



An IAPSS Monthly Online Magazine

Volume 6: Issue 38

March-April 2011

***Clientelism and Paternalism in Politics:***

***Undemocratic institutions that emerge after financial and economic crises.***

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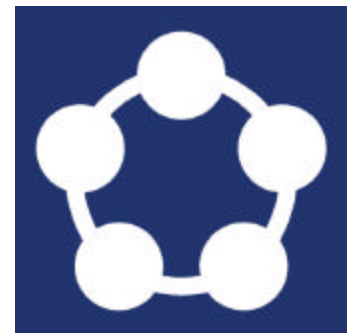
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## EDITORIAL

The IAPSS Online Magazine "A Different View" editorial team has the honor to welcome you to its March- April 2011 issue with the topic "*Clientelism and Paternalism in Politics: Undemocratic institutions that emerge after financial and economic crises*".

Political patronage and clientelism are institutionalized problems in many of the countries of flawed democracies. Eastern Europe, Latin America, Middle East and Southwest Asia are regions of the world where, although the predominant political system – and unquestionable – is democracy, are tainted by phenomena such as political patronage and clientelism.

The current political practices are stained by the exercise of undemocratic (institutionalized) practices, carried out through complex informal networks: Clientelism and Paternalism are the clearest examples of this kind of practices. These undemocratic institutions are the ones which constantly violate civil liberties of citizens. Above all, they undermine the concept of democracy itself.

Periodic elections are still far from transparency and freedom. Both attributes of democratic elections are only possible in the time when all citizens are free and equal (based on terms of economy and law). When political parties understand democracy functions as a market; and where the strongest political parties make a kind of coercion over the most vulnerable citizens (because of the unemployment and poverty situations), periodic elections do not guarantee full democratic outcome.

Mikheil Shavtvaladze, in his opinion article, aims to introduce ourselves into Georgia reality. The author attempts to describe the problems that Georgia is having to consolidate democracy, and how informal practices such clientelism and paternalism persist in this country. Shavtvaladze relate closely the high levels of unemployment and poverty with Clientelism and Paternalism phenomena. He considers that guarantying freedom of expression and to alternatives sources of information, strengthen republican mechanism of government, and increasing the accountability

and, at last but not least, giving universal right of education, Georgia will achieve the genuine democratic reforms that needs .

Julio Leonidas Aguirre academic article attempts to develop a general typology of the most common studies of political clientelism in Argentina, identifying the macro-political approaches and the micro-political approaches. He defines clientelism as a particular way of regulating social conflict in a context of low institutional development and high social demands. At the same time he explores the dual matter in which clientelism operates. He aims to demonstrate that analyzing political clientelism we can found out undercover cultural and political patterns of our societies. Adopting Hopkin's categories (2006) Aguirre focuses on the "old" and "new" clientelism dimension. His article is very useful not only to understand the categories that Argentineans use for studying clientelism but also for the presentation of the state of the art of the topic in discussion.

On our interview to Gabriela Ippolito-O'Donnell PhD, she addresses political clientelism in Latin America, and describes how this concept, highly influenced by different normative and/or empirical perspective, and above all; it involves an asymmetrical power relationship between two agents (individual or collective), in which one of them controls resources that the other one considers valuable and that is not capable to obtain by itself. At the same time she remarks the advance and consolidation of political clientelism parallel to the increase of poverty and even more so inequality. Professor Ippolito-O'Donnell invites us to explore the substantial elements of democracy and the importance of the active civil society roll in the fight to overcome clientelism and paternalism. She ends the interview with a clever reflection about today's situation in Middle East and the roll of political scientists.

On the behalf of ADV editorial team, I hope you enjoy of the lecture of those interesting and reach contributions.

Gabriela Marzonetto.

# **Clientelism and paternalism as factors of poverty, inequality, corruption and undemocratic governance in Georgia**

*Mikheil Shavtvaladze*

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## **Introduction**

Despite, in his annual speech delivered to the Parliament of Georgia in 2009, the President Saakashvili announced the launch of the Second Wave of Democratic Reforms in Georgia, which actually was response to the consequences of the internal political instability (2007-2009) precipitated by government's undemocratic policies and injustices that followed with the devastating August War 2008 between Georgia and Russia as well as economic hardships caused by the Russian embargo in 2006 and the World's financial and economic crises, the genuine democratization process in Georgia are not yet visible and the informal practices such as clientelism and political patronage are still persistent in Georgian politics.

