

**Ph.D. Program in Political Theory**  
**Cycle XXVII**

**PARTY PATRONAGE IN PARLIAMENT:  
THE ITALIAN EXPERIENCE.**

**Ph. D. Dissertation**  
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## INTRODUCTION

Party patronage is a recent notion in the literature. Often confused with clientelism, corruption and other distributive practices, this concept has to do with the cartel party (ideal) type and the party-state relationships, offering new and alternative resources for the parties based on the public money.

Defined as the power of party to appoint people in public and semi-public life (Kopecky, Mair, Spirova, 2012), party patronage has been studied analysing the governmental sphere, the public and semi-public agencies and the bureaucracies in the general framework of the public administration.

But does party patronage exist only when the patrons (the parties, their leaders, their representatives) distribute public appointments? Is traceable a further dimension of party patronage within the legislative assemblies in which the parties could directly or indirectly distribute jobs?

This dissertation aims at answering these questions, providing an expansion of the definition, achieved after relevant theoretical efforts, and of the field of research, starting from common features such as the exploitation of public resources in order to fulfil party goals.

The main argument of this work is that also the analysis of parliamentary patronage is helpful to explain the relationship between party and the state, investigating here the mechanisms of party installation within the Parliament, its working to satisfy its representative and legislative functions, its internal decision-making processes, its networks inside and outside the floor.

The thesis is composed of two parts. In the first part (chapter 1 and 2) we explore the literature on patronage with its multifaceted points of view and the various historical experiences of patronage around the world, each one with its own peculiarities that contribute to the emersion of parliamentary patronage definition.

In the first chapter we will consider the intricate confusion that, not without prejudices, scholars have caused across the time about the essence of patronage and its connection with the society and the state, both at micro and macro level. Further clarifications will

be given to distinguish more explicitly patronage and corruption. Moreover, new models of patronage will be developed on the basis of the intersections between merit and party affiliation, two categories usually conceived as mutually exclusive in the debate. A perspective on the evolution of patronage in regime changes that affect the party system or the public administration system will contribute to contextualize the phenomenon in a macro-scenario. Lastly the possible forms of parliamentary patronage in broad sense will be individuated, each one considered as a distributive relationship with different patrons and clients/recipients. It will follow a detailed focus on the specific kind of patronage object of this research, defined as the power of parties to distribute jobs in parliamentary structures.

The second chapter examines the historical, empirical and social experiences of patronage, describing the American, European and African patterns without any ambition to include the whole course of the history, but just commenting upon specific cases with the purpose to underline the main trends in party-state relationship and take them into consideration into the explanation of the empirical research. The US case (Schudson, 1998) will outline the evolution of the patronage on two sides: the object of the exchange and the features of the clients. From the findings of comparative research in 15 European countries it will not emerge a European model, but the causes and the factors that at the end make the difference from a country to another country. In the last section dedicated to the African patronage, we will focus on the ethnical networks at the basis of it as point of departure to explore (party) factionalism and its consequences on patronage.

The second part of the research consists of a preliminary and thorough study of the two dimensions of patronage in Italian experience: on one hand the party, the party system, its rules and its intra or inter party dynamics; on the other hand, the Parliament, here intended as a part of the state, its functioning and its permeability. This part prepares the ground for the empirical research and leads us to draw some hypotheses that will be present in the last chapter.

In the third chapter, the first dimension will be illustrated with an in-depth focus on the last three legislatures, starting from the new electoral system approved in 2005 and now replaced by the so-called *Italicum*. The reforms in party financing, the party switching

and the legislative turnover, the emergence of new tools for the re-legitimation of the parties as the primary elections even for the parliamentary offices are expounded as possible factors respectively in the increase of the need for patronage, in modifying the resources at disposal and in shaping the patron-client relationship.

Through a re-examination of the parliamentary functions and a study of the rules of procedure, the fourth chapter tries to identify the potential clients and the potential patrons in Parliament. In a first step, we zoom out on the actual development of the four types of parliamentary patronage theoretically distinguished in the first chapter. Once isolated and concretely defined the parliamentary patronage examined in this dissertation (the distribution of jobs within the Parliament), two types of patrons are found: collective (the parliamentary groups) and individual (the institutional office-holders).

The empirical research, conducted through semi-structured and conversational interviews to a mix of patrons, will be oriented to trace the general features and trends of parliamentary patronage, without going in details in the single party performances, fully aware of the slippery field of study if not observed with the proper tools. Following partly the scheme of Kopecky, Mair and Spirova, we will assess the reach, the depth and the motivations of parliamentary patronage, adding then new elements of analysis based on the stressed differences between the institutions where patronage grows. Lastly we will draw the profile of the clients involved in parliamentary patronage.

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**PART 1**  
**CONCEPTS AND PRACTICES**

## CHAPTER 1

### THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

*There is nothing more practical than a good theory.*

Lewin (1952, 169)

*The state, which is invaded by the parties, and the rules of which are determined by the parties, becomes a fount of resources through which these parties not only help to ensure their own survival, but through which they can also enhance their capacity to resist challenges from newly mobilized alternatives. The state, in this sense, becomes an institutionalized structure of support.*

Katz and Mair (1995, 16)

#### 1.1 PATRONAGE: DEFINITIONS AND DIFFERENCES

The evolution of party organizations has shaped the relationships between party and the state. In this sense, the emergence of cartel party model (Katz, Mair, 1995), replacing the mass-party (Duverger, 1954), represents a Kuhnian paradigm shift in the conception of party as institutional and political actor related to civil society and state.

On one hand, the decreasing role of the parties as point of connection for both citizens and voters has progressively unfastened the ‘transmission belt’ linking parties and specific groups by social cleavages at national or local level (Webb and White, 2007). The gradual ‘privatization’ of political life in a more and more complex society has dramatically weakened identities, ideologies and *grand narratives*, creating alternative forms of interest aggregation and other tools for social integration, depriving parties of memberships and traditional issues used to get electoral support (Whiteley, 2011).

The exercise of citizenship took place in other collective and non-partisan entities such as voluntary, charity associations or interest groups, or it happened in an individualized scenario dominated by modern media, such as tv or internet, without

face-to-face relationships. The ownership of politics slipped out of parties and social elites and became widespread in various peripheral centres. (Schudson, 1998)

The decentering of the parties in the political ground moved the attention and the interest of citizens and their energies out from the traditional organizations recognized as mass parties. This detachment in the bottom-up support caused the slackening of the grasp of the political class on ruled class and on those organizations such as unions, associations and factions usually blended and confused with parties. As Burnham observed, parties had “the character of an item of luxury consumption in competition with other such items, an indoor sport involving a host of discrete players rather than the teams of old” (1967, 305).

Furthermore, the collapse of party activism and the difficulties to mobilize even their own membership forced parties to look for new and modern incentives to the participation. Material and solidary incentives, such as basic fringe benefits or social recognition, were already overcome in developed democracies and richer and secularized societies. (Clark, Wilson, 1961)

For all these reasons, parties were obliged to find refuge elsewhere, away from the civil society, in order to survive and to secure the organization and the working of democratic life. As an instinctive resistance reaction, parties took shelter in an incompletely explored arena: the state. In this new context, parties have turned in quasi-governmental agencies or public utilities, focusing more on governmental functions and on the control of public resources and becoming more and more dependent on the state. (Epstein, 1986; Biezen, 2004; Ignazi, 2012, 2014).

Rephrasing Sartori’s minimal definition of a party (1976, 63), we could define the modern parties as political groups identified by an official label that run at elections, and are capable of allocating, before or after the elections, public resources.

In recent years the space of domestic policy-making process in EU countries has been significantly restricted by European institutions: the progressive Europeanization promoted an integration on national ‘policies, politics and polities’ (Börzel and Risse, 2003) that asked also for policy coherence commitments and, especially in some countries, spending standards “by authoritative European rules” (Risse et al. 2001, 3).

Similarly, even because of this pressure, the presence of the state in the economy of a country, particularly the Southern ones, started to draw back. The higher degree of economic liberalism in the industrial policies lessened the traditional concentration of distributive powers in the hand of the state, both as law-maker and political player. Nevertheless, parties still keep playing an important role within the state, conserving their distributive powers and self-managing their organization and campaigning, by controlling the legislation and providing rules for media access and legal framework for their existence and activities. (Biezen, Kopecky, 2007, 2014)

A huge variety of public resources is available for parties. Public funding, even if nowadays called into discussion and reformed or abolished in many countries, clearly symbolizes the growing relevance of the state in financing party activities or in refunding electoral campaigns. In turn, the availability of public sources for their subsistence has made less attractive for parties to try to obtain private resources, by reactivating and strengthening relationships with social groups.

However, the social and democratic value of public funding has not to be neglected here since state resources to the parties guarantee the participation in politics to groups otherwise excluded from the electoral competition or able to take part in political arena only if they represent special interests and achieve particular goals, supported by specific fund givers.

Patronage is a further means used by the parties to increase their legitimacy both within and outside the state. In Biezen and Kopecky scheme, patronage embodies and measures the third key dimension of the party-state relationship, in addition to the dependence on the state (public funding) and the management by the state (party regulation).<sup>1</sup>

Scholars from different fields of research have tried and found several ways to define 'patronage' in a continuous multidisciplinary struggle that involves particularly political science, comparative politics and public administration studies (Stokes, 2009;

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<sup>1</sup> This dimension has slightly evolved during the time: in 2007 they define it "the extent to which parties themselves control the state" in terms of "party rent-seeking", where as in 2014 it is more emphasized as "the capture of the state by parties". That said, party patronage emerges as a powerful tool of penetration in the state to gain benefits for the party.

Bearfield, 2009). Conceptualizing patronage has also changed because of the evolution, in the time and in the space, of party organizations and political life. Equally, remarkable progresses have been reached by refining approaches and strategies to operationalize this concept in order to purify it from anthropological bias and moral and negative prejudices.<sup>2</sup>

Starting from Sorauf (1959, 115, 117), patronage was described as “essential to a strong and vital party organization”, “a bastion of party”. Although its domain in the American civil service at the time was extremely more limited compared to the past, as we will see in the next chapter, the abilities of parties to administer patronage, the necessity of patronage for effective parties, the vitality of patronage as reward or incentive are lucidly pointed out as push factors for the good working of the parties<sup>3</sup>.

This demonstrates that some features of patronage are not affected by the time, but remain essential and almost constitutive of the practice. Blondel (2002, 241) provided a summarizing definition of patronage as “distribution of favours to individuals in exchange for political advantages accruing — or being expected to accrue- to those who give the favours.”

A further micro definition (Kaufmann, 1974, 285) points at the presence of a patron and a client, not hierarchically equal, equally involved in an ‘interpersonal exchange’ relationship ‘based on the principle of reciprocity’, mutually valid until if each actor is satisfied by the exchange<sup>4</sup>.

Like in the prisoner’s dilemma, the classical game theory scenario, this dyadic relationship lasts until the two actors cooperate in achieving mutual goals, but, unlike the prisoners, they know each other and establish a stable contact and a faithful alliance in order to be familiar with each other and know how to cooperate.

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<sup>2</sup> This ambiguity and the orientation to generic definitions of both practices have crossed different works: Graziano (1976); Lemarchand and Legg (1972); Gellner and Waterbury (1977); Shefter (1977); Eisenstadt and Roniger (1984), Kahane (1984); Kristinsson (1996); Warner (1997); Martz (1997); Kitschelt (2000), Müller (2000); Hopkin and Mastropaolo (2001); Gordin (2002); Eaton (2004); Taylor-Robinson (2006); Benton (2007); Kitschelt and Wilkinson (2007); Levitsky (2007); Manzetti and Wilson (2007); Wang and Kurzman (2007).

<sup>3</sup> Already in 1937, Pollock noted that “employees who are politically appointed are naturally expected to attend political meetings, make speeches, canvass voters, and do all the other things involved in political activity.” (p. 32)

<sup>4</sup> An alternative, but similar definition is later given by Lande: “vertical dyadic alliance ... between two persons of unequal status, power or resources each of whom finds it useful to have as an ally someone superior or inferior to himself (1977, p. xx)

From this minimal and timeless definitions of patronage at micro-level, it would follow that party patronage considers the party acting as a patron that distributes benefits in exchange of something, but that definition is still so skeletal and basic that draws a vague and zoomed out picture of how patronage is actually understood<sup>5</sup>.

Indeed, in the course of the literature, patronage has been better explained for differences with other similar phenomena such as corruption and clientelism (Scherlis 2010, Kopecky and Scherlis 2008). Clientelism and patronage have been brands used for too long time as synonymous to explain the same practices. Moreover, many have seen it both as evil practices of manipulation related to rural or not developed society and have considered the client as a socially marginalized actor, forced to get resources from the patron in order to survive (Blok, 1974; Chubb, 1982).

Democratization processes, economic growth and citizen empowerment weaken this assumption: clients may now count on a number of personal and material resources higher than in the past and they do not necessarily need party support. Citizens and groups become more independent in their choices even when they play the role of clients. Actually, the demise of parties as political machines and social linkage providers extends the power of clients, now free to select the patrons they prefer (Piattoni, 2001). These dyadic relationships are not anymore enduring as in the past, with an increasingly shaded nuance of paternalism and far from primitive lure.

A denotative approach helps us to distinguish clientelism and patronage. What makes the difference is the object of the exchange between patron and client. Patronage distributes *only* jobs, both at lower (contracts) and upper level (appointments), whereas clientelism uses different type of resources such as goods and material benefits (food, water, medicine in the poorest contexts, pensions or other subsidies in less emergency areas). (Stokes, 2007)

Clientelism may also distribute jobs, but only at low level and just in exchange of *electoral support*. In this sense, clientelism represents “an electoral tool in which benefits are delivered to obtain the recipients' vote” (Kopecky, 2011, 282) and looks

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<sup>5</sup> Patronage as “the submission of public officials to an overlord” that “diminishes their ability to serve the public interest at large” is mentioned among negative consequences to be prevented by a civil service act in a short paper published by SIGMA Support for Improvement in Governance and Management, a joint initiative of the OECD and the European Union to improve public governance (Cardona, 2002).



like a non-professional-oriented practice limited to a mutual and personal exchange, closed in a one-to-one relationship.

Compared to patronage, clientelism takes place outside from the state, both in a legal and illegal way whether allowed or forbidden by the law. Even if patrons may use public money, coming from party funding, to foster clientelistic relationships, they still do not hold public offices and do not necessarily distribute state resources<sup>6</sup> (Stokes, 2011).

The nature of the client here ranges from ordinary citizens, willing to get immediate and individual benefits from the personal vote-selling, to specific social groups organized to improve their own conditions conveying collective and mobilized support to a certain candidate or party. Usually these groups, especially when organized in constituencies or districts, are able to attract a richer quantity of resources, generally funds. They could receive it privately, without formal identification and recognition, or publicly, through particular public policies.

The latter is called pork barrel legislation or pork barrel politics (Müller, 2007, 251), a legal method to target benefits to specific groups, passing laws or provisions directed mainly to people that share the place where they live (Lancaster and Paterson, 1990; Kitschelt and Wilkinson, 2007). This particular exchange consists of buildings, infrastructures or any other form of public intervention distributed in favour of few and well defined geographic blocs of citizens, but paid by the whole community (Aldrich 1995, 30). These pork barrel policies are generally condemned as unethical or immoral since based on a veto power of the patrons/legislators, called instead by the constitutions and the norms to serve their own communities, representing their needs and desires during the mandate.

To be honest, pork barrel legislation leaves large room for free riders: one can benefit from new roads and take advantage from new constructions, without paying any electoral money to the patron. As in the rational choice theory (Olson, 1965; De Mucci, 2009), individuals could have no personal incentive to support a specific candidate if they consider high the cost of voting such candidate and take for granted that they will receive in any case some benefits.

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<sup>6</sup> In the case of pensions, patrons are in the condition to ask and receive benefits through personal channels within legislatures or government, but they do not control them directly.

The withdrawal from the electoral action in favour of that candidate deprives patrons of the traditional power and that hierarchical and superior positions, so widely recognized from the scholars. If every member of the specific constituency makes the same calculation, no one would vote for that candidate that promises benefits in change of electoral support. The attempt to avoid this paradox, at the extreme extent, and the need for the patrons to affirm their power in a given community have had a relevant effect on the legislation writing and making process, particularly in the budget laws: the more specific a law provision is, the higher is the probability to reach a distinct array of people that have secured electoral support.

Coming back to patronage and clientelism features, the first one allocates public jobs and appointments by discretionary criteria. These criteria are not limited to the electoral support, but they found strong motivations in alternative goals, such as parties' organizational necessities, mainly in electoral campaigning stage. In its basic meaning, patronage shares with clientelism reward-oriented functions and the core principle of 'take there, give here' (Graham, 1997), but a distinctive point between these two practices is represented by the nature of the clients in patronage relationships.

Patronage clients do not inevitably have to belong to a party or to demonstrate electoral affiliation with their patrons. In patronage, patrons and clients are reciprocally reliant on each other and their relationship is less asymmetrical and time-limited than in the clientelism since clients give something more than their 'simple' vote. Here we state 'simple vote' because in the democratic play the right and the act of vote is available for every eligible citizen, potentially a client that demands benefits on the clientelism market.

If patronage is a topdown concept, stressing the central importance of the patron/party in a network, clientelism, on the contrary, could represent a bottom-up perspective, more related to a wider social context and more focused to the role of the client as part interested in being involved in a clientelistic relationship to secure electoral allegiance.

For this reason, clientelism potentially reaches more individuals and social slices than patronage. Its vastness is related to the lack of special prerequisites that the benefit recipients are not asked to satisfy. In patronage mechanics, the requirement of minimal skills, albeit statically pointed out in terms of study title, income, age or gender, works

as filter in the selection of the client, selected on a merit based system, not officially licensed, but discretionally defined time by time.

There are good reasons for it. Parties can stand as patrons in clientelistic exchanges before the election in the form of a central or local committee or factions or candidates. Later, once accomplished their primary goals like getting electoral consensus and seats in Parliament and offices in the cabinet and in the government, they take the form of office-holder parties, that is to say political groups that now prepare themselves to confirm and extend their power until the control of decision making process.

We can suggest here that clientelism as ‘vote of exchange’ (Parisi and Pasquino, 1979; Katz, 1986; Parisi 1995) is a preliminary condition for the patrons to involve new clients in patronage exchanges, most effectively named ‘spoils system’. Without a solid electorate, that parties could significantly extend also through clientelistic channels, it is impossible for them to cross the electoral threshold or achieve a notable quota of seats in order to play as parliamentary subjects able to influence polity and policies<sup>7</sup>.

To sum up, the existence of widespread ‘clientages’, definable in nutshell as adherents or supporters consciously ready to tie with a patron, does not directly imply clientelism or patronage. In fact, if this clientage, both at individual and collective level, relies on direct electoral purposes, it follows that clientelism occurs, whereas if clientage is connected with a party or a politician without direct electoral reasons, but with other motivations to contribute to party/candidate’s success, patronage happens<sup>8</sup>.

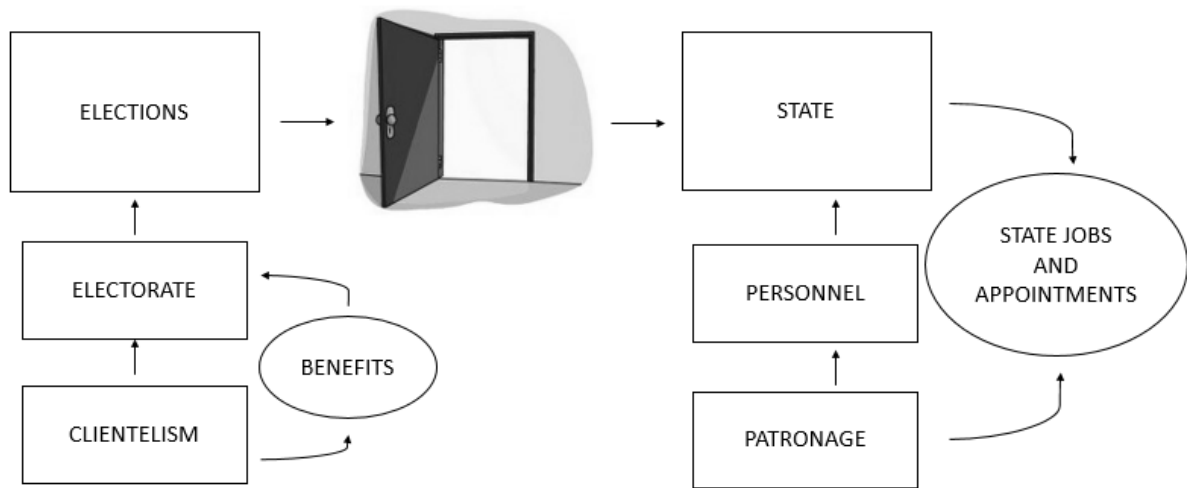
The figure that follows suggests an iconic representation and a synthesis of the difference between the two phenomena: what separates clientelism from patronage is an electoral result for the parties acceptable enough to go beyond the gate that separates civil society and the state. Once they overstep it, probably through the distribution of material and particular benefits, they are ready to distribute public jobs and appointment

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<sup>7</sup> Some scholars argue that electoral systems with personal vote encourage clientelism (Kitschelt, 2000). Even if others (Stokes, 2011) do not completely agree and the argument is still discussed, we could state with more certainty that patronage is not affected by the electoral system. An attempt to explain and observe a ‘post-electoral patronage’, in the form of “revolving doors” available for not elected candidates, is given by De Mucci et al, 2009.

<sup>8</sup> As Hilgers (2011, 575) wrote: “Patronage is closely linked to clientelism, although its key defining characteristic, the discretionary distribution of public office, is not necessarily shared by clientelism. Patronage entails the distribution of public sector jobs by a candidate or party to loyal supporters who have helped to generate votes. The votes in question are often produced through clientelism.”

derived from their installation within the state. It is self-evident that this process is cyclical and fluctuating: in order to keep their patronage power within the state, parties have to secure a solid electoral base. Clientelism can be practiced to reach this purpose<sup>9</sup>.



*Figure 1.1 Patronage and clientelism*

The most recent and comprehensive definition of patronage frames it as “the power of parties to appoint people to positions in public and semi-public life” and as “an organizational resource” (Mair and Kopecky, 2006; Kopecky, Mair, and Spirova, 2012). This dissertation follows their understanding, observing this practice in Italian parliamentary context and aiming at enlarging the realm of what has been conceived so far as ‘state’.

The assumption of appointment power, linked to the cartel party (ideal) type, has put forward several original contributions in the literature of patronage, reshuffling old explanatory models. The penetration and the control of public offices and job resources have revitalised the weak power of parties to attract citizens in the political sphere. They potentially allow parties to find fresh and, till then, unexploited energies and reinforce organizational structure, even promoting their advancement in the society.

The collusive neighbourhood with other parties, in order to exclude, as a ‘cartel’, other new, upcoming or small political actors from the arena, has not been fully confirmed so far by the facts. The broad agreements in Parliament in reforming electoral

<sup>9</sup> The circle closes with Downs’ definition of political parties as “a team of men seeking to control the governing apparatus by gaining office in a duly constituted election” (1957, 25).

system, typically in the direction of raising the threshold required to running lists for the entry in legislative assemblies, could provide an evidence of party veto power to new comers in the electoral market. By this bi-partisan agreement, they disincentive the electoral presence of other political formations stimulating not only electoral, but also organizational fusions.<sup>10</sup> It is though easier to imagine parties, even the major parties, as fighting each other in the electoral arena trying to increase at maximum their rent-seeking power. This competition takes place also in the intra-coalitional dynamics once parties have won preeminent positions within the cabinet and the government.

