

**CLIENTELISM AS A POLITICAL INCENTIVE STRUCTURE FOR  
CORRUPTION**  
(Draft Version)

Ramón Máiz

Roberto Requejo

University of Santiago de Compostela

The objective of this article is to explore the relationship between political clientelism and certain forms of corruption from the perspective of the exchange circuits that characterize both of these pathologies of democracy. Using the available case studies of Southern Europe and our own research on Galicia (Spain), the following analysis will attempt to sketch a theoretical model that might be useful in clarifying the relations between these two heavily debated and controversial informal practices.

There have been several stages in the sociological and political science research on the possible connections between clientelism – the direct exchange of votes for favours (Graziano, 1974, 1984; Eisenstadt & Lemarchand, 1981; Eisenstadt & Roniger, 1984; Roniger, 1990, 1994) – and corruption – the misuse of public power for private personal or party gain (Huntington, 1968; Heidenheimer, 1978; Johnston, 1986; Theobald, 1990; Heywood, 1997; Rose Ackerman, 1999).

For a long time the analyses of clientelism considered corruption as one more component of clientelist exchanges, highlighting the essential continuity between these two phenomena. It was even common to use the terms clientelism and corruption interchangeably. Thus, for example, Heidenheimer, Johnston and Levine's (1989) *Political Corruption, A Handbook* includes contributions referring to corruption and others referring to clientelism without corruption. Likewise, Cazzola's work on Italy (1988, 1992) placed a particular emphasis on the continuities between these two phenomena (exchanging favours, general distrust, absence of civic culture, etc.).

However, more recently researchers in this field have tended to conceptually separate the two. Thus, for example, Della Porta insists on the diverse modalities of exchange – votes for favours in clientelism versus money for favours in corruption – along with the absence of political subordination in the second case (Della Porta, 1992, 1995). Caciagli, in turn, dedicated a book to overview the conceptual distinctions between clientelism, corruption and organized crime, providing an analysis of the autonomous physiology of the three phenomena, even though in reality they are superimposed or overlapping. Thus, for example, asymmetry of power and general respect for the law tend to be characteristics of clientelism that are not present in corruption (Caciagli, 1996).

Now, given that any research on the matter must begin by differentiating these phenomena substantively and constructing the corresponding concepts autonomously (Christopoulos, 1998), one prominent question remains. It is important to explain the reasons why clientelism and corruption are often superimposed in real life.

Thus, we enter a third stage in the debate, which constitutes the subject of this paper: the empirical association between clientelism and corruption, the coexistence of both phenomena as an object of analysis to be explained, not just stated. This paper seeks to address whether there is a causal nexus that might explain this coexistence, something in clientelism and in corruption that encourages initiating corrupt exchanges in order to stabilize clientelist networks, and whether in these networks there might be a mechanism or circumstance which at times would allow the incorporation of corrupt exchanges.

There are very diverse modes of political corruption, which may be linked to poor administration, organized crime or even clientelism. Della Porta has explored how corrupt exchanges extend in order to establish clientelist networks. Here, however, we will focus on *corrupt clientelism* or “bastard patronage” (Moss, 1995). This consists of a vicious circle: clientelism 1 – corruption – clientelism 2. It occurs when the clientelist exchange – for reasons which we need to analyse – requires or facilitates the incorporation of corrupt exchanges for the purpose of reproducing itself, thus altering certain basic features (resources, actors, legality) that characterize party clientelism in its strictest sense.

In the following pages we shall briefly argue that: 1) various constituent elements of clientelist exchanges and especially of the incentive structure that actors face, 2) facilitate a potential overlapping with varieties of corruption in certain contexts and situations. However, the analysis of both these questions would require re-examining the concept of clientelism and focusing on some of its key dimensions.

Specifically, the question that we will attempt to answer is whether it is possible to isolate institutional mechanisms and contexts that might explain the empirical association between clientelism and corruption. In order to do this we propose an explanation that links the two dimensions: 1) to examine from a functional–systemic standpoint the nature of the exchanges characteristic of these two phenomena and the networks by which they are established as informal institutions; and 2) from a micro foundations perspective, to seek actor based causal mechanisms that illuminate why clientelism and corruption constitute nested circuits from a rational actor’s perspective.

This does not imply that these basically neo-institutionalist and rational choice explanations get to the bottom of the object of study in all its complexity, nor shall we deny the pertinence of cultural explanations of corruption and clientelism (Heidenheimer, Caciagli, Pizzorno). The propensity to corruption in a certain political culture may constitute a decisive explanatory factor since it favours an environmental predisposition towards clientelist and corrupt practices. In fact, variations in the density of corruption often depend more on people’s willingness to be corrupted, that is, on the moral cost of the corruption, than on the structure of incentives at a given time (Pizzorno, 1992: 42).

However, given that we shall examine corruption from the standpoint of clientelism, it seems important to explain the relationship between the structure of incentives that actors face - which determines their behaviour - and the interaction between structural variations and strategies for adapting to them (Máiz, 1994, 1996). This may contribute to lessening the chronic theoretical and comparative deficit in studies on clientelism.