Even though the accelerated pursuit towards modernization of the country has become main policy priority for Saakashvili and its ruling elite, clientelistic and paternalistic approaches are not disregarded from their practices, and even more reinforced especially after the World economic crises and the August War 2008. Such practices are particularly apparent during the election periods, when the administration resources as well as coercion practices are employed extensively by the ruling party candidates to achieve its targeted results.

Moreover, there is well-grounded perception in the public that the jobs, bonuses and promotion opportunities, as in public as well as in private sphere, are distributed according to the degree of one's allegiance to the current regime namely to the President and its ruling United National Movement party (UNM).

Impoverished population, badly affected by such internal and external crises, becomes much more vulnerable to the manipulations and coercions from the government that by exercising those practices, as clientelism and political patronage, strengthens its grip and control over the society. For instance, special favors, resources and benefits are distributed unequally to those who are loyal to the existing ruling party regime but

leaving other citizens, e.g. those who oppose or hold different views mainly with respect to current situation in Georgia, in highly disadvantaged and marginalized position. This means that, in fact, the government absolutely ignores the true democratic reforms in Georgia and instead uses democratic rhetoric, mainly for the international community, to disguise its authoritarian rule.

As a result, in Georgia, the unemployment rate becomes even higher and poverty more pervasive and acute, increasing the inequality gap between the poor and rich. Although, after the so-called Rose Revolution, Saakashvili's government put a lot of effort and vast resources, usually obtained from Western donor organizations in the form of loans, grants, aids and other contributions, to strengthen the previously largely corrupt and weak state agencies and institutions unable to provide elementary public goods, the newly created institutions in post-revolutionary Georgia, though visually looking more modernized and well-equipped, have become only accountable to the ruling party and the President rather to the public. Consequently, this created unfavorable and unequal environment for the free expression and speech, free and fair elections, justice, property rights and democracy in general.

Furthermore, although, through the government controlled media stations, Georgia is continuously portrayed as a success story of the leading reformer country in the world, namely with respect to its neo-liberal economic reforms and institutional building, and the claim that is often based on the reports of leading international organizations such World Bank, in reality, besides territorial disputes and other external threats, the country seriously suffers with growing poverty, high unemployment rate, double-digit inflation, manipulated unfair elections, weak civil society and poorly institutionalized political parties added with highly centralized undemocratic political system.

### **How clientelism and paternalism have transformed in Georgia**

Guillermo O' Donnell, in his article *'Illusions about Consolidation'*, argues that such phenomena as clientelism and paternalism are mostly common in those countries which have either authoritarian or hybrid regime, where in the case of latter political system may resemble democracy, at least at the procedural level, however, in reality,

such system lack institutionalization and democratic consolidation. Hence, in such cases even if democracy can exist formally, “the business as usual” is still proceeding through the system of clientelism and political patronage.

Besides, the clientelistic and paternalistic practices exist as the informal rules and encourage personal rather than universalistic policies favoring only certain ‘patrons and clients involved in exchange (Brinkerhoff, 2002:13), while spreading the burden of subsequent negative implications of such ‘quasi-legal governance practices (2002:10) across the whole society.

During the Soviet period’s totalitarian communist regime, the central state was rather very strong, occupying and controlling every sphere of social life, however such informal rules, as are clientelism and paternalism, had emerged, very well coexisted with the formal rules that existed at that time. This system allowed high rank communist party officials, apparatchiks and other loyal members to gain lucrative benefits from such personal based practices.

Although, during the Soviet times the economy was characterized by the centrally planned economy, where everything including what price to set, what to produce and how many to produce was determined by the arbitrary decisions made by the central politburo body, in every sphere of society informal rules had become so deeply entrenched that the underground or “black” market was established and was usually ran by criminal authorities having links with the government.

Despite the Soviet Union’s demise, the trend was continued and revitalized during the Shevardnadze’s presidency. Large percentage share of the shadow economy to the overall Georgia’s economy, which was not accounted in the official state budget revenues, represented excellent source for the small circle of Shevardnadze’s elite to amass personal fortune and power vertical leaving large part of public in sharp discontent and despair.

In contrast, after the so-called Rose Revolution many things have changed. Particularly, the new revolutionary government under the Saakashvili’s leadership slashed petty corruption, especially persisting in the traffic police, increased state extraction capacity and shrank dramatically the share of the shadow or informal economy. Besides, in support of the newly elected government and president, foreign

aids from the western donor organization and countries as well as the flow of the foreign direct investment (FDI) to the country increased significantly. However, the August War in 2008 between Georgia and Russia as well as the World economic and financial crisis dramatically decreased this trend hitting hard to Georgia's economic growth.

