• Freedmen often became the clients of their ex-masters. The master thus changed from their *dominus* to their *patronus*. As a recipient of the priceless gift of freedom, the freedman had to behave in accordance with his obligation toward the one whose name he adopted upon receiving Roman citizenship.

• The freedman had social obligations to their patron, which might involve campaigning on their behalf if the patron ran for election, doing requested jobs or errand, or continuing a sexual relationship that began in servitude.

What caused the formation of patronage?
• Greek historians Dionysius and Plutarch believe that the establishment of the patronage relationship was the early concerns of Romulus, and therefore the relationship dated back to the founding of Rome. Romulus introduced the patronage as a means of reconciling the two separate and naturally antagonistic bodies of ancient Roman society, the patricians and the plebeians.

Legal assistance:
• Legal assistance was one of the most important services a Roman citizen could give to his guest friends and foreign clients.
  o ‘The greatest and finest service’ (Cicero)
• It was forbidden by the Cincian Law in 204 to pay for legal advice, which was why patrons were expected and needed to provide legal assistance to their clients.
• Legal competence and ability to plead a case increased an individual’s prestige as well as the number of those loyal to him by placing them in his debt.
• It created a ‘symbolic capital’ that was the product of trust and loyalty, of an honourable reputation and influence, which could be mobilised in all the various circumstances of social and political life.
  o Cato the Elder, when he first came to Rome, did not have a network of friends. In order to get followers for a political career, he offered his services to anyone he could, so that the people would be in debt to him. He even went on tour around the small towns and principalities in the outskirts of Rome to do this.

Duties and responsibilities of patrons and clients:
• Patrons
  o Being educated, they explained the law to their clients, sought to protect them, not to impose a burden on them. They offered advice on matters of daily living. They could also bring suits on behalf of their clients.
• Clients
  o Clients assured their patrons of financial support, contributing to the dowry of their patron’s daughter, collecting ransom for a patron who had been captured or a fine levied against them, etc. They also had a political function, as they voted for their patrons in elections, etc.

‘Salutatio’ – the morning levee
• Roman life became centred on patronage. The morning salutation was the cliental ritual to greet the patron at his house at daybreak. Lines of clients queued up each morning at the door of a powerful man.
‘Aditus’ – open door
  • The notion of a patron having his door open to clients at all times.

Social and political features of the patron-client relationship:
  • The Twelve Tables stated that no patron could harm his client, and if a patron were to harm his client, he would be punished with death.
  • Patronage was a form of political communication between those in power and those not. The patrons could effect political decisions on behalf of their clients.
  • A network of clients provided votes in political elections. They also provided escorting processions, which showed the popularity of the patron, the strength of his patronage, his capacity to mobilise electorate, and also hindered other politicians.

Mutual benefits of patronage:
  • It was a collective ritual that united all the clients, and legal help was received in return for votes.

Military careers:
  • A patronage might also exist between a general and his soldiers, and patrons became good commanders with support from troops.
    o During the civil war, Caesar and Pompey could mobilise their resources of men and money needed for war.

Violence and Disorder in Ancient Rome

Roman mob:
  • A mob was composed of shopkeepers, craftsmen and workers. Since they could not affect decisions through republican channels, the Roman common people could only petition the emperor through mass demonstrations and even violence. Day labourers and pan handlers congregated in the markets and forums where dole was distributed, which meant that there was a crowd in the centre of the city with time on their hands.

Causes of violence – mob violence was a common reaction
  • There were economic hardships and famines that affected the working class more than the aristocracy. Poverty, grain shortages, popular spectacles and living conditions were the four main causes of violence.
    o Two greatest evils facing the empire were ‘idleness and poverty’ (Dio)
    o ‘Forced by ignorant poverty…to seek the filthiest supplements and free meals’ (Apulieus)
  • Grain shortages:
    o The senate discussed a large number of large-scale demonstrations related to the interruption of the grain supply.
  • Popular spectacles:
    o Shabby rhetorical displays caused small outbreaks from a disgruntled audience.