### 1.- *Clientelist linkage and indirect exchange.*

Our examination of the clientelism phenomenon will begin with the specific nature of the *clientelist linkage* as an ideal type characterized by the *exchange* of favours or material benefits for votes for a politician or party, in contrast with the *programmatic linkage*, which distributes benefits and costs among voters through public policies and universal criteria, whether or not they vote for the party. In this examination of the functions that political parties must carry out, our analytical approach follows Chefter (1994), Aldrich, (1995), Warner (1997), Kitschelt (2000a, 2000b, 2000c). For parties to acquire not only institutional but full functional status, they must resolve two key problems: one concerning *collective action* and the other concerning *social choice*. The solution to the first problem requires an adequate mobilization of resources for building a stable *organisation* that facilitates the goal of selecting and supporting candidates, while also simplifying the voters' choices by reducing the number of competitive alternatives and options. The answer to the second problem is closely linked to the first. It requires an internal reduction in the complexity of preferences within the organisation and the establishment of a *programme* for the entire party to present before the voters.

Kitschelt has insisted on the close linkage between these two dimensions (organisation and programme). The elaboration of the programme, that is, the choice of a certain order of preferences among possible options and the official support by the candidates in the elections requires a significant internal organisational effort and a complicated variety of mechanisms for conflict resolution (Kitschelt, 2000a), along with a significant degree of centralization (Hinich and Munger, 1994: 64). Only after achieving this simplification of information will the party be able to face the voters as a differentiated political alternative, with issue positions located on the left-right ideological orientation axis based on a synthesis of the programme principles.

So through a significant effort at "institutionalisation" (Panebianco, 1982), parties dominated by programmatic linkages may be functionally characterized as having achieved acceptable resolutions of *both* the collective action and social choice problems. This establishes a stable and consolidated organisation with a programme that identifies the party on the competitive level. In a very different manner, the parties dominated by clientelist linkages are characterized by intense political

organisation efforts but *no* investment in internal clarification and negotiation of a programmatic type. Rather, the party's organisation hinges on networks that exchange votes for favours and individual material benefits. In contrast with the traditional clientelism based on prominent figures, the modern clientelist parties' organisation may reach a high degree of complexity in flows of resources and political support, articulating multilevel exchange networks that link local, regional and central governments.

As a consequence of this programmatic deficit, the key conceptual element that distinguishes clientelist parties from programmatic ones must be found in the nature of the *exchanges* between politicians and voters in each of them (Graciano, 1984). A party based on a programmatic linkage will present an *indirect* type of exchange, that is to say, these parties offer sets of public policies to voters with the promise that they will implement them once they govern, so that in general terms – although there is increasing debate on this matter – incumbency would depend in good measure on keeping these promises (Klingemann, Hoffebert and Budge, 1994; Przeworsky, Stokes and Manin, 1999; Barreiro, 1999). In turn, voters perceive public policies according to universal and codified criteria, even if they did not vote for the governing party. The exchange is indirect precisely because it is mediated by a programme, or more exactly, by synthesised programmatic principles, which give the electorate a visual summary of information on the party's location.

Hinich and Munger labelled this stylisation of the programme, this image showing the electorate what the party's relative position is vis-à-vis its competitors, as its *ideology*. These authors follow the original position of Downs that political parties do not organize themselves around policy positions or issues but around ideologies, which are not personal belief systems but messages indicating “what is good, who gets what and who rules”. Thus the political choice menu available to citizens is determined by viable ideological positions. In turn, this viability is a function of the very discursive nature of the ideology and the success of the party organisation in popularising the message and orienting the government's policies (Hinich and Munger, 1994).

In contrast, things are very different under clientelism. The clientelist linkage provides a *direct* exchange, as voters trade votes for material resources provided by

the politicians, rather than following a costly process of aggregating interests and distilling a programmatic ideology. So the organisational effort focuses on establishing connections and links for exchanges and a particularistic distribution of resources via unmediated concrete and material exchanges, instead of following universal criteria oriented towards public policies. The direct exchange between someone that controls resources and someone that lacks them will generate instrumental friendship links that simultaneously are bonds of subservience, “lopsided friendships”. The presence of this direct exchange is precisely what distinguishes clientelism from “personal voting” (Cain, Ferjohn, Fiorina, 1987). The two are sometimes confused, but the latter consists in that a politician mediates in favour of voters when a bureaucracy fails to fulfil its function in a reasonable amount of time, which the politician then uses as a means of establishing personal electoral support. Constituency service distributes resources that are credited to the party, not the government, so that certain politicians may even develop stronger support than their party. In general terms, those who dedicate more time and resources to constituency service will be rewarded with greater popularity, higher esteem, and thus become more easily re-elected in their district (Cain et al., 1987: 213). But clientelism is overtly partisan, offering its followers a direct exchange of votes for individual favours. Thus, it “may be conceptualised as the individualisation and personalisation of pork barrel allocations” (Golden, 2000: 10). So it does not distribute collective benefits to an entire district or circumscription, but to individuals or specific groups via the exchange circuit and network.