In this scenario, electoral contests work as a preparatory step, an external test for management abilities and problem-solving skills in a political debate communicated by the media, with passive citizens that vote ‘yes’ or ‘no’ like in the referendum scheme.

To win the contest, parties are obliged to address electorate through generic and so inclusive platforms founded on minimal common values. Interclass ‘catch-all’ parties (Kircheimer, 1966), born to widen the traditional audience of a party, provide still today valid notion to analyse the political life, especially in times of volatile, if not fleeting, electorates (Bartolini and Mair, 1990) and of progressive decline in turnout, at the beginning fearfully considered as a deterioration of democracy and now commonly accepted as an evolved form of civic independence from the politics.

With an unmoved society and a growingly relevant government, parties have to embrace the opportunity to turn to the state, cover governmental functions and dismiss their function of representative agency, that is the typical motivation of the parliamentary initiatives.

But do they really totally dismiss the representative function when they deal with patronage? Or, better, do they deal with patronage when they serve as “means of representation” (Sartori, 2005, 24) and legislative parties within the proper institutions? Does patronage exist only in government arenas, in agencies and in administrative bureaus? This dissertation would answer these questions enriching the study on patronage and exploring a so far hidden distributive process: the parliamentary patronage. This phenomenon is here understood as the patronage that takes place within the legislative assemblies, and *not* as the patronage of the Parliament as a whole.

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<sup>10</sup> An example is constituted by the reform for the election of Italian members at European parliament in 2009, passed few months before the elections (Natale, 2009).

Rewording Kopecky and Mair definition, parliamentary patronage is the power of parties to distribute jobs within parliamentary structures. In doing so, we examine how parties establish themselves in a constitutional body, how they arrange themselves within the Chamber or the Senate in order to develop their working inside and outside these institutions.

After this first introductory section, now we deal with the functions and the styles of patronage as underlined in the recent studies (Kopecky et al. 2012, Bearfield 2009). This scheme will be useful to theoretically define parliamentary patronage and formulate some expectations in the last part of the chapter.

## **1.2 FUNCTIONS AND STYLES OF PATRONAGE**

The huge variety of patronage definitions has shown the different dimensions of this many-sided concept. Now, in order to ascend to a more macro-level comprehension, we set down functions and styles of patronage intended as the power of parties to distribute positions within the state structure.

Although fruitful and innovative, the governmental definition of patronage is still in the early stages and to some extent in a minority position in the literature developed until now. The obstacles to operationalization process, put by the anything but unanimous conceptualization and the variety of (difficult) measurement methods, have hindered and delayed the ‘installation’ of a common and shared basis.

This section contributes to circumscribe properties and quality of patronage intended as a dimension of ‘party-state’ relationship, going beyond the derby between patronage intended as electoral/reward or governmental/control resource (Kopecky et al., 2012) and trying to achieve an essential pattern of patronage capable of involving any contextualization of this practice. By doing so, we will be able to apply this pattern to parliamentary patronage.

In brief, in our assumption, party patronage as organizational resource represents a means to:

- Support party activities at financial level in a lateral and indirect way;
- Build and reinforce party internal organizations;
- Increase the professionalization of party management.

The first two functions compensate the otherwise decaying financial sources and organizational networks, whereas the third function equips parties to face modern challenges, especially in the electoral campaigning.

First, changes in public party funding oblige parties to find alternative legal ways in order to secure their financial independence and sustain their activities both at national and local level. The presence of party within the state guarantees in this sense a minimal insurance from the risk to completely disappear from the political landscape. Parties staff their structures, mainly at central level, with low level patronage and guarantee party activities' working and functioning ruled by professional staff comparable to those ones on the regular party pay-roll (Webb, Kolodny 2006) Using public state resources, parties reduce the recourse to private funding to sustain certain activities. In this way they have a larger margin to manoeuvre in their budgets to spend money in other directions according to their priorities.

Moreover, clients are often asked to contribute to the party budget with a certain percentage of their salaries as a return for appointments and jobs (Sorauf, 1969). This is also true at higher level when MPs are called to destine a quota of their parliamentary income to the party. It could be matter of debate whether this kind of patronage is legal or not, but here we assume that this practice respects the legal constraints, especially when party activities overlap the range of activities run by other state organizations that can offer patronage. In this sense, patronage represents an indirect surrogate of public financing.

Second, patronage can be used as intra-party cohesion and organizational loyalty facilitator (Panebianco, 1988a): the distribution of selective incentives to party members in exchange of stable external support could help to stimulate and reinforce, as a glue, the unity of internal structures at political level and keep party stable in its connections with local entities. This is true both for big and small parties. In the big parties with catch all ideologies, the internal use of patronage recognizes the existence of different factions that could stand as a party within the party. A shared management of patronage mechanisms and distributive processes keeps the party united in all its heterogeneous components, preventing party splits and conflicts (Giannetti, Benoit 2009), “wielding the different blocs within the party into a unified whole” (Sorauf, 1969). With the same

scheme and for the same purposes, patronage practices also are managed in coalitional government and contexts not only during the constitutive moments. As for the small parties, patronage is necessary to reinforce and motivate ties in a limited dimension. The absence of available patronage resources could weaken the internal cohesion, especially in majoritarian contexts, and discourage the belonging to small sized entities. In proportional contexts, on the contrary, small parties, in particular if they hold a veto power, could maximize their rent-seeking orientation, providing discrete quantity of patronage resources to their membership.

Third, the discretionary power of parties to distribute state jobs is a lever to raise the professional level of party management. In the electoral professional party, contacts between politicians and citizens are mediated by professionals, ‘so-called experts, technicians with specialist knowledge’ (Panebianco, 1988a, 264). The lack of stable points of connection with the civil society makes necessary the use of professionals to taps communication channels and develop policy proposals and platforms. The notion of patronage as control resource (Kopecky, Mair, Spirova, 2012), purified by any reference to governmental sphere and to the partyness of government (Blondel, Cotta, 2000), can be easily reconducted in this function.

What their theoretical framework argued about the point remains valid with a broader sense: “By staffing the state with trusted individuals, political parties can make their policies flow more effectively, can be better informed, and can thereby enhance their policy-making capacity and reputation”. “Through patronage, and through the appointment of party personnel to key agencies and institutions, parties can hope to gain an oversight of the likely demands posed to political leaders, as well as of the likely policies and programmes that are needed to meet these demands. In this sense, patronage can also serve as the basis for a powerful network of communication between policy-making sectors, expressed both vertically and horizontally”. (2012, 10, 11)

The professionalism in party working deserves more attention in patronage studies, not only to understand patron’s motivation, but also to focus more clearly on clients. Patronage studies are in fact affected by a lack of analysis on clients, more independent in modern patronage. This lack has been biased by a conception of patronage as an overwhelming practice of patrons on clients at top-down level. Here we



assume that a market of clients actually exists since clients can choose their patron and change it if not satisfied by the relationship.

Professionalism has really revolutionized party patronage. Clients now offer expertise and competence tied by autonomous, entrusted and contractualized ways (Wilensky, 1959; Brante, 1990; Webb and Fisher, 2003). Compared to traditional party bureaucrats, they have more status, a more professional commitment free from personal acritical devotion, but fully engaged in party's mission.

A further decisive contribution to patronage literature has been given by Bearfield (2009, 68-73) by pointing out four "styles" of patronage according to the principal or principle goals pursued by patrons. Even if these styles are formulated starting from the American experience, this typology has remarkable relevance for the object of this dissertation and for the future studies. The four patronage styles are:

1. Organizational patronage, "used to strengthen or create political organizations";
2. Democratic patronage, a means "to achieve democratic or egalitarian goals".
3. Tactical patronage, used "to bridge political divisions or cleavages as a means of achieving political or policy goals".
4. Reform patronage, a paradox situation in which "those committed to reforming the existing patronage system themselves engage in the practice as the means of replacing the corrupt political regime that preceded them".

We have already considered with other labels the organizational and the tactical patronage in the previous pages. Democratic patronage and reform patronage open interesting scenarios for reflection and debate. According to Bearfield, democratic patronage is "the most vulnerable to distortion and abuse", but actually "can be a useful tool for creating a representative bureaucracy". His considerations take the cue from Jacksonian experience with the 'rotation of the offices' against patronage as a prelude to corruption and a detachment from public interest, but can also be extended to consensual or consociational democracies. In Netherlands, for example, the politics of accommodation secured political stability and political pluralism (Lijphart, 1968). In his study about Dutch political system, Lijphart pointed out that "the Netherlands presents a paradox. On the one hand, it is characterized by an extraordinary degree of social

cleavage. On the other hand, Holland is also one of the most notable examples of a successful democracy”, stable and effective.

The spirit of accommodation among political elites is one of the decisive factors to explain this political miracle in terms of democratic management. Accommodation means “settlement of divisive issues and conflicts, where only a minimal consensus exists” (1968, 103) and, in order to be feasible, it could be rendered even into jobs, official positions and appointments reallocated and distributed among the ‘self-contained blocs’.

As highest and most explicit example of this practice, we could mention the Lebanese National Pact, established in 1943. Negotiated between the Shi’ite, Sunni and Maronite representatives, it stated in unwritten form that the president would have been always a Maronite Christian, the prime minister a Sunnite Muslim, the speaker of the National Assembly a Shi’ite Muslim, the Deputy Speaker of the Parliament and the Deputy Prime Minister Greek Orthodox. According to this pact, the ratio of Christian to Muslim representatives in Parliament would have been six to five.<sup>11</sup>

In Italy, a country with low rational-legal authority in Max Weber’s meaning, the so-called *lottizzazione* explains the democratic quality of patronage as means of power sharing and guarantee of pluralism. Mancini (2009) showed how during the First Republic the Italian public service broadcaster (RAI) has been object of pervasive party patronage according to party quotas, even by internal factions of the parties (a ‘*lottizzazione within lottizzazione*’, Padovani, 2005). This consolidated scheme practically applied the principle of pluralism and assured their presence and their representation in the media.

Economically expensive, democratic patronage has been considered as the prelude of corruption. Lijphart study (1999), though, denied the virtues of majoritarian democracies in terms of limited corruption and demonstrate the no significant relationship between consensus democracies and corruption, arguing on the contrary

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<sup>11</sup> As Zahar puts (2005), “the legislature turned into a private club as leaders promoted their protégés. The elites almost secured a monopoly of representation. Hence patronage politics did not bode well for legislative responsiveness to popular demands”.

that “consensual democracies are slightly less likely to be corrupt than majoritarian democracies” (2008, 97).

Reform patronage allows us to introduce a snake-biting-its-tail process. What if reformist parties elected against a given patronage system try to install their new patronage system? “If they stick to their ideals of not using (or, in their minds, abusing) patronage, the movement will die once the zeal of their initial supporters has waned” Bearfield wrote (p.72). “However, if the reformers build their own political machine and opt to use patronage to staff the organization with people loyal to their cause, they would appear as hypocrites, making themselves vulnerable to both political rivals and the next wave of reformers”.

This ironic paradox, overcome - according to the author - by the implementation of “a new patronage network under the guise of meritorious hiring of experts based on a specific set of experiences or credentials” (p- 73), concerns a serious issue about patronage and regimes, their consolidation and crisis.

According to Morlino (1998, 2005), parties with their own organizations and patronage<sup>12</sup> serve as ‘anchors’ “able to perform” in an asymmetrical relationship between people and elites “a hooking-and-binding effect on more or less organized people within a society” (1998, 446; 2005, 745). In so doing, the reach and the extent of patronage affect the domestic anchoring process, that is the gradual presence and adaptation of anchors and their development within a democracy with rules at electoral and decisional level.

In Morlino’s theory, anchoring process is a crucial component in the mix that leads to the complete and solid establishment of democratic structures, institution and norms, called ‘consolidation’. Only firm and fully developed anchors, after a reasonable lapse of time from the installation enough to let the dominance grow over the civil society, make possible to achieve consolidation in a context of exclusive legitimation with low consensus towards the democratic institutions and with alternative political groups out from the political field. In addition, firm anchors can prevent the emergence of a crisis.

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<sup>12</sup> In his work, Morlino referred to patronage as Kristinsson’s definition (1996, 355; 2005, 435): “the selective distribution of material benefits to individuals or small groups in change of their political support”.

The breakage of the flukes happens also when the economic, political and social cost of the anchors oversteps reasonable levels.

Even if for long time the conventional wisdom has associated patronage with waste, corruption and clientelism, this phenomenon is not a curse for democracy and government. On the contrary, it provides and guarantees the full functioning and stability of democracy although at extreme extent its freezing could bring to an inflexible and blocked system that only a crisis can unlock. Morlino's scheme helps to rethink patronage as one of the vehicles of democracy and consubstantial to it. Its fine working and its dynamic stability represent an insurance policy for a long-lasting democratic play. Patronage is not necessarily an evil and is not the devil so black as some scholars have painted. It is the cost of patronage that makes the dangerous difference even in a condition of widespread legitimation with large consensus for the institutions and absent support for alternative regimes.

Morlino's theoretical efforts stimulate us to draw some questions. When does a patronage system go to crisis? When does a patronage system stay below the tolerance threshold? Does reform patronage necessarily represent a patronage crisis? Answering them could contribute to widen the focus on the reasons why transitions in patronage models may occur, relying to some extent on their legitimacy. We assume here that party changes and state reforms do not affect patronage systems. We could define them external variables of patronage and we actually know that they can reduce the distribution of job positions and have an impact on how the distribution takes place, but focusing on internal variables of exchange relationships in this step allows us to underline the fundamentals.

Patronage systems could be distinguished by the intersections between merit criteria and party allegiance. Some scholars (Mainwaring, 1999, 177) have defined patronage as "the use or distribution of state resources on a non meritocratic basis for political gain". Our concept of patronage does not necessarily exclude meritocratic basis since patronage, as we said, is a means to increase the professionalization of party management and attested and acknowledged professional skills are necessary whereas party allegiance does not seem enough to guarantee all alone the achievement of political goals. Democracy is an exercise that requires both expertise and commitment.

From the two dichotomies merit-based/non merit-based and partisan/no partisan patronage four different patterns emerge:

		<b>MERIT</b>	
		<b>Weak</b>	<b>Strong</b>
<b>PARTY ALLEGIANCE</b>	<b>Weak</b>	Patronage zero	Patronage by the experts
	<b>Strong</b>	Low-level patronage	Patronage by partisan experts

Table 1.1. Party allegiance and merit: internal patronage models

Patronage zero represent the phase in which people with low party allegiance and low merit are recruited. Parties have little advantage to hire such persons, but actually sometimes they are ‘obliged’ to do if relatives or friends are involved. This phenomenon, called nepotism, weaken the legitimacy of both parties and states. Patronage by partisan experts could find the highest level of acceptance if parties have a large consensus. State resources are used to engage skilful people in order to fulfil party goals within the state and their costs could be easily tolerated by the citizens. The shift from patronage to patronage shapes the substance of party-state relationship and affect the quality of patronage.

However, party-state relationship can change if party systems or the state face changes, causing the crisis of the pre-existent model of patronage. The passage from consensual to competitive party systems, for example, reduces the space for multi-party patronage especially if the pervasiveness of the state is weaker. At the same time, distributive politics in jobs and state position needs some adaptations if the number of ruling parties grows: the sharing power with oversized coalitions could require an expansion of the state in order to satisfy parties’ demands.

		STATE	
		Weak presence	Strong presence
PARTY SYSTEM	Consensual	Shared patronage	Diffused patronage
	Competitive	Mono patronage	Exclusive patronage

Table 1.2 Party systems and states: external patronage models

### 1.3 WHY PATRONAGE IS NOT CORRUPTION

In the confusional, but prosperous state of the literature, the general notion of patronage has been coloured with misleading meanings, interpreted almost as an activity with para-lobbystic influence, quite close to corruptive practices and often overlapped. This section explains why patronage is not corruption and how and when these two concepts could correspond to each other.

“Without influence, which you call corruption, men will not be induced to support government, though they generally approve of its measures” said John Mortlock, British banker, Member of Parliament, and thirteen times Mayor and Master of the Town of Cambridge in 1780s. His sentence shows a common trait between patronage and corruption: the influence, intended as an authoritative exercise of an established power in a dyadic relationship. At the same time, if we substitute the term ‘corruption’ with ‘patronage’ or ‘clientelism’, the sentence remains meaningful with its multifaceted consequences.

Like in the case of patronage, the conceptualization of corruption is not completely defined. The first effort is to distinguish between systemic and individual corruption or grand and petty corruption. Grand corruption has been summarized as that kind of corruption that “occurs at the highest levels of government and involves major government projects and programs” (Rose-Ackerman, 1999, 27), whereas petty corruption “occurs within a framework where basic laws and regulations are in place and implementing officials seize upon opportunities to benefit personally” (Rose-

Ackerman, 2007, xviii). It is to be taken for granted that usually corruption raises from petty to grand.

We may start our comparison by examining the World Bank definition of corruption as an “abuse of public office for unauthorized private gain” (2000). In this term, corruption occurs everywhere, no matter if society, government, democracy or economical sector are advanced or not. By this view, modernization thesis of corruption (Huntington, 1968; Scott, 1969; Heidenhimer, 1970) have completely failed in bringing into the proper focus the phenomenon. Those theories considered corruption like a dependent variable of the development of a society: the more a country is modernized, the less is expected to observe corruption, declined after the transitional stage.

A wider definition spells out that political corruption is “the abuse of entrusted power by political leaders for private gain, with the objective of increasing power or wealth. Political corruption need not involve money changing hands; it may take the form of ‘trading in influence’ or granting favors that poison politics and threaten democracy” (Transparency International Annual Report, 2004, 10).

As such, the term “abuse” represents the constitutive element of corruption, distinguishing corruption from patronage. The abuse of power actually generates a violation of law and so corruption treads on the borders of the law whereas patronage practices are regulated by legal and regulatory provisions with always recognizable clients and patrons. So even if corruption uses “legal means to deliver favors, for example, by rewriting bills to include or exclude certain sectors from the scope of a bill” (Yadav, 2011, 5), its use is illegal.

An analytic typology of corruption has been advanced by Heidenheimer (1989). He defined three types of corruption from the literature:

1) public office-centered, focused on the public official. By this view, “corruption is behavior which deviates from the formal duties of a public role because of private regarding (personal, close family, private clique) pecuniary or status gains; or violates rules against the exercise of certain types of private regarding influence. This includes such behavior as bribery (use of reward to pervert the judgments of a person in a position of trust); nepotism (bestowal of patronage by reason of ascriptive relationship

rather than merit); and misappropriation (illegal appropriation of public resources for private-regarding uses)". (J.S. Nye, 1967, 966). Actually nepotism is situated at the border between patronage and corruption: when the discretionary power of parties to distribute public jobs or positions also to relatives and members of the family is not limited by the law, nepotism assumes more a form of debatable favouritism that damages other potential clients than a practice that directly breaks the law;

2) market-centered (van Klaveren, 1957, 4) when "a corrupt civil servant regards his (public) office as a business, the income of which he will seek to maximize. The office then becomes a maximizing unit. The size of his income depends upon the market situation and his talents for finding the point maximal gain on the public demand curve." Obviously, officers' income could be maximized also by good and not corrupted performances, such as productivity and goal-oriented incentives.

3) public interest-centered, as a "deviant behaviour associated with a particular motivation, namely that of private gain at public expense" (Friedrich, 1972, 127). Here the contrast is between private gain and public expense since a power-holder undertakes decisions or actions that advantage all those offer illegal payments or other rewards against public interest.

The first and the third meaning of corruption are inextricably intertwined since generally public officials' activities are supposed to be guided by strong esteem and respect for public interest. This consideration makes public offices, and civil service as a whole, value-holder entities spreading civic principles through their existence, structure and working.

Della Porta and Vannucci (1999) stated the most comprehensive definition of corruption: "a hidden (due to its illegality) violation of a contract that, implicitly or explicitly, state a delegation of responsibility and the exercise of some discretionary power; (ii) by a public agent (the bribee) who, against the interests or preferences of the principal (its public organization) (iii) acts in favor of a third part (the briber) from which he receives a rewards (the bribe)" (pp. 16-7).

Several initiatives have been taken to fight and destroy political corruption and sanitize institutions. The types of corruption control have been classified by Gillespie and Okruhlik (1991, 6). A first step, as we said, is the social strategy, the body of ethical norms, education and public vigilance that inhibit corrupt practices. No other clean up



provision (legal or political) could be forceful and compelling without the recourse of informal social sanctions. Their effectiveness depends on the level of acceptance, approval and promotion of social norms that encourage certain standards of behaviour and foster the abstract and practical respect for public interests.

Secondly, legal strategies and procedures emerge as a further factor to discourage corruption. Every country has more or less successfully erected an anti-corruption system, mainly through regulating agencies that “provide centralized leadership in core areas of anti-corruption activity” (Meagher, 2005, 70), in order to prevent the proliferation of bribes and kickbacks, especially in public works. In the last decades, public officials have been asked to show their asset situation, to abstain from conflict of interest, to refuse gifts over a certain value. Law enforcement makes the difference: a special and severe sanctionary system against corruption crimes with a strong rule of law largely intended affects the capacity of state structures to be penetrated by corrupters.

Market strategies have been considered as a third pillar. In last twenty years, policy platforms and agendas have been generally distinguished by a lower presence of the state in the economies and in the productive sectors of economic life. Government intervention in economy has actually lead to market distortion, facilitating collusions, oligopolies or ineffective monopolies that restraint perfect competition. The withdrawal of government from economic activities and the promotion of free market policies represent an additional factor to clean up corruption, avoiding strong asymmetries and disequilibria between demand and supply.

Lastly, political strategies to reduce corruption focus on authority, access to political process and administrative reforms. According to Gillespie and Okruhlik, the eradication of corrupt activities could be achieved if the decisional powers are assigned to committees, collective boards, rather than to individuals. The administrative reforms opening for more transparency, fairness and normative and administrative simplifications could reduce the bureaucratic shadowy space that allows to corruption to infiltrate. Even the law-making process has an influence on corruption practices, although it is more likely that corruption has more influence on determining bills’ writing and decision-making processes than the opposite. Some principles should guide the law-making: laws should be prospective, not retrospective and should be relatively

stable. Moreover, particular laws should be guided by open, general and clear rules that make possible a limited discretion of authoritative -delegated- powers in their application and enforcement. (Raz, 1979; Maravall, 2002)

Other strategies to fight corruptions focuses on open participation of citizens in the political processes in order to promote an effective control and scrutiny of ruled class upon the ruling class. Public officials can also be empowered as whistleblowers to denounce corruption crimes within the public administration. The degree of adhesion to this practice can vary from country to country and depends on social factors and the protection effectiveness secured to whisteblowers. Even an incentivisation of fair behaviours and good practices could be pursued by monetary benefits, increasing salaries and awarding non corrupted public officials.

To sum up, corruption has to do with rule of law more than patronage does and has much more implications with democracy at its roots than patronage. Actually, the rule of law represents a procedural dimension of democracy, one of the eight possible qualities to check how good a democracy is (Morlino, 2011), along with electoral and inter-institutional accountability, political participation and competition (each of four procedural dimensions), freedom, solidarity (both substantive dimensions) and responsiveness (outcome dimension).

In the studies on quality of democracies, the *rule of law* is “not only the enforcement of legal norms”, but “entails at least *the capacity*, even if limited, to make authorities respect the laws, and to have laws that are non-retroactive, publicly known, universal, stable, and unambiguous” (Morlino, 2011, 197). In this sense, the “institutional and administrative capacity to formulate, implement, and enforce the law; focus on the governance system (parliament and government) capable of ensuring the production of high quality legislation and its implementation throughout the country and a transparent policy-making process allowing for the participation of civil society, and the presence of a professional, neutral, accountable, and efficient state bureaucracy” (Morlino, 2011, 197) represents one of the basic sub-dimensions of rule of law that include also the “effective fight against corruption, illegality, and abuse of power by state agencies; focus on the existence and implementation of the comprehensive legislative framework to prevent and fight corruption”.