As a consequence, right before the crises and war, revenues to the state budget of Georgia have doubled and provided the new revolutionary rule under the newly elected president with sufficient resources and opportunities to ensure the citizens of Georgia with better public goods and real institutional changes towards democracy. However, although superficially, these reforms in the spheres such as judiciary, law enforcements, legislation, elections, education and media were carried out under the name of democracy, in fact all these newly created institutions came under heavy control of the incumbent President and its ruling regime.

Implications of such autocratic centralization of power by the newly emerged governing elite are the arbitrary decision-making and one party rule based on the personality of the President, overcrowding prisons, politically controlled judiciary incapable for free and fair trial, most media stations directly controlled by the ruling regime, disputed elections with the multiple cases of intimidation of the opposition candidates and the abuse of the administrative resources in favor of the ruling party and the President.

Furthermore, despite reducing petty corruption, the so-called elite corruption has erupted with new force among the highest ranks of political and business figures either being members or having close ties with the current ruling elite. The prove of the existence of such elite corruption can be the recent disclosure of the facts and photo materials by some opposition groups regarding the newly built luxurious mansions and properties belonging to the President or the persons close to him and the ruling party. On the other hand, large part of society suffers from high unemployment rate, catastrophically increasing prices for the food products and energy utilities, low salaries leading to the growing poverty and inequality.

Even if, the infrastructure namely roads and new building facilities has been improved substantially in today's Georgia than it was during the previous regime, as well as even if now there is no more such shortage of the electricity and natural gas supply to

our homes as it was before, the charges for the energy use are so high that large part of the Georgia's population barely has the means to pay them.

Thus, a question arises at what price are all these reforms provided? If the price is to ignore democracy, justice, the rule of law, human rights and civil liberties, as well as equality and the right for decent life conditions and equal opportunities for the future perspective and growth, then obvious response to this would be the recent civil upheavals and revolutions occurring in North African region, where one by one dictatorships fell under the ongoing civil demonstrations protesting against corrupted authoritarian regimes.

### **Concluding thoughts and points for possible resolutions**

First of all, to ensure the prevalence of the formal democratic rules over the undemocratic informal system of political patronage and clientelism in Georgia, at least the majority of citizens should accept the democracy as "the only game in town". So far, in Georgia, transfer of power was exercised either through violent military coups or bloodless revolutions due to the lack of proper democratic system ensuring constitutional transfer of powers; even though the latter is far better option than former one, still the consequences of such coups, as we are witnessing now, are not as democratic as they should be and instead have led to more authoritarianism.

Consequently, true stability and economic prosperity is highly unlikely in Georgia without consolidation of its democracy. Hence, it is crucial that in Georgia the upcoming elections to be free and fair, with such electoral environment and legislation that will provide all political contestants with equal and 'competitive level playing field (COE 2010). Moreover, to ensure freedom of expression and access to alternative information in the country, the key institutions such as judiciary, legislation, law enforcements and media must be exempted from the external political pressure and influence, and instead to the small circle of the current governing elite, should be accountable to the public.

Furthermore, to increase the government's accountability in Georgia, the budget process in the country should be more transparent and accessible to the Georgia's citizens. Also, the access to the education should be universal rather than

particularistic and budget funds allocated to the education system must be increased, since I think that the more educated and well-informed the citizens would be the more will be their demand for the genuine democratic reforms.

And lastly, the role of external democratic actors such as U.S., EU, and NATO could be also crucial in providing incentives and support for establishing in Georgia the truly formal democratic institutions and the system of checks and balances. On its part, the civil society in Georgia should be more vigilant and strong to ensure that the elected and appointed officials as well as key government agencies follow the formal rules and moral logic of democracy rather than political patronage and clientelism.

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## ***Political clientelism in Argentina: an overview on the state of the art.***

*Lic. Julio Leonidas Aguirre.*

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### **Introduction**

In this paper I attempt to develop a general typology of the most common studies of political clientelism in Argentina that help us uncover the *state of the art*. First, I will argue why we consider important for political scientists to enhance political clientelism studies. Then, we will effort to clarify some core concepts regarding political clientelism, taking special attention to the difference between “old” and “new” clientelism.

Regarding our typology of clientelism studies in Argentina, I have identified two mayor categories of studies: 1) **micro-politics approaches**, orientated by ethnographic methods that focus on how clientelistic relationships develop, at the same time, chains of dominance and cooperation, and how they have a crucial role on the construction of political identities. 2) **macro-politics approaches** orientated by normative political theory, they focuses on how clientelistic practices affect the quality of democracy and allow power concentration inside political parties.