This last aspect is especially important. In effect, the benefits provided by clientelism are predominantly of a club or semiprivate goods type, while those provided by programmatic linkage tend to be public goods. It is true, as Kitschelt has pointed out, that: 1) in favourable institutional contexts (i.e., highly fragmented party systems with single issue parties for specific constituencies) certain programmatic parties can develop provisions for rent seeking interests; and 2) it is difficult to operationalise empirical criteria and indicators in order to teleologically determine whether the nature of political parties’ programme proposals are universal or rent-providing for specific population segments. However, the structural nature of direct exchanges in clientelism implies a much greater potential for distributing club or

semiprivate goods as selective incentives. In other words, the strength of the clientelist linkage lies precisely in that the goods exchanged for votes are directly and entirely homogeneous with the individual rationality of the actors that participate in the exchange. In contrast, the programmatic linkage contains an important *disincentive* derived from the universal criteria that constitute the *programmatic accountability* of normal public policies: it seeks to distribute collective goods. The clientelist linkage distributes material benefits exclusively to partisans who support and vote for the party that offers the benefits, generating a peculiar *particularistic accountability* by which voters demand specific and individual favours or services from the politician, sidestepping general public policies' criteria. This has been expressed marvellously in Merton's classic study: "Help, you understand; none of your law and justice, but help" (Merton, 1949).

## 2. – *Patronage as an informal institution.*

At the beginning we mentioned that in order to understand clientelism, corruption, and their relationship with each other, one must establish the micro foundations, the actor-based causal mechanisms that specify how the individual and collective actors resolve collective action and social choice problems. Now, it is the structure of individual choice situations, the set of incentives facing individuals, which orient their possible courses of action while inhibiting or blocking other courses. For this reason "[it] is the structure which does most of the explanatory work" (Dowding, 1994: 112).

In this sense, Flap, Roniger and others have pointed out that clientelism carries out a lot of the functions of a bureaucracy (providing information, distributing scarce resources, social integration, etc.). So it may be conceptualised as an *informal institution* (Flap, 1990: 228; Roniger, 1990: XIV). From the beginning, researchers have highlighted that this phenomenon is based upon a specific structure of social networks (Scott, 1972; Singelman, 1975; Boissevain, 1974). Thus, network mediation through brokerage constitutes the mechanism by which the direct exchange of favours for votes takes place in the clientelist linkage parties. In addition, the dyadic power relations between patrons and clients extend in a capillary fashion

within broader political networks so that the patrons themselves become, in turn, clients of more powerful patrons (Knoke, 1990: 126). For this reason, in a strict sense clientelist networks are political resources, so that one must add to the first order of magnitude resources (favours, votes, etc.) other *second magnitude resources* (personal connections and relationships, instrumental friendships, etc.) that become the required channels for obtaining individualised mutual benefits.

The consolidation and extension of clientelist networks operates as a powerful incentive structure that restricts the alternatives available to the actors. And, as with every structure, strongly entrenched clientelist networks are relatively enduring once established, or in historical institutionalism path dependency terms, they are enduring legacies of past trajectories and political struggles (Ikenberry, 1994). So one facet of the analysis should be to explain its reproductive mechanisms, while another would be to explain the events or processes that may undermine the institutional legacies in its various contexts (Thelen, 1999: 392).

No matter how different the contexts are, the basic structure of clientelist networks imposes similar basic restrictions on the alternatives available to the actors involved, resulting in diverse crystallizations and strategies derived from the specific history of their countries. More specifically, students of clientelism have repeatedly pointed out that the clientelist network implies not only a relationship of exchanging votes for favours, which is mutually and reciprocally beneficial, but that this relationship is also essentially *unequal and asymmetrical*, that is, it implies subordination of the clients to the patron. This is due to the peculiar structure of second magnitude resources within the clientelist network, which are structured as *dark social capital*. In effect, its social capital consists of the expected value of future support (Flap, 1987; De Graaf and Flap, 1988). This works in such a way that individuals spend their resources on others, not only due to the efficacy at the time, but also for the future benefit derived from a network of pre-existing relationships. Coleman defines these social structure resources by their productive function in facilitating or blocking certain actions of those who are integrated in these structures, as a property of these structures “embodied in the relations among persons” (Coleman, 1990: 315).



The central feature of clientelist social capital is the establishment of social networks with *no horizontal closure*. This is articulated by exclusively vertical links between client – patron/broker, and the patron may in turn be the client of a broker with more resources, thus blocking the possibility of horizontal contacts between the clients. As Coleman has pointed out, this becomes decisive, not only for the vertical relationship favourable to the patron, which generates power as “a property of the actor in the system” (Coleman, 1990: 133), but also for the *inhibition of collective action* by the clients. According to Binmore and Dasgupta, “it is a major and fundamental error to take it for granted that because certain cooperative behaviour will benefit every individual in a group, rational individuals will adopt this behaviour” (Binmore and Dasgupta, 1986: 24).

Thus, in Figure 1, given a closed social network and the existence of a relationship - of information or trust - between B, C and D, they may establish a cooperative relationship vis-à-vis A, as shown graphically. However, this possibility is blocked or strongly inhibited in an open vertical clientelist social network, where B, C and D only have a relationship of trust with A, but competitively distrust each other. Any development of the horizontal or clientelist network as a cluster can only occur with new vertical links, via exchanges of information and mutual trust between patron and client, never horizontally between clients.

