

## Patrons, Clients, and Policies

Most models of party competition assume that citizens vote for a platform rather than narrowly targeted material benefits. However, there are many countries where politicians win elections by money, jobs, and services in direct exchange for votes. This is not just true in the developing world, but also in economically developed countries – such as Japan and Austria – that clearly meet the definition of stable, modern democracies. This book offers explanations for why politicians engage in clientelistic behaviors and why voters respond. Using newly collected data on national and subnational patterns of patronage and electoral competition, the contributors demonstrate why explanations based on economic modernization or electoral institutions cannot account for international variation in patron-client and programmatic competition. Instead, they show how the interaction of economic development, party competition, governance of the economy, and ethnic heterogeneity may work together to determine the choices of patrons, clients, and policies.

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# Patrons, Clients, and Policies

*Patterns of Democratic Accountability and  
Political Competition*

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*Edited by*

Herbert Kitschelt and Steven I. Wilkinson



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# 1 Citizen–politician linkages: an introduction

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*Herbert Kitschelt and Steven I. Wilkinson*

Since the 1970s, the “Third Wave” of democratic transitions has, by greatly enlarging the number and type of democracies, raised a host of new research questions on the dynamics of democratic accountability and responsiveness. After an initial period of scholarly attention to the process of regime transition, there has recently been a major effort to explain the origin and effects of democratic institutions, such as electoral laws, federalism structure, or presidential and parliamentary systems. After more than a decade’s worth of research, however, it now seems that the explanatory power of formal democratic institutions for democratic process features is more limited than many had hoped. Party systems vary tremendously even among single member district plurality electoral systems. Furthermore, institutional arguments have little to say about the substantive alignments that rally citizens around rival contenders or the strategic appeals made by leading politicians in each camp.

One important area that has not received sufficient attention is the wide variation in patterns of linkages between politicians, parties and citizens. The political science literature has, since the 1950s, been dominated by the “responsible party government” model, the logic of which forms the basis of both rational choice theories (Downs 1957) as well as historical-comparative approaches (e.g., Lipset and Rokkan 1967). This model sees politics as the result of interaction of principals (citizens, voters) and agents (candidates for electoral office, elected officials), characterized by five essential ingredients. First, voters have policy preferences over a range of salient issues to allocate or redistribute scarce resources through state action. Second, vote- or executive office-seeking politicians and parties bundle issue positions in electoral platforms or programs they promise to enact, if elected into office. To simplify matters for information misers in the electorate, such programmatic bundles can be aligned in a minimally dimensional scale, with a single “left-to-right” dimension. Third, voters relate their own preferences to those offered by the partisan competitors and opt for the most compatible programmatic basket, weighted by strategic considerations such as the electability of the party and the credibility

of its promises given its past performance.<sup>1</sup> Fourth, victorious parties or coalitions of parties with relatively similar programs then implement their promises, with an eye on the evolving preferences of their constituencies. Fifth, at the subsequent election, voters hold incumbents and opposition parties accountable for their performance during the electoral term, based upon their effort and performance.

This model of democratic representation clearly captures many of the ways in which parties' appeals and programs reflect and sometimes lead their constituencies' preferences in affluent capitalist democracies (cf. Powell 2004). Consistent with the standard responsible party model, several studies have found that the partisan complexion of governments does indeed make a difference for a wide range of social and economic policies in advanced capitalist democracies (see, e.g., Castles 1982; Esping-Andersen 1990; Huber and Stephens 2001; Klingemann, Hofferbert, and Budge 1994). In a similar vein, scholars have explored patterns of political representation according to the partisan government model and the variability of such citizen-politician relations contingent upon electoral rules and party system formats in a democratic polity (cf. Lijphart 1999; Powell 2000).

What the responsible-party model ignores, however, is that a quite different type of *patronage-based, party-voter linkage* exists in many countries, including some advanced industrial democracies. In many political systems citizen-politician linkages are based on direct material inducements targeted to individuals and small groups of citizens whom politicians know to be highly responsive to such side-payments and willing to surrender their vote for the right price. Democratic accountability in such a system does not result primarily from politicians' success in delivering collective goods such as economic growth, jobs, monetary stability, or national health care, nor does it rest on improving *overall* distributive outcomes along the lines favored by broad categories of citizens (e.g., income and asset redistribution through taxes and social benefits schemes). Instead, *clientelistic accountability represents a transaction, the direct exchange of a citizen's vote in return for direct payments or continuing access to employment, goods, and services.*

The need to understand such clientelistic linkages is particularly pressing now for three reasons. First, studies of the new democracies in Latin America, post-communist Europe, South and Southeast Asia, and parts

<sup>1</sup> Spatial models of competition (in which voters calculate the proximity of party programs to their own preference vector in terms of Euclidean distances) and directional models where they employ scalar products to gauge the distance are both only minor variants of the responsible partisan model.

of Africa have made it increasingly obvious that our general theoretical models of responsible party government fail to account for a lot of the observed variation in citizen–politician linkages. In the new democracies not all parties compete for voters based on coherent programmatic packages that can be arranged neatly on a left–right dimension or some other low-dimensional depiction of strategic configurations among parties. The programmatic positions of parties are often diffuse and erratic, but they can nevertheless attract solid support, even when emotional ties of “party identification” or a past record of competent management of economic growth appear to be unlikely sources of citizen–politician linkage.

A second theoretical reason to study clientelism is that, despite the view in the 1950s and 1960s that clientelism was a holdover from pre-industrial patterns that would gradually disappear in the modernizing West, clientelistic structures seem to have remained resilient in established party systems in advanced industrial democracies such as Italy, Japan, Austria, and Belgium. Why have these systems not made the expected full transition from patronage politics to programmatic policies?

A third reason why it is important to study clientelistic linkages now is because their pervasiveness has clear implications for economic growth and prospects for economic reform. In states in which clientelistic linkages are well entrenched, international financial institutions’ attempts to liberalize developing economies and reduce the size of their states have been resisted by politicians who, not surprisingly, are determined to subvert reforms that threaten their patronage and hence their ability to win elections and stay in power. The current World Bank and bilateral donor focus on governance and transparency, in our view, is doomed to failure unless it takes more account of the often directly opposing incentives facing politicians charged with implementing reforms in patronage-based systems from Nairobi to Kuala Lumpur to Tokyo. Why should politicians dismantle the patronage networks that keep them in power in order to satisfy financial institutions whose threats to withhold aid often sound hollow and whose policy priorities and conditionality requirements seem to change every few years in any case?

There have been surprisingly few systematic comparative studies on clientelism, partly because of the origin of research on clientelism in in-depth anthropological and sociological studies. From these disciplinary perspectives, political clientelism was only a special case of a much more widespread pattern of social affiliation found in “traditional” societies from Southern Italy and Senegal to India (Clapham 1982; Cruise O’Brien 1975; Fox 1969). Clientelism was seen as a durable, face-to-face, hierarchical and thus asymmetrical exchange relation between patrons and

clients supported by a normative framework. In contrast to comparative political research design, sociological and anthropological investigations favored detailed case studies and general social theory rather than “middle level” theorizing of a comparative nature about the varied incidence of clientelism across time and space.<sup>2</sup>

The few political scientists who examined clientelism in the late 1960s and 1970s did begin to provide a comparative perspective that examined the embeddedness of clientelistic politics in different political regimes (cf. Scott 1972; Tarrow 1977). They also realized that the stable, normative, and hierarchical character attributed to clientelism was only a special case that does not prevail at least in environments of democratic electoral competition. Electoral enfranchisement and party competition provided clients with an exit option from an existing relationship to a patron. Democracy strengthens the clients’ bargaining leverage *vis-à-vis* brokers and patrons (Piattoni 2001: 7). Furthermore, electoral competition promotes a scaling up of clientelistic networks from local politics with personalistic, face-to-face relations to the national level of hierarchical political machines, starkly distinct from patrimonial political organization (Scott 1969: 1158). In the context of democratic institutional settings, clientelism thus evolves into a more symmetrical (rather than asymmetrical), intermittent (rather than stable and continuous), instrumental-rational (rather than normative) and broker-mediated (rather than face-to-face based) exchange relationship (Scott 1972; Weingrod 1968).

With some simplification, we can say that the first generation of studies exploring the causes of variance in democratic mechanisms of accountability focused on absolute levels of economic development and rates of change of economic development as the underlying conditions that induced actors to construct diverse principal–agent linkage mechanisms. In the 1970s and 1980s, this generation was displaced by a second generation of researchers with a *statist and an institutional emphasis*. Such scholars detailed how the timing of the emergence of state institutions (bureaucratic professionalization) and the nature of formal democratic institutions (electoral laws, legislative–executive relations, and political

<sup>2</sup> As documentation of the crushing predominance of case studies and general theory, see Roniger’s (1981) impressive bibliography and even Eisinger and Roniger’s (1984) massive tome on patron–client relationships. It develops dimensions of variation in clientelism (chapter 7) and covers just about every region on earth, but lacks a systematic analysis of how, why, and when specific forms of clientelism come into existence or fade away. Examples in political science are Banfield’s (1958) study of Southern Italy and Banfield and Wilson’s (1965) monograph on political machines in US cities, although the latter offers at least a subnationally comparative perspective.



decentralization) may affect principal–agent relations in democracy.<sup>3</sup> Chief among these studies was Martin Shefter’s (1977, 1994) important comparative study of the United States, France, and Britain. First of all, Shefter’s work was distinctive because he did not sample on the dependent variable, but compared clientelistic linkage mechanisms in both democracies and non-democracies. Second, by confining the comparison to polities at roughly equal levels of economic development, Shefter shows that a developmental perspective cannot be all there is to the explanation of variance among democratic linkage mechanisms. Instead, he highlights the critical role of state formation in interaction with patterns of social mobilization and political enfranchisement as key factors shaping the presence or absence of clientelistic linkage under democratic conditions. Where the rise of bureaucratic absolutism professionalized the career of state officials before democratization and made administrative office unavailable to a spoils logic of distributing benefits among supporters of the electorally successful party, parties had to compete for voters with programmatic appeals rather than with material side-payments to individuals and communities. Extension of the suffrage after the advent of industrialization and social mobilization further undercut clientelism. New “external” mass political parties, supported by working-class people who were not entitled to vote and led by politicians who could not obtain seats in parliament, had to rely on their own internal resources and their purely ideological programmatic appeal, because they had no access to state resources. After the extension of suffrage, the presence of such mass programmatic parties undercut the spread of clientelistic practices, even where bureaucratic state professionalism was vulnerable.

Shefter’s perspective fed into the backlash against modernization theory and the state- and class-centered perspective advanced by comparative political theorists in the 1970s and 1980s. Unfortunately, it was published at a time when the institutional inclinations of comparative politics directed attention away from the comparative study of mass political behavior, political parties, and elections altogether. Rather than developing Shefter’s arguments further, comparative theorists with a class and statist persuasion abandoned the whole research topic and instead turned to comparative political economy as the main preserve of comparative

<sup>3</sup> The critical contribution of this era is Shefter (1977; 1994). Where bureaucratic professionalization precedes both industrialization and democratic suffrage expansion, “external” parties representing peoples not permitted to vote organize programmatic parties, while “internal” parties in the legislatures of traditional authoritarian regimes prefer clientelistic payoffs, if they could avail themselves of state assets to hand out to electoral constituencies.

theorizing and empirical analysis. As a consequence, between 1978 and the late 1990s very little of theoretical consequence has been written about clientelism, except in a rather isolated literature on the effect of electoral laws on personalism and intra-party factionalism in party systems. In as much as state- and class-oriented comparative political scholars attended to political parties, their work was explicitly or tacitly steeped in the responsible party government literature and spatial models of inter-party competition based on programmatic linkages.<sup>4</sup>

The only notable exception to this general inattention has been an excellent recent volume edited by Piattoni on the historical origins of clientelistic democratic politics in Europe. This book combines case studies covering a much larger range of countries than those considered in Shefter's original paper with comparative historical analysis of clientelism across European politics (Piattoni 2001). These valuable studies, however, also reveal the limits of Shefter's explanatory account. The articles show that some pre-democratic legacies of bureaucracy, such as in the French case, were not as professional and impervious to clientelism as Shefter's argument suggested. Moreover, the advent of democracy may make bureaucratic professionalization reversible and endogenous to political competition that favors clientelistic patronage environments, a development also suggested by the French and Indian cases.

One aim of our book is to reorient the causal analysis of democratic accountability and responsiveness once again, and move beyond the current focus on structures and institutions. First, as in the recent literature on democratization, we propose a return to broadly *developmentalist perspectives*, but only provided this can be achieved with greater theoretical sophistication than in the past.<sup>5</sup> This implies close attention to the mechanisms of citizens' and politicians' strategic conduct that link their asset endowments and preferences to individual strategies and collective outcomes of political action manifesting themselves in diverse principal-agent relations of accountability and responsiveness. It also implies examining relations of contingency and endogeneity that link economic development to other attributes of democratic politics and processes affecting

<sup>4</sup> This applies, for example, to the literature on the electoral career of leftist parties, such as Przeworski and Sprague (1986) and Kitschelt (1994).