Our assumption here is that patronage is not corruption, but is completely legal, potentially and generally transparent, subordinated to laws and norms. This helps us not only to give more dignity to the object of our study, but also to fully understand the reach of patronage within the state in total compliance with legislations and procedures and without damages for democracy's quality.

In Kaufmann definition of patronage (1974), the exchange relationship between patrons and clients is characterized by an “only loosely” anchoring “in public law”. Under this aspect, the evolution of patronage notion, in this case related more to the public administration transformation, wipes out every margin of ‘looseness’ or ambiguity. If patronage moves itself within discretionary criteria allowed by the law, this discretionality takes the form of an abuse, even in its basic step, when corruption occurs.

It is worthy to identify a further constitutive tract of corruption in order to getting out of the jungle of ‘bribery and kickbacks’ that plastically and materially describe the concept and of the forest of adjectives (political, economic, administrative) that pinpoint its field of action (Deysine, 1980): secrecy and secretiveness are associated with corruption. Patrons and clients in corruptive practices, or better the corruptor and the corrupted, work clandestinely, especially in the advanced democracies.

Secrecy is due mainly to the illegality of the corrupt acts, but also to the social consensus towards certain practices and to the moral costs personally sustained by the corrupter. The higher is the degree of social acceptance towards bribes or kickbacks, the higher is the probability that corruption overflows without limits even if bribes and kickbacks are forbidden and punished according to the law. Moreover, “The higher the “moral cost” for a given agent, the stronger will be his “preference for lawful fulfillment” (that is, the kind of psychological suffering associated with the violation of legal norms), influenced by his personal preference as well as by values and informal codes prevailing in.” (Della Porta, Vannucci, 2005, 2-3).

Although secrecy could represent a virtue for democracy when it aims at guaranteeing national or international security or a better quality of decision-making processes, in this case it damages democracy structures. As, in a paradox, Kunicova and Rose Ackerman put, “the secrecy and lack of transparency involved make it hard for

constituents to tell whether the overall impact of having a corrupt political representative is beneficial” (2005, 578).

Party patronage is not secret at all and for this reason provokes less scandal. It is likely that precisely the introduction of open and transparent norms to regulate relationships between parties and state has liberated patronage from that halo of occult pervasiveness which has discredited it so far. Obviously one can say that since laws and rules are proposed and passed essentially by the parties themselves as Parliament majority members or government builders, the power to decide what is corruption or not is up to the parties or the politicians themselves, but actually the empowerment of citizens and their more conscious and informed exercise of citizenship and social and political rights have restricted the secretiveness of discretionality, making it more accountable.

The financial crisis and the restraints in the national budgets have raised the attention level of the citizens on corruption, seen as a factor that increases the costs paid and shared by the community and undermines the efficiency of a government system. This does not mean that the civic engagement has been exerted with scrutiny in the polling booths to choose the less corrupted party. Actually a new climate with claims in favours of transparency, oriented to require more accountability and responsibility to the ruling class, has emerged. Low turnout forced parties and politicians to ask themselves more moral and legal behaviours, promote strict criteria in the selection of the candidates and push in their policy agendas the fight against corruption.

The notion of ‘control patronage’ (Kopecky, Mair, Spirova, 2012) or ‘power patronage’ (Müller, 2006), that is the appointment used to monitor and determine the governmental process, could at extreme extent bring to corruption if this process is polluted by corrupt ends: parties could distribute important public jobs and positions in order to control channels for illegal party financing or other criminal activities by influencing decisions not oriented to public interest.

The following table summarizes the considerations made in this section.

	<b>PATRONAGE</b>	<b>CORRUPTION</b>
WHERE	Within the state	Inside and outside the state
OBJECT OF EXCHANGE	Jobs	Public provisions in change of money
LEGAL	Yes	No
SECRET	No	Yes
AGAINST THE PUBLIC INTEREST	No	Yes
DAMAGES FOR DEMOCRACY' QUALITY	No	Yes

Table 1.3 Patronage and corruption

#### **1.4 PARLIAMENTARY PATRONAGE: A STEP FORWARD AND SOME EXPECTATIONS**

Systematic and detailed studies or at least hefty debates of “parliamentary patronage” or “patronage in Parliament” in the literature are still missing. It is true that just recently this concept has found more solid grounds after decades of carefree and not orderly use of ‘patronage’ term and so the lack of theoretical and empirical analyses in this particular field do not make surprise.

This dissertation tries to fill this empty space, assessing the power of parties to distribute jobs within legislative assemblies and parliamentary structures. In order to do it, we try to make a step forward compared to the reach of the literature so far, and at the same time a step behind about the ability of parties to control governmental decisions inside those bureaucracies. In some degree, our analysis could re-experience the mass party or cadre party performance in term of distributive practices, going back to the basic party organization.

Moreover, the term “within” is to be underlined. Some committees of the Parliament are entitled to elect the members of public companies’ board, following a practice principally associated with the party government scheme. At the most stretched

degree, in some occasions, the body of MPs intended as the representation of the sovereign popular will take part in joint parliamentary session to elect, for example, heads of the state, members of the constitutional court or other constitutional bodies. Through inter-party negotiations and agreements, these democratic and accountability-oriented procedures and arrangements could produce lateral and sophisticated forms of ‘control patronage’ with clients that serve in apical roles thanks to party allegiance and so likely to fail in their duties of impartiality and independence. In addition, Parliament as a whole or by its speakers or even with some internal branches can determine or intervene in appointment procedures, securing a ‘constitutional guarantee’ or a scrutiny to the process. It happens often that binding or non-binding preliminary hearings are held by the Parliament in the competent committees in order to approve, with or without a brief, governmental appointments<sup>13</sup>.

Moreover, patronage in Parliament could occur when change in internal organization in terms of advancements of career for some high-level officials take place. These advancements for particular roles may depend on decisions made by politicians serving as chairs or components of steering bodies responsible for Parliament organization. Professional or personal linkages can play as a key factor in these decisions, advantaging close persons in an anyway limited number of persons, each one selected by public and competitive procedures, each one asked to fulfil certain requirements.

Neither ‘patronage’ will be the focus of this dissertation. The first one (external institutional patronage) is in some cases quite far to be scientifically defined as a high-level patronage and is more interpreted as an expression of Parliament in its sum of political sensibilities, performing also as institutional counterweight in relation with other constitutional bodies or institutions. The second one (inner patronage) covers a very narrow array of persons that has limited explanatory powers about the general relationships between parties and state. There is also a third form of political patronage in the parliamentary practices: the distribution of parliamentary institutional offices and chairs among the majority parties or the opposition parties according to both inter-groups and intra-group negotiation. After formal or informal consultations, these

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<sup>13</sup> On UK experience, Matthews and Flinders (2015).

agreements are formally sealed by an internal electoral moment. We will explain this “chair patronage” in the light of the Italian experience in the last section of the fourth chapter.

In our study, this “chair patronage” is one of the sources of the parliamentary patronage as defined in this dissertation. We consider as parliamentary patronage (internal institutional patronage) the process through which parties staff themselves within parliamentary structures in order to guarantee their survival and working. The rationale of this kind of patronage differs somewhat from the traditional meaning of patronage: it moves itself among political science, constitutional and parliamentary law, considering Parliament as a branch of the state without any reference to the spoil systems, more related to the different sectors of the public administration.

The conceptualization and the operationalization of party patronage has crucially turned around the relationship between political parties and the executive - or the government in a broader sense - as a dimension of party-government (Mair 2008; Rose 1974). The effort of this dissertation is to overcome the conventional wisdom and transfer with the proper tools the study of patronage from governmental arenas to the legislatures, assuming that the party government model, indeed, does not thoroughly explain the entire sphere of patronage practices and represents a condition sufficient, but not necessary for the emergence of patronage linkages. This table offers a synthesis of what we have explained so far. For the sake of the brevity, we will use the term ‘parliamentary patronage’ in the next chapters as interchangeable with the “internal institutional patronage”.

	<b>PATRONS</b>	<b>CLIENTS</b>	<b>RESOURCES PROVIDER</b>
<b>EXTERNAL INSTITUTIONAL PATRONAGE</b>	MPs as members of assembly or committees that serve as electorate	Experts or other high-ranking politicians	External institutions
<b>CHAIR PATRONAGE</b>	MPs	MPs	Internal institutions
<b>INNER PATRONAGE</b>	Institutional office-holder in their administrative tasks	High-ranking officials for internal career advancement	Parliament
<b>INTERNAL INSTITUTIONAL PATRONAGE</b>	Institutional office-holders, MPs and parliamentary groups	Chosen by the patrons with total power of discretion	Parliament

Table 1.4 Different forms of parliamentary patronage.

On one hand, parliamentary patronage shares with the Mair's and Kopecky's notion the anchoring within a public structure (even if parliament constitutes a constitutional body), its potentially cyclical renewal, the exchange of public resources (jobs) and the existence of a patron that offers the job and a client that seek and receive it. On the other hand, in certain public administration systems the 'appointment' patronage (here labelled also "managerial patronage") is more embedded within the state structure, formally recognized as a spoil system in which the apical administrative officials are selected by the political vertex, with effects on the whole structure of a public administration. Parliamentary patronage, instead, works as a 'reserve' within the state – intended as a sum of representative assemblies - that coexists and does not replace the parliamentary bureaucracy, selected by competitive procedures. This 'reserve', not permanently installed within the parliamentary structure, goes parallel with the internal bureaucracy and is more oriented to the political and institutional goals of the temporary patrons with no influence on the whole institution. To same extent, Parliament "hosts" patronage and patrons in an enclave with a very limited reach and zero counter-effects on its institutional functioning, apart from the costs that it bears for it.

The growing relevance of parliamentary groups in party activities goes beyond the basic function of party cohesion, that is "the parliamentary endorsement of



government measures’ (Rose, 1983, 283). Parliamentary groups provide additional resources to parties: “in some legislatures Fraktion status is a prerequisite to chairing committees, serving on administrative bodies, and even gaining staff and other legislative resources.” (Bowler et al., 2003, 161)

In this case, the Parliament itself, here conceived as part of the state, offers public financial resources to parliamentary groups for their working<sup>14</sup>, giving them autonomy of budget within the borders of law and procedure constraints. In times of financial decline and low legitimacy, “parties penetrate the state to acquire more resources; these resources, which are managed by the national headquarters and by party groups within the representative institutions, are then selectively used to materially compensate militants and rank-and-file” (Ignazi, 2014, 166).

	<b>MANAGERIAL PATRONAGE</b>	<b>PARLIAMENTARY PATRONAGE</b>
<b>Reach</b>	Basically extended, at least at the top of the administration	Limited
<b>Nature of the token of exchange</b>	Appointment	Job
<b>Effects on the administration</b>	Yes	No

Table 1.5 Managerial patronage and parliamentary patronage.

The preliminary considerations made in the previous sections have to be tested in the light of parliamentary patronage. With its representation dynamics, Parliament constitutes the point of the intersection between the ruins of the ‘party on the ground’, the ‘party in central office’ and the ‘party in the public office’ (Katz and Mair, 1993). Local party elites and party members (‘party on the ground’) turn to parliamentary groups in order to make MPs aware of local, social or personal issues manageable at parliamentary level. This linkage could be strengthened by the effective and successful submitting of parliamentary acts about the raised issues (bills, resolutions, questions). The exercise of an “expressive function” (Bagehot, 1867) for internal goals stands along with the capability to distribute financial resources at parliamentary level. Sometimes local party members could address parliamentary groups to get financial resources in the

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<sup>14</sup> It is worth to make reference here to the “Short Money” practice in UK experience, that is a special funding for opposition parties and the support of their parliamentary duties.

form of legislative activities' communication 'on the ground'. It usually occurs also that a portion of MP monthly salary is directly destined to cover some expenses at local level, in the constituency where MP has been elected.

The decline of party membership and the general distrust have gradually deprived parties not only of independent figures sitting in party boards without partisan affiliation, but also of a presence of party members in those boards significantly larger than the parliamentary representatives. "Parliamentarians and their leaders now tend to be accorded greater weight in these bodies" (Katz, Mair, 2002, 125), in so achieving a colonization of the party. Especially in the small parties -that refer to small parliamentary groups- the "party in central office" corresponds approximately to the core of the party in public/parliamentary office. This is even more true when new parties originate from parliamentary splits. The independence of the party in central office so faded along with its capability to convey financial resources, giving free field to the dominance of the 'party in parliamentary office'<sup>15</sup>.

In an extensive sense, we could state that parliamentary patronage tends to embrace both the notions of "clientelism at the top" and "clientelism at the bottom" (Sotiropoulos, 2004). These concepts are here used not to refer to clientelism as explained in the first chapter (the vote-exchange). In parliamentary patronage, it is not the vote in itself to be the object of exchange, but the belonging to a party machine or an organization that contributes to the vote-seeking activities. The connections with the electoral campaigning are supposed to be strong both for high-ranked party managers and for the simple party workers, activists and volunteers, creating two broad categories of clients involved in exchange relationships. In the same extensive sense, we could mention here Gingerich's distinction between job patronage (low-level patronage) and resource patronage (2004), interpreting it with regard to the organizational needs of the party/individual politicians and to the internal hierarchy of jobs rather than to its effects on the state penetration that are assumed as paltry.

Parliamentary patronage motivations are supposed to differ from the governmental patronage mechanisms mainly because the object of the exchange

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<sup>15</sup> Actually "the resources which remain within the central office appear to be increasingly devoted to the employment of contractual staff and consultants, and to the provision of outside expertise" (Katz, Mair, 2002, 125).

relationships shifts from a formal appointment with discretionary powers to a job without relevant decisional autonomy related to the internal structure of Parliament. For this reason, reward motivations are expected to be more incisive than the control motivations and party organizations' needs exert a considerable influence on the distributive processes, especially for the small groups. The electoral campaigns represent an important source of recruitment, providing career occasions to party members and activists. In this sense, parliamentary patronage embodies at the same time the meaning of patronage both as organizational and post-electoral resource.

The appearance of several patrons, often not necessarily strongly tied with party dynamics, leaves space for a personalized patronage, sharing a common trait with the Italian governmental patronage for 'solitary leaders' (Di Mascio, 2012b). Job selections in Parliament are not always held by party or parliamentary boards: usually group leaders and other MPs eligible to distribute state jobs select their staff basing on personal networks with a scrutiny of professional experiences.

For its nature, parliamentary patronage is more unstable and changing even if firmly anchored to a certain fixed availability of resources. Clients are more professionally oriented to ordinary and practical pursuits linked to parliamentary activities such as legislative drafting, institutional and political communication or organizational functions.

Parliamentary groups concentrate the timing of job distribution at the beginning of the legislature, forming their staffs and the internal hierarchy, individuating persons responsible for each area or function. The same happens for single MPs entitled to hire personnel, paying it by public resources (be them part of the single MP salary explicitly devoted to this goal by the rule or directly provided by the institutions).

Political factors can impact on patronage dynamics: party switches in Parliament can increase or decrease the size of the parliamentary groups from which the amount of public funding derives. The emergence of new parliamentary groups, not necessarily linked to parties, creates new opportunities of patronage, obviously diminishing the supply of other groups. Also a change in group leadership or in the institutional offices moves the consolidated order to new offers of jobs, especially in the key positions.

Comprehensive studies on parliamentary patronage are still missing in the literature, probably because of its different nature and its limited scope considered as a

matter of mere hiring and staffing. The notion of parliamentary patronage is indeed build here as an attempt to challenge the traditional expectation that patronage is an exclusive sinew or sinecure of the party government and to extend the reach of the cartel party model to the legislatures, assessing its depth and its internal mechanisms. The Italian case study illustrated in this dissertation tries to give a systematic focus on parliamentary patronage and an empirical demonstration of what we have developed here in assumptive way. The next chapter will go through some particular experiences of patronage in the world, letting emerge some features that parliamentary patronage could share.

Our research design adopts a qualitative method with semi-structured interviews and conversations at different steps, firstly with experts (high-skilled clients and officials in a preliminary stage) and then with patrons (MPs and leading administrative chiefs of Parliamentary groups in Parliament in the core part of the research). We will intendedly use part of the same approaches and indicators adopted by Mair's study, considering it as a meaningful point of departure to explore patronage, but gradually improving it by focusing on the specific parliamentary dynamics that could shape patronage relationships. The participant observation oversees not only the correct development of the empirical research, but also its theoretical ground.

The considerations expressed in the third and in the fourth chapter about Italian parties and Italian Parliament will allow us to trace in detail the fundamental aspects that shape patronage relationships. We consider this part of the dissertation preparatory for the correct and complete setting of the hypotheses that inspire the empirical research. Here we could write down the first basic research questions that will guide the study of Parliament as institution penetrated by the parties, developed in the fourth chapter:

- 1) To what extent do party distribute patronage in Parliament?
- 2) Which factors influence the distribution of patronage in Parliament?
- 3) Who are the patrons?

## CHAPTER 2

### THE PHENOMENON AROUND THE WORLD

*“When Abraham Lincoln was elected president, he stated that his policy in filling offices would be ‘Justice to all’. What that meant to him was that all the factions within the Republican Party that had served the national ticket would be rewarded with federal jobs.”*

Michael Schudson (1998, 148)

The first chapter has largely illustrated the theoretical framework of patronage, retracing the evolution of this concept, marking the difference with bordering notions such as clientelism and with unconformable practices such as corruption. In addition, we have specified in depth functions and styles of party patronage, contextualizing this phenomenon in the theory of democratization processes and putting forward the parliamentary patronage dimension.

This chapter briefly recaps some literature contributions of party patronage experience in three wide, but defined areas: United States, Europe and Africa. This apparent digression on historical - and then empirical - evidences gives us further elements to fully understand patronage. Our hypothesis, indeed, is that parliamentary patronage concept and practice embrace and contain blended characteristics of traditional and modern patronage. A detailed overview in an evolutionary time and space perspective, based also on short cases and relevant historical passages, allows us to materially distinguish common tracts, discrepancies and gaps between patronage models emerged in and within different continents. Obviously this chapter does not constitute a cross-continent and subcontinent-comparison, but rather a summary of how parties have practically put down roots in the state developing patronage systems in incomparable and more or less fertile ground.

Here we focus on three macro-geographical areas such as US, Europe and Africa. We find these three aggregates amply explanatory of the various facets of patronage, of its functions and styles. There is a large number of reasons that indicate why we select US, Europe and Africa as comprehensive field of analysis. Actually,

patronage has been studied in several countries, from diverse conceptual trends and slants. Party patronage, indeed, exists everywhere in the world as an embedded and unalienable component of democratic life, with organic and functional values for parties, politicians and political and social elites. It takes place in post-colonial states, in newly institutionalized states, in democratic transition, consolidation and crises context, in poor and in wealth economies, in rural and urban national and subnational communities.

### **2.1 PATRONS AND CLIENTS IN US: FROM THE POST OFFICES TO THE PLATFORM PATRONAGE.**

In the rural America, patronage represented a means of not only political inclusion, but also of social integration. During the colonial era, town meetings were open only to property-owning adult males and not the whole body of people entitled to vote went to the polling booths. In Massachusetts, the turnout ranged from 20 to 60 percent of eligible voters for town elections and from 10 to 30 percent of adult males in colony elections (Mansbridge, 1980). Social hierarchy was pronounced and political relationships were conducted in personal ways with social distinctions.

A deference system diffused the custom of non-competitive elections that reinforce the gentry rule. Gentlemen had the right to vote in any county where they fulfilled the freehold requirement and so ran for the office in any county where they were eligible to vote. The control of the public affairs was in the hand of local social elites through the forms of representative government: politics was understood as a “responsibility attached to high social standing” (Schudson, 1998, 30)

Few years after the coming into force of the American Constitution, the Post Office Act was approved by the Federal Government: it lowered the postal rates for newspapers in order to allow the most effective circulation and at the same time protect local press from competition. Notwithstanding this improvement, the postal service was almost a prerogative of the Federalists that could delay correspondence and newspapers of antifederalist propaganda during the debates over Constitution ratification. In 1775, Benjamin Franklin was appointed by the Continental Congress as the first Postmaster General, an attractive patronage post for parties until 1971.

One century later, the postmasterships keep representing plum offices since postmasters served in partisan way, withholding opposite mails and behaving also as party organizers and not as independent officials. Even the post offices were used as partisan places with political billboards and postal workers at low level organized fundraising campaigns, using their charges for political goals. For this reason, in 1887 the president Grover Cleveland banned these activities through an executive order that in some cases was ignored.

The widespread presence of postal offices made relevant for parties their capture and exploitation: in 1896 almost 80 thousand positions were available for patronage, 200 of which controlled by a member of the Congress belonging to the presidential party. The distribution of such jobs involved also the senators that held power in the districts characterized by opposite party's representation.

In an age of internally heterogeneous parties focused more on party affiliation and personal attacks, patronage was helpful to cement identities, affinities and belongings and, even as a tactical tool, to maintain together different factions. It happened also to president Abraham Lincoln that was able -and compelled- to satisfy Californian Republicans divided for the seeking of key positions in San Francisco (postmaster, collector of the port, superintendent of the mint, sub-treasurer). During his mandate, Lincoln substituted approximately the 80% of the personnel appointed by the president and patronage was close to be used as a ready-made token for the re-election campaigning. Dismissals and firings of anti-Lincoln officers were not uncommon at the end of his mandate, but Lincoln plans were turned upside down by his assassination in 1865. Not only the public positions were part of the parties' stakes: also the private sector was controlled by the political machines through public contracts.

Not only Lincoln and the Republicans had to face and deal with the office seekers' ambitions: the politics of 19<sup>th</sup> century in New York City and State was mainly managed by Tammany Hall, the Democratic Party political machine. "Taking the Tammany- controlled number of public payroll jobs as a percentage of the vote totals for Tammany's mayoral candidates, the 'payroll share' of the vote was 20 percent in 1897, as high as 36 percent in 1913 and never under 20 percent until the 1920s" (Schudson, 1998, 147).

The New York Customhouse produced in the 1870s and in the 1880s more than the half of federal government revenues. Five times more profitable than any other private company in the country, it constituted the largest federal office anywhere, obviously not exempted from patronage practices. This institution indeed attracted people to employ from different corners of the country, under the strict control of Roscoe Conkling, leader of the Stalwarts, a faction of the Republican Party, and of the opposition to President Hayes' attempt to administer Civil Service Reform at the New York Customs House. In 1881 Conkling resigned from the Senate because of some controversies with President James A. Garfield (Republican) about New York Customs House patronage.

In the same year, patronage plots reached tragic and extreme peaks with the assassination of the President Garfield. Charles Guiteau, seeking a federal office through a more intense political commitment, became more and more nervous for the few opportunities to deliver speeches that the Republicans gave to him. His ambitions were oriented to the position of consul in Paris, although he did not know any other language than American. The Secretary of the State, James G. Blaine, told Guiteau that he would have never assigned to that office and so Guiteau, considering the denial linked to his position as Stalwart within the Republican party, decided that just Garfield's death would have brought himself to become consul.

The distribution of jobs had fruitful and direct consequences on party finances. Assessments on the salaries of those hired by patronage mechanisms were the rule at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, however displayed as voluntary contributions: "There was a time in New York City when even the scrubwomen who earned their dollar a day by hard labor in the city hall yielded their toll to the party's war-chest as the price of continued employment" (Munro, 1912, 188).

In this internal fundraising activities, parties assumed the form of business-oriented machines aimed at catching as much money as possible with solicitation letters to the workers (roughly the 3 percent of the wage was asked as contribution). This kind of practice started to be less frequent at the end of the century at national level, even labelled as an old barbarism by Clarkson, the Republican National Committee chairman.