(Figure 1 about here)

In addition, fundamental dimensions of political clientelism as a social exchange logic, as a network of instrumental relationships and political capital, are not only the asymmetry between patron and client but also trust. This may be seen as “a particular level of the subjective probability with which an agent assesses that another agent or group of agents will perform a particular action, both *before* he can monitor such action...*and* in a context in which it affects *his own* action” (Gambetta, 1988: 217). Trust, as an “assumption of shared reliability” (Roniger, 1990: 10), decisively encourages individuals’ participation in the social exchange, which is the nucleus of political clientelism, despite uncertainty and risk (Blau, 1968: 454; Coleman, 1990), thus providing a perspective that insures a “leap into the future” (Luhman, 1979: 13).

But just as the clientelist exchange is, as mentioned, a *direct* exchange, the characteristic type of trust in clientelism is *trust focalisation* (Roniger, 1990: 16), which contrasts with general, universal and impersonal confidence in others and in the institutions of social capital and the policies of programmatic linkage of political parties and formal representative institutions. Trust focalisation is a manner of extending trust via specific contexts and personal links that are particularistic, centred on specific (personalised) actors. First of all, then, personalised confidence depends on specific actors and concrete experiences, which makes it difficult to generalise to other social actors outside the production circuit. So then, the social inhibition of confidence even in the presence of common interests, superimposes itself upon the absence of social interaction and communication that is characteristic of a vertical clientelist network. Second, and in consequence, the focalised disaggregation through the vertical clientelism network becomes compatible with - or even encourages - broad distrust between equals.

Thus, clientelism not only emerges among them, but also reproduces these social contexts characterised by extensive distrust, constituting a peculiar mechanism that transmits a strange political economy of distrust. Locally based and particularistic dark social capital impedes the extension of social capital based on group links around shared interests. The absence of trust generates an important disincentive for collective action by blocking the cooperation between clients. In order to mobilise politically, actors need to have sufficient motives (common interests) and trust in others (as Williams, 1988, points out contrary to Axelrod, 1984), or confidence that others trust in you (Vélez Ibáñez, 1983). Otherwise, as Gambetta states, “in a politically and economically untrustworthy world which is not lacking in scope for social mobility, and where *le pouvoir de la faveur* prevails over justice and merit, the sole remaining merit is in fact that of seeking *la faveur* from those above, extorting it out of one’s equals...and only personal relations – where distrust is less threatening – count and are believed to count as means of social mobility” (Gambetta, 1988: 163).

### 3.- *The client and patron/broker dilemmas*

Although the clientelist structure tends to last, it does not necessarily reproduce itself naturally. On the contrary, the reproductive dimension of the clientelist institution demands attention. Even though from the perspective of the client's options it is clear that the patron's position is relatively stable and reinforcing given the limitations to cooperative action between clients, there are other more problematic aspects.

In fact, due to its own mechanism, the clientelist linkage is unstable when faced with a series of potential threats:

1. exhausted or decreasing resources for the clientele
2. competition between patrons
3. competition with parties involving programmatic links

A patron/broker must invest extensive resources (time, organisation, money...) in order to maintain a network. So, along with *systemic power*, as a property of the actor in the system, we must add an additional dimension that is more dynamic: *social power* (Dowding, 1991: 48). Social power does not refer to the initial and unequal distribution of resources between actors, nor to their location in a network of vertical relationships and the related limitations on horizontal relations between clients, but to the broker's capacity to manipulate the incentives structure that the clients face. In order for the patron/broker to be competitive, he or she needs to overcome three challenges and threats to the network, providing modifications and adjustments to the clients' incentives structure in order to be competitive in the midst of other potential or real providers of favours. New resources and new sources of financing must continually be sought out in order to maintain the clientelist machinery. This does not occur on its own, but requires: 1) active involvement by the actors, maintaining loyalty and focalised trust in the patron in spite of eventual competitors and decreasing resources, and 2) the construction of "reproductive mechanisms" for the institution (Thelen, 1999: 390), in order to ward off alternative institutional competitors or changes in the context.

Above all, the supply of selective incentives is decisive in maintaining the clientele, given that: 1) the solidity of the network is a by-product of the broker's

ability as a political entrepreneur to provide selective incentives for the clients; and 2) the inequality of the various clients' and patrons' access to public resources becomes a decisive issue in the intermediation and distribution of selective incentives.

