Patronage is most commonly associated with artists and the arts in general, but, as with the case of Galileo, it extended to academia and the sciences. Notability and credibility went hand-in-hand, particularly for the scientist. Working under an increasingly prominent noble made one an increasingly credible thinker, or respectable craftsman. (Hence, Galileo sought the patronage of the Grand Duke.) Perhaps the best example of this patron-reputation linkage is Michaelangelo, whose patron was the Pope himself (Julius II). By the time of his death, he had been practically raised to a level of divinity among Florentine artists.

The social standing of the patron also benefitted from the arrangement. Sponsoring several clients indicated substantial wealth and an interest in the community. Especially accomplished clients brought to their patrons added prestige. In the academic hierarchy, the most prestigious patrons tended not to identify with clients from the "lower" disciplines (mathematics and the natural sciences), which further illustrates the remarkable accomplishments of Galileo. Ironically, patrons tended to distance themselves publicly from their clients as much as possible, so as not to give the appearance of relying on their patrons for their status.

Under Elizabeth, the English Church assumed many of the characteristics that were to typify it until the middle of the seventeenth century. In particular, the Queen used the church as a source of patronage and revenue - Elizabeth did have some religious beliefs but not ones that clashed with using the revenues from church land and offices to support secular ends.


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