I conclude this paper with a series of recommendation regarding what we consider to be some challenges in studying political clientelism.

### **The importance of political clientelism for political scientists**

Political clientelism is a particular way of relating citizens and politicians. It is normally defined as “the distribution of selective benefits to individuals or clearly defined groups in exchange for political support” (Hopkin, 2006: 2). However political clientelism can be seen as much more than that. We can consider political clientelism as a particular way of regulating social conflict in a context of low institutional development and high social demands (poverty, housing insufficiency, unemployment, and so on), that constitutes itself as a particular linkage between citizens and politicians (Kitschelt, 2000).

Under this particular interpretation, political Clientelism operates in a dual matter: 1) it functions as a problem solving network that distributes, within its clients, different goods and services aiming to create an informal and politically driven link within the State and the excluded citizens. 2) It allows politicians to empower and legitimate themselves by granting votes and different forms of political support. This double function of political clientelism leads to the constitution of “a logic of exchange with asymmetric but mutually beneficial and open-ended transactions” (Roniger, in Kitschelt, 2000: 849); that allows a sort of conflict regulation mechanism that empowers in times of economical crisis.

Political clientelism allows us to submerge into the deepness of political organization; it helps us to understand the link between local/micro relations and the macro functioning of the political system by approaching a critical local interaction that influences the emergence of major political structures. Analyzing political clientelism can help us to uncover patterns and characteristics behind political culture, political institutions, reproduction and circulation of political power, political leadership, citizens-politicians relationships, quality of democracy and social rights (un)guaranteed, between others.

Because of these, we encourage to undertake political clientelism as an important subject for political scientists, especially for those who are concerned in the particular characteristics of political organization and the functioning and particularities of the welfare regimes in the region.

### **“Old” and “new” political clientelism**

What exactly do we mean when we refer to political clientelism in Argentina? The literature on the subject identifies several types of political exchange possible in democratic regimes: lobby, “old” clientelism, “new” clientelism, class voting, etc. There are different ways in which individuals or organized groups can exchange political support for selective benefits. Hopkin (2006) developed a typology based on two dimensions of political exchange: a) patron-client proximity/distance and b) the scope of benefits offered by patrons. Through this typology we can identify up to six

major types of political exchange (see table 1). Although, on this paper I will focus on only one two of them: “old” and “new” clientelism.

**Table 1:** Types of Political Exchange

		Proximity / Distance	
		Durable relationship	Market Exchange
Scope of benefits	Selective	<i>"Old" Clientelism</i>	<i>"New" Clientelism</i>
	Club	<i>Corporate / Ethnic</i>	<i>Lobby</i>
	Collective	<i>Class voting</i>	<i>Issue voting</i>

Source: Hopkin 2006, pp. 6-7.

The concept of *political clientelism* refers to the hierarchical patron-client relationship in traditional rural societies. This form of political exchange involved a personal (face to face) and dyadic relation between patron and client; it is an asymmetric relationship that describes the “unequal, hierarchical exchange characteristic of feudal society, in which patrons and clients were tied to durable relationships by a powerful sense of obligation and duty” (Hopkin, 2006, pp. 2). This form of political exchange survived and persists in our modern democracies, and it is what we will call “old” clientelism.

“Old” clientelism characterized by a durable *face to face* dyadic relationship between a patron and a client exchanging selective benefits. “Old” clientelism tends to develop a sense of reciprocity and, sometimes, even a durable bond of cooperation.

On the other way, “new” clientelism is the adaptation of clientelistic practices into the mass party political system, and it develops a relationship similar to a market exchange in which clients use their vote and political support as an exchangeable commodity. Even through the asymmetric power relationship remains, in “new” clientelism there is no durable bond between patrons and clients or any sense of deference or loyalty; as a result, “the new clientelism is more conducive to fluidity and change in electoral behavior” (Hopkin, 2006, pp. 3). New clientelism reproduces

itself through a relatively bureaucratized structure that uses State resources in a discretionary fashion, distributing them via informal networks.

On both forms of political clientelism, we found an instrumental exchange relationship that distributes selective benefits for political support to selected clients. The main difference is on the type of relationship between patrons and clients, while in old clientelism there's a more direct relationship, new clientelism uses a complex structure of exchange that demand new agents into the system: the brokers –*mediador politico*- (Auyero, 2001 and 2004; Muno, 2010). In new clientelism brokers are responsible of the *face to face* relationship with clients, operating as a link between them and the patrons; then, the old clientelistic relationship persists into new clientelism practices through brokers/client relationship, and a new more complex type of clientelism emerge.