In this sense, if we analyse the usual constraints on participation pointed out in the literature (Knoke, 1990; Dunleavy, 1991), we can establish how the clientelist network provides significant incentives for overcoming all of them:

1. Clientelism's focus on divisible and excludable benefits. Excessively collective benefits and the provision of public goods tends to favour free rider attitudes by individual actors who seek to gain things at the lowest personal cost with the least personal implication. In contrast, clientelist exchange provides material benefits that are divisible and personalised, with the possibility of excluding those who do not belong to the network. Programmatic parties will not be able to exclude members of the clientelist network from the benefits generated by their policies, so clientelist network members assure for themselves at least the same services as the rest of the programmatic voters.
2. The irrelevance of individual participation to supply. In large and medium sized groups the individual contribution is irrelevant, and when this is extensive it becomes a serious inhibition to participation. Clientelism structurally counterbalances this with personalisation, using bilateral links of mutually beneficial reciprocity, reinforced with focalised trust, which highlights each client's contribution.
3. The invisibility of not joining. The third great inhibition to participation is that it is impossible to identify each individual actor, which in turn impedes applying sanctions or rewards. Clientelism counters this with a structure of local networks that give each actor an extraordinary visibility in limited contexts that are almost communitarian in regards to loyalty to the patron and active implication in the network.
4. The low probability of sanctions for not joining. The vertical structure and the presence of power in the clientelist structure allows the distribution of negative selective incentives by stick and carrot strategies: public policies based on universal criteria are replaced with a set-up that excludes

outsiders from the benefits while providing favours for followers, which causes the cost of not joining to rise steeply.

5. Distrust and uncertainty about cooperative behaviour by other potential members. Clientelism generates not only focalised and vertical trust, but also general distrust in programmatic politics (and in the rest of the citizens, the political parties, the representative institutions, etc.). Clients fear that if they opt for programmatic politics, others may opt for clientelist politics, which will tend to spread clientelism.

Moving from the incentives structure to the actors, clientelism must demonstrate that it is more beneficial than the ordinary politics of programmatic linkage, since it provides direct exchanges for both parties under the conditions already mentioned, although there are costs incurred in providing these benefits. The clientelist exchange will take place if and only if two conditions are met (Heath, 1976: 104):

1. the contributions that the client provides to the clientelist party or the broker are less burdensome than those required by a programmatic linkage party or collective mobilization.

2. the contributions provided by the client are less costly for the clientelist party or broker than those that are obtained by an organisational effort and a programme.

But let us briefly examine the reasons actors opt for the clientelist linkage. The citizens' options are those of a typical prisoner's dilemma: either cooperate with the programmatic linkage politics, or do not cooperate and instead work with the network of some local patron. Thus, in Fiorina and Noll's facilitation model, which analyses the relations between supporters and legislators, the situation of the voters is such that even when collective rationality would lead them to vote for programmatic parties, they find themselves trapped in an individual logic where all the incentives are in favour of voting for parties that provide goods and services (Fiorina and Noll, 1978a, 1978b). Barbara Geddes formulated a patron-client game as an iterated prisoner's dilemma, so that politicians will lose electoral support unless they provide public employment along partisan lines, and if the clients do not support the patron they lose their public employment that was provided as a personal favour. As a result,

we find ourselves in a *politician's dilemma* vis-à-vis the democratic reform policies in Latin American countries: the whole country would benefit from a reform that ended the job patronage policies, but no political party or individual politician has incentives to unilaterally change the situation. Thus, although widely perceived as desirable, reforms tend not to occur (Geddes, 1994).

Given that our objective is to seek possible links between clientelism and corruption, we will focus on the collective action problems that clients have when voting (or becoming members) of programmatic parties in the context of historically entrenched clientelist parties. Then we shall examine how this affects the reproduction of the clientelist system. This may be modelled as a game involving two players (voter 1 and voter 2) who face a dilemma: a) NOT COOPERATE (D) and vote for the clientelist patron, who has proven the efficacy of the network that transforms public goods into semiprivate or private ones through favours. Public resources are prioritised for the clientele, and only the surplus is invested in regular public policies. Or b) COOPERATE (C) and vote for programmatic political options - parties that provide public goods and services through a more or less efficient process that is normal, following the regular political decision and policy channels.

The possible results of the game would be: 1) regular public policies – all the resources are invested in policies that dispense them in a regular fashion through the institutional mechanisms of democracy; and 2) subpolicies: those policies that are financed with surplus resources once the patron has satisfied the clientele, with 3) favours: material and personalised benefits provided by the clientelist party without any costs, control or limitations due to issues of decision-making, procedures or responsiveness.

As can be seen in Figure 2, voters face a typical prisoner's dilemma when choosing a party to vote for (or join). They may choose to vote for a programmatic party that proceeds to implement regular public policies along universal and legal criteria using controls and priorities based on programmatically accountable decision policies, distributing public goods equally to everyone according to general distribution criteria. But in doing this they lose the personalised and unrestricted favours typical of semiprivate or private goods, along with the corresponding guarantee of material benefits. Therefore, even though the collective rationality

would suggest that they should vote for the programmatic party as the solution with most social value, from an individual perspective the most rational thing is to vote for the clientelist party. So, each individual voter that did this would obtain: 1) the benefits of the public policies at the available level (subpolicies), from which there is no possible exclusion, and 2) the personal favours gained through the clientelist party. In addition, as summarized in Figure 1, those who are already incorporated into the clientelist network are unable to coordinate their actions due to the vertical structure with no horizontal outlets. So even if they did have similar interests, it would be difficult for them to establish cooperation and trust in defiance of the local patron/broker's power. Also, the series of positive and negative selective incentives (favours and sanctions) characteristic of the clientelist network do nothing but reinforce the superiority of the clientelist exchange from each individual actor's cost/benefit perspective. When both vote for the programmatic party, the cooperation situation becomes unstable as both voters have material and personalised selective incentives to vote for the clientelist party, which would at least guarantee the benefits from the subpolicies shared with the programmatic voters, but only collective, identity and universal incentives to vote for the programmatic party, which cannot exclude them from its policies.