<sup>5</sup> In this vein, Przeworski *et al.* (2000) return to a perspective that treats development as the major predictor of democracy, albeit with amendments that concern the difference between transition rates to democracy and persistence of democracy. In a way, Boix (2003) and Boix and Stokes (2003) push the conditionality of development as a causal variable in a somewhat different direction by focusing on patterns of inequality as the mechanisms that link economic asset availability and control to political regime choice.

democratic principal–agent relations. It is the focus on these additional processes and mechanisms that constitutes the second analytical shift in the study of democratic principal–agent relations proposed in this volume. A critical mechanism shaping principal–agent accountability relations concerns the *competitiveness of democratic elections*. As we argue below, competitiveness and levels of economic development interact in contingently shaping accountability relations. In a similar vein, *political-economic governance structures and property rights regimes* mediate between development and principal–agent linkage mechanisms. Third, the mobilization of *ethnocultural divides* plays an independent role in shaping principal–agent linkages and also interacts with development and political-economic governance structures.

This introductory chapter consists of two major sections. In the first section, we conceptualize alternative democratic principal–agent linkage mechanisms of accountability within a rationalistic framework of direct (clientelistic) and indirect (programmatic, program-based) exchange. In the subsequent section, we flesh out the factors that account for variance in principal–agent linkage mechanisms across time and space.

### **Identifying clientelistic and programmatic linkages**

We define clientelism as a particular mode of “exchange” between electoral constituencies as principals and politicians as agents in democratic systems. This exchange is focused on particular classes of goods, though the feasibility and persistence of clientelistic reciprocity is not determined by the type of goods exchanged. For the purposes of this volume we use the terms *patronage* and *clientelism* interchangeably, though we recognize that some authors use patronage in a narrower sense to refer to an exchange in which voters obtain public jobs for their services to a candidate. One problem both clients and patrons face is that the clientelistic exchange between principals and agents is not usually simultaneous, but takes place over time. This raises the obvious threat of opportunistic defection, in which either the voter or the politician reneges on the deal once he or she has been “paid.” Programmatic politics does not run into this problem because the implicit exchange of votes for policies does not rely on the specific conduct of individual voters and small groups of voters. With regard to politicians, mass publics must have the possibility to observe their activities, e.g., through surveillance by free and independent mass media.

Clientelism, however, as a form of direct, contingent exchange, requires more specific contractual performance by the involved parties than programmatic linkage. Moreover, the critical contributions of the

participants in exchange bargains may be unobserved or unobservable. As a consequence, clientelism can persist only if one or both of the following conditions is in place. In some instances, politicians have good reasons to expect that the target constituencies for clientelistic bargains will behave in predictable fashion and refrain from opportunism. Here, a *cognitive condition* – knowledge of the other side’s motivations and payoffs from alternative courses of action – and a *motivational condition* – voluntary, spontaneous compliance of constituencies with clientelistic inducements – ensure the viability of clientelism. Absent these two conditions, politicians may develop ways to monitor defection from the bargain and capabilities to punish free-riding groups and individuals based on that knowledge. In order to do so, they have to build expensive organizational surveillance and enforcement structures.

Hence, in the case of clientelism, under conditions of democratic enfranchisement the major cost of constructing such linkages is that of building organizational hierarchies of exchange between electoral clients at the ground floor of the system, various levels of brokers organized in a pyramidal fashion, and patrons at the top. Politicians have to identify resources they can extract and offer to clients in exchange for contributions to their electoral efforts. Moreover, they must construct organizational devices and social networks of supervision that make direct individual or indirect group-based monitoring of political exchange relations viable. In this process, clients and politicians gain confidence in the viability of their relationship by iteration, i.e., the repeated success of exchange relations that makes the behavior of the exchange partner appear predictable and low risk. The evolution of party organizational forms that manage clientelistic relations is a drawn-out process, not an instant result of rational strategic interaction in single-shot games.

Under conditions of democratic competition with full enfranchisement, local exchange networks will rarely suffice to win national elections. Politicians need to organize the flow of material resources across the complex pyramidal network of client-broker-patron exchanges. By coordinating large numbers of political operatives, they must overcome challenging problems of collective action and principal-agent conflicts through finely balanced systems of incentives. For example, higher-level brokers will wish to divert as much as possible of a party’s electoral resources to their private use rather than to confer them on lower-level brokers who then are in turn expected to restrain their own income-maximizing self-interests and reward external electoral clients with resources that induce the latter to contribute generously to the party through votes, labor, and financial

contributions.<sup>6</sup> It takes complicated internal mechanisms of monitoring and control to limit the predatory behavior of party agents sufficiently so that external clientelistic exchanges can still generate the resources needed to enable a party to win electoral office and to dominate the benefits–dispensing government executive.

Programmatic exchange relations, like clientelistic exchange networks, require heavy investments on the part of politicians and voters, although each practice requires somewhat different techniques. Because programmatic party competition does not necessitate direct individual or indirect social-network-based monitoring of voters' electoral conduct, it is cheaper to construct organizational machines than in the clientelistic case. After all, programmatic parties need fewer personnel to manage exchange relations. The lower transaction costs of erecting large-scale flows of material resources up and down the organizational ladder, however, are outweighed by the imperative that the party must speak with a more or less single collective voice in order to create a measure of confidence among voters that it will pursue the policy objectives after elections it has announced before an election. Creating a common collective party program is what Aldrich (1995) calls the solution to the problem of collective choice, i.e., create agreement on and compliance with a collective partisan preference schedule that may be somewhat at variance with the many diverse preference schedules of all the party members. It takes constant “ideology work” to establish or maintain the collective preference function against the centrifugal tendencies of all individual party activists to assert their own individual or factional preference schedules. Just like clientelistic exchange networks, programmatic techniques of partisan political accountability are path dependent. In new democracies, they require pre-democratic legacies or earlier episodes of democratic competition that enabled political actors to take steps towards solving problems of social choice in the construction of programmatic alternatives. If such preconditions are absent, programmatic party competition requires the iteration of electoral contests under democratic conditions in order to allow politicians and electoral constituencies to incur the cost of overcoming problems of social choice through “ideology work.”

Let us now turn to the three components that we define as constituting clientelistic exchange: *contingent direct exchange*, *predictability*, and *monitoring*. First, the exchange between principal and agent is contingent and

<sup>6</sup> For example, the Republican Party machine in Philadelphia in the 1930s complained about ward leaders who used resources to help their friends and families rather than help the party keep control of the city (Kurtzman 1935: 44).

direct. It concerns goods from which non-participants in the exchange can be excluded. Second, such exchanges become viable from the perspective of politicians, if voter constituencies respond in predictable fashion to clientelistic inducements without excessive opportunism and free-riding. Third, short of constituencies' spontaneous and voluntary compliance with the clientelistic deal, politicians can invest in organizational structures to monitor and enforce clientelistic exchanges.

#### *Contingent direct exchange*

All politicians in democratic systems target benefits to particular segments of the electorate, based upon their perception that particular groups of voters will prefer policy packages from which their own group will benefit. In a system of programmatic party competition, however, politicians announce and implement policies that create beneficiaries and losers without verifying that the beneficiaries will actually deliver their votes. Programmatic linkage therefore directs benefits at very large groups in which only a fraction of the members may actually support the candidate. In other words, politicians enter a *non-contingent, indirect political exchange*. They devise policy packages knowing that they are *likely* to benefit particular groups of voters (typically, a party's swing voters) rather than others, and that this in turn will make it more likely in general that members of these groups will vote for the party. But this policy targeting is neither accompanied by monitoring or sanctioning of voters who defect from the politician's partisan camp, nor by precise knowledge of who in the target constituency will vote for the party delivering the benefit.

In a clientelistic relationship, in contrast, the politician's delivery of a good is *contingent upon* the actions of specific members of the electorate. Here is the first difference (necessary but not sufficient) between programmatic and clientelistic politics. What makes clientelistic exchange distinctive is not simply the fact that benefits are targeted. Rather, it is the fact that politicians target a range of benefits *only* to individuals or identifiable small groups who have already delivered or who promise to deliver their electoral support to their partisan benefactor. Voters dedicate their votes *only* to those politicians who promise to deliver a particular mix of goods and services to them as individuals or small groups in return. Thus it is the contingency of targeted benefits, not the targeting of goods taken by itself, that constitutes the clientelistic exchange.

The *nature of the goods* supplied by the patron politician or party only in some cases provides definitive evidence about the nature of the linkage type at work, but not in others. For example, the politicized allocation of *private goods* that accrue to individual citizens – such as public sector

jobs and promotions or preferential, discretionary access to scarce or highly subsidized goods such as land, public housing, education, utilities, or social insurance benefits (pensions, health care), and specific procurement contracts to private enterprises – signal clientelistic relations almost by definition. As well as material goods (money, jobs, other tangible goods), parties and patrons can offer clients the less immediately tangible but no less valuable private goods of power and influence. In states where individual officials and politicians have a high degree of discretion in how they enforce rules, many people regard it as crucial to have sustained access to a powerful patron who can ensure that the agents of the state either deal with the client honestly, or when required dishonestly, for example by ignoring tax regulations, building codes, anti-squatter legislation, proper procedures for charging for water and electricity, or by giving favorable legal judgments (e.g., Milne 1973).

Whereas the provision of *private goods* through political exchange invariably signals the existence of clientelism, *public goods* that are desired by everyone in society and from whose enjoyment no one can be excluded, regardless of whether they contributed to the production of the good or not, can by definition not be traded through clientelistic exchange. Public goods include the provision of external and internal security, macroeconomic growth, full employment, low inflation, and a clean environment. Just about everyone benefits from these goods. They are “valence issues” in the sense that they exhibit a popular distribution of preferences heavily skewed to one extreme. Hence politicians compete not by offering different packages of such goods, but by trying to trump each other in terms of making credible their competence and capacity to deliver such goods, if elected to office.

Many important benefits that politicians allocate through the political process have neither public nor private goods status. They belong to the murky middle ground of “*club goods*” that provide benefits for subsets of citizens and impose costs on other subsets. Citizens external to certain group boundaries can be excluded from the enjoyment of such benefits, but none of those inside the boundary. Club goods typically redistribute life chances across groups in society, and politicians engineer such redistribution so as to solidify and increase the size of their electoral coalitions. Club good character accrues to all schemes of income redistribution through the tax code and social policy insurance schemes, whether obvious or not. Redistribution is also involved in the public regulation of goods and services industries, e.g., to the advantage of consumers or producers.

When it comes to club goods, politicians can try to organize linkages to their constituencies based *either* on programmatic *or* clientelistic

relations. If they go the programmatic route, they frame the disbursement of resources in terms of general rules with highly specific stipulations for policy implementation by which both administrators of the policies and recipients of the benefits have to abide, regardless of their personal party preferences. Politicians then simply hope that the distributive impact of the policies will create enough support for their party or their personal candidacy to ensure reelection. Programmatic politicians have to cast their net wide and hope for a moderate electoral yield among all the people who benefit from their office incumbency.

Clientelistic politicians, by contrast, prefer rules and regulations for the authoritative allocation of costs and benefits that leave maximum political discretion to the implementation phase, i.e., have as few precise rules of disbursement and entitlement as possible. Politicians then may cast their net narrowly and aim at identifying particular individuals and small groups whose support can be obtained by material inducements tailored to their personal needs and serviced by political appointees in public bureaucracies who do the governing parties' bidding. Rather than dispersing moderate benefits across a broad audience, clientelistic politicians concentrate a high proportion of benefits on a critical mass of voter constituencies whose support they expect to bring them victory in the next electoral contest. For this focused, concentrated strategy to work, however, either certain cognitive and motivational preconditions are vital and/or politicians must have ways and means to monitor and enforce terms of the clientelistic bargain.

*Voluntary compliance as a condition of contingent exchange:  
predictability and elasticity of citizens' conduct*

What knowledge allows politicians to be more confident when offering electoral constituencies a direct exchange involving targeted club and private goods? At a minimum, politicians need to be confident in their prediction that voters who actually receive the benefits of their actions will vote for them ("predictability" of citizens' conduct). Furthermore, politicians will go to the trouble of crafting clientelistic relations only if the direct, targeted clientelistic exchange actually makes the difference between people voting or not voting for them. Politicians would waste their scarce resources were they to focus clientelistic benefits on constituencies that support them in any case, regardless of tailored material inducements. Only where there is strong effective "elasticity" in voters' electoral conduct, contingent upon the provision of clientelistic goods, have politicians a reason to supply such goods. Vote choice predictability may be a function of the magnitude of the benefit enjoyed by the target



constituency. Vote choice elasticity is a function of the probability that some competitor could offer the same or even more valuable targeted material goods to the constituency. Iteration of the political game may affect the credibility of competitors offering to deliver the club good in clientelistic fashion. Where one party or politician has done so for many rounds of the competitive game, it may be difficult for some challenger to establish credibility as a potential alternative source of benefits.