### **Two main approaches to political clientelism**

On a broad general description, we've found two mayor categories of studies regarding political clientelism: Micro-politics approaches and macro-politics approaches. Those categories must be seen as an *ideal type*, we are not implying that all clientelism studies are represented by it, on contraire, we're simplifying the field by describing a typology, a map to tackle an ample field, this map should not be confused with the territory.

1) Micro-politics approaches follow a qualitative methodological strategy, normally based on ethnographic studies that focus on the local interactions between clients and patrons, and clients and brokers. These studies are primary interested in the different representations and strategies that the agents undertake inside the clientelistic networks: how they create social bounds between them, how they manage to maintain into the processes of exchange and obtain selective benefits, how they legitimize their actions, the particular contexts in which these practices emerge and the reasons that leads the agents into these practices. By inducing a comprehensive interpretation of these practices from the biography of agents involve and ethnographic observation of their interactions, researchers infer the particularities of political clientelism. (See: Schoröter, 2010; Auyero, 2001 and 2004).

This particular approach is more often in anthropologists and sociologists than political scientists, and tends to have a less critical interpretation of this phenomenon as they emphasized on how it creates survival strategies for those who have been excluded of formal welfare institutions.

With all, we can argue that this approach focuses more on “old” clientelism and how it creates a paradoxical link of cooperation and dominance between clients and brokers, its impact on political identities and the development of a relationship of obligation and reciprocity.

2) Macro-politics approaches follow a critical analysis of political clientelism based, mostly, on normative political theory. They tend to focus on how clientelism affects the quality of democracy by distressing fundamental elements of citizenship -voting and association- and, by doing so, weaken human agency (O’Donnell, 2001; Ippolito O’Donnell, 2006). Developing a historical analysis this approaches define the core concepts of democracy, such as *eleutheria* (freedom) or *isonomia* (equality before the law), and show how political clientelism attempts against democracy and violates basic political rights (Ippolito O’Donnell, 2007 and 2008).

From this perspective, more common for political scientists, we focus on the consequences of “new” clientelism on the political regime as a whole, the institutional context in which it emerges, its effects on policy making, its effects on social and political inequality, the quality of representation and the functioning of party system.

This approach tends to be more theoretical than empirical, and focus mainly on the negative effects of political clientelism. This normative questioning of political clientelism seeks to find the key variables of its functioning, and develop a political alternative to overcome its consequences.

### **Provisional conclusions and recommendations**

Most political clientelism studies identify three main agents: patrons, brokers, and clients. In order to approach the characteristics and roles of those agents on a clientelistic network, we need to understand them as members of a particular system in which each one of them plays a central role in the system self-organization. This

question us to study political clientelism not only considering the characteristics of actors or institutions (as micro politics and macro politics approaches do, respectively), but also from a relational perspective that focuses on their relationships. As "...the most important intellectual developments in political science –behaviorism, rational choice, new institutionalism- are built on the core belief that political decisions are made by self-interested, if cognitively limited, actors who operate independently of each other" (McClurg y Young, 2011: 39), we should undertake a different scale of analysis that help us see how political decisions and actions are strongly interdependent between the actors in a clientelistic network; for that propose we suggest to pay more attention to social networks analysis and complex systems interactions when approaching political clientelism.

There is a parallel existence of "old" clientelism and "new" clientelism practices in Argentina. Old clientelism is sometimes found, based on the ethnographic studies analyzed for this paper, on the dyadic *face to face* relationship between clients and brokers; while new clientelism is present on more macro level strategies that link political parties, patrons and brokers, normally via conditional social policy. We suggest taking special attention to these links between old and new clientelism as they seems to be the result of party strategies at local level, and, at the same time, it may influence directly the design of social policy in the region.

As any political phenomena, political clientelism needs a particular social and institutional context to emerge, normally characterized by high levels of unemployment and poverty, conditional access to welfare institutions and politically driven social policy; combine with weak – and/or in develop- democratic institutions (Audelo Cruz, 2004). The correspondence between this conditions and the emergence of political clientelism needs to be taken under consideration in contexts characterized by a progressive withdrawal of welfare institutions and increasing economical crisis, such as the one in affecting several countries since the financial crisis of 2008.