So, for each of the voters, the worst possible outcome would be to vote for the programmatic party (or join it) while the other voter sides with the clientelist network and obtains short term favours with no programmatic control while also sharing subpolicies (CD for voter 1, DC for voter 2). In contrast, the best situation for each of them is to play the clientelist card and let the other voter side with the programmatic party (DC for voter 1, CD for voter 2). In this fashion the voter or member of the clientelist party would enjoy the private or semiprivate favours and goods while the programmatic voter would have to adjust to the legal requirements and procedures and the regular public policy decision criteria, while also receiving a lower level of resources because they have first been funnelled through the clientelist exchange circuit. So, voting for a programmatic party implies a sub optimal political level: subpolicies. The instability of this option lies in that both voters will attempt to unilaterally join the clientelist linkage.

An important factor from the party perspective is that there arises competition between the clientelist circuit and the programmatic linkage. Each will offer its own public or private benefits, becoming even more intense as the material benefits inflate the cost of the policy, requiring that the brokers access additional resources in order to maintain their reputation as providers that satisfy demands.

Thus, a spiral begins, in that if clientelism becomes substantial, the demand for favours in exchange for votes will grow in the political arena, while the clientelist parties reinforce their position vis-à-vis the electorate and increase their expectations of being re-elected instead of the programmatic opposition, which is always less efficient in this sort of service supply.

Since both voters seek to accommodate themselves to clientelism unilaterally, both will finally opt for it, which is a stable situation in the game. So in calculating that the other player will opt for clientelism, distrust adds additional individual reasons for not joining democratic politics. Thus the final outcome would be a stable situation in which both players side with clientelism (DD).

Now, it is interesting to highlight a significant issue for the parties: just as in the case of DC for voter 1 or CD for voter 2, this dominant choice of clientelism will diminish the available resources for distribution as private or semiprivate goods, and the mushrooming number of potential patrons seeking clients will intensify the competition between alternative brokers within the clientelist system. This, in turn, will have an immediate effect: a need for new resources in order to decrease the cost/benefit ratio vis-à-vis the other internal competitors within the system, so that the broker's reputation can be maintained as provider of favours.

(Figure 2 about here)

Based on what we have seen, from an individual actor's rational perspective, in the short run the only sensible choice is to vote for a clientelist linkage party, given the favourable cost/benefit ratio of personalised material favours. The same might be said concerning membership: from a short run utility perspective the best alternative for individuals that need resources would be to join a clientelist party with an emphasis on the instrumental dimension of membership (Chubb, 1982). The



extension of clientelism makes the “voice” option rather implausible for individual actors, due to the disincentives already mentioned, but the “exit” option remains (such as migrating to industrialized areas or to another country following established migratory patterns), or “loyalty”, that is, becoming a part of the clientelist fabric of a party dominated by the clientelist linkage.

However, a shadow arises from the prior analysis: the stability of the clientelist exchanges is threatened by external competition with programmatic parties and internal competition from other patrons/brokers in the clientelist system. A new round of the prisoner’s dilemma game might develop cooperative results that partially encourage the programmatic linkage between voters or parties, especially in cases of clients excluded or discriminated by the networks and minority parties lacking substantial clientelist linkages.

The consequences are clear: the initial power derived from the patron’s position in the system is insufficient, so additional social power must constantly be generated. Thus, the clients’ incentives structure must always be reoriented favourably so that it does not generate adverse effects. In sum, a reputation must be maintained vis-à-vis the programmatic parties and other alternative brokers, maintaining a flux of favours that capture new resources. It is entirely possible that the normal clientelist reproduction mechanisms are insufficient, requiring the inclusion of additional exchange circuits.

#### *4.- Overlapping circuits of clientelism and corruption*

This need to capture resources through the reproductive mechanisms of the clientelist institution gives rise to increasingly diffuse borders between it and corrupt exchanges, which initially were outside the usual patronage structures. The hypothesis presented here is that in certain situations the reproduction of clientelism as an institution may require: 1) an increase in illegality that is not a structural characteristic of the patronage phenomenon in a strict sense; and 2) the establishment of an overlapping vicious circle of clientelism 1 – corruption – clientelism 2.

The literature (Caciagli, Della Porta, Johnston) points out significant differences between clientelism and corruption:

- a) resources employed: money versus votes
- b) actors involved: voters–patron/broker versus civil servants, businesses/business politicians (Della Porta)
- c) presence of power: asymmetry versus equality
- d) legality versus illegality
- e) public versus secret

However, there are two factors providing continuity between clientelism and corruption: 1) both are based on the *direct exchange* of material benefits; and 2) both are built around *networks* that establish “un territorio politico a reticoli” (Pizzorno, 1992: 58). This structure does not establish strong or clear limits between the exchange circuits that lack programmatic accountability. So within the entire set of direct exchange networks, the relationship between the clientelist and corrupt linkages is that of nested networks, that is, circuits that are autonomous but due to their proximity and a search for greater stability through mobilizing resources (money, organisation, etc.), they may clash and overlap in certain contextual circumstances.