Along with these indirectly state-financing system, parties asked financial support also to their candidates in order to guarantee their presence in the ticket: a candidate for the House or the Senate was called to donate more than 20 thousand dollars (Ivins, 1970). A practice still habitual nowadays in Italy at the time of the national blocked lists.

In a so exasperated context, the civil service reform was very soon perceived as a policy priority that in the same years was diffused around the world. In 1883, the president Chester A. Arthur signed into law the Pendleton Act: competitive examinations were finally in force under the supervision of the Civil Service Commission in order to secure merit-based hiring processes. The first president of the commission was Dorman Eaton, a strenuous opponent of patronage system that materially wrote the act. Even if the need for the civil service reform was claimed also by local association such as the New York Civil Service Reform Association, the Pendleton Act was only valid at federal level and not at state or local level.

It was not without difficulties that parties adapted themselves to this sort of revolution. Notwithstanding a bipartisan commitment, the merit system took approximately two decades to expand itself in American civil service. The Pendleton act took away from the parties' grasp nearly the 11% of positions and in 1900 there was a difference equal to twenty thousand positions between the patronage (still prevailing) and merit appointments.

In any case, the civil service reforms contribute to change the nature of the parties, partially anticipating what it would have happened in Europe after the demise of mass parties. American parties were now forced to find new resources out from the state in order to preserve their structures and their linkages, but their weakening and their transformation was not late to come. The challenges advanced by the new system resounded as a far cry in the words of George Washington Plunkitt in Plunkitt of Tammany Hall: "How are you goin' to interest our young men in their country if you have no offices to give them when they work for their party?" (1905).

Patronage phenomenon was so deeply rooted not only among the political class, but also in the American society that even famous writers such as Nathaniel Hawthorne

(clerk in the Salem Customhouse, Massachusetts), Walt Whitman (part-time copyist in the army paymaster's office) or Herman Melville (inspector for the New York Customhouse) were involved in patronage practices.

That is why, as ten years before his election as president, Theodore Roosevelt, wrote, the majority of the people was not able to fully understand the "vicious theory of party appointments": "public confidence is a plant of slow growth and public knowledge grows but little faster, so it is not surprising that after a sixty years' carnival of patronage politics, the average man has to grow to regard it as part of the order of nature that only the adherents of both parties, by distributing them among the congressmen" (1890).

Roosevelt attacked the reigning spoils system much less because one party or another monopolized the offices than because all the politicians occupy them at the expense of the people. At the same time, he denounced clearly the attempts to stop the reforms and impede their executions in order to make the law not effective.

The outputs of the civil service reforms were under the eyes of everybody: "nearly a fourth of the total number in the service in the United States are now withdrawn from the degrading influence of the spoils system; and as a direct result, in these offices the public business is performed more honestly and efficiently than ever before, while the offices themselves no longer form part of the vast bribery fund which is what the official patronage has become" (Roosevelt, 1890).

The 'sanitization' of civil service passed through the merit system "thoroughly American", opening the public service to worthy men, no matter their rank in their life. This new system is hence essentially democratic according to Roosevelt, giving the opportunity to all the people to access to the public process and confirming their positions if they serve the public interest and work in honest and efficient way. "The merit system is the system of fair play, of common sense and of common honesty, and therefore it is essentially American and essentially democratic" (1890).

A further element of criticism by the reform opponents was the selection procedure adopted by the Commission with questions that appeared impractical and irrelevant. The Commission asks the distance from Mars!, they replied. Contesting this

argument, Roosevelt put that “no questions can be so irrelevant to a man’s duties as copyist or railway mail clerk as are questions about his political backing and about how he voted at the last election”. Reforms deleted the party affiliation criteria replacing them with examination that required geographical and historical knowledge, grammar and writing tests.

From Theodore to Franklin Delano Roosevelt (FDR) the meaning of patronage shifts from bureaucratic to more personal and policy requirements, pushing once again parties out from the patronage management. In a time of democracy ruled by the leaderships and by the experts, FDR organized the first presidential staff at the White House and the centre of the government passed from the legislature to the bureaucracy under direct presidential authority.

A certain sense of a managerial democracy was explicit when during a speech in the campaign preceding his first mandate, he turned the sentence “The day of enlightened administration has come” -prepared by his speechwriter- to “The day of the managers has come” (Milkis, 1993). This managerial attitude was not totally conceived by FDR as the government by the pure and autonomy expertise. The independent agencies, for example, felt under the presidential control and new federal agencies founded by FDR were not considered civil service and so merit based system was not applied.

Although during the 31<sup>st</sup> presidency of US the number of merit system offices grew to 80% of the federal positions, the percentage of classified positions drastically diminished by 20% after FDR’s first term. In 1936, whereas Americans were largely in favour of civil service and some associations were actively involved in supporting it, the increase of 300 thousand employees at federal level, registered in three years, was also conditioned by the new 100 thousand positions exempt from civil service.

These figures do not witness the invasive return of the party in the state as we have seen during the Gilded Age. Democratic party, not without some quarrels, was though put aside and used more as an electoral majority than an organizational structure. The commitment required to fill the available positions within the government,

especially in the agencies, were not tied to the party, but to the New Deal platform, a sort of policy control not unbound from professional criteria.

Some years later, the Ramspeck Act and the Hatch Acts extended the limit of the civil service until the 95% of the federal employees. Moreover, after some accusation to local Democrats for their patronage use of the Works Progress Administration and with some doubts of FDR that signed an act on the deadline day, they introduced strict rules to underline the border of political activities both in first and in second row.

The evidences from the American experience here briefly summed up show the entrepreneurial spirit of the parties to recur to patronage resources. The evolution and the transformation of the exchange tokens at the stake (from post offices to governmental position) confirm the inclination of the parties to occupy state sphere in order to get political benefits.

The progressive awareness demonstrated across the time by the American politicians themselves as legislators in dealing with patronage reinforces the idea that, although regulated by the law, excesses and anomalies of patronage could provoke abuses to the democracy and the understanding of citizenship. The gradual reduction of positions available for party politics has normalized the recourse to public resources for partisan goals, even in a majoritarian democracy accustomed to the saying “To the victors belong the spoils” (William L. Marcy, New York Senator, 1832).

Some conclusions could be drawn from the lesson of the American history about patronage:

- 1) the stepwise advancement of the merit as standard rule for the personnel selection, with partisan or policy affiliation on the background;
- 2) the slow, but steady removal of parties from the patronage relationships, replaced by personal networks anything but intertwined with party dynamics;
- 3) the orientation to fulfil the policies than fill public positions by patronage.

## **2.2 PATRONAGE IN EUROPE: BETWEEN STATE PENETRATION AND PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATION.**

The cross-comparative analysis elaborated by Kopecky, Mair, Spirova (2012) with other scholars has dealt with patronage in a more systematic sense, firstly defining it as the power of parties to appoint people to positions in public and semi-public life and then making remarkable efforts in order to get an index patronage, investigating the reach, the depth and the motivations of patronage.

The partial affinity of this dissertation with that research design, both in terms of definitory and empirical approach, suggests us to summarise here trends and patterns that that study has organically traced. The observed phenomena and their explanations provide us examples and precedents of what we are going to analyse within a different, but not completely far context.

The “public and semi-public life” was empirically translated into 9 different policy sectors (Finance, Judiciary, Media, Military and Police, Health Care, Culture and Education, Foreign Service, Regional and Local Administration) and 3 institutional levels (ministerial departments, non-departmental agencies and commissions, executing institutions). Regional and Local Administration have been explored as a macro category that include regional and local government and subnational branches of other policy sectors’ institution.

The findings of the research conducted through single national studies in 15 countries (Austria, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Netherland, Norway, Portugal, Spain, UK) by expert interviews do not close in geographical cages the patronage models, confirming the conventional wisdom that predicts Southern countries more exposed to patronage practices than the Northern ones.

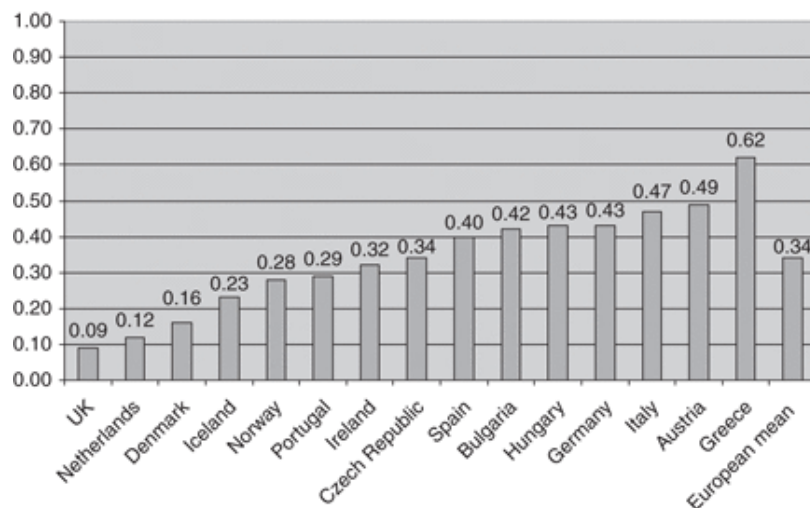


Figure 2.1. Index of Patronage (Kopecky, Mair, Spirova, 2012, 367)

On the contrary, compared to the European mean, some countries of the old democracies such as Austria and Germany show considerable levels of politicization along with Southern countries like Greece and Italy or post-soviet states like Hungary and Bulgaria. UK and Nordic countries confirm the expectation of low patronage whereas some penetration degrees are registered in Portugal and in Norway.

Far from achieving a homogenous and unitary framework, the average European patronage pattern -whether it exists- appears more concentrated on the ministerial structures, more oriented to the professional criteria in the appointment and selection procedures. As for the influence of the party system, it is found that the more fragmented is a given system, the less the parties as a whole behave as single actors of patronage relationship and make room for personal channels and networks.

Putting the ranking aside, let consider the degree of partyness of the patronage matching two different pairs of countries. As Kopecky and Mair put, “Bulgaria and Spain are two of the very few polities where [...] the party as such plays a more prominent role in the appointment process than the individual ministers and leaders” (2012, 359) whereas in Italy and Czech Republic the personal networks replace the choices of the party in appointment process.

The motivations are different: in the 1990s in Bulgaria patronage was used as a reward resource, “a necessary element of both reforming the state and building new

parties” (Spirova, 2012, 58) based on party identity and allegiance, whereas nowadays the control motivations are increasing mostly at the higher level. The predominance of the qualifications required for the appointments reflect the strong politicization of patronage processes: 90% of respondents point at political loyalty as main feature of appointments. Professional criteria count as much as the personal networks.

In Spain, the control motivations prevail with a less recent tradition and through the dominance of the political party as appointment maker that follows often criteria related to the political closeness and exclusiveness. Furthermore, in Spain the decentralization has multiplied patronage opportunities allowing to the parties, increasingly looking for offices particularly after the transition, to occupy relevant sectors of the state with no depth ambitions and limiting their presence to the top level (Gomez, Verge, 2012). Anyway, here the professional-based selection stands out as the most relevant.

The emergence of individual-driven patronage, common in not precisely similar countries like Czech Republic and Italy, stresses the widespread withdrawal of the party as a whole in appointment processes replaced by selection channels directly controlled by the office holders. This feature derives from the weak party institutionalization and the penetrable administration: “with the new democracies, Italy shares both the generational factors of new parties that are governing without having first institutionalized their own organizational infrastructure, and a weakness of the public administration, from which the private networks of leaders extract resources”. (Di Mascio, 2012b, 247).

So a party-independent patronage arises also in Czech Republic where “it is not uncommon to observe that it is the party that emanates from patronage, rather than that patronage emanates from the party” (Kopecky, 2012, 88). Here, as in any new democracy, patronage also emerges as party-building factor, a necessary anchor to tightly bind the party to the system.

At the extreme, UK zero-patronage (Flinders, Matthews, 2012) shows, as in US experience mentioned before, the impact of the civil service reform: by establishing the Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments (OCPA) in the mid-1990s, a

broader merit-based system was actually introduced, centralizing the appointment power under the control of bureaucratic actors. The provision was expanded later to the healthcare system. In general, a bureaucratic patronage was promoted provoking in return the awareness that party affiliation could have represented more a stain than a merit.

The zero party-patronage pattern includes also as a consequence the salience of control motivations and professional criteria, sometimes, especially recently, linking the concept of 'merit' to a past experience in the sector. Considering this limited boundary, the nature of the governmental appointment under the responsibility of the ministers has basically excluded the opposition and those not in the surrounding of the government personnel. This is less true at local level where a less majoritarian and exclusive approach is diffused.

On the opposite side of the scale, the findings from Greece emphasized a maximum degree of permeability of the minister structures in an overall context in which the state is perceived as an appreciable employer, with all the consequences that this has recently implied in terms of economic costs (Pappas, Assimakopoulou 2012).

The invasive presence of the party within the state is highly demonstrated by the extended reach of patronage, especially in the bottom level of the administration, here dramatically penetrated compared to the other countries. The forms of this bottom patronage is multifaceted: even temporary contracts or low administrative positions constitute the object of the exchange between patrons and clients, to reinforce their reward-oriented linkages as expected.

Moreover, from the Greek case it emerges the highest rate of political allegiance (100%) in determining the appointments. To be more accurate, political allegiance is however mixed with the other qualifications set by the research (professionalization or personal networks), but the lower is the level of the appointment at stake the more likely it will be that personal networks plus party affiliation condition the process. As partially found in the UK case, the spoil sharing varies according as the positions are at the top or not: "spoils sharing is more common at the bottom level of appointments in the public sector and, more particularly, in the local administration. The reason for this is, quite



obviously, the importance of interpersonal relations at this level and of course the great number of posts that have to be filled” (Pappas, Assimakopoulou, 2012, 157-158).

The problematic reach of the Greek patronage has been more and more evident during the austerity reforms, as a recent research show (Afonso, Zartaloudis, Papadopoulos, 2015). The comparison between the Portuguese and the Greece reaction to the need for austerity reforms has marked a “greater difficulty in finding compromises about austerity in Greece” just because of “the greater extent of clientelistic linkages”. The incapacity of the traditional Greek party system and its mainstream parties (Pasok and ND) to fully enact reforms with enormous electoral and organizational costs has led to a reshuffle of the party system with the ascendance of radical and anti-system parties such as Syriza or Golden Dawn.

The Portuguese case, instead, indicates the lowest patronage depth among the Southern European countries (Jalali, Silva, Moreira, 2012). It is the state supply that makes the difference here because of its small top-level offer of appointments. That does not mean that on the contrary the range is limited as well: “Portuguese parties attempt to ‘colonize’ a wide range of institutions but mainly appoint to the upper echelons of the civil service” (Jalali, Silva, Moreira, 2012, 306).

This limited supply and distribution has actually contributed to fulfil reforms policy in time of austerity. It mainly concerned the lower electoral costs occurred by the Portuguese parties, used to promise less with the awareness that they may distribute few: “alienating clienteles was a minor concern in its reform agenda” (Afonso, Zartaloudis, Papadopoulos, 2015, 325) Along with a more stable party institutionalization, this factor explains why parties in Portugal have been able to reach compromises and negotiations about reforms and face the need for austerity.

Also the inclusion of opposition in patronage mechanisms spread the awareness of a shared progressive withdrawal from the state through a negotiate consensus about austerity reforms. It constitutes a natural heritage from the past: “incumbent parties have an incentive to share patronage appointments with the opposition, to avoid wholesale purges of their appointees once they lose power. Moreover, consistent with this equilibrium, the sharing of patronage resources does not occur with all parliamentary

parties alike, but rather is more evident with the main opposition party, which can lead a subsequent government” (Jalali, Silva, Moreira, 2012, 312).

A kind of consensual patronage emerges also from the studies about Netherland. The latter derives from Dutch history characterized by a tradition of cooperation, pillarization and consociationalism (Lijphart, 1999) oriented to a shared power that distributes shares of appointments. This democratic style of patronage has actually led most scholars to claim that patronage in Netherland does not exist. Actually the motivations of party patronage exist and bring rarely to some forms of relationships not connoted by ‘amoral familism’ (Banfield, 1958). The 18% of experts declared that sometimes the personal networks, anyway not detached from an impressive professionalism, involve friends and former colleagues (Van Thiel, 2012).

Van Thiel’s focus includes also an interesting reflection about gender patronage and its debate. The female participation, encouraged in the elective assemblies by gender quotas, is increasingly concerning also the Dutch patronage change, along with the decentralization of the appointments that at local level are less influenced by the national parties and the rise of the new public management, by nature oriented to the highest level of professionalization in order to manage the administration in an almost entrepreneurial way.

As for the Nordic countries, in Norway the expected low control of the parties has reached its higher extent within the ministries, reinforcing the European trend. Here parties do not play a leading role in patronage distributions, including the party in government. When they play it, the party size matters in the positions’ assignment without involving personal networks – the lowest in the 15 countries after Denmark. (Allern, 2012).

In Danish patronage the parties are almost absent, the exception is represented by the executive structure as well. The non-influential role of the parties is also related to the strong civil servants’ commitment to their work that make so useless the recourse to loyal (personal or partisan) people. “The socialization of Danish civil servants into faithful servants of their political masters appears to be extremely effective. Unprompted, one civil servant after another depicted a strong ethos of service and

loyalty in the civil service” (Bischoff, 2012, 108). This aspect has to be observed also in the light of the weak party identification that lower both the supply and the demand of reward. With the words of Marcellus in Shakespeare’s Hamlet, it seems that nothing is rotten in the state of Denmark.

A less marginal role of the party characterizes the Icelandic pattern, substantially changed in the last twenty years through the increase of the public administration professionalization and the dismantlement of many state assets. These two factors have reduced the space for reward patronage, remained to some degree present as a reminiscence of the past glorious clientelism undermined by the 1990s reforms (Kristinsson, 2012).

As for the post-soviet countries, Hungarian ministers have a stronger role than the prime minister in selecting appointments, but they do not exert alone this power, sharing it essentially with the party in the public offices. Patronage has served as anchor for the Hungarian parties that so reached a certain degree of consolidation and competitiveness through the building of party elites.

The need for party-building has also produced a sort of reform patronage (Bearfield, 2009), a reaction push that replaced the old bureaucrats of the former regime and their legacies as essential component of the democratization process (Morlino, 2011). This happened also in other countries that experienced the transition to democracy like Portugal and Spain.

The detailed empirical research of that study has generically affirmed that patronage has been used more as an organizational resource than an electoral resource. Staffing the state has generically provided channels and linkages between leaders, parties and the administration that have been mostly oriented to the control of the decision making, both in terms of regulatory and financial decisions. As Mair puts, “patronage resources therefore appear to be increasingly concentrated in the hands of a relatively narrow group of partisan elites, usually occupying positions in the public sphere” (Kopecky, Mair, 2012, 372).

The admission of a certain political discretion in appointments, managed by a narrow elite, has been the founding element for the patronage distribution, entitling

politicians to place close people in the state structures and delimiting their margin of manoeuvre in doing so. This integration between party and state has been expected and detected in some sensitive policy sectors, such as the media, but in general no uniform trends have emerged.

This kind of state capturing has also been conditioned by the degree of autonomy that the appointed clients would have had in executing the control functions. In this sense, the top level positions have represented in this study the most desirable jobs to distribute in order to successfully manage the internal structure of the states, especially the ministries.

In examining the parliamentary patronage, we take into great account the lessons from this study not only for its successful effort to clearly define what party patronage is. It is for this reason that we will adopt not only part of its definition, but also part of the scheme of the empirical research with no comparative ambitions.

Obviously the focus of our research will be oriented on a narrow, but significant portion of the state by its nature different from the state dimensions analysed by Kopecky, Mair, Spirova and other scholars. The Parliament with its internal patronage opportunities is not comparable at all with the whole body of state structures: in our research we expect to not meet so influent internal command positions, also because of the deliberate choice to not observe certain forms of patronage, such as the internal career advancement dependent on patrons' decisions.

The latter form of patronage deviates significantly from our definition of patronage as the distribution of jobs managed by the party. The reason is twofold. On one hand, the patrons involved in that relationship confer a more or less temporary *appointment* to persons already enrolled in the parliamentary organization after passing a competitive selection procedure. On the other hand, here politicians serve as institutional patrons, selecting people that are expected to serve the institutional machine guaranteeing its functional working without any relationships with the party.

However, the distinction between organizational and electoral patronage remains the relevant heritage from Kopecky, Mair and Spirova study and the prevalence of one or another style will represent the main research question of our dissertation.

### **2.3 EXCHANGE POLITICS IN AFRICA: THE ETHNICAL NETWORKS.**

Studies on African patronage have been distinguished by a mixed orientation both to anthropologist, historical, sociological and political science studies. The particular degree of backwardness performed by the continent has facilitated the conceptual stretching of the patronage concept.

Also the weak nature of the party organizations and structures, mainly local or personalized, and of the public administration has enhanced that stretching, particularly focused on private benefits. Despite of these difficulties, the interest towards some new African democracies has provided a renewed nourishment to study this practice under the umbrella of the governmental studies (Arriola, 2009; Kopecky, 2011).

In any case, as in every political sphere, patronage involves exchange relationships between two actors mutually interrelated. This section aims at letting emerge one of the main linkage motivations in African patronage: the ethnical network<sup>1</sup>.

As in every developing context, African patronage has frequently conceived as a sub or pre-dimension of neopatrimonialism, that is patrimonialism mixed with a modern bureaucracy (Eisenstadt, 1973), a vertical distributive relationship with a strong hierarchy inaugurated by the patron to build around him a limited constituency of clients by extraction of state resources. (Englebert, 2000; van de Walle, 2001; Beekers, van Gool, 2012). So, as Erdmann/Engel draw (2007), the neopatrimonialism is characterized by a “patrimonial and legal-rational bureaucratic domination”, with an accepted difference between public and private resources, and personal relationships.

The ideal type features compared by Beekers and van Gool (2012) have stressed the strong legitimacy of patronage as a democratic and less corrupted tool to distribute resources, with an inclusive approach in an informal politics. In their re-examination, patronage is typically described as a less concentrate and centralized power with more accessible linkages tied with the society while neopatrimonialism, indeed, works as a cartel.

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<sup>1</sup> This network has also been studied in other countries. About India, Chandra, 2004.

Beyond this conceptualization, exchange relationships have been also practiced in order to secure the political stability to a given system, both at national or at local level. In this, the ethnically polarized systems have been object of attention: “the extreme diversity of most African countries, coupled with the politicization of ethnicity before independence, has obliged incumbents to recruit coalition partners from a cross-section of ethnic groups in order to ensure their tenure.” (Arriola and Johnson,2014, 497).

In this sense, the ethnicity makes meaningful exchange relationships not only inside each ethnic group, but also in its interrelations with other ethnic groups and other minorities. To some extent, ethnicity constitutes both a priority weight and a counterweight for the political stability of a given society<sup>2</sup>, emerging as the most relevant variable in cabinet appointments for example. The use of the ethnic arithmetic to achieve ethnic balance appears to confirm this assumption.

Here ethnical networks are significantly more important than gender, as Arriola and Johnson have demonstrated through their research. This study also provides further contributions and considerations to gender patronage: while, as seen in the previous section, Van Thiel (2012) observed in Netherland an increasing attention to women as clients or recipients of appointments, in Africa just “big men who can deliver their ethnic constituencies through the distribution of patronage” are co-opted in cabinet formation and “women [...] rarely become ethnic patrons” (2014, 507)<sup>3</sup>.

By stressing the belonging to a sympathetic community that shares common values and identities often with a parochial dimension where communication and interactions take place (Naroll, 1964), the ethnicity plays a strategical role in the political interactions “between self-interested actors with divergent interests” (Berman, 1998, 312) splitting and apportioning both society and state. It also helps to fuel the political mobilization around hierarchical leaderships.