Where the conduct of individual voters or small groups of voters cannot be predicted easily, or when predictable electoral conduct is inelastic, politicians have incentives to engage only in programmatic linkage strategies with indirect, non-specific exchanges that disburse club goods to large groups of voters in the hope of swaying enough voters by the politicians' actions to win reelection. Alternatively, politicians may engage in programmatic valence competition trying to prove their competence in delivering collective goods demanded by all citizens in a polity (e.g., good economic performance) or at least club goods requested by all citizens living in a particular district ("pork"). In all of these instances, politicians save the transaction costs of monitoring and enforcing the actions of clients, but operate under conditions of uncertainty and unpredictability. Because their policy benefits are less specifically targeted and lack contingency when compared to those in clientelistic relations, they will accrue to many citizens who do not support their reelection.

Let us illustrate the impact of high predictability and elasticity in facilitating clientelistic politics with the case of the voters in the Fifth Election District in Gunma, Japan. The local economy in Gunma relies heavily upon agriculture and in particular on the local yam industry, which accounts for 80 percent of Japanese production. The Gunma yam industry is highly inefficient by international standards, and could not survive without the government's 990 percent tariff on imports. People in the district have voted overwhelmingly for the Liberal Democratic Party, which has offered strong support for the yam industry as well as for the public works projects vital to the local construction industry.<sup>7</sup>

Is the LDP's delivery of a club good (the yam tariff) to the voters of Gunma a clientelistic practice or not? A reasonable decision rule is to classify such a transaction as clientelistic if it satisfies the following conditions of the direct exchange: (1) *Predictability*: for the people of Gunma, protection of their local yam industry is decisive for their electoral choice. Given the size of the tariff and the profile of income sources in the district, this result is a pretty good bet. Furthermore, the fact that there have been many iterations of the electoral bargain between

<sup>7</sup> 4 "2-Party elections a foreign concept in rural Japan," *New York Times* Nov. 5, 2003, p. A-3.

LDP and Gunma district voters increases the predictability of political action. (2) *Elasticity*: the salience and material importance of the good's provision (tariff) for the local economy is sufficiently high for members of the target group to tip the balance of *most* group members' voting behavior in favor of the party that promises to provide the good. It is plausible that the extraordinary magnitude of the benefit all but certainly creates elasticity around the issue. (3) *Competition*: were the LDP to stop provision of the benefit, or were alternative credible parties promising to supply the same or a greater benefit, it is all but certain that the local voters would switch sides to other parties. With national competition among parties intensifying in Japan in the 1990s, LDP politicians know that they probably would lose the support of the local constituency were they to abandon the tariff.

By these criteria, the citizen-politician linkage in Gunma is clearly clientelistic: newspaper reports suggest local citizens vote for the powerful LDP family that controls the seat *because of* its fierce support for the tariffs that protect the prefecture's main crop, as well as the LDP's support for the local construction industry, both of which are the pillars on which other local services (such as banking, insurance, farm supplies) rely. While the LDP has been prepared to reduce other agricultural tariffs, the party has kept the yam tariff because of the high salience and economic importance of the issue in this one politically important district, which has produced a string of powerful LDP leaders, including former prime minister, Keichi Ozumi.<sup>8</sup>

*Counteracting opportunism in clientelistic exchange: monitoring and enforcement*

Monitoring voter behavior is often difficult, but without such monitoring from one election to the next, politicians run the risk of misdirecting resources to voters who will defect: in other words, take the money and run. As it turns out, there are many options to achieve this objective short of reliance on crude, coercive, violent, and therefore costly punishments of citizens' defection from clientelistic bargains. Some of them are explored in detail in the contributions to this volume by Chandra, Hale, and Levitsky. Politicians of course prefer lower-cost methods of monitoring to those that require large investments of time and money, and this biases them toward group rather than individual monitoring, and public methods of monitoring rather than reliance upon a network of private informants. First, monitoring how a group votes is less costly

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

than monitoring how individuals vote, so individual monitoring will be used more often where the number of voters is small (hundreds or thousands, rather than tens of thousands) and geographically compact rather than dispersed. Second, private promises of support from an individual are much less valuable to a politician than public pledges, or the display of badges, party colors or signs. The advantages of requiring those who claim to be supporters to publicly pledge or display their support are obvious. This especially applies to members of ethnic, religious, or clearly identified social groups, because public pledges by influential members of these groups have multiplier effects on the voting preferences of the group as a whole. By forcing members of a group to publicly pledge support to the incumbent party rather than the opposition, for example, group members are effectively then cut off from any expectation of rewards if the opposition should win. This increases the probability that group members in general – including those who may not have agreed with the decision of their peers to support the incumbent party – will actually vote for the incumbents in order to avoid punishment if the opposition wins and increase their chances of a reward if the incumbent is reelected. We should note here that continued interaction and exchange between patrons and clients over time – for example at local celebrations – may eventually make such regular monitoring of voting unnecessary because (a) regular interaction and exchange alone effectively cuts off the clients from any expectation of rewards from a different client; (b) the interaction may be sufficient to induce cultural expectations of reciprocity inherent in any gift giving situation (see below).

### *Monitoring individuals*

The simplest way to monitor individual voters, but also one that is relatively costly in terms of party resources is by violating the secrecy of the ballot, or as Chandra explores in this volume, by giving voters the impression that one has violated the secrecy of the ballot. For several hundred years in Europe and North America, of course, voting was public by law, allowing patrons to match punishments and rewards precisely to voter behavior, and also in some cases to maintain their hold on political power long after the underlying distribution of voters' preferences had shifted away from them (Whyte 1965: 741–49). Laws that mandated open voting, not surprisingly, were often endogenous to political elites' calculations about likely voting patterns under open and secret ballots. Dahl, for instance, describes how members of the Protestant elite in early nineteenth-century Connecticut, worried about losing power as the franchise expanded, instituted a “stand-up law” in 1801 to make voting public

so that they could retaliate against new voters who voted the wrong way (Dahl 1961: 16).

Even where politicians were unable to block the introduction of a secret ballot they developed many methods to monitor voters so that they could then reward or punish people who supported or opposed them. Studies of voting in the USA in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries describe the widespread use of such tactics as marked or pre-printed ballots, party workers forcing voters to ask for help in the voting booth because they were “disabled” or “illiterate,” or voting systems that required voters to publicly identify themselves if they did not wish to vote for officially approved candidates (Dahl 1961: 16; Kurtzman 1935: 121, 133–35). Political reformers and opposition politicians tried to challenge incumbents by pressing for the introduction of voting machines that, it was hoped, would make such monitoring impossible. Incumbent party machines, predictably, fought against the introduction of such technologies; for example, the ruling Republicans in Philadelphia made great efforts to fight off reform by “proving” that new voting machines were costly, complex, and unreliable.<sup>9</sup> But in practice even such apparently threatening technologies as voting machines could sometimes be adapted to politicians’ need to monitor the way people voted. For example, in some cities machines were configured so as to allow a straight party ticket to be voted quickly with a distinctive ringing sound, whereas voting for the opposition or for a mixed slate required additional time with no accompanying ring, a combination that clearly signaled one’s preferences to those outside the booth (Kurtzman 1935).

There are other methods of monitoring how individuals vote that do not require violating the secrecy of the ballot box. Door-to-door canvassing allows politicians to acquire good information on voters’ party preferences, because most people either do not like to lie or else are not very good at it. Ethnographic studies of elections indicate that party workers quickly become skilled at determining from brief interviews whether particular voters support their party or not. The intentions of those who try to mask their preferences can be further uncovered by asking individuals to accept party literature, be contacted in the future, or show their support by wearing badges or displaying party colors and signs. In many electoral systems party workers also pass out goods such as sweets and liquor to their supporters outside polling places, the object being to make voters publicly declare their allegiance to one party or the other.

<sup>9</sup> As a result of these efforts Philadelphia spent more than *ten times* as much on the combined purchase and maintenance costs of each voting machine as nearby Delaware County. Kurtzman (1935: 121).

Another way in which politicians can monitor voters' preferences is by keeping track of how many voters from particular areas or groups come to ask them for favors based on their support for the politician (Kurtzman 1935).

We can think of mass party organization models as highly effective group devices for surveillance and mobilization, in which local party bosses closely monitor individuals' conduct. Contrary to Shefter's (1977, 1994) conceptualization of mass party organizations as the antithesis of clientelistic machine politics, mass parties provide the capabilities of serving clientelistic monitoring practices, provided they are placed in a democratic political context in which their leaders acquire access to public resources that fuel clientelistic distributive schemes – such as the power to appoint civil servants, to grant access to public housing, or to disburse pension and unemployment benefits.

### *Monitoring groups*

Monitoring groups of voters – or having them monitor themselves and then rewarding or punishing the group – is much more efficient than monitoring and then rewarding and punishing individuals, especially where party organizations are weak and in elections with large numbers of voters dispersed over a wide area. In dealing with cohesive ethnic groups with clear hierarchies – the Lubavitch Hasidim in parts of New York State are a good example – the politician needs only to contract with the group leader to be assured of the support of the entire group. The certainty of the payoff to the politician helps explain why the Lubavitch Hasidim have enjoyed so much political patronage relative to their size. One Brooklyn politician described how “They go to synagogue and get their palm cards and they're bused right to the polls. Mayor Daley would be proud of them . . . They are the last deliverable bloc in the city . . . They get heavy money from everybody because they can deliver votes. They want bucks. They want programs, because programs mean jobs and power in their community. They get tons of stuff, housing particularly.”<sup>10</sup>

Even though many groups lack this level of cohesion, politicians have other options to monitor groups' voting. Voting returns and opinion polls, if sufficiently disaggregated, can also provide sufficient information to politicians to enable them to verify a group's support with a high level of accuracy – and low transaction costs – even in the absence of public or

<sup>10</sup> “Birth of a voting bloc: Candidates pay court to Hasidic and Orthodox Jews,” *New York Times*, May 2, 1989, p. B1.

private pledges or private information on voting behavior.<sup>11</sup> They can verify support and deliver rewards with very low transaction costs. Chandra, Hale, Scheiner, and Levitsky's articles in this volume all provide instances of geographic monitoring of groups, for instance through counting of ballots at the subdistrict level in Japan (Scheiner). Until 1971 ballots in India were counted at each local polling station, which enabled politicians to quickly determine whether a village had kept to its side of the political bargain. In Philadelphia and Chicago ward-level results similarly allowed supportive wards – often ethnically homogenous – to be rewarded and opposing wards to be punished. Opinion polls can also, if disaggregated by race, ethnicity, constituency, or other salient group attribute, facilitate clientelistic targeting by politicians. If a particular constituency, such as African Americans in the USA, ultra-Orthodox Sephardic Jews in Israel, or members of the Yadav caste in north India is known from opinion polls to vote for a particular party (the Democratic Party, Shas, the Samajwadi party) at a level of 80 percent or above, then patrons do not really need individual information on voting preferences in order to be (80 percent) sure of delivering benefits only to their supporters.

If the interaction between the patron and the clients is sustained over time, it may be unnecessary for the patron to continue to monitor the clients' votes, and we can think of clientelism in these circumstances as a self-enforcing group equilibrium. The sociologist Javier Auyero (2000) provides a good example of such an equilibrium in his study of clientelism in Argentina. He shows how clientelistic brokers (Peronist Judicialist Party local ward bosses) have developed a web of services in which they deliver tangible benefits to individuals (from food and medicines via local jobs in the party machine and the municipality to the delivery of marijuana to rallies). Participants are immersed into a system of generalized, implicit exchange in which brokers expect and encourage, but do not enforce reciprocal acts. The clients participate in PJ party rallies (where they get booze and pot) and in turn vote for the party. This *ongoing network of social relations* generates widely held cognitive expectations about appropriate behavior that in turn reduce monitoring efforts (Auyero 2000: 122–23). The instrumental exchange aspect remains tacit and is concealed in the symbolic representations of the relationship by both brokers and clients. It is an *ongoing, iterative process* in which the past behavior of parties individuals, and communities influences present expectations of the obligations of patrons to clients and vice versa. The same type of relationships exist in voting in Thailand, where older voters who regularly participate in patron–client networks explain their actions

<sup>11</sup> Assuming low geographical and social mobility on the part of the target population.

in normative terms and are reported to regard it as a *bad* (demerit) not to vote for a patron who has given them money or other rewards (Callahan and McCargo 1996). Historical analyses of voting in eighteenth and nineteenth-century England and Ireland also identify generalized ties of “deference” and “obligation” of tenant to landlord (and vice versa), sustained over time not just through reciprocal transactions but through continuing participation in local community affairs and events, as much more important in explaining voters’ choices than simple threats of coercion or promises of monetary rewards at the time of an election (O’Gorman 1984: 398–403; Whyte 1965).

The monitoring and enforcement of clientelistic citizen–politician linkages is not a simple process in which patrons at every step monitor their clients and intervene to punish free-riders. Clientelism involves a complex web of relations in which monitoring and enforcement is practiced in a highly indirect and concealed fashion. The concealment of clientelism may go so far as to lead to “preference falsification” on the part of all participants.<sup>12</sup> Neither patrons nor clients are willing or even able to describe the clientelistic relationship as a quid-pro-quo exchange of scarce and desirable goods, but instead interpret it in flowery terms as an enactment of community relations and civic solidarity.