Della Porta (1992, 1995) has studied the Italian case of extending *corruption towards* clientelism, as certain corrupt politicians are able to create electoral strongholds and diffuse complicity, either by individualised favours or by informal groups and networks, thus superimposing (according to Eisenstadt and Roniger’s concept) highly personalised traditional forms (patron brokerage) or using organisationally and institutionally more complex forms of clientelist linkage (organisational clientelistic brokerage). In the same sense, Rose-Ackerman analyses the cases in which politicians accept illegal funds for their electoral campaigns and then use them to reward their voters individually, so the voters lack incentives to denounce the irregular financing because they either benefit from it or hope to (Rose-Ackerman, 1999: 137). Heywood has studied the Spanish case, where the legal financing is insufficient to fund the parties’ campaigns and the campaign finance laws have only been partially adhered to (Heywood, 1996: 126). Bicchieri and Duffy analyse corruption cycles, assuming that in order to be re-elected, corrupt politicians have to reward voters with material incentives (Bicchieri and Duffy, 1997: 479).

As mentioned at the beginning, here we are interested in examining *from the clientelism perspective* the overlapping of the two exchanges, which may be translated into the rise of a hybrid sort of patronage: corrupt clientelism or bastard clientelism. In the studies on Southern Europe (Heywood, 1994, 1997; Della Porta, 1995; Christopoulos, 1995; Mavrogordatos, 1997), as well as in our own research on Galicia (Máiz, 1993; Requejo, 2000), a new resource (money) is observed to have appeared in the midst of the “normal” clientelist exchange, along with an increasing role for new actors (businesses, “business politicians”). The evidence available indicates that it is not a mere coincidence but an empirical association owing to an underlying process or mechanism that needs to be explained.

So, let us return to the prisoner’s dilemma that the voters face vis-à-vis the two options, programmatic and clientelist linkages. We pointed out that although collective rationality would imply voting for programmatic parties, the best option for each individual in the short run is to join a clientelist circuit while the other voter participates in programmatic politics. However, this individual rationality tends toward a state of equilibrium in which both are ultimately incorporated into the clientelist circuit. This becomes decisive in explaining both the individual rationality that leads to the success of the clientelist linkage vis-à-vis the programmatic linkage, and the appearance of corrupt exchanges.

In principle, whenever the clientelist linkage politicians need resources to sustain their system, or at least to strategically manipulate the scarcity by maintaining expectations of benefits (Chubb, 1982: 156), it would seem as if a circumstantial decrease in the supply of resources would be translated into a system crisis. However, comparative politics shows that “machines tend to live beyond their means” (Bicchieri and Duffy, 1997: 479). That is to say, the clientelist structure is institutionally resistant and it tends to last over time. The patron/broker’s reputation is able to resist occasional decreases in the flow of resources, and expectations may be frozen for a time. So, something more than a mere momentary decrease in resources is needed to destabilize the system. There are other factors that clearly affect the vulnerability already mentioned in the clientelist networks: internal and external competition from other providers of goods, and the restructuring of the institutional scenario due to multilevel fragmentation of government. That is:

1. The destabilization of clientelist networks due to a *relative* scarcity of resources as a result of: a) increasing competition with programmatic parties; and b) internal competition within the clientelist system once the generalization threshold has been reached.
2. The destabilisation of the network due to increasing political or administrative decentralisation and the appearance of autonomous networks at various decision-making levels, that generate their own exchange circuits and particular clienteles.

First of all, in contexts where there is a high degree of clientelist practices, a scarcity of resources to be distributed as selective incentives by the patron/broker from the administration and through the party may become endemic. As mentioned, clientelist networks are constantly threatened within the system by competing brokers. In fact, they must invest extensive resources (time, organisation, money...) to maintain or even regain control of their clienteles. In this internal competition within the clientelist system, the advantage is clearly on the side of *corrupt* patrons, that is, those who superimpose the exchange circuit of votes for favours with that of money for advantages and protection against the market or competition. It is important to maintain enough votes to overcome the danger of judicial or media intervention. Campaigns within the parties become increasingly expensive and are difficult to fund unless you have additional resources, and those who obtain money in corrupt exchanges may make donations to the party or local leaders, reinforcing clientelist links, winning allies in the administration at any level. In this sense, patron brokers or business politicians will be more competitive in clientelist terms than those who remain outside of this circuit, since the former 1) pay or participate in exchanging with civil servants advantages for money (clear market bribes) in order to gain an illegal restriction of competitors; 2) pay civil servants to speed up paperwork or obtain privileged information (incentive bonus bribes); or 3) pay to avoid tariffs, adherence to contracts, or taxes, etc. (lower cost bribes) (Rose Ackerman, 1999) (see Figure 3).