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<sup>2</sup> Diverging opinions are always present. As Samora Machel, the Mozambican revolutionist socialist leader, said, 'For the nation live, the tribe must die' (Quoted in Mahmdani, 1996, 135).

<sup>3</sup> The authors also suggest that weak clientelistic ties or exchange relationships called by any other name could enhance women participation in politics and within the cabinet. If so, as a paradox, patronage could bring at the same time more democracy and less democracy, bridging ethnical gaps, but creating gender divides.

Ethnic groups define themselves not only setting geographical and cultural boundaries, but also building internal organizations in order to address the social life. The distribution of the benefits -and the demand for them- appears rooted in the social meaning of the exchange, excluding individuals by “cultural differentia” that work as a social cleavage (Barth, 1969; Lipset, Rokkan, 1967).

So the patronage suppliers adopt a selective targeting, stable across the time in order to create and develop faithful linkages. This does not assume that these exchanges occur in a closed environment, without any form of competition. On the contrary, the size of the ethnic group could lead the office-holders to offer patronage to other ethnic groups as well in so enlarging their own constituency and get more or at least enough consensus. “If their own ethnic category is large enough to be independently efficacious, [office-holders] will have no incentive to distribute any benefits to members of other ethnic categories” (Chandra, 2007, 101).

In a such system, voters should conclude that they would take more benefits with a large trust in co-ethnic relationships and actually they do so, as the Afrobarometer has shown<sup>4</sup>. Some reliable motivations have been found after a study about Uganda, a state with a wide gap between trust in co-ethnics and non co-ethnics (more than 20%). As the authors state, “owing to norms of reciprocity that bind more strongly in within-group than in cross-group interactions, co-ethnics have greater incentives than non-co-ethnics to respond to trusting overtures in a trustworthy way”. (Habaryimana, Humphreys, Posner, Weinstein, 2007, 16-17).

In turn, also patronage has shaped internally ethnic groups and, more relevant, has fostered the “installation” of the colonial state within the ethnic building process. At the extreme degree, in amoral and competitive contexts, ethnicity though has turned into ‘political tribalism’ that emphasize more the existence of a top-down mobilization spreading, even violently, politicization from above. Scholars (Lonsdale, 1994; Orvis, 2001; Klopp, 2002) have opposed to this concept the notion of a “moral ethnicity”, a synonym of civic and accountability-oriented citizenship that inspires democratic values

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<sup>4</sup> On more than 25 thousands of respondents, the 50.6% declared to trust co-ethnics “somewhat” or “a lot”. Only 38.3% declared the same about non-co-ethnics

from below. This includes also a vertical orientation to the needs of the society, fighting inequalities (Lonsdale, 2010).

Actually, recent researches (Durant, Weintraub, 2014) have tried to propose alternative institutional arrangements in order to cushion and thwart the influence of the ethnical mediation in patronage and distributive politics. Ethnic groups, indeed, play as “minimum winning coalitions, [...] small enough to secure maximize the per capita value of [...] benefits” (Bates, 1983, 164), led and represented by elites.

Durant and Weintraub argue that turn-taking institutions could enhance cooperation and a better policy making, requiring a super threshold (60%) in order to win and govern for the whole term. If no party reaches that amount of votes, “the first-place party takes the first and third years in office, and the second-place party takes the second and fourth years” (Durant, Weintraub, 2014, 65). A such system would guarantee the alternation of the ethnic groups and, one after the other, an equal access to the power and the distribution of resources.

In addition, according to the authors, the likeliness to be governed by a turn-taking institution determines some effects on the electorate. “First, the hardcore voters [...] have the incentive to form, enforce, and adapt a more balanced view of the proper scope of executive discretion [...]. Second, conflicted insiders [...] may find that it is worthwhile to leave the coalition when policy is bad” (Durant, Weintraub, 2014, 65).

Although it provides an interesting framework, this theoretical design advances questionable issues: it takes for granted a noteworthy empowerment of the voters, able to express policy-oriented preferences, and their partial independence from the elites. Furthermore, it overestimates the influence of *time* variable, creating a form of power-sharing tempered by a clustered split of a four-year terms in two equal parts.

Notwithstanding this theoretically attractive attempt, the inter-ethnic power sharing is actually far to be removed from the African democracy and seems to count even more with the prevalence of the ethnic congress party – a multi-ethnic party- that, as a coalition, holds together ethnic groups often too small to gain seats in the Parliament and form government majority (Erdmann, 2004). As it usually occurs when coalitions rule the political game, a bloc could be identified and connected with a single



ethnic category, but at the same time not all the ethnic categories, mainly the smallest, could be identified and connected with a coalition party.

It follows that a single ethnicity matters and results successful - not only in the party formation stage – when as three concurrent conditions are fulfilled: “1) Identification of one ethnic group with one party; 2) A relative large size of the ethnic group involved; 3) A high degree of political unity among the political elite of the ethnic group” (Erdmann, 2007, 25). This explains also the rare success of ethnic parties, based on a single ethnic group.

The ethnic ‘favouritism’ in patronage distribution has been also fostered by the the lack of information in environments still anchored in the tradition and in the past patronage experience. The force of customs and consolidated practices not only cements the exchange relationships, but also makes them inflexible so to impede structural changes. In this sense, the ethnic favouritism tends to be a weapon to preserve the social system in conservative way, reaching autonomously a self-equilibrium (Chandra, 2007).

The exploration of the ethnic patronage allows us to draw some reflections valid also for party and parliamentary patronage. Parties and parliamentary groups have often been considered as single monolithic actors, but, indeed, they work and serve as coalitions of individuals with a basically common share of values, identities and sensibilities. Especially in the big, catch-all and not homogeneous parties, these individuals could form subgroups and factions with smallest or no ideological distance in order to push forward with their specific policies, especially if not shared by the majority of the party (Sartori, 1976; Boucek, 2009).

Party factionalism creates sub-units oriented both to veto-power and power-sharing, claiming space in the internal party organization, be they a minority or not. In doing so, they behave as an ethnic group that tries to maximize its advantages just staying isolated and uncontaminated from the remaining part of the society, although it lives within it.

As a consequence, patronage by factions/parties-within-a-party realizes a sub-distributive process that could imply a large amount of available resources to distribute in order to satisfy each faction. The accommodation and the agreement between the

different factions could be achieved by tactical patronage that in turn makes possible the achievement of democratic goals (Bearfield, 2009). The so-called “Manuale Cencelli” in Italian tradition is an example of it: an arithmetic distribution of the offices that leads to the political balance and the peaceful working of the system.

The mechanics of intra-party patronage is expected to depend also on the “faces of factionalism”. Three kinds of factionalism have been distinguished: cooperative, competitive, degenerative. (Boucek, 2009) The first responds to positive functions such as the contribution to the party building, even because it mainly occurs during a post-founding phase. Here “a factional structure has the potential to increase the aggregate capacity of political parties and to facilitate intra-party cooperation where centripetal incentives exist” (Boucek, 2009, 469).

In a such initial phase, it is likely that each wing of the party practices a sort of learning process with positive attitudes towards the other wings. With cooperative factions, patronage incentives the unity, however stable, of the party and aims essentially at democratic goals as a weapon of inclusion and consolidation.

Competitive factions, instead, start to introduce some sources of discord. Here the inclination to the conflict is more stressed, combined with a centrifuge/exit tendency that increases the intra-party competition. “Divergent factional preferences and polarized party opinion create splitting pressures and loosen intra-party ties as factions become opposed rather than simply separate” (Boucek, 2009, 473).

The policy capacity is extremely burdened, exerted through onerous and strenuous compromises to avoid internal gridlock. The distribution of patronage, here in tactical sense, could contribute to reach agreements, but it is potentially exposed to threats and blackmail that could increase the demands of patronage in a dangerous ultimatum game.

Lastly, Boucek individuates the degenerative factionalism, situated in the last step of a climax after a gradual legitimacy of the faction. The risk at stake here is to produce “excessive fragmentation, privatized incentives and faction embeddedness”, as the Italian DC in 1970s and 1980s (Boucek, 2009, 473).

The absence of limits to the faction growth undermines the party unity and makes room to corrupt practices through which each faction seeks to prevail in the internal hierarchy. The legal boundaries of patronage are challenged and jeopardized: clientelism and corruption settle in the party whose stability is at risk.

The following table summarizes the relationship between factionalism and patronage, explained so far:

<b><u>FACTIONALISM</u></b>	<b><u>PATRONAGE</u></b>
Cooperative	Democratic
Competitive	Tactical
Degenerative	Illegal (corruption)

Table 2.1 Factionalism and patronage

A recent empirical study has interestingly shown that factions, frequently conceived as a divisive and contentious component that destabilizes the party system, “can play a role in integrating extreme ideological streams of a party” and “tying extreme party politicians to more moderate faction leaders, who are better informed and so better placed to make decisions on behalf of a party” (Dewan, Squintani, 2015, 17).

It is the cost of this integration that has to be monitored and makes the difference: if the factionalism takes degenerative forms, democracy is at risk.

**PART 2**

**THE ITALIAN PARTIES AND THE PARLIAMENT:**

**WHICH PATRONS, WHICH JOBS**

## CHAPTER 3

### THE ITALIAN PARTIES: THE DYNAMICS OF THE PATRONS

*Coalitions and parties will continue to exist  
in a peculiar mix which does not exist in other democratic regimes.*

Bartolini, Chiaramonte, D'Alimonte (2004, 19)

The parliamentary patronage relationships are shaped both by parties and parliamentary structures. This chapter focuses on parties and party system considered as state resources 'exploiters' that serve at the same time as patrons of client networks and beneficiaries of the state. The first section analyses the evolution of Italian party system in last ten years ruled by the 'majority-assuring' proportional system, describing the transition from the traditional bipolarism to an unexpected tripolarism: this change is supposed to affect the external composition of the patrons. In the second section we explore the party switching phenomenon in Italian Parliament and the turnover of the parliamentary class, observing the last two legislatures and the parliamentary fragmentation. The third section assesses the change in Italian party financing systems offering key elements of reflection about party's need for state. In the last section we discuss the role of primary elections as modern tool for party engagement and recruitment.

Each one of these aspects is expected to influence the dynamics of parliamentary patronage mainly on patrons' side with repercussions on clients:

1) The continual transformation of parties with splits and fusions and the unrest of the political supply with the rise of anti-party system makes more fluid and unstable patronage mechanisms, encouraging a renewal of both patrons and clients;

2) Party switching affects the number of parliamentary groups, their size and consequently the effective number of parties calculated in seats (Laakso, Taagepera, 1979). In turn they have an influence on representativeness, power and the related availability of chairs and jobs. Also the financial budget of parliamentary groups is affected by the size of the groups according to the parliamentary rules, affecting the availability of contracts to distribute. The end of a term is supposed to reset patronage

relationships: the legislative turnover could at the same time break the personal linkages and provide new opportunities for clients;

3) Reduced or eliminated state contributions to parties oblige them to find alternative way to secure their survival. In this sense, parliamentary patronage serves as surrogate of the party financing.

4) Primary elections offer linkage occasions with the 'party on the ground' and create reward expectations once the winner of the primary election winner takes the office.

### **3.1 THE ITALIAN PARTY SYSTEM UNDER THE NEW ELECTORAL LAW.**

This section would provide a comprehensive re-examination of the party changes in last decade, that is the background of the parliamentary patronage. This evolution affects not only the emergence of new patrons, but also their internal reorganization and its effects on the parliamentary arena in a mix of splits and fusions.

The new electoral law approved in 2005 (law 270/2005) introduced in Italy a proportional system with a majority award that theoretically should have assured stable and certain numbers in the Parliament, simplifying the political supply also through a threshold for coalitions at 10%. The voters' choices were expressed through closed lists in order to supposedly fight the exchange vote. The law also allowed to the candidates to "run" in more than one constituency for the Chamber or region for the Senate, producing in some case a massive presence of the leaders and the prominent candidates within the lists (Fusaro, 2009).

The first election held under this system (April 2006) confirmed some doubts: the outcome was twofold with a 'lottery' effect (D'Alimonte, 2007; D'Alimonte, Chiamonte, 2007) even if the alternation was achieved by the Prodi's coalition victory. In the lower house, nearly 25 thousand votes of advantage for the red bloc were enough, according to the new system, to get the majority of the seats (340). The electoral competition at the Senate, instead, consisted in the sum of 21 different and autonomous electoral contests: the product was a narrow majority that made difficult to run the country. This predictable feature previously forced the parties to form catchall

and heterogeneous coalitions, united to defeat the opposite bloc. The bipolarism kept ruling the party system with an increased fragmentation: more than ten party or movement lists for each bloc supported the two left-wing and right-wing coalitions.

At the beginning of the term, Parliament reflected the crowded political scenario with thirteen groups at the Chamber of Deputies (12 plus the so-called *gruppo misto* – 7 belonging to the Unione, Prodi's majority, and 5 to the right-wing bloc) and eight at the Senate of the Republic (3 majority groups, 4 opposite groups). The difference with the XIV legislature (2001-2006) was immediately evident at the Chamber of Deputies where the number of the groups almost doubled.

On one hand, the precarious equilibrium of the Unione intensified and exacerbated the intra-coalition competition leading very soon to some internal splits that raise the degree of uncertainty and actually slowed down the progressive platform and policies, barely fulfilled by the Prodi's cabinet. It was exactly its multifaceted nature, with some parties involved in the cabinet for the first time after decades of absence - intended or not (Radical party and Communist Refoundation), that provoked a historical expansion of the size of the cabinet that numbered 103 members. The distribution of these offices here emerges as a mere lever of tactical high-level patronage (Bearfield, 2009).

On the other hand, Berlusconi's leadership constantly dominated the right-wing field engaged in a compact opposition, along with his long-standing allies. The four party alliance embraced an extensive set of values well rooted both in the northern part of the country -through the Northern League linkages- and in the centre and in the south part -through the traditional Cristian democratic organization of UDC (Baccetti, 2007) and of the changing network and issues of National Alliance (Tarchi, 2003). The unsuccessfully contested leadership of Forza Italia and its leader over the whole coalition was not long to stimulate strong divergences, partly faded very soon with the upcoming elections.

Notwithstanding the fear for Berlusconi's return, the less moderate parties of the red coalition pushed the government to face some crisis about foreign policy. The continuous oscillations jeopardized the strength of the executive even later an

agreement based on twelve issues. After less than two-years, Prodi's experience, inaugurated in 2005 through plebiscitarian primaries (Venturino, 2007), came to the end and the sense of a calm, but firm and independent leadership disappeared with it.

In the meantime also the Ulivo experiment was replaced: already in October 2007 the dismissal of this party cartel - that unified the two most important parties of the red bloc (Ds and the Daisy) under a single list for the Chamber of Deputies in 2006 and that gave the name to the common parliamentary group in the lower house – was accompanied by the pressing emergence of the Democratic Party with its leader, Walter Veltroni, supporter of a “majoritarian vocation” that Unione coalition was unable to deliver together (Pasquino, 2009). This cold fusion was at the beginning a simple sum of the party elites, later developed on the ground not without obstacles (Ignazi, 2008).

The elections were yet to come, regulated by the same electoral system that, under different political conditions, would have guaranteed an overwhelming majority to the blue coalition. In April 2008, the flaws underlined and criticized in the past became rapidly the strength of the present: the efforts to simplify the political supply, launched by the Democratic Party – that at its beginning it looked directed toward a single party installation within the left-wing coalition-, were immediately followed by the Berlusconi's appeal to merge the moderate parties in a single political actor.

Despite of his allies' resistance (firstly Fini, then Casini that rejected his proposal), most of the right-wing political class – Fini included- contributed to the creation of People of Freedom (Pdl) as electoral list in February 2008 (the party would have been founded one year later). It was an act of political clarification for those forces committed to build the alternation to Prodi: on the left part of the bloc Casini with Udc decided to run alone to represent the “extreme center”, whereas on the opposite part of the coalition, Storace, leader of The Right, aspired to occupy the far right voters, deluded and disappointed by Fini's choice.

The fragmentation looked like a memory of the past after the passage from the catch-all coalitions to the catch-all list. Actually a wide array of leaders (in total almost 30) ran as candidate with one single list, but the fears for a second uncertain outcome after 2006 spread the awareness toward the ‘useful vote’, that is the vote for those lists



that would have not reached the 4% threshold at national level for the lower house and the 8% at regional level for the Senate (Chiaromonte, 2010)<sup>1</sup>.

The product was a limited pluralism (Di Mascio, 2012b) expressed in a ‘winged’ would-be bipartitism with two main political actors allied with one or two local parties (Northern League and Movement for the Autonomies) or not ideologically defined movement (Italy of Values). The Left-the Rainbow, a party cartel that merged in one list all the leftist movements and parties that were noticed during the Prodi’s cabinet because of their noisy presence, did not pass the threshold, leaving out from the Parliament the heritage of the Communist and Green Party.

The electoral transformations though did not deeply change the substance of the party system, now less numerically overcrowded, but not more internally stabilized at organizational level than in the past. The building of two big parties indeed began to meet some failures already in the first year after the elections, stimulating the awakening of dozy centripetal forces. The Democratic Party’s leadership change from the modern Democrat Veltroni to the old social-democrat Bersani moved back the party in terms of policy issues and political class to the time of Leftist Democrat. It is so that Alliance for Italy led by Rutelli, former opponent of Berlusconi in 2001, started to move out from the perimeter of the traditional left-wing coalition that Bersani was ready to restore, along with the Italy of Values and Left Freedom and Ecology, the party founded by the communist Vendola one year after the total defeat of leftist list.

The escape toward the centre concerned also the blue coalition. Despite his broad consensus and the success of his coalition at the regional elections in 2010, Berlusconi’s honeymoon stage was near to an end. The co-founder of his party and Speaker of the Chamber, Gianfranco Fini, progressively sustained the need for a moderate and modern right, able to deal with immigration without fears and populism, truly committed to push forward the values of the European integration and oriented to manage justice policies without personal profits. The divergences focused on the

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<sup>1</sup> The effective number of the parties at electoral level decreased from 5.69 to 3.82, the effective number of parties at the parliamentary or legislative level from 5.06 to 3.07.

alliance with Northern League and on the personal leadership of Berlusconi, exerted even in the party building.

Soon Rutelli and Fini, once rivals in mayoral elections in Rome, shared with Casini and Udc, from the beginning committed in a 'republican opposition', the exigence to restore a moderate and reformist centre against the populism, opening a short political age in which the centre was decisive and numerically conditioning as in the past First Republic. The split of Future and Freedom for Italy, the party led by Fini, reduced the margins of manoeuvre for Berlusconi and step by step, despite of the prime minister's attempts to remain in charge, prepared the ground for the government led by the technocrats.

As happened more or less during the previous term, party consolidation and system stability lasted not more than 2-3 years, upset also by the popular referenda about water, nuclear energy and immunity of high governmental officials held in 2011. The highly polarized result (approximately 95% of votes for the laws abolishment) and the extraordinary participation that permitted to get the quorum (almost 55% after fifteen years of failed consultations) reinforced the leftist spirit in the public debate and strengthen the opposition to Berlusconi's majority, even in the left-wing coalition. A trend inaugurated by the local elections in relevant cities such as Milan and Naples (Chiaromonte, D'Alimonte, 2012).

The worsening of economic and social situation stressed the inability of the blue bloc to run the country: the majority, even more shattered and confused also by the personal troubles of his leader, was forced to back out of the government and, along with its more moderate opponents (Democratic Party and UDC) aid the formation of an emergent cabinet inspired by the Head of the State and the European institutions and led by the independent Monti.

The apparent pacification lowered the temperature of the system and oriented the whole body of policies to guarantee the financial stability and the health of the public accounts and restore the international trustworthiness. The struggle for reforms - even unpopular after decades of delayed choices- ran early into social costs barely bearable by the population and for this reason the traditional parties progressively

started to keep a certain distance from Monti's government, even if they kept supporting it.

As a consequence, the reformist drive gradually fizzled out especially in terms of institutional reforms: new electoral law at least and Constitutional reforms were expected to be proposed after a large agreement between the new majority parties, but no effective outcome was actually produced after one year. Unable to achieve the restated and intended promises, parties started again to play in defensive way, a dangerous tactics while the Five Stars Movement, an anti-system party led by the comedian Beppe Grillo, advanced both loudly and creepingly (Bordignon, Ceccarini 2013; Diamanti, 2014).

After decades of partial reorganization and internal rearrangement, the Italian party system began to know a totally diverse political actor. Following Panebianco's genetic model (1988a,50) based on Eliassen and Svaasand, the development of the party organizations could be related to territorial penetration, a top-down process in which the periphery is stimulated by the center, or to territorial diffusion, a bottom-up process in which local elites guide the creation of party associations.

The Five Star Movement (M5S) combined them operating through a "web-like structure consisting of micro organisations conducting a heterogeneous range of activities" in a "franchise system" (Bordignon, Ceccarini, 2013, 438); an innovative and attractive model that captured not only the political space left by the traditional parties, but also the mysterious zone of abstention and distrust, increasingly grown. This mix of peculiarity has represented the most relevant innovation at party organization level, after the business firm model embodied by Forza Italia in 1994, progressively turn in a personal party with particularistic interests (Hopkin, Paolucci, 1999; Paolucci, 1999, 2008).

The M5S emergence was particularly due to the evident gap between citizens and representatives, now increasingly 'operationalized' in protests against public money waste and abuse. The reaction of traditional parties was perceived as weak, notwithstanding the partial reform of party financing enacted by the law 96/2012, and the weight of the old unrealized promises flattened the electoral compactness that

Democratic Party (Pd) and People of Freedom showed in 2008 elections, questioning the Second Republic party system (D'Alimonte, 2013).

2013 election results led to a further crash of the bipolarism through a more volatile electorate able to liquefy the rooted ideological vote already unfrozen by the 'useful vote' in 2008<sup>2</sup> (Chiaramonte, De Sio, 2014). From the ballot boxes a tripolar party system came out: the astonishing recovery of Berlusconi's bloc (that confirmed the People of Freedom, symbol notwithstanding the usual and pre-electoral internal divisions, along with seven lists), the failed win of the Democratic Party and its three-lists coalition, the partial flop of three-party centrist alliance led by Mario Monti characterized the electoral scenario.

With a decreased turnout on the background (5,3% less than 80% in 2008), the electoral vote legitimized the ascendance of M5S as first (non)party and proposed again at the Senate the same (even more alarming) spectres of uncertainty in 2006. The Senate region-based electoral system did not allow any party to have the majority in the upper house, forcing the coalitions to reach a broad agreement and secure the governability.

After the failed attempt to form a M5S-leftwing coalition, Democratic Party, People of Freedom and Civic Choice (Monti's *rassemblement*) restored the formula that supported Monti's cabinet and agreed about Letta's as prime minister, cutting once again the extreme wings as Left Ecology and Freedom (that benefited from the majority award) and Northern League and isolating M5S. Again, the need for reformist policies - in order to keep fulfilling the European constraints and commitments- makes more meaningful the Lowi's assumption that "policies determine politics" (1999).

The following figure shows the steady decline of Italian bipolarism and the up and downs of Italian bipartitism (or better 'bilistism', only loosely anchored in the society), setting apparently a more contestable market.

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<sup>2</sup> The effective number of the parties at electoral level increased now to 5.3 (near to 2006 number) whereas the effective number of legislative parties slightly grew (from 3.1 to 3.5).