#### *Alternative modes of citizen–politician linkage*

Thus, clientelistic linkages are carried out either through single transactions, multiple discrete transactions, or – more frequently – through complex, continuing webs of exchange, obligation, and reciprocity. In many systems characterized by relatively high levels of poverty – such as Thailand, India, Pakistan, or Zambia – patrons directly purchase clients’ votes in exchange for money, liquor, clothes, food, or other immediately consumable goods (Callahan and McCargo 1996). Much more frequent than single-shot transactions of this nature, however, are webs of exchange, obligation, and reciprocity sustained over a longer period, in which patrons provide *private goods* or *club goods* to their clients.<sup>13</sup>

In general, politicians target specific constituencies with clientelistic benefits when they can predict the electoral behavior of that constituency

<sup>12</sup> We are employing here Kuran’s (1991) notion originally intended for citizens in communist regimes who deny that they even have a wish to abolish existing power structures, until it becomes feasible to do so.

<sup>13</sup> Some money, alcohol, food etc. may be given by politicians to voters on polling day as part of these more generalized networks of reciprocity and exchange but in many cases it would be a mistake to see these gifts as sufficient in themselves to determine voters’ choices.

Table 1.1 *Which conditional exchange relations are most valuable to politicians in clientelistic systems?*

		Predictability of exchange: single-shot or ongoing relations?	
		single-shot	ongoing
<i>Counteracting opportunism.</i> <i>Locus of provision,</i> <i>monitoring and enforcement</i>	<i>groups</i>	Weakest leverage of political agent over principals	Intermediate leverage
	<i>individuals</i>	Intermediate leverage	Strongest leverage of political agent over principals

in response to the stimulus. Furthermore, the effectiveness of clientelistic targeting increases with the precision of monitoring constituency behavior and enforcing compliance by sanctioning free-riding, even though these may be expensive undertakings. Predictability of client behavior increases, as citizen–politician relations unfold in an iterative process in which both sides can coordinate around a cooperative solution. The precision of monitoring increases from less expensive group monitoring to more expensive monitoring of individual behavior. Hence, as we can see in the  $2 \times 2$  representation presented in Table 1.1, clientelistic relations become more valuable to politicians as a way to gain political leverage if they can be (1) easily targeted to individuals or small groups and (2) if they can be withdrawn if the voter does not keep up his or her end of the bargain.

Obvious examples of goods that offer high leverage over voters include permission to work a landlord’s land, or access to a local government job in systems without substantial civil service protections for employees. There are many historical examples, for instance, of landlords threatening tenants with the loss of agricultural credit, advances of seeds, loans, or the right to work the patron’s land if they dared to vote the wrong way (Whyte 1965). In classic US party machines jobs were readily targeted to known supporters of the incumbent party and these supporters knew that their jobs – and those of their relatives – were in immediate jeopardy if they switched their support or failed to vote in sufficient numbers to keep their party in power.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>14</sup> Reports suggest that the “classic” US political machine still survives. The Philadelphia Democratic chairman warned thousands of city employees in August 2003 that their jobs would be given to Republicans if the Republican candidate was elected mayor. “Democrat says win by Katz would imperil patronage jobs,” *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, August 27, 2003.



Table 1.2 *Modes of citizen–politician linkage*

	Strategic linkages		
	Programmatic valence policy competition	Programmatic policy competition	Clientelistic competition
1. Contingency of exchange: Benefit tied to vote? (“targeted” delivery)	No	No (indirect exchange)	Yes (direct exchange)
2. Nature of goods offered to voters: Private, club, or public goods?	Collective and club (“pork”) goods (“valence competition”)	Club goods (“spatial-directional” competition; redistribution)	Private or club goods
3. Predictability: Compliance of individuals/groups responding to politician’s actions?	Low	Variable	High
4. Elasticity: Change in constituents’ vote choice due to politician’s stimulus?	Small	Medium	Large
5. Monitoring and external enforcement of the exchange?	No	No	Variable: 1. Individual surveillance 2. Group oversight and self-policing

We are now in a position to compare clientelistic politics to other types of citizen–politician linkages in competitive party democracies (Table 1.2). We are depicting here only *strategic* linkages in which the actions of principals and agents are conditional upon each other in some fashion. We set aside here non-strategic linkages where voter constituencies display unconditional loyalty to politicians. This at least applies to the social-psychological version of “party identification” based on processes of socialization and affective bonding, not so much the strategic version of party identification as result of the cumulative “running tally” of policy actions parties have performed over long periods of time to endear themselves to particular voters. The strategic image also does not apply to voter-citizen relations based on

candidate personality traits (“charisma”), net of the candidate’s policy preferences.

Among the strategic relations, we distinguish clientelism from two different types of programmatic policy voting, one dealing with a situation of valence goods with a skewed distribution of preferences and politicians trying to demonstrate their competence in delivering the club or collective goods most voters want, and the other dealing with plain directional and spatial competition among parties offering different programmatic packages and appealing to electoral constituencies with different policy preferences.

On two of our five aspects of the linkage relationship, there is a clear contrast between both forms of programmatic competition and linkage building, on one side, and clientelistic competition and linkage, on the other. Only in clientelistic politics are benefits implicitly or explicitly tied to delivery of political support (the vote, material contributions and time going to the party) in exchange for material benefits flowing from political office. Programmatic politicians do not engage in contingent exchange and therefore do not try to monitor and enforce conformity of voters with certain party preferences, while clientelistic patrons most definitely engage in such practices.

On the other three dimensions, we have a sliding scale ranging from programmatic valence voting via programmatic directional policy voting to clientelistic competition. Clientelistic linkages tend to involve goods with a smaller scale of disbursement and less opportunity for free-riding, but there is no hard and fast borderline. Local and regional club goods may be featured by politicians pursuing either clientelistic or programmatic linkage strategies. In a similar vein, even for programmatic policy strategies, the predictability of voters’ response to policy initiatives may be sufficiently high to constitute a clientelistic exchange. Finally, while in general voter elasticity in response to programmatic initiatives may be lower than that in response to clientelistic inducements, this is a matter of degree and is often hard to measure.

The heuristic value of Table 1.2 is to clarify the conditions under which politicians may pursue clientelistic linkage building in a rational, instrumental fashion, taking the full political opportunity costs and benefits of this strategy into account. In this section, we have identified characteristics of clientelistic and programmatic linkages and institutional or behavioral preconditions for each to operate in democratic electoral party competition. Both modes of linkage building require considerable time and resources on the part of politicians to coordinate their teams of office-seekers as well as electoral constituencies around their preferred pattern of democratic accountability and responsiveness. Let us next

explore the conditions under which politicians choose programmatic linkage strategies as their preferred mode of operation and those that make politicians inclined to seek out clientelistic linkage systems.

### **Explaining democratic linkage practices**

In the previous section, we have identified three attribute dimensions that distinguish clientelistic from programmatic principal–agent accountability. They are analytically distinct, but up to a point parties can, of course, combine elements of clientelistic and programmatic accountability in an encompassing “portfolio” package.<sup>15</sup> First, clientelistic linkages *target* benefits to individuals (private goods) and small groups (local club goods) who have proven, or are expected, to be supporters of winning politicians with control over resources. Programmatic linkages deliver benefits to large groups (functional club goods) and the entire polity (collective goods). Targeting benefits also facilitates “credit claiming” by politicians for benefits reaching electoral constituencies. Second, clientelistic linkages rely on some kind of *monitoring or enforcement of direct exchanges*, and we have laid out the manifold techniques – from crude supervision of individual citizens in the voting booth and prepared ballot papers via organizational encapsulation of constituencies to sophisticated calculations based on precinct returns – that can achieve this objective in the end. Third, even where monitoring and enforcement may be weak or absent, a *high predictability and low elasticity of constituency partisan affiliation as a result of the supreme salience of specific targeted benefits for the group* may deliver a reasonably high level of certainty and contractual enforcement of direct exchanges, i.e., a low dissipation of politicians’ resources among citizens who do not support them through their votes. In the absence of facilities to monitor and enforce direct exchange or under conditions where the benefits that constituencies deem salient are sufficiently amorphous and distributed among voter groups and variable over time to increase elasticity and decrease predictability of voting behavior, it is likely that politicians rely more on programmatic accountability.

All this presupposes, of course, that politicians have the time and resources to engage in the arduous, slow, resource-intensive undertaking to build clientelistic or programmatic political parties. Both kinds of parties have to solve collective action problems in the process of building an

<sup>15</sup> See Kitschelt (2000b) and Magaloni et al. in this volume for a more extensive discussion of this topic.

elaborate organizational infrastructure. This infrastructure may be more extensive in the case of clientelistic parties. In addition to targeting public resources on their constituencies, clientelistic parties raise “private” resources from asset-rich, but vote-poor clients in exchange for favors and in order to dole them out to asset-poor, but vote-rich other client groups (Kitschelt 2000b). Conversely, programmatic parties have to make an investment in solving problems of social choice by setting up mechanisms to deliberate collective goals in the organization and enforce compliance with collective programmatic objectives by partisan politicians in electoral office. Where democracies were recently founded and politicians cannot build on organizational infrastructures that either precede authoritarian episodes or that could grow within authoritarian regimes, neither clientelistic nor programmatic parties will instantly appear. In that case, politicians’ accountability exclusively relies on short-term performance ratings (“retrospective voting”) or personal qualities (“charisma”).

In the following section, we lay out how different causal mechanisms may influence targeting/credit claiming for benefits, monitoring/enforcement of direct exchange, and the predictability/inelasticity of constituency vote choices. We begin with economic development and then consider its conditional relation to the competitiveness of democratic partisan contests. We then discuss institutional democratic rules, followed by the public control of the political economy and mobilized ethnocultural divides. While the democratic rules of the game should affect all parties competing in a polity in a similar fashion, all the other mechanisms we lay out may shape linkage mechanisms differentially for individual parties within the same polity or for all parties in the same way in that polity.

### **The role of economic development**

Economic development is the most commonly confirmed predictor of differential modes of democratic accountability. Affluent democracies and parties appealing to affluent citizens in a democracy tend to operate more through programmatic accountability, while parties in poor democracies and parties appealing to the poorest electoral segments tend to practice clientelism.

#### *Demand side factors*

*D-1. Scaling up of social networks:* Development works through people’s involvement in markets beyond the local level. At extremely low levels, most local constituencies will be highly autonomous and self-sufficient

such that principal–agent exchange relations will be superfluous. Most residents of an area will be simply subject to political authority. As van de Walle (in this volume) explains, principal–agent relations of exchange will be limited to a small elite within which “prebendal” patrimonial exchange prevails. Scale upgrading and market commodification of social relations generates demands for societal coordination through centralized authoritative political decisions. This initially gives rise to new group loyalties serviced by clientelistic networks beyond the realm of kinship and family (Scott 1969, 1972). But as the process of further societal scale upgrading proceeds, clientelistic linkages – providing private and local club goods – become too narrow and give way to class, sectoral, and professional linkages in the formation of national and global markets. People demand goods from politicians who serve increasingly large clubs for whose members clientelistic linkages are too costly in terms of transactional arrangements. Some of these goods serve everyone in a polity (“collective goods”).

*D-2. Discount rates.* Poor people cannot wait for material rewards and therefore prefer targeted handouts to the distant benefits of policy change. But, as Lyne argues in her treatment of the voter’s dilemma, without further triggers originating on the demand and the supply side, even under conditions of high affluence voters should always prefer clientelistic exchange. It delivers benefits – both private and local public goods – with greater certainty than indirect exchange based on policy (large-scale club goods, collective goods). Citizens are stuck in a prisoner’s dilemma: people abandoning a clientelistic exchange opportunity may therefore be punished and left empty-handed, if too few voters become “suckers” and promote a winning programmatic party rather than their personal and local benefit, however modest. Programmatic parties are attractive only to voters who have enough assets (especially human capital endowments) to become entirely indifferent to clientelistic-targeted goods and therefore incur zero opportunity cost when their favorite programmatic party loses to a clientelistic contender.<sup>16</sup>

*D-3. Cognitive sophistication in the calculation of costs and benefits.* As a cognitive complement to the discount rate and opportunity cost

<sup>16</sup> Banfield and Wilson (1963: 106) came to a similar conclusion about the reasons for the decline of the American urban party machines of the second half of the nineteenth century, “[t]he main reason for the decline and near disappearance of the city-wide machine was – and is – the growing unwillingness of voters to accept the inducements that it offered. The petty favors and ‘friendship’ of the precinct captains declined in value as immigrants were assimilated, public welfare programs were vastly extended, and per capita incomes rose steadily and sharply in postwar prosperity. To the voter who in case of need could turn to a professional social worker and receive as a matter of course unemployment compensation, aid to dependent children, old-age assistance, and all the rest, the precinct captain’s hod of coal was a joke.”

arguments, poor people may have less education and therefore less capacity to understand and trace the lengthy causal process linking policy changes to personal benefits. This may make them ignore or understate the value of large-scale club or collective goods.