In the realm of competition between clientelist and programmatic linkages, clientelist parties are threatened by parties that offer programmatic accountability, political decisions and regular public policies. It is true that the individual voter's rationality compensates for this vulnerability: voters have important selective

incentives (positive and negative) encouraging them to vote for clientelist parties that distribute personalised benefits. We must not forget that the essence of the clientelist set-up is to “spare the chore of decision making” (Pye, 1985), lessening the costs for the politician and the voter. Now, if we add the recourse to illegality and corruption in the three senses already mentioned (generating complicity in the administration, paying favours to brokers, and consolidating the position of the patron in the network and the party), the stability of the clientelist option is substantial. The efficacy of corruption lies precisely in developing a *reinforcing mechanism* through lessening the costs of providing favours, which acts as a multiplier of the investment in social capital via illegal competition by the clientelist party vis-à-vis the programmatic one (Pizzorno, 1992).

In societies with broad distrust and weak civic culture (given that many of the conditions that cause the need for direct exchanges are in turn a path dependent outcome of the prior success of the clientelist system), programmatic parties have a hard time competing while remaining in the legal realm. Universal public policies supplying collective goods are at a disadvantage vis-à-vis someone who lowers the cost-benefit ratio using various forms of illegality and corruption. Broad segments of the electorate will demand that the programmatic parties facilitate services and personalised favours, thus punishing the establishment of legal means, planning along public criteria, regular public policies, etc.

In addition, there is an effect derived from the scarcity of resources caused by the external strict regulation of party finances and electoral campaigns or the increase in legal-rational control over these resources (subsidies, public expenditures, etc.). The need for funds to oil the machinery, to cover increasingly expensive electoral campaigns, to lower the cost-benefit ratio and be more competitive in the political market of distributing services, all open the door to corruption.

The second situation that generates overlapping networks refers to the relationship between clientelism as an informal institution and formal institutions such as the parliament, the government and the administration of a democracy. Specifically, increasing decentralisation and the rise of multilevel governments create a process of fragmented patronage that is extremely unstable concerning the clientele it develops, providing new avenues for corruption. Moss has analysed the Italian case

of burgeoning corruption in the 80's, explaining its continuity with clientelism as an effect of the destabilisation of traditional clientelist networks. The decentralisation process, with its multiplying scenarios and autonomy of political power arenas, allows patrons to operate at each of these levels. The need to create new links in multilevel governments, maintaining a reputation and an exchange network in the context of this complex and unstable *fragmented patronage*, encourages the development of corruption bridges as shown in Figure 3.

In summary, the causes derived from the selective incentives structures are: the presence in clientelist networks of direct exchanges of personalised material benefits, providing endogenous reasons for the institutional reproduction to require, as an additional mechanism, a hybrid structure including corruption. In situations of increasing internal competition (within networks) or external competition (with programmatic parties), the clientelist institution encourages actors to seek the reinforcements provided by illegal sources of funding. In the case of multilevel fragmentation of government, the autonomy of the new emerging decision-making scenarios forces the local brokers to develop autonomous arenas and to restructure and reinforce their clientele. This requires means for maintaining a reputation that, in the absence or scarcity of vertically provided resources, must be sought in corrupt exchanges, developing a new "reputation derived from the collection and distribution of illegal funds" (Moss, 1995: 84).

(Figure 3 about here).

A structural-institutional and actor-based model of clientelism shows that: 1) clientelism and corruption are two different phenomena (and the social scientist should develop different concepts for them) in regards to their exchange formats, actors involved and resources exchanged. However, they share an essential closeness: the logic and the indirect exchange networks for material and personalised benefits; 2) the strength of the clientelist linkage lies in the vertical structure of exchanging favours for votes: this allows the establishment of dependency, of social capital and focalised trust in the patron, while also producing general distrust between the clients and blocking any eventual coordination or cooperation between the clients since they

lack contact with each other; 3) at the same time, the vulnerability of the clientelist linkage lies in the asymmetry of the exchange: the hierarchical position and reputation of the broker require maintaining a flow or reasonable expectation of resources. Now, competition with programmatic parties or other potential brokers, the increasing exchanges of material benefits for votes that inflate political costs, along with the fragmentation of multilevel governments and the autonomy of the respective clienteles, require additional resources in order to improve the cost-benefit relationship vis-à-vis the competitors. This increasing demand for resources may be heightened by various institutional factors (increasing controls, legislation concerning party finances, etc.) that generate increasingly competitive and demanding contexts for establishing and maintaining the reputation of patronage. Once the vertical flow of resources has stopped or decreased, the contiguous indirect exchange circuits of clientelism and corruption along with the constant need for additional resources encourage a horizontal opening towards corrupt exchange while also superimposing corruption in the clientelism circuits. Corruption provides the funds that oil the machinery, reinforcing clienteles, consolidating positions within the party by financing campaigns or paying leaders, and establishing allies in the administration.

In sum, although the clientelist linkage as institution is relatively self-reinforcing, it becomes structurally unstable when attempting to reproduce itself due to the competition with programmatic parties and other brokers, along with institutional changes that alter the vertical flow of resources. The corruption phenomenon that we have labelled *corrupt clientelism or bastard patronage* constitute the mechanism for reproducing and reinforcing the clientelist linkage networks, facilitating the illegal provision of resources along a nested circuit of indirect exchange.

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