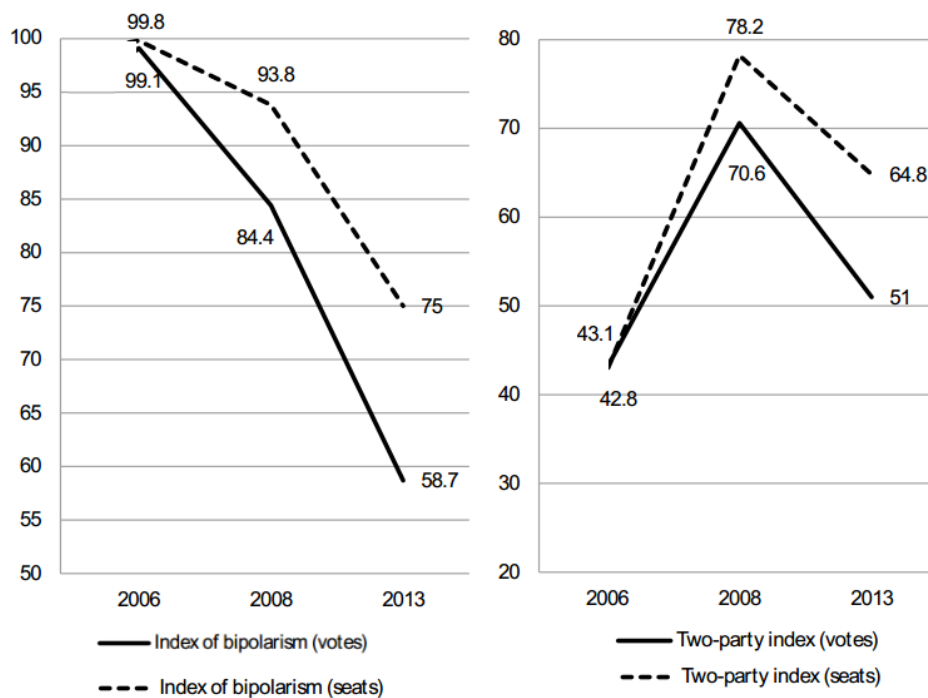


Figure 3.1 Index of bipolarism and bipartitism.

Selection from Chiaramonte, Emanuele (2013, 64, 65)

In the course of the XVII legislature, tripolarism has changed faces and dynamics: the intra-coalition divergence was more and more sharp and Pdl's threats weakened Letta's leadership to the extent that he was replaced as prime minister by Renzi, new Pd secretary after the primary elections held in November 2013. In the meanwhile, almost sixty MPs guided by Alfano, right-hand man of Berlusconi for long, left their party to found New CentreRight: a trustier Pd ally against the relaunch of Forza Italia. Berlusconi's leadership began to be undermined first by a law conviction that excluded him from the Senate and later by the rise of Salvini, populist leader of Northern League.

So, in a sort of game between leaders, the left-wing bloc essentially constituted by Renzi's Pd tried to present itself as the democratic bulwark against the populisms represented by M5S and Northern League, now recognized as the leading party of the old blue bloc. There was no space at the time for other possible alternatives, as the European elections showed.

This brief excursus individuates the evolution of the party system and its parliamentary arrangement in the last three terms, proving the fluidity of the parliamentary patrons and the continuous emergence of new leaders that, confirming their own personal networks, partly modernize not only the job offer structure, but also its internal composition.

The lacking cohesiveness of the legislative parties has had no consequences on the electoral supply at the following elections - or at least a lesser impact compared to the party formation out from the Parliament, as the experiences of Left Ecology and Freedom and M5S show. The “intra-party” movements have though affected the equilibria and the majority in favour or against a government, conditioning its duration and bringing both in 2008 and in 2011 to the change of the cabinet.

The next section focused on the party switching will provide further evidences of this parliamentary fragmentation, in an oscillation of competition and cooperation, that do not necessarily bring to party fragmentation. Its dynamics though, combined with division on policy issues, can change the nature of a party shaping the patronage relationships. In an overall view, as confirmed also by the ascent of an anti-party movement such as M5S, we can state that also the precarious and at the same time blocked coalitions have led to a weak institutionalization of party system, characterized by high levels of electoral volatility, low legitimacy and temporarily active and intermittent organizations.

Party cartels and lists as an addition of candidates ran at the elections with weak roots in society and strong affiliation with the leaders, especially under the close-list system. The new electoral law (l. 52/2015) - if the constitutional reform will be approved by referendum in the next autumn -is expected to define a clear winner, securing it a list-based majority potentially after a run-off. The limit to close list only on the top in the 100 constituencies will increase both intra-list and inter-list competition (D’Alimonte, 2015). The Italian party consolidation still remains on the ground, conditioned mainly to the possible use of the list as party cartel in order to gain the electoral benefits, entry into the Parliament and then split in different parliamentary groups.

### **3.2 THE ITALIAN PARTY SWITCHING AND THE LEGISLATIVE TURNOVER: PATRONAGE AT STAKE AND CLIENTS AT RISK.**

*Trasformismo* has usually been a common feature of Italian politics. Once elected, parliamentarians can change party -and so their parliamentary group- in order to achieve their own goals or utilities (Carocci, 1992; Musella, 2003). This personal choice, consented by free and not imperative mandate explicitly guaranteed in the Italian Constitution (art. 67), depends mainly on the political situation (if the party or the leader is in decline or not) and personal incentives or essentially on offices, policies and votes (Strøm, 1990; Muller and Strøm, 1999).

This process could have consequences on the executive determining at extreme extent its fall, and so majority parties, just like coalitions, tend or try to prevent it by building solid channels through the distribution of compensative policies, roles or offices among the different factions.

We focus here on party switching as independent variable of patronage: the higher is the party hop from a party A to a party B, the higher will be the amount of resources at disposal of party B, the lesser will be the amount of money available for party A. This should depend on the rules of procedure adopted by the Parliament.

In order to explain party switching, Mershon and Shvetsova's approach (2008) assumed that incentives and motivations to hop party traverse specific periods of time and individuated five different stages within a parliamentary cycle: three legislative stages, the final electoral stage not necessarily at the end of the term and a 'Dormant' step that do not include the first four.

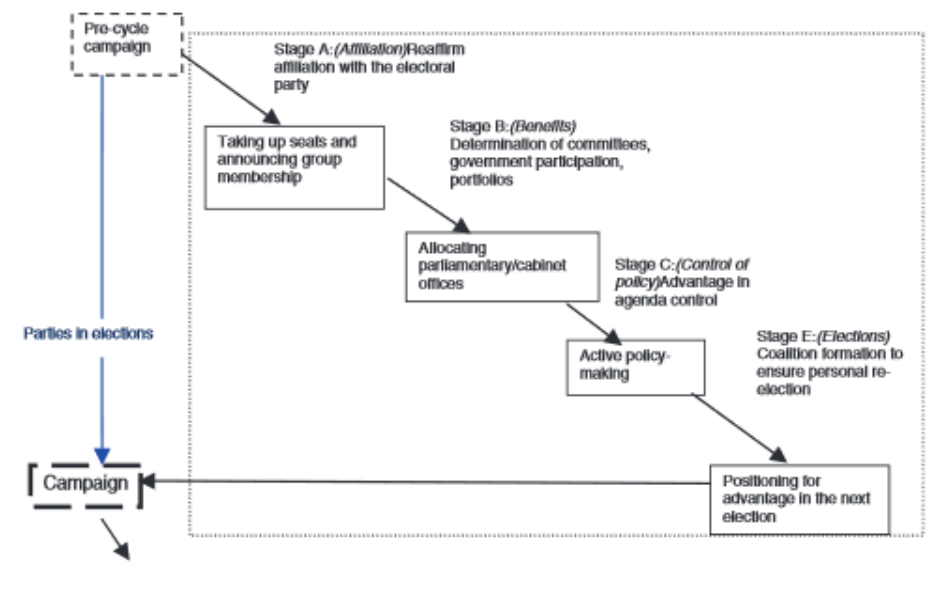


Figure 3.2. Switching behaviour and parliamentary cycle.  
Source: Mershon, Shvetsova, 2008, 102

The initial stage represents the step with high motivations because there is a huge availability of resources to assign (offices both in the executive and in the Parliament, staff, leadership and representation of the group in the different committees). MPs declare their affiliation to the group directly linked to the party that has elected them. This choice is almost obliged in the age of the electoral law called *porcellum* (l. 270/2005) with blocked lists: party select their own candidates at central level and simultaneously put them in an order from which their election depends. Parties control their candidates more than actually happened with the single member districts stated in the laws 276 and 277/1993.

This first stage (A) has some implications in term of policy motivations since the distribution of the offices conditions policy issues and their agenda. In the second stage (B for Benefits) the resources available in A are assigned and their assignment increases the office seeking ambitions and expectations for the remaining MPs. Stage C is the step with more explicit implications in terms of policies since it is situated in a point far from the elections, able to develop relevant legislative activities with the main issues raised by policy proposals. In this phase switching could be aimed at influencing policy choices and affirming policy values.



In the last stage (E for Elections) the progressive nearing of the elections spreads the need for a pre-electoral positioning. The occurrence of non-parliamentary elections (European, regional, local, referenda) may reorganize the political landscape in which the single MPs perceive themselves and their personal career in the future. The stage D (for Dormant), not included in the figure, consists of all periods other than Stages A, B, C, and E.

The studies on Italian party switching and party discipline (Verzichelli, 1996, 1999; Giannetti, Laver, 2001; Ferrara, 2004; Heller, Mershon, 2005, Mershon, Shvetsova, 2008; Di Virgilio, Giannetti, Pinto, 2012; Pinto, 2015) have underlined high rates of affiliation change by Italian MPs. In the last two legislatures an increase of this phenomenon has been registered after a massive back and forth in the first two legislatures of the so-called Second Republic (on average more than 20% of the MPs switched). Here we focus on the hops occurred in the last three legislatures, providing a comparative framework.

We start from assessing the most visible effect of the party switching: the variation of parliamentary/political groups number at the Chamber of Deputies<sup>3</sup>.

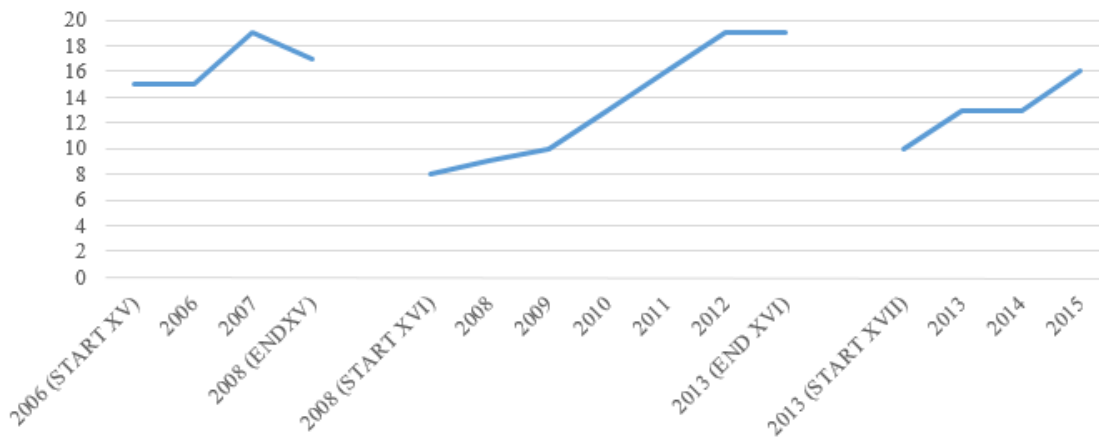


Figure 3.3 Numbers of Political Groups Chamber of Deputies (2006-2015)

As we have already underlined in the previous section, the party system fragmentation *in the course of* each legislature finds its expression in the parliamentary arena through the proliferation of new groups. This happens especially when the

<sup>3</sup> The *Gruppo Misto* is not considered as whole, but each its internal sub-group is assumed as a single group. Those MPs not enrolled in a sub-group are considered as a single group.

number of groups is lower at the starting of the legislature: the Parliament dynamics appears a complicating factor for the party system. During the XVI and XVII (current) legislature, the number has essentially doubled, with a remarkable propulsion during the current term compared to the length, and has scattered and reduced the size of patronage sources. The following table provides further confirmations to this from a different perspective.

<b>Legislature</b>	<b>Switched MPs (%)</b>	<b>Total Switches</b>	<b>Yearly Average Switched</b>	<b>Period</b>
XV	8.5	65	33	2006-2008
XVI	19.8	209	42	2008-2013
XVII	19.6	167	55	2013-current

Table 3.1 Incidence of Party Switching in the Italian Chamber of Deputies (2006-2015)

Source: Legislature XV: Di Virgilio, Giannetti, Pinto, 2012. Leg. XVI and XVII: author.

Note: The total number of deputies is 646 for Legislature XV, 683 for Legislature XVI and 663 for Legislature XVII. Data updated to 15<sup>th</sup> December 2015.

Beyond the quantitative weight of the phenomenon, party switching has been observed also in its motivations and timing, too often considered as an individual choice. Recently, as for the Italian XVI legislature, three main factors have been observed as reasons for the parliamentary reshuffle: “time” that measures personal ambitions, inevitably related to the re-election, “party type” with “ideologically coherent and catch-all parties” that “offer legislators different incentives to switch”, and “party structure” with the presence of factions that foster collective switching (Di Virgilio, Giannetti Pinto, 2012, 52).

The interesting case of the current legislature deserves more attention, both at the Chamber and at the Senate (Ceccanti, 2014). Here we focus on the switches that include more than one MP and occur on the same day, from the same group towards the same group. These switches are more likely to be related to policy or party issues and have significant effects on the (re)distribution of patronage. At the Senate, 45 collective moves have taken place in the first three years and half of the term. 13 of 45 have involved more than 5 senators mostly in the creation of new groups or in the formal



At the Chamber of Deputies, instead, the collective switches affect less the formation of the new groups because of a higher number required for their constitution.

	MAR-MAY -13	JUN-13	JUL-OCT 13	NOV-13	DEC-13	JAN-14	FEB-14	MAR-MAY 14	JUN- 14	OCT -14	NOV-14	DEC-14	JAN-15	FEB-15	MAR-15	APR-OCT-15	NOV 15	DEC-15
PD										(+2)	(+8)			(+2)				
FI-PDL				(-29)													(-9)	
AP				(+29)								(+6)						(-4)
SC					(-20)									(-2)				
PI (then PI-CD)					(+20)					(-2)	(+3)	(-6)						
M5S		(-2)					(-2)				(-2)		(-9)					
LEGA NORD															(-3)			
SEL (then SI-SEL)									(-2)+ (-3)+ (-4) (-2)								(+3) +	(+3)

Tab. 3.3 Collective party switching in the Chamber of Deputies from the same provenience to the same destination – Leg. XVII.

Note: each parenthesis represents a collective party switching. The number intra parenthesis represents the number of deputies involved in the collective party switching. Internal and external variation within the mixed group are not considered.

Comparing the timing of the collective hops in the two houses leads us to state that a political switching asymmetry exists, partially motivated by the different threshold for the group formation and partially connected to the political relevance that Senate during this term represents because of its tiny majority. Moreover, the Chamber is more exposed to individual switching.

Changes also occur not only in the course of the legislature, but also *between* a legislature and one another. The legislative turnover, expected to let elites circulate, renews the political class and its policy issues and proposals and allows the emergence of new leadership. (Matland, Studlar, 2004; Manow, 2007), jeopardizing the persistence and the continuity of patronage relationships, cutting off the pre-existent linkages and reshaping or removing patronage motivations and patronage opportunities. The incumbent patrons – here considered as individuals- tend to lose their power shares and, consequently with them, offices, chairs and new resources.

Despite of this, a successful political career, with advancements and progresses that lead to new more important offices, could confirm and enhance past patronage experiences, creating a fixed web of relationships durable across the time. This constitute a motivation for the clients as well, since they hope for a re-election or a prestigious assignment for their patron in order to get career benefits from it.

The two Italian legislatures have shown an increasing turnover in both houses. The merit is not directly due to the voters' choice. Last three elections have been ruled by a system of closed lists that do not allow citizens to directly express their preference. As would-be self-reformers, parties have pushed the renewal of the political class placing candidates never engaged in Parliament in the first positions of their electoral lists (Verzichelli, Tronconi, 2010, 2014).

The exclusion of the incumbents has been flaunted as a distinctive element of their emergence -and so a competitive advantage - by new movements or lists such as M5S and Civic Choice. Also the traditional parties have promoted a partial renewal of the second-row politicians, selecting successful candidates from the civil society and the local branches of the party. In the following tables, the trend of legislative turnout of the last legislatures are shown.

	Women		Men		Total	
	XVI	XVII	XVI	XVII	XVI	XVII
Elected for the first time at the Chamber	10,0	21,75	37,6	44,29	<b>47,6</b>	<b>66,03</b>
<i>Already elected at the Senate</i>	<i>0,3</i>	<i>0,79</i>	<i>4,0</i>	<i>1,90</i>	<i>4,3</i>	<i>2,70</i>
Already elected at the Chamber	7,3	9,37	45,1	24,60	<b>52,4</b>	<b>33,97</b>
<i>Elected only at the Chamber</i>	6,8	8,57	43,3	22,7	50,2	31,27
<i>Elected both at the Chamber and at the Senate</i>	0,5	0,79	1,7	1,9	2,2	2,7

Table 3.4. Legislative turnover, Chamber of Deputies, XVI- XVII legislatures (%)

Source: Our elaboration from data provided by the Chamber of Deputies<sup>4</sup>

	XV LEG.	XVI LEG.	XVII LEG.
Elected for their first time and not previously elected at the Chamber	37,8	35,5	60,6
Elected for their first time and previously elected at the Chamber	23,1	16,7	18,1
Re-elected incumbent	39,1	47,8	21,3
Total	100	100	100

Table 3.5 Legislative turnover, Senate of the Republic, XV-XVII legislatures (%)

Source: our elaboration from data provided by the Senate of the Republic.

Note: numbers include also legislators who have replaced other senators after their resignation or death

The unusual designation of the same MPs to the same institutional offices in the legislature t+1 held by them in the legislature t confirms the fluidity of patronage opportunities as well. On the contrary, patronage persistence is expected to be observed, to some extent, in those parliamentary groups which represent traditional or electorally consolidated parties.

<sup>4</sup> Numbers refer to the composition of the Chamber at the end of the legislature for XVI leg. The data about the current legislature are updated until 11<sup>th</sup> December 2015. Original data available at these links: Leg. XVI: [http://leg16.camera.it/564?tiposezione=C&sezione=1&tabella=C\\_1\\_8](http://leg16.camera.it/564?tiposezione=C&sezione=1&tabella=C_1_8). Leg. XVII [http://www.camera.it/leg17/564?tiposezione=C&sezione=1&tabella=C\\_1\\_8](http://www.camera.it/leg17/564?tiposezione=C&sezione=1&tabella=C_1_8)

### 3.3 REFORMS IN PARTY FINANCING: THE NEED FOR THE STATE

Italian party system has to face a new dramatic challenge for its existence: the reform of party financing. Parliamentary patronage could provide surrogate tools to secure party to survive and maintain its minimal organization (Pizzimenti, Ignazi, 2011). A focus on the evolution of party financing laws stresses the progressive and mandatory detachment of parties from the state in financial terms.

At the end of 2013 a decree law<sup>5</sup>, approved according to Italian Constitution requirement in case of necessity and urgency, has revolutionized the party funding system. The illustrative premises of the decree 149/2013 look relevant: “the difficult economic situation of the country requires necessarily the adoption of provisions that affects the public spending, in line with citizens’ expectations to overcome public party funding”, “the popular will expressed by the electorate through the referenda about the issue has always confirmed its orientation to overcome such system and lastly emerging social misery forces political system to austerity measures”, “it is an unavoidable exigence to pass to a [funding] system based on the taxpayers’ free choices that empowers citizens and give them a central role in party financing, since parties are by nature associations constituted to contribute, according to democratic method, to determine national policies, under art. 49 of Constitution”.

The decree has completely overturn the party funding systems that ruled for decades and during the years partially reformed. It removes public funding of political elections and financing for political activities, establishing in their place a procedure for sustaining political parties by voluntary tax-exempt contributions and indirect political contributions. In order to receive these benefits, political parties have to fulfil requirements of transparency and internal democracy fixed in the decree.

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<sup>5</sup> Decreto Legge 28 dicembre 2013, n. 149, Abolizione del finanziamento pubblico diretto, disposizioni per la trasparenza e la democraticità dei partiti e disciplina della contribuzione volontaria e della contribuzione indiretta in loro favore [Elimination of Direct Public Financing, Provisions for the Transparency and Internal Democracy of Parties, and Control of Voluntary and Indirect Contributions in Their Favor] Gazzetta Ufficiale [Official Gazette] No. 47 (Feb. 26, 2014)

The stratification of existing laws (195/1974 known as Piccoli law approved to face scandals and collusions with illegality, 659/1981 and other next interventions with art. 1 of 422/1980 and art. 1 413/1985) built a financing system that provides a first state contribution for the ordinary functioning of parties and a further state contribution in the form of reimbursement for electoral campaigning spending in European, national and regional elections<sup>6</sup>. In June 1978, four years after the approval of the law, a popular referendum promoted by Radical Party failed to abolish the first kind of contribution: in an age of mass participation to direct democracy initiatives, the consultation reached the quorum (81,19% of electorate went to the polling booths) with the main parties of the so-called First Republic (Christian Democracy, Communist Party, Republican and Liberal Parties) allied in favour of maintaining direct public funding. The popular vote confirmed the existing system with 56,4 per cent of votes.

In April 1993, in a different context characterized by the progressive collapse of the old party system and by a more awkward party-mobilization, Radical parties and other movements replied successfully the attempt. The same bunch of eight referenda that lead to the abolishment of Agriculture, Tourism and State Participation Ministers and push the change of electoral laws both for Chamber and Senate, passing substantially from a proportional to majoritarian system with single member districts, eliminated the first channel of direct contributions and made parties more dependent on the electoral reimbursement. Almost 77% of the eligible to vote took part in the consultation with 90,25 of voters saying yes to the abrogation of the articles 3 and 9 of 195/1974 law. With animated *anti-partitocrazia* beliefs, Radical Party's leading members proposed to replace public funding with an open financing system in which lobbies, foundations, unions could have financially supported parties, along with individual citizens that could have participated and engaged in local assemblies.

This ambitious myth was very soon challenged by the reaction of ruling and pro-system parties that already in December 1993 fixed the contribution for electoral spending without any correlation with the effective amount of party spending in campaigning (law 155/1993). The amount of this so-called reimbursement was

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<sup>6</sup> On this: Rhodes, 1997; Musumeci, 1999; Bianco, 2001, Pelizzo, 2004; Pacini, 2002, 2009; Amato, 2012.



calculated, in the case of two Chamber and Senate elections' funds, as the multiplication of 800 liras per inhabitant of the Italian Republic in the whole legislature. Later this amount increased to 4000 liras in 1999 and up to 5 euros in 2002. Approximately 47 million euros were distributed among parties in the first national elections after the referendum (1994).