*D-4. Ethnocultural group salience and the valuation of local club goods.* Conventional modernization theory considers ethnocultural divides as endogenous to development (e.g., Gellner 1983). While modernization might reduce ethnic divisions in some instances (Weber 1976), in others it has clearly increased them. Colonial and post-colonial states, for example, have increased them by creating inter-group inequalities and creating new dimensions for comparison and competition within the same multi-ethnic state (Bates 1983; Horowitz 1985; Rudolph and Rudolph 1967). As a countervailing force to the propensity of development to reduce actors' demand for clientelistic private and local club goods, ethnic divisions thus may boost clientelism even in the face of increasing economic affluence and modernization. Demand side conditions, however, do not tell the whole story. Politicians must be willing and able to mobilize resources and facilities that attract a constituency or may in the first place even create it.

#### *Supply side factors*

*S-1. Network monitoring:* Politicians will invest in clientelistic exchange under conditions of low development because citizens enjoy only limited spatial mobility and are entrapped in rigid, durable social networks increasing predictability and inelasticity of the vote. Programmatic politics takes over when mobility increases and makes the delivery of clientelistic goods unreliable.<sup>17</sup> For some stretch along the way to greater affluence, politicians counteract the erosion of their capacities for monitoring/enforcement and predictability of voter behavior by making investments in the organization of partisan machines. Contrary to Sheffer (1978), mass party organization may help, not hinder, clientelistic politics.

*S-2. Constraints on acquiring resources to deploy in clientelistic exchange.* In affluent societies, votes become exponentially more expensive to purchase, while economies may become increasingly vulnerable to the market

<sup>17</sup> This is not of course to claim that clientelism is incompatible with migration as such. When migrants in the nineteenth century moved from one country to another, clientelistic machines such as New York's Tweed ring were highly effective at integrating them into their new permanent homes. Immigrants were the source of clientelistic network growth, but only because they settled in ethnic neighborhoods once in the USA, in which dense social networks facilitated clientelistic monitoring activities.

distortions such authoritative resource reassignments to rent-seekers are generating. Building on Lyne's contribution, one might suggest a Malthusian law of democratic principal–agent linkages: whereas the costliness of clientelistic exchange increases exponentially with development, politicians' effective acquisition of resources grows only in a linear or asymptotic fashion. The initial response of politicians is to lean more on their asset-rich, but vote-poor clients to surrender private resources. This fuels corruption. Corruption, in turn, may restrain economic growth and indirectly reduce public revenues, generating an unsustainable vicious cycle.

*S-3. Strategic dilemmas due to constituency heterogeneity.* Relative scarcity of politicians' asset control and heterogeneity of constituencies with some favoring and others rejecting clientelistic exchange makes it difficult for politicians to maintain coherent parties. They may ultimately cut loose the remaining constituencies seeking clientelistic benefits.

*S-4. Ethnocultural divisions facilitate supply of clientelistic linkage under conditions of economic development.* The presence of clientelistic markers and of associated networks is relatively resistant to development and enables politicians to sustain clientelistic linkages much longer and at lower cost than in homogeneous societies. Even where networks break down or are less relevant at higher levels of political aggregation – towns, assembly and parliamentary districts, states – where there is more uncertainty about the efficacy of alternative networks to organize clientelistic exchange, risk-averse politicians and electoral constituencies may be more likely to rely on ethnocultural markers. Thus, in Chandra's chapter in this volume appeals to ethnicity are more successful because voters lack faith that they are being fairly compensated by other ethnic groups at these higher levels of geographical aggregation. Because trust in non-ethnic patronage networks wanes as well, voters and politicians may rally around ethnocultural clientelistic networks. Evidence from Madhya Pradesh (Singh, Gehlot, Start, and Johnson 2003) and New Haven (Johnston 1979: 389) illustrates that in clientelistic networks the patrons consistently overpay co-ethnics.

*S-5. Media exposure of clientelistic politics.* When large electoral constituencies have anti-clientelistic preference schedules and consider clientelism scandalous, the media will feed on reporting clientelistic practices, particularly where they are expensive and target highly exclusive rent-seeking constituencies. What were established practices of clientelistic political accountability now are framed as variants of cronyism, nepotism, corruption, fraud, and favoritism.

Development-based supply and demand mechanisms do not consider that politicians are immersed in differential competitive contests with

rival parties. Things become more complicated, and clientelism may be sustained at higher levels of development, when certain competitive configurations prevail.

### The effect of party competition

Parties make more effort to build principal–agent linkages of accountability whenever “competitiveness” is intense. Whether this competitiveness translates into more clientelistic or more programmatic responsiveness, however, is contingent upon levels of development. Competitiveness is a hard-to-specify concept and the party system literature often associates it in misleading ways with party system fragmentation and volatility.<sup>18</sup> We define party systems as competitive when citizens and politicians have strong incentives to try hard to win supporters at the margin for one or the other partisan camp. This is the case, when (1) elections are close between rival blocs of parties identifiable to voters as alternative governing teams *ex ante* (before elections) and (2) there is a market of uncommitted voters sufficiently large to tip the balance in favor of one or another partisan bloc. But elections must also be *relevant* from a perspective of resource control by the government. They are competitive only if small changes in electoral support might bring about large shifts in public policy or control of patronage.<sup>19</sup> In other words, there must be some programmatic distance between alternative party blocs competing for executive office (“polarization”) and governments must have considerable institutional leverage to shift resources (e.g., among clients). Neither measures of party system fragmentation nor electoral volatility capture this conception of competitiveness well. What matters is the location of floating voters, not the size of the floaters’ market that is revealed by electoral volatility. In a similar vein, not party system fragmentation, but the identifiability of alternative governing blocs is the critical ingredient of competitiveness.

Competitiveness is most intense under oligopolistic conditions when only a very small set of alternative (coalition) governments is feasible and has unimpeded control over the authoritative allocation of public resources. Competition is less in a highly fragmented and fluid party system with multiple coalition opportunities and in a hegemonic party system. It is under conditions of oligopoly that politicians have the greatest

<sup>18</sup> For an earlier more sophisticated effort to conceptualize competitiveness, see Strom (1990). More recently, Franklin’s (2004) conceptualization is useful. For an extension of this literature, see Kitschelt (2006).

<sup>19</sup> This may entail, for example, the absence of institutional veto players that arises in systems with a division of power between independently elected executives (presidents) and legislatures and in many federalist and bicameralist systems. Cf. Tsebelis (2002).



incentive to reach out to uncommitted voters floating between the rival camps. Politicians will generally make less effort to extend benefits to “captive” segments of their electorate they can be sure will support their own party. Instead, under conditions of scarcity, they will focus their investments on marginal voters who make the difference between electoral victory and defeat.<sup>20</sup> As competitiveness intensifies, politicians will first target voters whose demands they can combine with those of their core electorate with the least effort in resource expenditure and/or policy concessions, and with comparatively high predictability. In policy terms, this means they will target “leaners” toward their own party rather than “indifferents.”<sup>21</sup> Only under conditions of extreme competitiveness will politicians feel compelled to target highly uncertain and indifferent electoral prospects. In clientelistic terms, chasing uncertain prospects is likely to dissipate a great deal of resources. Politicians’ expenses may go up exponentially for each additional marginal vote, whereas the cost of programmatic commitments may go up only moderately. Particularly under conditions of high development, where many voters have low regard for clientelistic inducements and thus command a very high price to be bought off, clientelistic linkage may lose its feasibility in the presence of intense competition and an expenditure constraint on politicians.

Consider our rendering of the development/competition interaction as a qualification and extension of what Geddes (1991) discussed as the conditions under which parties abandon administrative patronage – as a specific technique of clientelistic linkage – in favor of professional bureaucracy. On the face of it, her game theoretical set-up suggests that intense, balanced competition between two rival party blocs of almost equal size and probability to win elections induces politicians to abandon clientelism. Upon closer inspection, however, what tips the balance in favor of a competitive race to embrace professionalization is that *politicians in at least one party must perceive a small electoral incentive to propose and make salient administrative reform in a tight electoral race in which small shifts of voters may make the difference between winning and losing*. We interpret this to imply that demand side preference changes, induced by higher levels of development (resulting in human capital endowments, private sector labor market options, etc.) and a decreasing valuation of clientelistic pay-offs among the more affluent, in the fashion introduced by Mona Lyne, drive the switch in office-seeking parties’ linkage strategies. Competition

<sup>20</sup> For a detailed theoretical logic along these lines, see Lindbeck and Weibull (1987) and Dixit and Londregan (1996). Empirical confirmation can be found in Schady (2000) and Dahlberg and Johansson (2002).

<sup>21</sup> For the distinction between these types in a model of voting, see Stokes (2003).

is not the unique cause, but the catalyst of such strategic transformations of accountability and responsiveness.<sup>22</sup>

Politicians' response to intensifying competitiveness of a party system thus depends on the interaction of socioeconomic development in a polity with patterns of competition. We summarize this pattern in Figure 1.1 (a,b,c). Everywhere intense competitiveness makes politicians pursue less promising bets, subject to budget constraints. But under conditions of low development, this will induce politicians to spend marginally much more on clientelistic politics and only moderate additional amounts on programmatic commitments, starting from a negligible baseline (Figure 1.1a). Given the low cost of marginal voters, politicians may in fact not worry much about the dissipation of direct clientelistic benefits to some voters who end up supporting their competitors.<sup>23</sup> By contrast, under conditions of high development, increasing competitiveness may shift outlays almost entirely in favor of programmatic commitments and may make clientelistic responsiveness all but vanish (Figure 1.1b). In addition to resource constraints, here the intense aversion of many voters to clientelistic targeting, particularly among voters not firmly committed to an existing partisan camp, may compel politicians to give up on clientelistic responsiveness altogether. Under conditions of intermediate development, politicians are likely to engage in "menu diversification" contingent upon the electoral segments and the specific poverty or wealth of the location they are dealing with (Figure 1.1c). At the margin, electoral expenses and commitments in a clientelistic and programmatic fashion may initially go up, as competitiveness increases. Once very intense levels of competitiveness are reached and parties chase highly uncertain prospects among the electorate, they may rely more on intra-party investments in solving problems of social choice and demonstrating sincere commitment to programmatic objectives than additional clientelistic handouts. Nevertheless, clientelism remains an important ingredient in party strategy in many places.

<sup>22</sup> Because of the competitive nature of the process, not just one, but all major parties may abandon patronage at once to gain marginal voters and to protect their core constituencies hitherto benefiting from clientelism. In the USA in 1884, for instance, senior civil servants appointed under Republican patronage lobbied to have themselves demoted to lower-paid positions protected under new professional civil service rules, when President Cleveland's new Democratic administration came in. See "Charm in Civil Service Rules," *New York Times*, December 8, 1884.

<sup>23</sup> This resolves the at first sight so puzzling practice of candidates who hand out money and gifts to passers-by in public places in a candidate's electoral district in all but indiscriminant fashion.

