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## **Party patronage in Parliament: the Italian experience.**

### **Abstract**

Party patronage is a recent notion in the literature. Often confused with clientelism, corruption and other distributive practices, it has to do with the cartel party (ideal) type and the party-state relationships, providing new and alternative resource for the parties. Defined as the power of party to appoint people in public and semi-public life, patronage also occurs in parliamentary arena, far from the governmental sphere within the bureaucracy and the public administration. This dissertation aims at investigating parliamentary patronage as a job distributive process, individuating the factors that shape this exchange relationship between collective and individual patrons and clients. The empirical research focused on the Italian experience finds that parliamentary patronage works both as an organizational and post-electoral resource. From the qualitative survey addressed through conversational interviews to more than sixty parliamentary patrons and organizers in the last two terms, three main trends emerge: when patrons are represented by collective bodies as the parliamentary group, party networks and allegiance matter -though not excessively- in the distribution of patronage resources, but combined with professional criteria, especially at top level; when individual patrons hold internal institutional offices and distribute jobs related to that office, they are likely to look more at personal networks in selecting their 'clients'; the control function of patronage, stressed in previous studies about the phenomenon, fades making room for organizational and functional patronage.

**KEY WORDS:** Political science, legislative studies, party patronage, Parliament, state capture, party professionalization.