We argue that most macro-politics perspectives on political clientelism lacks of more empirical background, and most micro-politics perspectives on political clientelism lacks of a more integrated view on how clientelism affects the quality of democracy. We believe that one of the most important challenges for political clientelism studies in Argentina is to integrate plural normative approaches with empirical analysis in

order to create a better understanding of this phenomenon and design alternatives to empower democracy and citizenship.

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***A short presentation of the author:***

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## Interview with **Gabriela Ippolito O'Donnell PhD.**

*By Gabriela Lucía Marzonetto for A Different View magazine.*

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When the editorial board of ADV decided to address the issue of *Clientelism and paternalism in politics*, we began with the hypothesis that the 2008 economic and financial crisis, has some similar aspects with the 2001 Argentinean crisis, and is also similar to others similar crisis across Latin American history. At the same time, we suggest that after major economic and financial crisis a representation and political legitimacy crisis appears.

Faced with this pose, we consider that reviewing the issue of political patronage is appropriate to bring a better understanding on a political practice that tends to grow in these scenarios of economic and political crisis.

**Gabriela Marzonetto (GM):** Although lately it is common to hear about clientelism and patronage, both from mass media and from academia, as two sides of the same coin (as a result of practices that weaken democracy) we cannot say that there is a general acceptance. **What are clientelism and patronage exactly? Which are its main characteristics?**

**Gabriela Ippolito-O'Donnell (GI-O):** Clientelism (and patronage), as your question anticipates very well is a polysemic concept, highly influenced by the normative and/or empirical perspective that one adopts for defining it and, as such, also polemic. However, focusing on its most basic aspects, we can affirm that clientelism is above all an asymmetrical power relationship between two agents (individual or collective), in which one of them controls resources that the other one considers valuable and that is not capable to obtain by itself. This asymmetrical power relationship is made effective by the delivery (or the promise of delivery) of resources by agent A to agent B, in exchange for actions or abstentions of the latter. In general, clientelism thus defined is embedded in many social relationships; we talk about *political* clientelism when actions are related to the sphere of politics, understood in a broad sense (including –but not exclusively—the electoral process). In this sense, the scholarly

literature considers political clientelism as the exchange of material goods for political support, that is, as a strategy of mobilization. The goods or resources can be delivered immediately or differed along time and can be delivered to individuals (ex., social welfare plans) or to groups of individuals (ex., building of some urban infrastructure). The actions of the beneficiaries can also be delivered right away (ex., participating in a rally) or be differed in time (ex., voting in a certain way in the next election).

Once we define political clientelism as an asymmetrical relation of power, then we must ask what effects it may have on the quality of democracy; the answer will depend almost entirely on the definition of democracy we adopt.

**(GM)** It is well known that pre-electoral periods are more enabling to the emergence of these (institutionalized) practices, but not just in elections time those phenomena appear, **what are the determinants for the emergence of political patronage?**

**(GI-O)** There are several important studies about the historical origins of political patronage (or clientelism) focusing on processes of bureaucratization, democratization, institutional development, etc. The experience of the last decades in Latin America has a lot to contribute to this literature. One aspect that has called my attention is the advance and consolidation of political clientelism parallel to the increase of poverty and even more so inequality.

A hypothesis that is important to explore considering the experience of several countries in the region in the last decades, is how the dismantling of the welfare state (or de-universalization of social rights) and the concomitant implementation of targeted social policies have accompanied the expansion of clientelistic practices; at the same time the consolidation of these practices has generated a number of interest groups that preclude the inclusion in the political agenda of a serious and open debate on the re-universalization of social policies. Indeed, this is a context suitable for the action of brokers that concentrate information about targeted social programs and how to access them.

The Brazilian case is quite interesting for comparative analysis, because in this country during last decade there has been some retrenchment of clientelistic practices (which are historically deeply rooted) thanks to the implementation of universalistic social programs.

**(GM)** Political clientelism seems strongly associated with high levels of inequality and poverty, while appears to be more targeted on focalized and conditioned social policy systems. In this institutional context the figure of the “intermediary agent” (brokers) guarantee people’s access to the State institutions. These brokers have a dual role: they are clients of the patron (political party representative) and, at the same time, they are intermediate agents controlling the return of political favors from clients. **What are the underlying factors for the emergence of this broker? And, what is the role that the broker plays in party politics?**

**(GI-O)** Political parties use several strategies of mobilization, and clientelism is to some extent, even in minimal doses, always used. The equation poverty + social inequality + targeted social policies, and I would add decentralization, is a breeding ground for the emergency of this third ‘intermediary agent,’ as you call it. One important aspect of this equation is the process of implementation of targeted social policies in contexts of extreme poverty and inequality. The design and implementation of public policies can strengthen or neutralize those intermediary agents. This is definitely a matter of political leadership and consensus building, if there is a truly firm decision to limit and neutralize these practices and their main players.