The financial crisis of parties that inherit the burdens of the past forced them to find legal alternative solutions within the state resources to keep financing their organizations. In this direction the decree 83/1995, though not converted in law, tried to anticipate the payment of the half of contributions already received for the same institution. In the same year, the reimbursement for regional elections was introduced, granted to those parties that got one seat in the regional assembly. Then in 1997 (law 2/1997) a sort of direct public funding came back in the form of voluntary contribution by allocating 4×1000 of Irpef (personal income tax) to a generic “party financing fund” without giving the possibility of the taxpayers to explicitly indicate the party to sustain. The same law introduced formal controls of Chamber of Deputies' Speaker on party budgets and balance sheets whereas *Corte dei Conti*, a constitutional institution with audit jurisdiction in matters of public accounts, is responsible for the control on electoral expenses. The final hit was stricken through law 157/1999 and its modifications that repeatedly inflated the costs of reimbursement system, firstly by lowering the quorum required to access to the reimbursement from 4% to 1% (l. 156/2002) and then multiplying the amount of money owed to the parties for five years, independently from the real lasting of the legislature (l. 51/2006). In this scheme elections become a business that an early end of the legislature can increment. The following table represents 20 years of reimbursement system:

ELECTIONS	A	B	C	D	E
	Verified expenses	Received reimbursements	Difference B-A	% B/A	% A/B
NATIONAL ELECTIONS MARCH 1994	36.264.124,34	46.917.449,32	10.653.324,98	129,38	77,30
EUROPEAN ELECTIONS JUNE 1994	15.595.788,66	23.458.724,66	7.862.936,00	150,42	66,49
REGIONAL ELECTIONS APRIL 1995	7.073.555,52	29.722.776,08	22.649.220,56	420,20	23,80
NATIONAL ELECTIONS APRIL 1996	19.812.285,84	46.917.449,32	27.105.163,48	236,81	42,23
EUROPEAN ELECTIONS JUNE 1999	39.745.844,39	86.520.102,57	46.774.258,18	217,68	45,94
REGIONAL ELECTIONS APRIL 2000	28.673.945,87	85.884.344,63	57.210.398,76	299,52	33,39
NATIONALE ELECTIONS MAY 2001	49.659.354,92	476.445.235,88	426.785.880,96	959,43	10,43
EUROPEAN ELECTIONS JUNE 2004	87.243.219,52	246.625.344,75	159.382.125,23	282,69	35,38
REGIONAL ELECTIONS APRIL 2005	61.933.854,85	208.380.680,00	146.446.825,15	336,46	29,73
NATIONAL ELECTIONS APRIL 2006	122.874.652,73	471.973.696,56	349.099.043,83	384,11	26,04
NATIONAL ELECTIONS APRIL 2008	110.127.757,19	418.621.544,00	308.493.786,51	380,12	26,30
EUROPEAN ELECTIONS JUNE 2009	39.587.801,52	180.147.837,03	140.560.035,51	455,05	21,97
REGIONAL ELECTIONS MARCH 2010	62.926.376,47	118.924.935,86	55.998.559,39	189,00	52,91
NATIONAL ELECTIONS 2013*	45.444.781,99	40.162.145,45	-5.282.636,54	88,37	113,15
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>726.963.343,81</b>	<b>2.480.702.266,11</b>	<b>1.759.021.558,54</b>	341,24	29,30
* Just 2 payments of 5 are considered. Source: Corte dei Conti, Delibera CSE 14 POL 2013, p. 340					

Table 3.6 Verified expenses and reimbursements received by the parties until 2014 in elections from 1994 to 2013. (Values in euros)

A slow, but steady about face was made by the parties. Already in 2010 (decree 78/2010 converted into law 122/2010) the amount of the funds was reduced by 10% starting from the following legislature and the ‘double reimbursement’ was deleted,

interrupting the five-years payments even related to early ended terms. In 2011 (decree 98/2011 converted into law 111/2011) the funds were reduced by a further 10%. Obviously these tenuous improvements did not basically change the strong dependence of parties on public funding, certificated by the Greco Evaluation Report on Italy Transparency of Party Funding (2012, 5).

Public funding	82%
Private funding	16.5 %
Other funding (from publishing activities, events, etc.)	1.5 %

*\*Note: Data collected from the 2010 financial statements of major political parties*

Table 3.7 Percentage breakdown of public/private/other funding with respect to major political parties revenues.

In 2012, during the unity government ruled by experts lasted less than a two-year period, Parliament approved the law 96/2012 with a large majority, essentially the same that sustained the cabinet. The law was elaborated exclusively on the basis of parliamentary bill proposals and without any intervention of government: in a reform period that essentially put parties under temporary receivership with the pressure of the economic crisis, parties adopted austerity measures that included a partial revolution of the political financing and that tried to fill the worryingly growing gap between represented and representative.

The current and future electoral reimbursements were halved and would have constituted the 70% of the total amount of state contributions (91 million euros). The remaining 30% would have been linked to the ability of party to self-finance their activities and would have been proportional to the membership fees and to the private funding raised. Party budgets were mandatorily submitted to stricter and less discretionary controls managed by two different kind of review: first the audit firms and then a new committee composed of five magistrates chosen by the most important bodies of Italian judicial system were charged to guarantee reliable checks. More effective sanctions, decided by the committee according to punctual criteria defined by

the law, were enforced: the maximum penalty, in case of failed submission of the budget, consisted in a total cut of the contributions.

Fiscal deductions to private contributions were encouraged by raising the rate from 19% to 26% rate and decreasing the maximum deductible amount to 10 thousand euros. More demanding transparency requirements were introduced, publishing the party budgets on both Chamber of Deputies and party website. Public declarations of private contributions to party are necessary for donations from 5k euros.

Overturing Scarrow's assumption<sup>7</sup>, even in front of an overall fund reduction parties were asked to supply their own statutes and charters in compliance with internal democracy's principles stated by the art. 49 of Italian Constitution. This provision is not sufficient without a comprehensive definition of the legal status of 'party' in Italy, still far to be individuated. In the Italian legal systems, parties are actually considered as non-legally recognized associations: every attempt to achieve a more complete legal framework has failed<sup>8</sup>.

The law 96/2012 also stated 5% reductions of public contributions if the number of the same gender candidates would have overcome the 66,6% of the total. At the same time, the approved bill would have delegated the government to prepare a law collecting all the rules and norms about political financing, but the government did not.

The gradual emergence of Five Stars Movement as key political player in 2013 elections made almost irrelevant those significant efforts that led to law 96/2012. The strong opposition against the cost of politics that characterizes the anti-establishment movement developed a noticeable pressure of public opinion upon the traditional party system, especially during the hang Parliament situation lasted two months after the

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<sup>7</sup> "The introduction of either party finance regulations or subsidies has often been accompanied by new legal definitions of political parties [...]. This legal language defines what a party is, and may even establish rules for getting onto a public registry of political parties, thus clarifying which organizations are covered by the new subsidies and finance rules" (Scarrow, 2011, 21)

<sup>8</sup> The art. 49 of Italian Constitution in a liberal provision states that "All citizens have the right to freely associate in parties to contribute to determining national policies through democratic processes". The last advanced attempt to fix a legal status of parties dated back to December 2012 when at the Chamber of Deputies (Constitutional Affairs Committee) the legislative iter of AC 244 stopped after the approval of some amendments.

electoral results. A new reform of party financing became immediately an issue on the political agenda. Actually in October 2013 the Chamber of Deputies approved a parliamentary bill that would have become two months later the base of the decree: it constituted an attempted means to cool down the climate of tensions and anti-political feelings.

The decree 149/2013 (converted into law 13/2014) totally abolished the direct contribution system from 2017 and gradually, but significantly cut the funds from 2014 (25% reduction in 2014, 50% in 2015, 75% in 2016). The old system was replaced by fiscal incentives for 2×1000 of Irpef contributions. Quite similar to the short-lasting 4×1000 contributions supplied by law 2/1997, this voluntary financial support goes directly to only one eligible political party expressed in the taxpayers' declaration. In order to get these benefits, parties have to previously enter into a register held by the now called Commission for the Guarantee of the Bylaws and for the Transparency and Control of Political Parties' Accounts, the same committee instituted by law 96/2012<sup>9</sup>. Parties have to submit their statute in compliance with democratic rules (art. 3.2).

Other measures contemplated in the law established a per-person cap of €100,000 in value per year in favour of a single political party (originally 200,000 in the decree) Innovative fundraising strategies were regulated: campaigns conducted by telephone, SMS or other telecommunications methods are disciplined under a set of rules approved by telephone operators authorized to provide public electronic communication services, in accordance with the guidelines set by the telecommunications authorities.

Transparency requirements from law 96/2012 were confirmed and a further threefold definition of political party was advanced to determine the political subject eligible to receive the benefits: 1) parties, movements or organized political groups that placed candidates with their symbol at the national, European, regional and provincial elections; 2) parties enrolled in the register connected to a parliamentary group or to a

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<sup>9</sup> In July 2015 this commission has openly denounced the scarce availability of resources in term of tools and personnel. In order to not compromise its functioning, Parliament approved a so-called *leggina* in October 2015 (law 175/2015). In that occasion and through a bipartisan approval, checks on expenses related to the years 2013 and 2014 were disapplied.

sub-group in *Gruppo Misto* 3) parties enrolled in the register that took part at national or European elections by a coalition list with other parties and elected at least one candidate.

This radical change has obliged parties in the last years to conduct intensive fundraising campaigns focused mainly on the 2% contributions in force from 2014. Taxpayers have the possibility to choose between 11 parties in the first year, but this number has grown up to 19 in 2015. Five Stars Movement had never applied to receive this benefit.

Notwithstanding these efforts, the following table clearly demonstrates the expected difficulties after the first two years of the new financing system. Less than 20 thousand of 40 million taxpayers (0,04%) in 2014 have intendedly destined their contribution to a party. In the following year this ratio is considerably increased up to 2,7% and in total all the eligible parties got nearly 10 million euros, loose change if compared with the electoral reimbursement system<sup>10</sup>. Parties with a more rooted organization as Democratic Party and Northern League show the best performance in this innovative fundraising.

The transition to the new system, fully in force in 2017, is producing not insignificant costs for the parties that are reconsidering first of all the use of their estates. The review involves mainly the expenses for national and local headquarters and party personnel, with frequent changes of site, layoffs<sup>11</sup> and downsizing plans. In such context, parliamentary groups represent a minimum safe shelter in order to allow the parties to work.

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<sup>10</sup> Actually in 2015 the total contributions have been proportionally reduced since they have exceeded the fixed cap of the fund (9,6 million euros). The real amount is 12.353.574,68 euros. In the data presentation, the Ministry of the Economy specifies that in 2014 the procedures to express the choice for the voluntary contribution have been less direct and more complex.

<sup>11</sup> It is not a case that the decree 149/2013 (converted into law 13/2014) extended to party personnel the extraordinary treatment of salary integration and solidarity contracts.

POLITICAL PARTIES	VALID CHOICES (n)		% OVER THE TOTAL CHOICES		TOTAL CONTRIBUTIONS FROM 2‰ (€)		
	2014	2015	2014	2015	2014	2015	TOTAL
Centro Democratico		19.958		1,8		137.873	137.873
Die Freiheitlichen		2.949		0,27		21.843	21.843
Fratelli d'Italia Alleanza Nazionale	510	56.362	3,09	5,09	9.326	472.384	481.710
Lega Nord per l'Indipendenza della Padania	1.839	138.941	11,13	12,56	28.140	1.109.082	1.137.222
Movimento Associativo Italiani all'Estero - MAIE		4.429		0,4		32.380	32.380
Movimento Politico Forza Italia	829	60.778	5,02	5,49	24.712	529.904	554.616
Movimento Stella Alpina		5.263		0,48		35.520	35.520
Nuovo Centro Destra		16.764		1,52		168.629	168.629
PATT - Partito Autonomista Trentino Tirolese	39	3.014	0,24	0,27	656	24.680	25.336
Partito della Rifondazione Comunista - Sinistra Europea		46.564		4,21		342.732	342.732
Partito Democratico	10.157	596.290	61,49	53,9	199.099	5.358.250	5.557.349
Partito Liberale Italiano		2.608		0,24		32.259	32.259
Partito Socialista Italiano	591	18.257	3,58	1,65	9.686	114.938	124.624
Popolari per l'Italia		2.650		0,24		22.041	22.041
Scelta Civica	156	9.229	0,94	0,83	7.102	90.863	97.965
Sinistra Ecologia Libertà'	1592	100.991	9,64	9,13	23.287	881.588	904.875
SVP - Sudtiroler Volkspartei	511	12.196	3,09	1,1	16.600	149.659	166.259
UDC		114		0,69		3.084	3.084
Union Valdotaïne	180	4.083	1,09	0,37	4.017	35.995	40.012
Unione per il Trentino		4.962		0,45		39.379	39.379
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>16.518</b>	<b>1.106.288</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>325.711</b>	<b>9.600.000</b>	<b>9.925.711</b>
<b>Total amount of taxpayers</b>	<b>40.989.567</b>						

Table 3.8 Valid choices of voluntary contributions from 2 ‰ Irpef (2014-2015).

Our elaboration on the data of the Ministry of Economy

### **3.4 NEW TOOLS FOR PARTIES, NEW OCCASIONS FOR CLIENTS: THE PRIMARY ELECTIONS.**

Even if not engendered within the Italian tradition and imported from the US experience (Fabbrini, 2002, 2005), primary elections have been frequently used in the last decade in Italian politics. Sincere or not, the claim to recur to primary elections - recently as an act of self-criticism and repentance- has worldwide crossed the most part of the parties, especially in Europe, more and more concerned -or oriented- to open new spaces for a democratic and inclusive participation and to stir and mobilize the 'party on the ground' (Pasquino, 1997; Fusaro, 2006; Hazan, 2011; Sandri, Seddone, Venturino, 2015).

The decentralization of the candidate selection could move the decision-making process out from the party in the central office and inside the party on the ground (plus eventually other eligible voters defined punctually in the statutes or time after time), creating a new occasion/event to connect with the membership and the voters, revitalize these relationships and so acquire more legitimacy (Valbruzzi, 2005, 2007; Florida, 2011).

Primary elections could be held at national and local level and at party or coalitional level. Through primary elections a party or an alliance of parties could choose both a single candidate that, after the victory, runs as the candidate of the whole party/coalition for monocratic offices, and a whole list of candidates, with a priority order or not.

Adding a further distinction, primary elections could be directed to define the candidacies for public offices or to assign party offices. The latter could be also simply considered as an internal frequent election guaranteed by the party statute and would not necessarily overlap with the first (Seddone, Venturino, 2013). The leaderization and the presidentialization of the politics (Poguntke, Webb, 2005) have though stretched the meaning of the intra-party selection, often acting as a springboard for political careers and so coinciding with the aspiration to a certain public office.

We mention here as example the national primaries organized by the Democratic Party in December 2013 to decide the party secretary after Bersani's resignation and



Epifani's temporary regency. Won by Matteo Renzi and with significant consequences not only in terms of political communication those elections paved the way to the ascendance of the mayor of Florence as Prime Minister, replacing Enrico Letta in the following month. Partly also the primaries won by Veltroni in 2007 had more or less the same effect: promoting new party leaderships oriented to the government leadership.

However, the object of our analysis leads us to focus on those primary elections that select the candidates for the public offices, since it is the public office in itself that represents the necessary and sufficient condition to take advantage of public resources and then distribute them by patronage mechanisms.

A such bottom-up process, although internal and pre-electoral, is likely to produce new channels and relationships between candidates, activists and voters or reinforce those ties already activated in the past, mobilizing party or non-party personnel like in any electoral campaigning. In this sense, primary elections could serve also as an occasion for the clients with career ambitions to establish a contact with their potential and preferred patrons.

In this sense, primary elections could achieve a further democratic goal, not only trying to bridge the gap between the party and the voters, but also providing an additional opportunity for an inclusive patronage by party or professional recruitment, in so enlarging the possibilities for being involved in a fruitful exchange relationship.

In an attempt to swing the pendulum from party-destructuration to different and growing degrees of party-restructuration, parties may choose the scope of a given primary election setting the 'selectorate', that is people entitled to take part and vote. Literature has individuated basically five levels of selectorate: from the most general and inclusive -the voters, independently from their party affiliation- to the most restricted and exclusive – the leaders themselves (Hazan, 2011).

The scope of the selectorate could affect the establishment of patronage relationships: in a primary election in which only the party members are eligible to vote, it is likely that just partisan or party members are interested in working for the candidate campaign, in so excluding the array of independent voters potentially interested in supporting the candidate both at electoral and organizational level. So we consider that

essentially the wider is the electorate involved in a primary election, the higher are the opportunities for patronage-seeker voters.

A limitation to this assumption could be provided by the size of the primary elections' arena. For example, mayoral primaries' campaign could rely on the exclusive support of activists belonging to the city in which primaries take place, or at least such primaries could be less inclusive than region-wide primary elections. The level of professionalization could make the difference in overcoming these "ethnic" barriers, especially in middle or low populated cities or in peripheral contexts where expertise and competence in campaigning could be hard to be found. Offering high standards of experience could represent a competitive advantage in patronage-oriented relationships.

In any case, be the size of the primary elections' arena large or not, be the electorate wide or not, the presence of a candidate network, not necessarily related to a certain party allegiance, may work as a filter, building a sort of inner circle with personal relationships that divides the insiders from the outsider. In such situation, the patronage resources that could derive from a successful election would be distributed within that circle without any consideration for the party organization.

If so, it is the amount of patronage resources at disposal that play a key role. If the cake will be large enough to satisfy the inner circle, other slices of patronage are available for non-personal networks. In general, this could be related to the size of the primary elections' arena: if these electoral contests concern for example the candidacy to national elections or even to party secretaryship, winning the primary elections would mean administrate -or at least have an influence on- national or party resources.

In the last years, Italian politics has been stud with primary elections chiefly organized by the leftwing coalition of the leftist parties at every level<sup>12</sup>. For our purposes, we exclude from this counting the online consultations organized by the Five Star Movement since they have been generically used both for selecting candidacies, expressing policy preferences and opinions about the expulsion of some members (Corbetta, Gualmini, 2013; Lanzone, Rombi, 2014).

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<sup>12</sup> To be complete, an exception is represented by the European elections. Two reasonable factors, organizational and electoral, have excluded so far the recourse to primary elections: 1) the inter-regional size of the constituencies that divide Italy in 5 broad "macro-regions" 2) the presence of a preference vote open at maximum to three choices (but constrained by the gender quota).

Their mediate and not physical nature make them not comparable to the *parlamentarie*, the primary elections held by Democratic Party or Free Ecology and Freedom in December 2012 to select candidacies for deputies and senators (Musella, 2014). The establishment of relationships and channels here is to be excluded since voters, mainly long-time activists, take part in the election in a lonely way, casting their vote in electronic polling booths.

The empirical research, indeed, will take into account this kind of primary elections and will investigate their impact on patronage distribution. We consider meaningful to do so even if - and because - *parlamentarie* have been used for the first time in the 2013 pre-national elections in order to “open” the 90% of the closed lists mandated by the electoral law. The remaining 10% would have been composed through nominations after an agreement between the national and the regional board.

The importance of this consultation is stressed by Musella even if literature contributions are still missing: “Primary elections held on 29 and 30 December 2012 [by the Democratic Party] chose about 800 candidates for the two houses of parliament” (on average almost 8 candidates for list) “and more than two million citizens took part in the event” during a holiday period. “[They] were the first primary elections in Italy in which the electoral result was neither a foregone conclusion nor even predictable” (2014, 248).

The non plebiscitarian outcome makes *parlamentarie* an interesting and original object of analysis, even because, as usual, their organization has shaped their nature. In this sense, *parlamentarie* took the form of a sum of local elections, run in provincial districts, quite similar to the single-preference voting introduced in the early 1990s. In order to stand as candidate, the aspiring MPs were asked to collect the signatures of at least 5% of the party members in the voting. So a first minimum linkage with the territory and a minimum organization for collecting signatures were required.

The figures show a competitive contest with a low concentration of the votes in the first elected candidate (approximately on average the 30% at national level, with the lowest performance in the South - 27.5%) (Musella, 2014, 254). This intra-party competition took place within an ideologically limited selectorate, allowing the participation to those that already voted for the primary elections held by the centre-left

coalition in November 2012 to select its leader. So not only the Pd voters were entitled to take part, but also all the left-wing voters, making *parlamentarie* an inter-party competitive arena, attracting the Sel voters potentially engaged on the same day in similar elections.

The combination of local size and restricted electorate could have promoted close personal relationships between candidates and patronage-seekers, reinforcing the pre-existent ties in case of incumbent candidacies. Playing a key role, the local organizations as a whole could have also represented a determining factor in pushing a candidate or another, standing as potential collective ‘clients’. Even the impartial contribution to the electoral process, given by some volunteers as scrutinizers for example, could be taken into account to explain the external reach of patronage relationships. Part of the empirical research will aim to assess these assumptions.

Notwithstanding their democratic value, primary elections have been also interpreted as a further occasion of party control from above that at the extreme extent could foster clientelistic ties or spread corrupt practices, strengthening the party machine or apparatus that the outsiders generically would call into question through primaries (Bolgherini, Gelli, 2011; Cross, Rahat, 2012; Ichino, Nathan, 2013). If so, primaries do not provide any further occasion for the clients excluded from the prior patronage relationships and practices, emphasizing both party power and illegitimacy (Ignazi, 2014).

The innovative reach of primaries as tool to select the Italian parliamentary class could be confirmed by the new electoral system, the so-called *Italicum* (l. 52/2015) that, in the course of the parliamentary discussion, has replaced the short closed lists (rejected by the Constitutional Court through the sentence 1/2014) with open lists, except for the top candidate chosen by the party, in 100 multi-member constituencies.

The nearly similar size of the constituencies could promote the organization of *parlamentarie* held under the same system, but it is not easy to predict which candidacies would be assigned through primaries – whether the top or not. In a such context, patronage from the above could be jeopardized, increasing the likeliness of a

successful nation-based patronage, where the relevant relationships occur in Rome, far from the territory of origin or election.

## CHAPTER 4

### THE ITALIAN PARLIAMENT: WHICH SPACE FOR THE PATRONS?

*Today call the deputies and the senators ‘people’s representatives’ does not have anymore the same meaning that this expression had in other times: they should be called rather employed by their party.*

Calamandrei (1956, 214)

The previous chapter has analysed the Italian evolution of the patrons in the last decade, their nature and their external and internal dynamics, providing some evidences about the floor-crossing and the legislative turnover. In turn, these phenomena shape patronage relationships, creating new patrons and making disappear the old ones within the legislature or between two legislatures, reducing or increasing their reach by affecting the financial resources at disposal.

Furthermore, two relevant aspects have been explored. The progressive downsizing of the public funding in Italian politics forces parties to recur to alternative resources in order to sustain themselves, encouraging the “capture of the state by the parties” (Biezen, Kopecky, 2014) and the withdrawal into the state and the institutions. Then, the possible consequences of the appearance of primary elections on patronage relationships have been outlined: opening a participated selection before the election mainly in the left-wing parties, the emergence of democratic tools to select candidates both for monocratic bodies and Parliament seats is expected to create and foster further patron-client linkages.

The present chapter studies the institution that provide patronage opportunities analysed in this dissertation: the Parliament. Not only because of their representative nature, regional, national and European legislative assemblies recognize some spaces of autonomy to parties and politicians, allowing them to build their own staffs and organizations financed by public money.

The first section of this chapter explains the evolution of Parliament’s role and its relationships with the executive, taking into account more in depth the last two

terms. This focus will introduce us to the main activities that parties or MPs run within the Parliament and, consequently, to the motivations of parliamentary patronage.

In the second section, we will further clarify the concept of parliamentary patronage, object of this research. Parliamentary experience opens to other possible - veiled or less- forms of patronage not examined by the empirical study here. In the light of the Italian procedures and rules, we distinguish the attribution/confirmation of roles and appointments that, even if it occurs in the Parliament with or without votes, it does not strictly derive only from parties or MPs in their political essence.

The last two sections of the chapter identify who are the patrons within the Parliament. They can be constituted by collective or individual actors: the parliamentary groups, expression of the parties in the Houses, in the first sense and the institutional office-holders in the latter sense. A punctual assessment of their nature and their functioning in Italian experience will permit us to advance some hypotheses about the patronage mechanisms.

#### **4.1 PARLIAMENTARY FUNCTIONS: WHICH TASKS FOR THE CLIENTS, WHICH CLIENTS FOR THE TASKS**

The differences in resources' supply are not the only distinguishing element that could condition governmental and parliamentary patronage. Actually the functions of the legislatures determine the quality of the patronage, its goals and its motivations sketching also the requirement for the clients. Examining the functions of the Parliament and their evolution in relationship with the executive will help us to understand what clients are called to do nowadays.