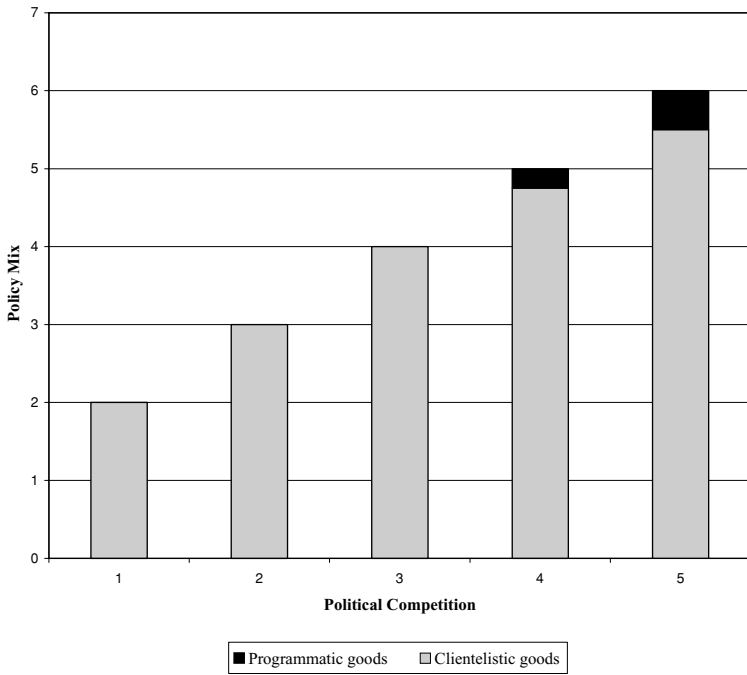


Figure 1.1a Policy mix at low levels of economic development

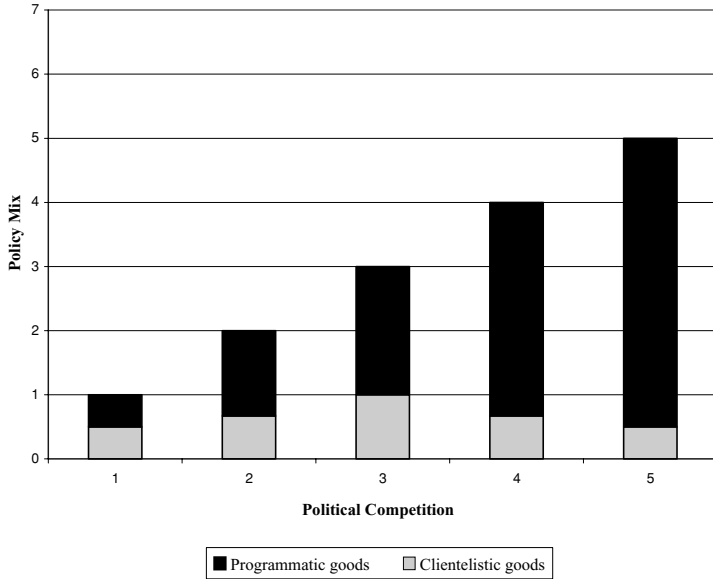


Figure 1.1b Policy mix at high levels of economic development

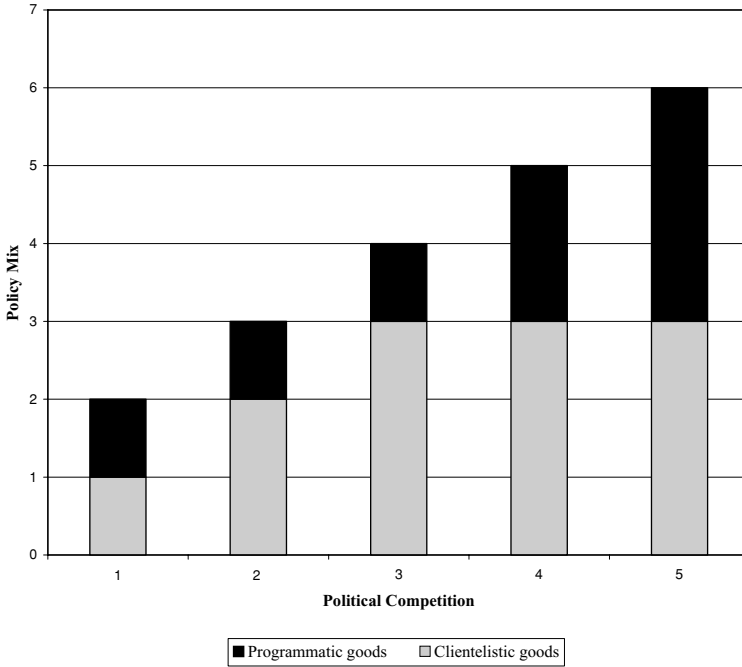


Figure 1.1c Policy mix at intermediate levels of economic development

A critical question is whether competitiveness is endogenous to linkage strategies. For example, does the existence of clientelistic politics keep clients dependent on their patrons and prevent political defection to a competitor because that competitor has little credibility to deliver the benefits guaranteed by the long-term incumbent? There is no doubt that asymmetrical relations exist in which only one party ever controls the assets of government and has additional access to private resources from wealthy, but vote-poor supporters. At the same time, the existence of highly competitive clientelistic polities with regular alternation in governing parties and intense efforts by the contenders to supply goods and to make credible their ability to supply such goods makes the endogeneity argument unlikely. From Bangladesh to Jamaica, clientelistic politics has operated through party competition. Especially among poor countries, competition enhances clientelism. Because competition intensifies ethnocultural mobilization (Wilkinson 2004), and ethnic groups promote clientelism, politicians will move to employ every imaginable strategy of attracting constituencies, subject to a general budget constraint. Within this envelope, ethnocultural mobilization

induces a net increase in clientelistic patronage, amplified by democratic competition.

This point is impressively driven home by Carl Stone's (1986) and Obika Gray's (2004) splendid political-anthropological fieldwork on the power of the urban poor in the intensely competitive Jamaican partisan polity. Competition allows the urban underclass and its criminal elements to extract substantial rents from rival politicians who organize conflicting clientelistic networks. In a similar vein, municipal leaders of the urban poor in Brazil "auctioned off" the votes of their communities to the highest bidders in the electoral contest, taking pre-election tangible benefits and credibility of post-election promises into account (Gay 1994: 101–14). Multiparty competition and clientelism are also closely intertwined in Ecuador (Burgwal 1995).

How is it possible that hegemonic clientelistic systems become competitive? One path is that clientelism emerges only after democratization already in a competitive situation in which two or more parties have built up reputations to govern and deliver benefits to their constituencies before clientelism becomes a major currency of linkage building. Another path is that a clientelistic hegemonic ruling party stays in power after full democratization, but then decays both in terms of its capacity to attract private assets from wealthy supporters as well as to deliver spoils of government, for example when a country's economy faces hard times. In that instance, opposition parties with clientelistic aspirations may take over, or the clientelistic incumbent may be displaced by parties relying on different linkage strategies. In fact, very wealthy business owners, if sufficiently antagonized and disgruntled by the governance of the hegemonic party, may bring to bear their own resources on the construction of a new party that prolongs clientelistic linkage building.

Under conditions of democratic contestation also ethnocultural pluralism may be a powerful catalyst of intensifying clientelism, as competition between parties appealing to different ethnic segments heats up. The fiercer the competition, the more ethnic politics may rely on clientelistic bonds. As support of an ethnocultural group becomes *decisive* for a band of politicians to govern, they tend to offer increasing amounts of targeted clientelistic favors to assemble a winning electoral coalition. This may be one of the mechanisms that accounts for what Horowitz (1985: 306–11, 334–40) observes as an empirical reality, namely that in most polities the rise of ethnic parties drives out other non-ethnic divides based on economic class or sector. Politicians simply cannot make credible commitments to universalism in an ethnically complex polity in which some ethnic groups begin to organize in an exclusive fashion. All state assets, including the bureaucracy, instead of being

seen as neutral vehicles of programmatic policy implementation, are instead perceived as deeply partisan toward one ethnic group rather than another.

The critical ingredient to bring about this dynamic of “deepening” clientelism under conditions of intensifying inter-ethnic party competition may not be necessarily the existence of ethnic markers, but the *presence of dense organizational networks configured around particular interpretations of ethnicity*. Even though ethnocultural markers may generate particularly strong social networks, as Chandra argues in her contribution, sometimes class, sector, or regional organizations may achieve equivalent levels of network properties. Krishna in his contribution therefore emphasizes the role of cross-caste village networks led by educated “new leaders” in wresting power away from traditional village-based landed elites in India.

Nevertheless, ethnicity may be a particularly powerful bond of network construction and political organization promoting clientelistic linkage building. It is therefore not by accident that most of the established affluent democratic polities with “pacified” ethnocultural divides that Lijphart (1977) refers to as “consociational” polities tend to have been heavily clientelistic, even though not all clientelistic democracies are plural in ethnocultural terms.<sup>24</sup> The close link between clientelism and ethnocultural divides applies to Austria and Belgium, and used to characterize the Netherlands, where since the early 1960s cultural pillarization declined in tandem with a clientelistic carving up of the state. The decline of ethnocultural divides in all three countries, in fact, may be related to the increasing political-economic difficulties these countries encountered in satisfying clientelistic claims.<sup>25</sup> Political-economic difficulties, in turn, boosted the salience of non-cultural divides. We will return to political-economic constraints on linkage formation shortly.

The pursuit of alternative strategies of principal-agent accountability and responsiveness at different levels of development in interaction with different modes of competition is prominently represented in many contributions to our volume. Medina’s and Stokes’s chapter characterizes clientelistic partisan strategies under low competition and *low to intermediate development* in general conceptual terms. Krishna and Wilkinson demonstrate with data and narratives from India that competition and

<sup>24</sup> Consider Ireland, Italy, and Japan itself.

<sup>25</sup> In the Netherlands, the “Dutch disease” of dependence on natural resource rents (gas) already triggered this crisis of clientelism in the 1960s, whereas in Austria and Belgium the erosion of clientelistic politics had to await the crisis of the heavy industry in the 1970s and 1980s.

clientelism go hand-in-hand in comparatively poor countries. Nevertheless, this does not lead us to deny that under conditions of single party hegemony, clientelism may flourish and persist in the manner analyzed by Medina and Stokes. This configuration just does not compel politicians to disburse as much in resources to their clients as does a highly competitive partisan contest.

Contributions to this volume examining polities with diverse, and *on average intermediate development*, powerfully demonstrate the logic of portfolio diversification between clientelistic and programmatic linkage strategies and the progressively greater propensity to support programmatic linkages, where competition creates uncertainty and interacts with intermediate levels of development. Portfolio diversification prompted by locally varied competitive configurations and popular demand profiles induced by differential levels of development are the main themes of Magaloni, Diaz-Cayeros, and Estévez studying Mexico, Levitsky analyzing Argentina in comparative perspective, and Hale examining the regional politics of national and sub-national electoral contests in Russia. Levitsky shows how the Argentinean Peronists paid off poor communities with clientelistic compensation, while targeting the urban middle classes with the national programmatic policy objectives of economic liberalization. In Mexico, while sub-national levels of development almost invariably correlate with more programmatic and less clientelistic politics, competition and what Magaloni *et al.* conceptualize as “electoral risk” can actually be positively related to clientelism at comparatively weak or intermediate levels of development. In a similar vein, Hale detects a net effect of local competitive structures on clientelism in Russia’s regions, holding constant for indicators of economic development and industrial structure.

Under conditions of high development, finally, clientelism can hold on as long as hegemonic parties or party alliances – in countries such as Austria, Belgium, Ireland, Italy, or Japan – remain more or less unchallenged and control a political economy penetrated by partisan politics (see below). Societal change of preferences and performance problems in the politicized economy often contribute to an intensifying competitiveness in the party system that translates into a partial or complete erosion of clientelistic linkage mechanisms, as Scheiner shows for Japan, and Kitschelt develops for a more inclusive comparison of advanced post-industrial economies and polities. In these polities, increasing competitiveness makes clientelism prohibitively expensive just at the same time as political-economic difficulties constrain the clientelistic largesse of the governing parties in any case.

### Public control of the political economy

Government activities are to a greater or lesser extent amenable to clientelistic targeting or universalistic programmatic allocation of costs and benefits. Governments and legislatures codify more detailed and transparent rules of authoritative allocation of costs and benefits, when incumbents intend to pursue programmatic accountability.<sup>26</sup> Elected politicians who appoint, confirm, instruct, or lobby administrators in the executive branch then have comparatively little leeway to target resources to their favorite supporters. But many government activities permit considerable discretion and targeting because they are inherently difficult to codify in general rules and/or the political incumbents intentionally structure them in such ways as to become amenable to clientelistic case-by-case targeting. The degrees of freedom for clientelistic linkage-building politicians tend to be particularly high in the cases of business and market regulation (safety, hygiene, and environment; anti-trust; zoning; architectural compliance; price and quantity regulations), the award of specific market advantages (subsidies, loan guarantees, export/import licenses or support, etc.) and the procurement and operating contracts for government infrastructure (transportation, public buildings for a variety of purposes, communications equipment). In a similar vein, the direct management of public enterprise under the auspices of agencies headed by elected politicians opens the door wide to the construction of clientelistic patronage networks. A thus “politicized” economic governance structure feeds directly into the partisan circuits of clientelistic principal–agent relations.

The analytical difficulty for research on principal–agent linkages, however, is to determine whether politicized economic governance is an *endogenous aspect* of clientelism or may operate as a *causal antecedent creating opportunities for clientelistic linkage building under democratic conditions*. Furthermore, there appears to be a complicated *causal interaction between politicized economic governance and other causal determinants of citizen–politician linkages, namely socioeconomic development and the intensity of inter-party competition*. Nevertheless, we insist that a partial causal autonomy of politicized economic governance in shaping principal–agent relations comes to the fore in at least two regards. First, political economic conditions that facilitate programmatic or clientelistic governance may historically precede mass enfranchisement and principal–agent linkages predicated on such democratic opening. Second, in advanced

<sup>26</sup> On this point, see the study of Huber and Shipan (2002) who measure the extent to which legislatures remove the discretion of bureaucrats by the detail that makes it into legal instructions.



post-industrial capitalist economies the decline of politicized enterprise sectors is an important trigger for bringing down clientelistic politician–voter linkages. Let us briefly sketch each of these elements and then turn to the endogenous-interactive relations among economic governance, development, and competition.

*Exogenous antecedents of a politicized economy*

A (de)politicized economy and public administration is not endogenous to citizen–politician linkages, *if it was established before the advent of democratic mass politics*. This was Shefter’s (1977, 1994) main point about the consequences of absolutist rule, as opposed to an inter-penetration of oligarchical economic special interests and state governance. It may be no accident that all three of the most clientelistic industrialized democracies in the second half of the twentieth century – Austria, Italy, and Japan – experienced highly politicized political-economic governance under their respective authoritarian or fascist regimes.