**(GM)** If we consider political clientelism as a particular way of regulating social conflict, forming chains of dependency between social agents, that are exclude of the formal welfare system, and the political power structures that manage social justice policies; then clientelism becomes a social relationship, a particular way of linking citizens with government. Following this train of thought, **what tools of political and citizen action we can pursue in order to strengthen a direct relationship between citizens and state institutions, in other words, how can we overcome the need of intermediaries (brokers)?**

**(GI-O)** When there is no decision from the apex of power, is much more difficult to find solutions. In this sense, in most cases civil society organizations have led the fight for transparency against clientelism. Although clientelism is not a cultural phenomenon attributable to individual profiles, character shortcomings or other psychological aspects, there is some cultural rooting that needs to be attacked; one way of doing it is by demanding universalistic and transparency policies to those in power. Political clientelism is an asymmetrical exchange between agents, and the wider the inequality between them, the greater the dependence generated.

In highly unequal contexts, political clientelism is essentially the “*politics of fear*”; fear of losing a subsidy, fear of saying what one truly thinks and angering the patron or boss. And also, fear of change, fear of changing the current government, because I (the receptor) do not know if the next government would still implement the same social programs, or if the broker I know disappears and another one comes she/he may not know about my past ‘loyalty’ and punish me. To counteract the “politics of fear” there is no doubt that we have to participate actively in civil society organizations and demand our rights as citizens. Also we have to support institutional innovations that promote a more direct relation between the represented (citizens) and the representatives (politicians). In this sense, there are a series of recent institutional innovations that aim at expanding citizenship participation to transform representative democracy into semi-direct democracy in everyday affairs. Participatory budgeting, advisory councils and referendums are some of the examples.

**(GM)** When patronage practices are the result of economic and financial crisis followed by political legitimacy crisis, a paradox arises:

To maintain a stable democratic system and political legitimacy, patronage and clientelism, that weaken the democratic system, are used to operate as “precarious” social security policies -to contain vulnerable sectors-, with the condition that “beneficiaries” (clients) return the “favors” granted by the “patron” by granting him votes, political support and, along with these, the stability of party representation system. Therefore, a possible interpretation arises of patronage as a system that allows protecting and maintaining democratic regime in a context of institutional crisis. **Is**

**there any truth on the described dynamic? And, what are the underlining problems in this paradox?**

(GI-O) I believe this is the big myth of political clientelism; to think that a clientelar network may sustain the political party system in times of crisis is simply wrong. The clientelar networks can also generate a high level of social hostility in those who feel excluded from them, much more so in times of crisis. What is really important is the existence of “networks” that include not so much brokers but grassroots civil society organizations capable of fluid communication with state officials who can sustain a reasonable and more or less equitable distribution of goods. Do not forget that brokers have -more than anything else-access to state resources, and when the state collapses amidst economic crisis, it is more often than not civil society organizations that come to the rescue. I insist on this: I believe there is a big myth about clientelism, a kind of romantization of clientelistic networks as saviors in crisis situations. Behind this idea underlies the alleged existence of mutual loyalty between the agents engaged in the patronage exchange, as well as of a certain service vocation on the part of “intermediaries” as you call them (brokers). In contexts of high marginality, this resembles somehow the Stockholm syndrome or gratitude to the prison guard or kidnapper for not using more violence than she/he could use otherwise.

(GM) In a context defined by high levels of political clientelism and patronage periodic elections do not guarantee full democratic outcome. Under these conditions, **Can we say that we are protected under a legitimate democratic system? Where is the moral logic of democratic institutions when carrying out these practices?**

(GI-O) Democracy is the only political regime that gives us the possibility of redress: maybe in this election I need to sell my vote, but not so in the next one. For that, regular elections, in spite of the practices you describe well, are one of the best antidotes for clientelism. Freedom from oppression, even under democratic rule, is an everyday fight.

(GM) If democracy strengthens by citizen participation, we should ask **what are the responsibilities that civil society should undertake in order to ensure the principles of freedom (eleutheria) and equality at the law (isonomia) of all citizens in the face of patronage practices?**

**(GI-O)** At least the Latin American experience shows that civil society organizations have been the ones to draw attention about clientelism and its negative effects on democracy. The fight against these practices is permanent and in all spheres of life. Of course it is also true that several civil society organizations have been co-opted through financing by state powers (local and national). It is in fact an unequal fight, but luckily, many civil society actors still believe it is worth it.

