Augustus and such increase in his kingdom was Augustus' reciprocating *officium*. Augustus further showed his approval of Herod by allowing his sons to come to Rome to study. At least two of these, Alexander III and Aristobulus IV, lived in the palace with Augustus, benefitting from such close interaction with the Roman Emperor.[74] Augustus, probably influenced to some degree by Herod's sons, also gave him the right to name his own

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[73] Joseph. *AJ* 16.5.1. Livia also took part in this patron–client relationship with the Herodian dynasty. In addition to the talents sent to Caesarea "she sent expensive gold libation bowls as an offering to Herod's restored Jerusalem Temple," (Eric D. Huntsman, *The Family and Property of Livia Drusilla* [Ph.D. Diss., University of Pennsylvania, 1997], 181). She also had a patron–client relationship with the queen Salome, Herod's sister. When Salome wanted to marry Sylleus, Livia acted as intermediary between Herod and Salome and "encouraged, or perhaps instructed, Salome to marry . . . Alexas" (Joseph. *AJ* 17.1.1). See also Huntsman, *Livia*, 181. Livia also inherited from Salome the gifts and cities Herod gave his sister when he died. Additionally, it is likely that these 500 talents came back to Augustus and Livia as stipulated in Herod's will. They received 1500 talents along with gold and silver and expensive clothing. Augustus reciprocated by giving Herod's legacies to his dynastic successors. This kind of reciprocity was commonly outlined in clients' wills to their patrons. See Richardson, *Herod*, 39–40; see also Champlin, 144, 150–5.

[74] Joseph. *AJ* 15.10.1. Some of Herod's other sons also went to Rome to study and were cared for by Augustus but the information on these sons is too scant to paint a substantial picture (Richardson, *Herod*, 231–2; this follows exactly Augustus' practice as described by Roman historian Suetonius,who writes (*Aug.* 48.1), *ac plurimorum liberos et educavit simul cum suis et instituit.*

successor.[75] This reciprocation continued when, in 12 B.C., Herod gave 300 talents to Augustus. In return, the Roman Emperor bequeathed upon Herod the copper mines of Cyprus.[76] The revenues of these mines must have repaid the 300 talents many times over.

Another major event during Herod's rule outlines the reciprocating nature of Augustus and Herod's relationship. In 24 B.C., a terrible famine hit Judea and its environs and lasted two years.[77] Herod called upon the prefect of Egypt, Petronius, to aid him in dealing with this problem. Petronius exported grain to Judea for a fraction of the cost and "assisted them [Judea] every way, both in purchasing and exporting the same."[78] Egypt was an imperial province and under the Emperor's direct control and, consequently, Petronius was under Augustus' supervision. As such, Petronius was duty-bound, as Augustus' client, to help another of Augustus' clients.

Conclusion

The patron–client relationship was a complicated and intricate social system throughout the ancient world. Rome was no exception to this rule. As Rome spread throughout the Mediterranean world, this system naturally evolved into Roman foreign policy. Augustus, as *princeps*, ruled his Roman subjects as their patron. As this patronage extended into the East with Pompey, client-kings arose. After the death of Hyrcanus II and Antipater, Herod the Great took full advantage of this system, allying himself with Rome and committing his support to Augustus.

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[75] Joseph. *AJ* 15.10.1. This right was later withdrawn when Augustus denounced Herod after the Sylleus incident. Unfortunately for Herod, Augustus never renewed this right and Herod was forced to clear his will changes until his death.

[76] Joseph. *AJ* 16.4.5.

[77] Joseph. *AJ* 15.9.2.

[78] Joseph. *AJ* 15.9.2.

This system allowed for a contradiction in the way Rome governed. On the one hand, client-kings like Herod were sovereign; on the other hand, they were subservient and maintained loyalty to Rome. As Augustus' position in the Roman Empire changed, and his public and private roles blurred together, this contradiction became even more pronounced. Herod maintained a level of autonomy as a sovereign king of Judea while committing his *fides* or trust to Augustus. In this way Herod benefitted from Augustus' patronage and Augustus, if the need arose, could dictate to Herod how to rule his kingdom. As a client-king, Herod ruled, in most cases, efficiently and prosperously. Herod's subjects profited from his clientage as this prosperity disseminated into the kingdom. Understanding this unique system of patrons and clients elucidates the imbalance between two different schools of thought regarding Roman involvement in Judea. Was Rome a conqueror, bending client states to its own will, or a mediator, simply facilitating good systems of government and interfering only when necessary? The patron–client relationship allowed Rome to do both.