Of course, if other conditions are favorable for clientelism, after democratization the competing parties may dismantle a professional bureaucracy and a liberal separation of private enterprise from public management in favor of more politicized arrangements. Conversely, programmatic democratic politicians may dismantle public enterprise and regulation precisely in order to seize on new opportunities to build programmatic citizen–politician linkages after the advent of democracy.<sup>27</sup>

Conditions of external threat to regime coherence and state survival may exogenously shape the political economy. “Politicized” economies prevail where rulers face intense immediate military threats from the environment (“total war”) or none at all. In both instances, they can or must extract resources from their subjects with a short time horizon of maximization and without regard for long-term prospects of economic growth. Only where external military threats have intermediate intensity and urgency rulers may develop longer time horizons over which they assess their stream of benefits flowing from political rule. They then may calculate that the net present value of future economic wealth and military power is sufficiently large to preserve a depoliticized, if not entirely liberal economy in which private investors enjoy secure property rights and investment opportunities with moderate taxes. This arrangement encourages economic growth through private enrichment that ultimately

<sup>27</sup> Western Germany where the Allied occupying forces made the greatest effort to restructure business governance is the one outlier with relatively depoliticized post-war governance.

converts into greater tax revenue (at lower rates) and increasing military prowess of a state.<sup>28</sup> Where the external military threat is weak, in contrast, rulers may opt for the immediate and exhaustive exploitation of their people without much concern for the consequences for the future private wealth and power of the state. Where external military threats fade, the new security may fuel politicians' propensity to organize principal-agent relations in a clientelistic fashion. South Korea after the waning of the Chinese threat may be an example for this dynamic (Kang 2002: 158–71).

A third external condition affecting the politicization of the economy has to do with technology and market structure. It may not be an accident that in affluent capitalist democracies clientelism figured as a prominent linkage mechanism primarily in some of those polities the "variety of capitalism" literature describes as sectorally or industrial group coordinated market capitalism (cf. Hall and Soskice 2001; Soskice 1999). Economic sectors in such countries excelled that were configured around (1) heavy fixed capital investments and (2) incremental processes of innovation and learning relying on (3) a skilled labor force with human capital assets deployable only in highly specific jobs and sectors, and (4) networks of companies and associational umbrella organizations facilitating cooperative research and development. Such profiles of production and factor inputs thrived in countries with institutions that favored webs of contracts build around (1) an industrial relations regime relying on long-term labor contracts and peak-level bargaining among nationally or sectorally organized factors of production (business and labor); (2) a system of corporate governance configured around close oversight of management by capital owners; (3) a financial system based on large individual stock owners and investment banks engaged in the coordination of private enterprises within and across sectors; and (4) a cooperative regulatory public administration practicing informal negotiations with business rather than an adversarial, judicialized regulatory process. In this arrangement, either the most productive firms themselves were open to clientelistic politicization or at least they generated the public resources that enabled political parties to sustain a politicized, clientelistic sector of regulated and/or state owned companies.

This arrangement functioned as long as the world innovation frontier was centered around industries where incremental learning in large organizations was efficient. But since the 1980s, the growing significance of information and communication technologies, biotechnology, financial

<sup>28</sup> On the relationship between external threats, taxation, and organization of the public economy, see Levi (1988) and Kang (2002).

services, and personal and cultural services in post-industrial economies has made it more advantageous for firms and sectors to rely on liberal market-based economic coordination through venture capital or equity financing in stock and bond markets and more arms-length, decentralized relations between business and labor. This arrangement takes away opportunities for clientelistic linkage building. As coordinated capitalism, and especially politicized industries therein, enter a period of economic crisis, political clientelism is bound to suffer. As Kitschelt and Scheiner argue in this volume, the economic decline of politicized, state subsidized companies and entire sectors has put pressure on clientelistic partisan politics. In a similar vein, in Latin America and communist Eastern Europe, both examples of strategies of import substituting industrialization with more or less strong clientelistic linkage building that came to the fore after democratic transitions, the most politicized industrial sectors entered a deep crisis of efficiency in the 1980s that made business and labor abandon the established arrangements and opt out of clientelistic politics for either market liberalization or some vague socialist-populist political reorganization of industry. The economic costs of clientelism began to skyrocket out of control, as coordinated market capitalist governance lost its comparative advantage.<sup>29</sup>

A fourth, at least partially exogenous, condition for the politicization of economic enterprise results from ethnocultural mobilization. Particularly if ethnocultural pluralization goes together with an ethnic division of labor and strong ethnocultural networks, then it is likely that it promotes a politicization of the economy. Under conditions of democratic party competition, ethnocultural parties engage in a clientelistic penetration of economic governance. The presence of dense ethnic social networks makes it particularly attractive for politicians to nurture loyalties through clientelistic exchanges that are anchored in politicized economic governance. More so than in any other circumstances, from the vantage point of ethnic voters the decision of whether to join in, or abstain from support of, an ethnic party is then framed as a coordination game rather than a prisoner's dilemma. Where ethnic markers are salient and the economy is politicized, voters do not expect politicians to employ political authority in an ethnoculturally unbiased, universalistic fashion, but always in favor of some ethnic group. Supporting your ethnocultural group thus does

<sup>29</sup> This process may not be intrinsically linked to increased “globalization” of markets for goods, services, and capital, as Rosenbluth (1996) suggested, given that many of the coordinated capitalist economies were trade open and delivered globally competitive rates of return.

not have the potential downside that cooperative strategies in producing some club or collective good may incur in prisoners' dilemmas.<sup>30</sup>

*The interaction of politicized economy, socioeconomic development and inter-party competition*

Politicization of the economy, socioeconomic development and inter-party competition may all influence clientelistic or programmatic principal-agent relations in democratic politics. But this effect may be a result of complex interactive and recursive relations. We have already discussed the contingent relationship between socioeconomic development and the competitiveness of democratic party systems for citizen-politician linkage strategies. A highly politicized economic governance structure, in turn, may depress economic development and reduce inter-party competition.

The association among economic governance structures, development, and growth is quite firmly established (cf. Barro 1997; Easterly 2001; Easterly and Levine 2002; Knack 2003; Rodrik, Subramanian, and Trebbi 2002). "Good institutions" in the sense of the rule of law barring political rulers from directly intervening in the allocation of property rights on a case-by-case basis are closely intertwined with superior economic performance. This does not rule out, of course, that very different "varieties of capitalism" may yield equally favorable economic outcomes under certain circumstances (cf. Hall and Soskice 2001). Nor does it exclude the possibility that countries operating behind the world innovation frontier may have politicized economies and still be able to accelerate the process of catching up with the lead countries, particularly if they face moderately strong external threats. And, finally, good economic institutions that prevent arbitrary political intervention are no independent prime movers of economic growth all by themselves. Causally prior to them, but affecting economic outcomes only through institutions, we may discover the powerful role played by climate and geography (cf. Acemoglu *et al.* 2001). In a similar vein, prior economic development or prior bold policy initiatives by political actors may make all the difference for the emergence of economic institutions that are favorable for development at a later point in time (cf. Glaeser *et al.* 2004). What is critical for research on principal-agent relations in democratic politics is not to sort out the

<sup>30</sup> For a coordination logic of ethnic mobilization rather than a prisoner's dilemma see Hardin's (1995) discussion of ethnic violence. In a coordination game, it is always advantageous to join with your fellow group members in the production of a club good and there is little or no chance to become the "sucker" who incurs a personal cost of effort without obtaining an equivalent or greater gain.

causal priority of any of these variables for economic development. It is important, however, to keep in mind that – as a bundle – they affect the politicians’ and voters’ preferences over democratic principal–agent relations.

In a similar vein, a politicized economy may affect levels of democratic competition, even though at least some of these effects may be mediated through prior economic development itself. If a politicized economy undercuts competition between firms, sectors, and regions, it may not only reduce growth, but also stifle political competition, as electoral constituencies support candidates servicing “their” industries and jobs only. At least under conditions of high development, reduced competition, in turn, is likely to promote clientelistic politics even in the face of the manifest economic inefficiencies of such arrangements.

Citizen–politician linkages, in turn, may feed back to the governance of the economy. Where intense competition coincides with moderate to high levels of economic development, anti-clientelistic sentiments among voters may motivate office-seeking politicians to abandon clientelism and opt for the professionalization of public bureaucracies and a depoliticization of state-governed enterprises or entire sectors. Conversely, under conditions of weak development, intense competition may encourage politicians to seek an extension of the government’s influence over economic resource allocation with the implicit or explicit objective to create clientelistic principal–agent ties. As already indicated, in the course of such political linkage building, politicians may reduce the competitiveness of democracy. They create associational “pillars” around economic groups and political parties that reduce the size of the electoral market place and may anchor the rise of a hegemonic political party or partisan cartel. As the cases of Austria, Belgium, Italy, or Japan after World War II could show, material bonds of direct citizen–politician exchange kept partisan camps afloat long after their earlier ideological moorings had weakened (Hellemans 1990). Wilkinson observes a similar process of clientelistic penetration of the public sector by a hegemonic party in India.

By contrast, in democratic polities with intense competition between two rival blocs of parties, such as in Britain or Scandinavia for much of the twentieth century as well as in Germany and France since the late 1950s, a clientelistic politicization of the economy went nowhere fast or at least was abated. Socialist parties pursued universalistic welfare state schemes, not a selective politicization of the economy. Intermediate cases are countries with dispersed competition, but fluid party systems, such as Germany during the Weimar Republic or the French Third Republic. Here clientelism played a considerable role, particularly at the local

municipal level, but could not produce large-scale inter-party compacts to politicize the domestic economies for the benefit of partisan spoils.

### **The missing link? Formal democratic rules of the game and principal-agent relations**

When we refer to democratic institutions, we mean formal, codified institutions typically detailed in democratic constitutions. In a broader sense, institutions as regular practices and rules, the violation of which actors sanction with penalties, are ubiquitous in political life and most definitely matter also for citizens' and politicians' coordination around principal-agent relations. But we wish to focus here on a narrow set of "parchment institutions" (Carey 2000) that have generated a huge and fruitful literature in comparative politics, particularly that on electoral systems (e.g., Cox 1997; Lijphart 1994; Taagepera and Shugart 1989) and on the legislative cohesiveness of parties (see Morgenstern 2004). Can we construct a causal association between electoral systems and prevailing citizen-politician linkages of accountability? Electoral systems vary according to their ballot structure, electoral formula, and district size in ways that pattern electoral contests as being more between individual candidate personalities or parties as unified competitive teams of candidates (cf. Carey and Shugart 1995). Some scholars have associated clientelism with personalized political contests that enable individual politicians to strike bargains with small target groups of voters (cf. Ames 2001; Katz 1980). Others have associated clientelism with highly centralized party machines in rigid, national-level closed-list proportional representation schemes, such as Austria and Venezuela before electoral reforms over the last twenty years. Such systems cut off the accountability of individual politicians to identifiable local constituencies of the national electorate (cf. Coppedge 1994).

Maybe it is thus "extreme" electoral systems of a personalist or collectivist type that promote clientelism over programmatic politics because they lack a balance between the personal accountability of individual politicians and of partisan collectives. They provide one or the other only, but not countervailing modes of representation that could rein in the inclinations of individual politicians or machine bosses to provide material inducements to their constituents. But, upon closer inspection, the incidence of clientelism does not appear to be closely associated with specific extreme electoral systems. Just consider a "moderate" electoral system like Belgium's with small member electoral districts, proportional representation, and a mild personal preference vote. Institutionalism has even greater difficulties explaining the subnational diversity of principal-agent linkage mechanisms across space or over time. This is a

recurrent theme in our book, whether we think of Chandra's and Wilkinson's treatment of India, of Magaloni *et al.*'s study of Mexico, Hale's analysis of Russia, or Scheiner's treatment of Japan. More explicitly, the message that formal institutions cannot explain democratic linkage practices comes across in the comparative pieces by Kitschelt and Scheiner.

Given otherwise favorable conditions, it appears that politicians find a way to “work around” electoral institutions, when other imperatives make it attractive for instrumentally rational politicians to build clientelistic principal–agent relations. In this regard, electoral institutions have an indirect impact on the precise operational techniques politicians employ to build their favorite linkage patterns. Thus, in polities that effectively protect the secrecy of the vote, politicians will have to devise different indirect mechanisms of monitoring and enforcing than in polities where the vote is open and parties provide the ballot papers. In a similar vein, clientelism in a personalistic electoral system (e.g., single member district systems or PR systems with personal preference vote, but without pooling of votes for all of a candidate's party) probably relies less on national hierarchically integrated mass parties than in systems with closed-list proportional representation systems. Institutions matter for politicians' strategic choices, but not such that those institutions directly would bias linkage building toward programmatic or clientelistic options.

A similar argument about the indirect effect of institutions on the “tactics,” but not the “strategy,” of principal–agent linkage building could be developed for executive–legislative relations. As such, the institutions of presidential democracy, when compared to parliamentary democracy, are indifferent to the choice between more programmatic and more clientelistic linkage strategies. On the one hand, one could argue that presidents have programs and policies more on their mind, given that they rely on the support of the median voter who is captured by the provision of collective goods rather than private and club goods. On the other, one could instead claim that the single-handed leverage of presidents over discretionary funds and appointments in many polities creates tremendous capacity for patronage and favoritism that allows incumbents or candidates with the right credentials to cobble together patchwork coalitions of supporters who expect to benefit from presidential clientelistic largesse.