**(GM)** Considering that the readers of ADV are colleagues from Europe and Latin America, would you give us your opinion about **what are the challenges of democracy in Latin America, and what Europeans can learn from the Latin American experience?**

**(GI-O)** I believe the challenge for democracy in Latin America is what model of democracy will consolidate at the end of the day. Although in the last years there have been advances in terms of implementation of mechanisms of semi-direct participation, as mentioned before, also clientelism and delegative democracy have deepened in many countries of the region. That is today's dilemma in Latin America, and it is in the hands of citizen to decide which direction to go. I am convinced that it is possible to consolidate a model of participatory democracy that respects individual freedoms. In relation to European countries, I guess there is some ignorance regarding Latin America. If there is a lesson to learn from us Latin-Americans, for well-developed countries especially in this time of economic crisis is that democracy is an open process and that authoritarian reversions are always a risk. In this respect, an important aspect that I would like to point out is that Latin America is more tolerant than Europe in relation to immigration; tolerance is a fundamental value of democracy and when affected a perverse snowball effect is hiding around the corner.

**(GM)** Finally (perhaps away from the topic in discussion, but because of its importance we are urged to ask), after the unpredictable and unexpected rise of civil society in the Middle East, **What are the lessons that we can get from these events?**

**(GI-O)** The events in the Middle East had been unexpected and unpredictable because we did not know much about those societies. The diffusion of information is also one of the basic values of democracy, and in those countries it was hard to obtain. In all

transitions processes, and hopefully the ones in Middle East will end in democratic rule, there is always a re-emergence of civil society, or the ‘resurrection’ of civil society as O’Donnell and Schmitter called it in their 1986 volume.

For this reason, as political scientists we have to learn to see where the “non obvious” is, beyond the most common aspects of politics. I am convinced that there is a common task that links us to the Middle East events, especially after discussing about political clientelism: we have to fight against the politics of fear in all its forms, both of the most brutal authoritarianism to the more lax clientelism. As in ancient Athens, democracy and the reflection about it is a continuous quest for freedom and dignity.

**(GM)** On behalf of the editorial board of A Different View, we want to Thank you very much for accept to be interviewed, and for the valuable and interesting contribution to the issue in discussion.

*Gabriela Marzonetto, on behalf of the ADV editorial Board*

### ***References***

#### ***Interviewed***

***Gabriela Ippolito-O'Donnell*** holds a Ph. D. in Political Science from the University of Cambridge (UK), a Masters degree from the University of Notre Dame (USA) and BA in Political Science at Universidad del Salvador (Argentina). She is director of CESC (Centro de Estudios de la Sociedad Civil y la Vida Pública) and of the Political Science BA at Escuela de Política y Gobierno at Universidad Nacional de San Martín (Argentina).

#### ***Interviewer***

***Gabriela Marzonetto*** is finalizing her BA in Political Science and Public Administration at Universidad Nacional de Cuyo. She is secretary of external relations for the Latin American Regional Center of IAPSS (International Association for political science students) and editor of A Different View.

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If you have something to say about economic, political or legal developments around the world, if you feel there is an issue that other people should be aware of then submit your paper to the following e-mail address: [adifferentview@iapss.org](mailto:adifferentview@iapss.org).

#### **What topics are published by A Different View (ADV)?**

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#### **Technical specifications for articles:**

**The deadline for articles shall be the 20<sup>th</sup> of each month (except otherwise specified on the last call for articles)**

#### **I. Academic articles should show:**

- ? academic style and tone
- ? excellent English
- ? between 1000 and 4000 words
- ? in-text references (APSA-Style): Name of author, year of publication, page  
<http://www.ipsonet.org/data/files/APSASyleManual2006.pdf> (e.g. Klausmann, 2007, 23)  
<http://www.refworks.com/Refworks/OSPreviewer.asp?format=233&selected=323&samplD=true>

? a bibliography at the end

**II. Opinion articles should be:**

? on a current political, economic or legal issue

? written in standard English

? between 1000 and 2000 words

? no in-text reference

**III. Dialogue articles:**

? two authors take different sides on an issue and oppose their arguments in two columns

(no bullet points)

? excellent English

? between 2000 and 4000 words (altogether)

With your articles please include a **short presentation of yourself** (approx. 100 words) in the following style (3<sup>d</sup> person singular): Name, age, (hometown), university, degree, focus of your studies/Master or Bachelor Thesis, current employment or study interests, e.g.:

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