Hence, as long as socioeconomic, competitive, and political economic configurations are conducive to clientelism, politicians may come up with tactics to implement such linkages under all sorts of formal institutional arrangements. A shred of institutionalism can be salvaged if we examine the tactics rather than the strategy of linkage building. We are skeptical, however, about whether inflating the domain of “institutionalism” would be a helpful alternative to assert the salience of institutions for the explanation of linkage strategies. For example, to claim that

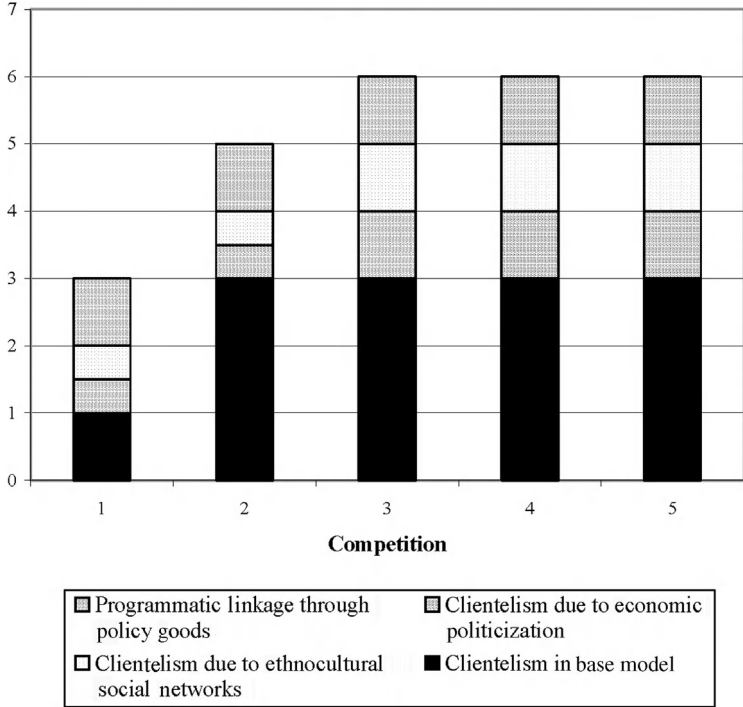


Figure 1.2a The mix of linkage mechanisms at intermediate levels of development

“informal” institutions and quasi-private choices by a party’s activists, such as nomination procedures for candidates running for national legislatures, determine linkage mechanisms only begs the question of why activists play by these rather than by other rules. As political alignments change and clientelistic or programmatic exchange relations are no longer advantageous, “informal” institutions can be changed relatively easily without having to incur very high transaction costs.

In contrast to conventional predispositions in much of contemporary political science, we thus assert that – overall – formal institutions are not particularly useful in accounting for the strategic dynamics of democratic accountability and responsiveness. Our volume shows instead that the interaction of (1) economic modernization; (2) political economy; (3) levels of party competition; and (4) patterns of ethnic heterogeneity explain more about mechanisms of democratic accountability than a country’s formal institutions. In Figure 1.2a and 1.2b, we visually summarize how the interaction among these factors affects patterns of



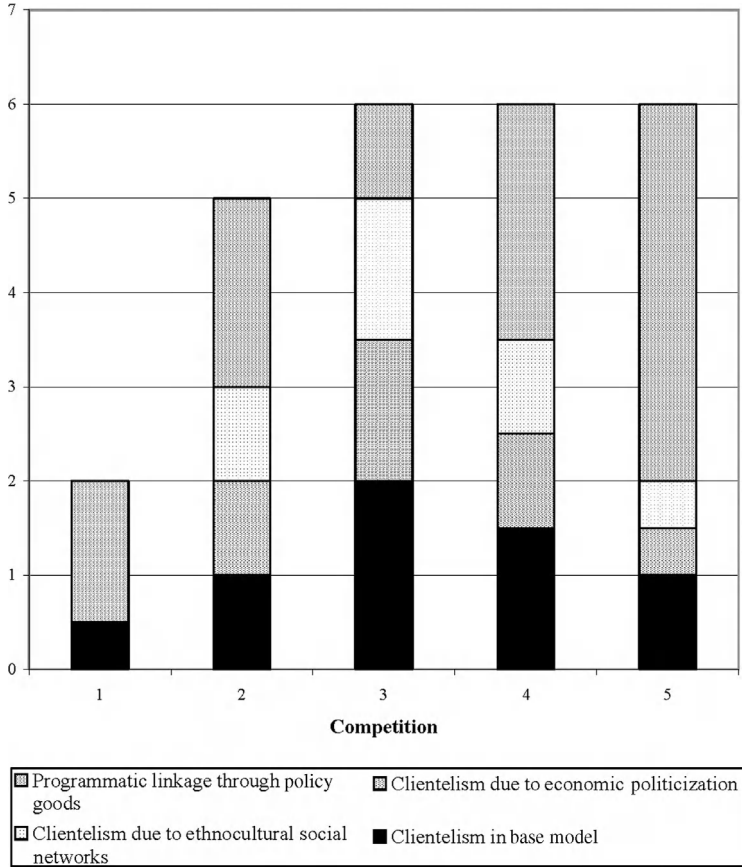


Figure 1.2b The mix of linkage mechanisms at high levels of development

programmatic and clientelistic linkages at intermediate and high levels of economic development.

Compared to the baseline models for the interaction of development and competition in Figures 1.1b. (high case) and 1.1c. (intermediate case), politicized economies add more clientelistic linkage building at low to intermediate intensities of party competition. The inverse applies to ethnocultural mobilization, but tempered by the indirect negative effect of a declining resource base for clientelistic linkage building, as economic governance structures become less politicized, and by general resource constraints on the efforts politicians can make to build citizen–politician linkages.

Ethnocultural mobilization and its impact on citizen–politician linkages in democratic polities are highly conditional on political-economic circumstances, development, and especially, partisan competition. Both greater politicization of economic governance and more intense inter-party competition are likely to fuel ethnocultural mobilization such that politicians have stronger incentives to craft clientelistic principal–agent relations. Economic development may have an ambivalent influence. But most likely greater societal affluence makes more resources available for the distributive game that mobilizes ethnocultural groups around clientelistic linkages. Of course, ethnocultural mobilization remains exogenous to all these other causal factors insofar as there must be a feasibility space of cultural markers – preferably markers also associated with distributive impacts on the division of labor and distribution of economic rewards in a society – without which politicians could not even conceive a promising strategy of ethnocultural interest mobilization.

### **Plan of the book**

The first chapters in the book – by van de Walle, Medina and Stokes, and Chandra – focus on the conditionality of linkage mechanisms, providing general theoretical accounts of how levels of economic development, party competition, and ethnocultural diversity interact to determine different levels of clientelism. Van de Walle’s opening piece on democratization in sub-Saharan Africa reminds us that not only programmatic linkage mechanisms, but also clientelistic citizen–politician relations, are arrangements that presuppose material resources and organizational capacities that do not exist in every country. Under some conditions of extreme poverty and lack of democratic experience, political and economic conditions may at least initially permit only what van de Walle, following Joseph and Weber, calls “prebendal” exchange networks within a rather small political elite. Such relations of accountability may later be expanded in more full-fledged clientelistic systems, an evolution van de Walle expects to take place in the future democratization of sub-Saharan Africa. In what is a purely theoretical model, but with parameter settings that approximate most clearly to countries at intermediate levels of wealth, Medina and Stokes highlight the importance of competitive conditions between partisan incumbents and challengers in shaping linkage strategies. Economic development is a big driving force of democratic linkage formation because resource constraints shape the calculations of voters and politicians. At intermediate levels of development, however, there is sufficient socioeconomic heterogeneity and inequality to generate rather different cost–benefit calculations, such as those made by lower tiers of poor

peasants and menial workers, but also those of higher tiers of well-paid engineers and professionals. Contingent upon the competitiveness of the electoral contest and the distribution of voters with different cost-benefit calculations over clientelism and programmatic policy rewards, politicians choose different linkage strategies *vis-à-vis* voters. The empirical analysis of the subsequent four chapters with cases drawn from Latin America and the post-communist region supports this general argument. Chandra adds to the analyses of van de Walle and Medina and Stokes by demonstrating how conditions of party competition and ethnocultural pluralism interact and lead strategic politicians to highlight specific ethnocultural markers as a vote-getting strategy in an overwhelmingly clientelistic setting.

The second set of chapters, by Wilkinson and Krishna, illustrate the strategic logic of linkage formation under conditions of weak development and considerable democratic experience. Here inter-party competitiveness does not reduce clientelism, but reinvigorates it. Under conditions of comparatively widespread poverty and weak development, politicians do not really have an alternative to clientelistic strategies. The intensity and specific nature of clientelistic politics, however, varies with the nature of the party system and ethnocultural mobilization. Both Wilkinson and Krishna show how the economy is politicized, at the state and national level, as a resource employed for clientelistic network building.

The following chapters deal with countries under conditions of intermediate economic development, i.e. roughly, per capita gross domestic product in the range of \$5,000 to \$10,000 purchasing power parity corrected in 2000. Such polities are particularly common in Latin America and post-communist Eastern Europe, the regions from which evidence is drawn in our chapters. The work of Jomo and Gomez (1999) suggests that Southeast Asia might furnish further cases of democratic linkage building under conditions of intermediate development. In these polities, conditions of living and economic rationales of citizens are sufficiently varied to open spaces for some vote-seeking politicians to abandon clientelism as the dominant linkage strategy and to add or to substitute programmatic appeals in their menus of linkage building. How exactly politicians' strategies of differentiating their mixes of linkage efforts play out, however, depends again very much on the interaction of socioeconomic conditions with our three other theoretical elements.

Lyne details how cost-benefit calculations of politicians and voters at intermediate levels of development in Brazil may eventually contribute to a change in linkage patterns. Although Brazil has electoral institutions often seen as inhibiting programmatic party competition, some voters and politicians may begin to abandon clientelism, as economic development

proceeds and electoral competition intensifies. Next, Magaloni et al. demonstrate for Mexico, in an elegant comparative analysis of subnational politics, how local settings induce politicians to vary linkage strategies, contingent upon levels of local development and electoral competitiveness. With more qualitative evidence, Levitsky makes a similar point in his comparison of the linkage strategies practiced by the Argentinean Peronists over time and by four further erstwhile hegemonic parties in additional Latin American countries. Levitsky also considers political-economic governance and liberalization as a vital trigger, but also as an effect of partisan linkage strategies. Whether or not parties can find electorally promising linkage strategies in an environment of economic liberalization, however, depends on the parties' internal organization. The final chapter in this part, by Hale on Russian democratic politics in the 1990s, combines many of the Latin American themes in a statistical model of electoral success in single-member seats for the national *Duma*. Based on an ingeniously designed measure of clientelism, Hale can show that not only variance in socioeconomic development across Russia, but also ethnocultural networks and political-economic conditions play an important role in shaping the locally prevailing nature of democratic linkages.

The fourth and final set of chapters deals with postindustrial capitalist democracies, i.e., the socioeconomic conditions under which conventional developmental arguments expect the least clientelism and the greatest vulnerability of clientelism to a switch in linkage strategies. This places the greatest burden of explaining clientelistic politics on variables other than development. We therefore asked two authors to pay particular attention to the core variables featured in institutionalist explanations of linkage strategies, namely electoral systems and federalism, on which there is considerable variation within this group of countries.<sup>31</sup> Both Müller's cross-sectional comparative analysis and Scheiner's longitudinal analysis of electoral systems and clientelism find that institutional explanations of linkage mechanisms are rather weak. They cannot be entirely discounted, when tested against a limited sample of cases, but they leave considerable variance unexplained. Moreover, institutions may themselves be endogenous to other conditions that generate clientelistic or programmatic party competition. For this reason, Scheiner and the final cross-national contribution by Kitschelt pick up political-economic

<sup>31</sup> This leaves out executive-legislative relations ("presidentialism") on which there is rather little variance among contemporary affluent democracies, except the United States. Finland and France can be characterized at most as semi-presidential systems, and that may not fully reveal how similar their operation is to run-of-the-mill parliamentary systems.

explanations, interacted with the level of inter-party competitiveness in a polity, to account for major shifts in democratic linkage building. Performance crises of the industries and sectors most commonly exploited for clientelistic purposes generate intensified party competition and anti-clientelistic backlashes that may lead to the demise of clientelistic politics. Where competition remains lop-sided, such as in Japan until the advent of the twenty-first century, even under conditions of economic crisis in the state penetrated sector, however, clientelism can hold on tenaciously, even though in a more subdued fashion than in earlier decades.

In polities characterized by different levels of economic development linkage strategies play out differently. That much is correct about a developmentalist perspective. But in order to account for the subtle choices politicians make in designing relations of accountability and responsiveness to voters, it is indispensable to examine politicians' and voters' strategic calculations taking into account the interaction between economic resource endowments, partisan competitiveness, political-economic governance structures, and ethnocultural diversity.