Five parliamentary functions are found in the legislatures: 1) the political address to the formation of governmental policies (essentially through motions and resolutions); 2) the legislative function, intended as the traditional law-making moved by exclusive parliamentary impulse or shared with the cabinet (exerted more and more through amendments to government bills/decrees); 3) the control and the scrutiny on governmental or non-governmental actions at every level (through questions or inquiry committees or other minor tools); 4) the constitutional guarantee, acting as a counterweight to other powers and institutions or as a protection to secure, for example,

national safety; 5) the coordination with the local powers and authorities, still in a developing stage (Manzella, 2003).

The growing decline of the parliament in the exclusive law-making power, increasingly shared with the executive in consensual processes mainly through the conversion of the law decrees (Capano, Giuliani, 2001a), has progressively limited the purely legislative function of the legislature (Kreppel, 2009), transforming it in a representative/expressive function in Bagehot's meaning, especially if combined with a relevant symbolic policy content. The frequent elaboration of *leggi bandiera*, presented mostly at individual level, but rarely scheduled in the agenda of the committees, has been a by-product of the expressive function's renaissance, using the legislative power as a ready-made political and communicative weapon oriented more to propaganda and tactical goals than to the actual passing, conditioned by their low priority (Pisaneschi, 2014). Even the *iter* of scheduled bills could be far from a successful conclusion, creating a sort of bottleneck between the production of the bills and the effective approval (Capano, Giuliani, 2001b). The following tables related to the last three terms show the trends in bills production and their effectiveness in the committees, the most important filter of the legislative *iter*.

<b>Initiative</b>	<b>XV LEG.</b>	<b>XVI LEG.</b>	<b>XVII LEG.</b>
By MPs	5062	8399	5117
By executive	284	482	298
By the regions	28	67	52
By the people	20	27	37
By CNEL	4	2	4
Total	5388	8977	5508

Table 4.1. Amount of bills proposed in Parliament in last three legislatures. Our elaboration from Parliament data, updated to 15<sup>th</sup> January 2016.

	<b>XV LEG.</b>	<b>XVI LEG.</b>	<b>XVII LEG.</b>
(N)	592	1972	1162
% on the number of presented bills	10,9%%	21,9%	21,1%

Table 4.2. Amount of bills whose examination was concluded by the parliamentary committees in the last three legislatures. Our elaboration from Parliament data, updated to 15<sup>th</sup> January 2016.



This first filter essentially highlights the strict selection, through the agenda-setting process, of the whole body of presented bills: governmental proposals can rely on a stronger priority comparing to the remaining initiatives and, as the table below illustrates, they show the higher rates of success at the end of the legislative *iter* with the final approval in both the houses and the coming into force.

Initiative	XV LEG.		XVI LEG.		XVII LEG.	
	n	%	N	%	n	%
By MPs	13	11,6	91	22,75	31	16,4
By the executive	99	88,4	304	76	157	83,1
By the regions	0	0	4	1	0	0
By the people	0	0	1	0,25	1	0,5
Total	112	100	400	100	189	100

Table 4.3 Bills definitely approved by the Parliament in the last three legislatures.

Our elaboration from Parliament data, updated to 15<sup>th</sup> January 2016.

The overwhelming majority of governmental bills on the whole body of approved laws and the expansion of the executive in the parliamentary activities has been a consolidated trend since 1990s (Capano, Giuliani, 2003). This fact does not discourage though the massive production of bills by MPs, usually demanded to the legislative offices of the parliamentary groups or the personal assistants. In order to “express” their political values and policies or to strengthen the linkages with their constituencies, the patrons, both collective and individual, need clients for the assistance in the law-making.

This exigence is also justified for the preparation of the amendments in order to intervene on the governmental proposals and try to modify them, especially if the executive does not ask for the confidence vote. The relevance of the amendments has steadily grown in the legislative techniques (Piccirilli, 2009), both for government, that sometimes corrects its decisions or recurs to the maxi-amendment, and for MPs (Capano, Vignati, 2008). This twofold advantage is explained by Capano and Vignati:

“on the one hand, government is forced to table amendments in order to resolve policy conflicts within the ruling coalition previously ignored or postponed during the pre-parliamentary phase of the decision-making process; on the other hand, confirmation is provided of the structural trend whereby the dividing line between the majority and the opposition very often becomes blurred during the legislative process” (2011, 54).

The elaboration of the most important amendments, usually object of political negotiation, is mainly centralized in the hands of the parliamentary groups, their political elites and their legislative offices, in so requiring a high professional level to their employees in terms of technical drafting and policy elaboration. Often specific consultants or experts are necessary for a more detailed study about the policies.

For the reasons explicated above, the emergence of non-legislative functions has become more and more relevant, following a trend not exclusively Italian (Dickmann, 2008). This kind of function embodies a noteworthy political meaning, especially for the opposition parties, that can control the activity of the government and try to address its political actions (Rivosecchi, 2007). Depending on the issues raised -on the base of local vs national or individual vs collective interest cleavages, groups or single MPs in their personal initiatives recur to professionals for the preparatory work, even though an institutional consultancy, without any political meaning or involvement, is also provided by the parliamentary officials (Zuddas, Piccirilli, 2012). A strong political affiliation or a local connection between patrons and clients, even without any party allegiance, could help to better define the political inputs and consequent policy solutions or concerns expressed in the initiatives.

The final performances are presented in table 4.4 that assesses the concluded initiatives (final vote for motions and resolutions, received answered to interpellations and questions). The low percentages demonstrate not only a scarce interest of the executives towards these initiatives that enhance its accountability and responsiveness capacities. It is not uncommon that parliamentarians deposit these acts only for media motivations, claiming for their urgency, without soliciting an answer or making efforts to schedule it. This depends mainly on the scales of priorities laid down by the groups or by the single MPs (De Micheli, Verzichelli, 2004; Rosa, 2007).

	XV LEG.			XVI LEG.			XVII LEG.		
	Pres.	Conc.	% C/P	Pres.	Conc.	% C/P	Pres.	Conc.	% C/P
Motions	445	210	47,19	1933	1167	60,37	1608	919	57,15
Interpellations	1216	612	50,33	2348	1316	56,05	1572	917	58,33
Questions with oral answers	2760	1255	45,47	5882	2650	45,05	4440	2005	45,16
Questions with written answers	9919	3292	33,19	28449	9361	32,90	16806	3729	22,19
Questions in Committee	1953	1321	67,64	8715	4866	55,83	7423	3523	47,46
Resolutions in the plenary sitting	97	93	95,88	252	251	99,60	337	336	99,70
Resolutions in committees	351	212	60,40	1412	833	58,99	1079	485	44,95
Conclusive resolutions	107	107	100	225	225	100	163	163	100,00
Orders containing guidelines to the Government - In Plenary Session	3637	3626	99,70	12827	12624	98,42	11197	11122	99,33
Orders containing guidelines to the Government - In Committee	561	534	95,19	2691	2525	93,83	2562	2064	80,56
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>21046</b>	<b>11262</b>	<b>53,51</b>	<b>64734</b>	<b>35818</b>	<b>55,33</b>	<b>47202</b>	<b>25277</b>	<b>53,55</b>

Table 4.4. Presented and concluded initiatives for both political control and address to the government (XV-XVII leg.). Our elaboration from Parliament data, updated to 20<sup>th</sup> January 2016.

The impressive amount of parliamentary questions deserves a particular attention: even if parliamentarians have several other tools at disposal, they seem to recur more often to this instrument in a vis-to-vis strategy that put against the MP and the government in a relationship between equals (1 question=1 answer). Furthermore, the content analysis of the parliamentary questions has revealed their use as a service to the constituency: “candidates who are elected in a district where they do not have strong personal roots do not devote much effort to representing their constituency” (Russo, 2011, 299). This emerges in the studies focused on bills as well (Marangoni, Tronconi, 2011) just like it happened under the old electoral system (75% majoritarian and 25% proportional) when “those MPs elected in majoritarian constituencies have a greater propensity towards presenting bills than those elected by the proportional rule” (Capano, Giuliani, 2003, 24).

Beyond this quantitative analysis of the production performances, it is to admit that the Parliaments do not represent only a legislative-control-address arena. They create, at national and European level, a communicative space, “a discursive structuring of public networks and arenas in which anonymous circuits of communication are detached from the concrete level of single interactions” (Habermas, 1996, 171) and go in a bidirectional line with the society. The public opinion sometimes is likely to indirectly condition the policy-making or the agenda, not through popular off-line initiatives<sup>1</sup>, but through its expectations and its feelings (Carbonnier, 1978).

For an incisive political action, parliamentary groups and MPs, generally considered as the institutional branches of the parties, should activate communication and information flows and maintain a stable connection with the constituency or the general electorate. It follows that the importance of a fluid and constant communication with the generic voter, local groups or specific targets asks for the engagement of activists or professionals responsible for the political communication, online and offline. From this need, a further kind of client arises: press agents or secretaries and spin doctors have emerged as key figures and shadow players in the political field, not only in the governmental sphere, but also in the Parliament at the time of the permanent campaigning.

Terms like “political marketing” or “packaging of politics” have become frequent not only during the electoral campaigns (Swanson, Mancini, 1996; Mancini, 1999). The news management, intended as the agenda-setting of the facts that are transformed into news and headlines, needs a daily commitment in facts-building, preparing reports or dossiers about the adversaries if a negative campaigning strategy is adopted or about particular issues (always the same if promoted by a single-issue party in the Parliament).

In last decades, the issues of the political debate, conveyed through the media, have been constantly conditioned by the Europeanization of the executive agendas and

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<sup>1</sup> The Italian tradition in popular legislative initiatives’ success confirms the gap between representatives and represented (Della Sala, 2002). It should not surprise if we look at the rate of parliamentary legislative initiatives approved in both the floors. The trends show the existence of a caste-model legislative process, with the executive at the top and the people at the bottom.

domestic policies. This happened also in Italy and obviously has had an impact on the domestic legislatures not only in financial constraints, but also in terms of the content of the laws, increasingly tied with EU agenda and commitments (Radaelli, 2003; Graziano, 2013). Clearly not all the policy sectors are Europeanized at the same degree. Three levels usually are distinguished and often national executives for a reversible change in that degree, allocating more resources and increasing the level of integration about a single issue, as it happens with immigration nowadays. At the top of the Europeanization there are those policies related to the common currency or to the common market, inspired by the fundamental values at the base of the European Union; in the middle, those policies that require investments and funds for middle-term results such as transport, environmental issues, research, education and development; at the bottom those policies with a low influence of the EU institutions so far, left to intergovernmental agreements (immigration, justice, foreign policy and defence). Equally not all the provisions that come from EU institutions have to be adopted in vertical way as the difference between regulations, directive resolutions, demonstrates.

The need for policy experts with a cross-national knowledge and a thorough comprehension of EU policies has so innovated the required profile of the clients, opening new opportunities for time-limited and single issue-oriented consultancies. This modernization is not related only to top-down flows of policies, but has received an impulse from the further bunch of policies coming from above, in so asking for different kinds of experts with local experience.

The decentralisation, indeed, has multiplied the actors of the decision-making, conditioning the law-making processes with subnational constraints and differences. Especially after the constitutional reform approved in 2001, the differentiate regionalism has created 21 different policy systems, each one with its peculiarities, strengths and weaknesses, as the management of the health systems has shown (Di Giovane, Mastromarino, 2008). To govern and coordinate this efforts and policies and hopefully achieve mutual gains in the legislative processes, a link between the parliamentary groups and the regional or local representatives is expected to be established. These intense relationships could be developed at party level in those bodies that involve all the party elites and summarized in concrete proposals that

parliamentary groups turn into initiatives to promote in the floor and in the committees. It is also true that this sort of policies tends more to find a consensus if preliminarily negotiated at institutional level with deals between central executive and local governments. At the end of this process, amendments or proposals in whatever form could receive just a final and formal approval with broad supports in the committees or in the floor.

The performance and transformation trends that Parliament, as legislative and representative institution has experienced, could generally influence the minimum requirements asked to the clients in competitive selections held by single persons or a board through interviews or cv screenings.

#### **4.2 PATRONAGES IN PARLIAMENT: A PRELIMINARY DISTINCTION.**

In the last section of the first chapter, we have already introduced a distinction between four forms of possible patronage in Parliament in broad sense: the external institutional patronage, the inner patronage, the chair patronage -that we will examine in the fourth section- and the internal institutional patronage. Here we summarize the Italian experiences in the first two types of patronage, a useful focus to disentangle the four concepts and better define the parliamentary patronage in strict sense, object of this dissertation.

In the external institutional patronage, the distribution of relevant offices, through one or more electoral steps, is common mainly by bicameral procedures through the joint parliamentary sittings of Chamber and the Senate. In the original sense these electoral moments, not preceded by any debate (Mannino, 2010), are considered as a sum of individual preferences casted by each member of parliament as representative of the Nation (art. 67, Italian Constitution). In such process, the most appropriate and well-known as independent figures should advance to serve in the most effective way those constitutional bodies that have a dominant role in the controversies about the constitutional legitimacy and in the conflicts between powers or in the self-government of the judiciary.

The progressive involvement of the parliamentary groups, as aggregating and facilitating units for mediation between elites in front of a huge electorate, have partially

affected in their composition, but not in their working, the balance-oriented bodies such as the Constitutional Court (one third of the whole composition, art. 135, comma 1, Const.) and the High Council of the Judiciary (CSM, one third of the whole composition, art. 104, comma 4, Const.). Under participatory practices, usually conducted with consensual methods, the party influence in these high institutional environments has though progressively extended its reach, including also persons with party linkages among the constitutional judges or even members of the cabinet as members of the CSM.

Obviously, a set of minimum criteria to fulfil is required in order to be eligible to come in charge: the constitutional judges should be “chosen among judges, including those retired, of the ordinary and administrative higher Courts, university professors of law and lawyers with at least twenty years practice” (art. 135, comma 2, Const.). As for the CSM members elected by the Parliament, the MPs could choose “among university professors of law and lawyers with fifteen years of practice” (art. 104, comma 4, Const.).

At the maximum degree even the election of the President of the Republic could be interpreted as an expression of patronage at the top, requiring though high thresholds -and so broad agreements- for the success of the election (a majority of two thirds of the assembly. and after the third ballot an absolute majority, art. 83, c. 3-4, Const.). The same rationale guides the election for the members of the above-mentioned bodies: a majority of two thirds -and after the third ballot the majority of three fifths of the Parliament – is required for the Constitutional Court components (l. 2/1967, art. 3), while the rule for the 8 members of CSM elected by the Parliament mandates a majority of two thirds -and after the third ballot the majority of three fifths of the effective voters in Parliament (l. 44/2002, art. 1).

A further domain of external institutional patronage is represented by the board of directors of RAI, the publicly owned media company addresses or controlled by the Parliamentary Vigilance Committee. This connection should suggest a function of the Parliament as the transmission between the state and the society in a sensitive matter such as media and communication. The law 112/2004 (art. 20, c. 5, 9) assigns to this bicameral committee the election of seven members (of nine) and the binding approving

opinion, by two thirds of the committee members, about the chairperson of the board, appointed by the board. Albeit some merit-based criteria are defined (art. 20, c. 4), they appear so vague that leave space for the political interference on the management of the public broadcaster, as the past and recent history has demonstrated. (Dickmann, Malinconico, 2009; Mancini, 2009; Hanretty, 2011).

Even the Speakers of the Chamber and of the Senate hold jointly a power to appoint: it occurs in those authorities that “shall act with total autonomy and independence of judgment and assessment” to guarantee citizens’ rights related to competition, fairness and transparency. It is the case of the Competition Authority (L. 287/1990 and further modifications) where the three members in the board, including the President, are proposed and appointed jointly by the Presidents of the Italian Chamber of Deputies and Senate. Also in this circumstance merit-based limitations are posed<sup>2</sup>.

Moreover, a remarkable scrutiny activity on the governmental appointments lies in the hands of the Parliament, developed in the competent committees. This control on the executive patronage is stated by the law 14/1978 and is supposed to increase the level of transparency, democracy, accountability and legitimacy, limiting arbitrary decisions and opening a discussion about the proposed appointments. This process concerns the chairpersons and the deputy chairpersons of public –also economic– entities or institutions: every appointment made by the Prime Minister, the Council of Ministers and the single ministers in the above-mentioned entities has to pass the examination of the Parliament before to come into force. A huge and various array of public entities are involved in this consultation that involves the candidates for the appointment in informal hearings before the committees (Spaventa, 1981; Dickmann, Staiano, 2008). It is to be added that this opportunity to intervene in the appointment process has to be activated by the parliamentary committees in a defined lapse of time beyond which the appointment procedure has anyway a successful end in front of a sort of silent-assent.

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<sup>2</sup> At the Competition Authority chosen among judges serving on the Supreme Administrative Court ('Council of State'), the Court of Auditors, the Court of Cassation, full professors of Economics or Law or respected business executives of particularly high professional repute.



An inner patronage with no party influence takes place inside the parliamentary bureaucracy according to the Rules of Procedure<sup>3</sup> and other sub-rules. As the Rule 51 of the Rule of the Services and of the Personnel (rSPC, an internal code that disciplines the administrative aspects of the lower house), the hiring selection of the Chamber of Deputies personnel passes through open and competitive exams or scrutiny of titles and exams. The selected officials are subdivided into five levels according to the complexity of their functions, linked also to different selection procedures and different level of salary (D'Orta, Garella, 1997). Professional updated courses are run by the administration for the officials whose attendance is necessary for the success of internal assessments, career advancements and salary raises (rule 69 rSPC).

In this general context, the apex of the bureaucracy follows a slightly different pattern. The Chamber of Deputies administration consists of 19 Services and 7 Offices, the latter under the control of the Secretary General, the head of the administration that controls, monitors and addresses all the activities of the Chamber and is its legal representative. The Secretary General is also the Head of the Personnel and takes part to the meetings of the Bureau, with an advisory vote (art. 7 rSPC) (Zampetti, 2000).

The office of Secretary General is assigned through an appointment process. Proposed by the Speaker of the Chamber, this choice has to be approved by the Bureau, as core 'political' board of the administration management, composed of elected MPs (art. 12.4, rC). The collegial nature of this appointment is confirmed also by the provision about its removal, adoptable with motivations by two thirds of the Bureau, after the Speaker's proposal (art. 7, c. 5, rSPC). High standard requirements are fixed: the Speaker has to select the name of the candidate among the deputy general secretaries, the Counsellors that serve as Chief of a Service or the Counsellors that successfully passed from at least six years the internal assessments preliminary to a career advancement (art. 7, c.1, rSPC).

The discretionary power to appoint, hold by the Speaker, but actually shared with the Bureau, has nothing to do with the spoil system practices adoptable in the public

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<sup>3</sup> For the sake of brevity, in the following pages the rule of procedure of the Chamber of Deputies is abbreviated as rC. whereas the rule of procedure of the Senate of Republic is abbreviated as rS.

administration sector, at national and at local level. It configures rather an internal selection at the top of the administration managed by those bodies responsible for the third and impartial working of the administrative machine, with a threshold (two thirds of the Bureau) not depending on the *pro tempore* majorities. The shared power leads usually to a previous informal consultation of the Speaker with the members of the Bureau, considering the consensual scheme of the appointment. In this process, the assessment of professional criteria matters more than any other motivation. The evaluation is based on the internal experience -not without some nuances of personal and subjective judgements- that in the last twenty years appears to have privileged the continuity, with a low turnover.

A similar pattern is stated for the appointment of the five deputy Secretaries-General (art. 8, rSPC), responsible for the coordination of aggregate areas of activities upon the delegation of the Secretary General. They are selected among the Counsellors that from four years successfully passed the internal assessments (art. 57.4, rSPC) and are proposed by the Secretary-General to the Bureau that decides on these candidacies. The appointment decree is signed by the Speaker. In turn, also the Chiefs of the Services are proposed by the Secretary-General to the Speaker.

These internal processes of appointments call to mind the so-called *autodichia* of the parliamentary assemblies, a prerogative recognized only to the Parliament through the Rules of Procedure (r. 12.4 rC, r 12.1 rS), to the Presidency of the Republic and to the Constitutional Court through ordinary law (l. 87/1953) (Occhiocupo, 1988). For what we concern here, *autodichia* implies a sort of administrative self-government, motivated by the division of the powers, that creates a domestic jurisdiction within each Chamber and consequently an external unappealability of the *interna corporis acta*: a no man's land regulated only by the internal specifics sub-rules as the rSPC (Testa, Gerardi, 2013). This self-protection from the interference of the judiciary, increasingly questioned also by the Constitutional Court (sent. 120/2014) (Dickmann, 2014; Malinconico, 2014) and the European Court of Human Rights (sent. Savino et al., 14/2009)<sup>4</sup>, is exerted in the case of the Chamber personnel through an internal jurisdictional committee, composed of three MPs drawn among those with pertinent

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<sup>4</sup> See also the ordinance of Cassation Court (United Civil Sections) n. 26934, 19<sup>th</sup> 2014.

competences: an evident absence of a third and impartial judge complained by the ECHR.

Studies of inner patronage, focused on its timing and its mechanisms, could provide a meaningful explanation of how the distributive choices occur at the top level of the administration. Such researches, though, will not be able to explain to what degree the party influence conditions the process for two main reasons. Firstly, the Bureaus and the Speakers here act as institutional bodies with responsibilities on the whole administration and its correct functioning, adding their preferences with a consensual approach to reach the high threshold. Secondly, the high legislative turnover, combined with the temporary nature of those bodies in the same membership- at maximum the full duration of a legislature, so 5 years-, facilitate the renewal of the patrons that, in turn, ask for clients whose acknowledged experience helps them to accelerate their learning process of the apparatus. Personal factors are not to be excluded in an exchange relationship that get competence in change of trustworthiness.

It is more likely that in this information asymmetry an imbalance of the power in transactions occurs, with clients much more influential than their patrons, aware of being the real “elite” of the administration and often tending to reduce its “circulation”, in Pareto’s meaning, in order to not change the consolidated regime. The last appointments held in June 2015 after almost ten years from the last similar process appear to confirm this assumption.

#### **4.3 COLLECTIVE PATRONS: THE PARLIAMENTARY GROUPS.**

Once elected, “within two days of the first sitting” at the Chamber (rule 14.3, rC) and “three days” at the Senate (rule 14.2, rS), each MP has to choose its parliamentary group. By expressing this choice, the MP realizes the passage, mediated by the list of election, from the belonging to a party to the registration to a parliamentary group connected to that party, cementing the partyness of the Parliament. By this connection, the parliamentary groups represent “the projection” of the political parties within the Parliament, helping their installation and enhancing their institutionalization within the party system (Rescigno, 1970; Bin, 2001; Ciancio, 2008; Lupo, 2009).

It is to be clarified, though, that in Parliament the connection party-group is not always direct, explicit and one-to-one related because both group without parties or group with more parties can exist. The first is the case of parliamentary groups emerged by the split from pre-existing groups. In such situation the collective party switching precedes the formation of the party (see Future and Freedom for Italy in XVI legislature and New Centre Right in XVII legislature, both from People of Freedom).

Parliamentary groups could be formed not only by divisions -be they founded on a party or not-, but also by sum of different parties or even different MPs, each one of them representing a party or a political subject. The experience of L'Ulivo in XV legislature provides an example of the first case: in 2007 the fusion of Democratic of the Left (post-communist party) and La Margherita (post-Christian democratic party) in one single party (PD) was previously tested in the floors of the Parliament with the creation of a single group, only at the Chamber tied with a same-named electoral list<sup>5</sup>.

At the extreme degree, parliamentary groups could constitute more a coalition of persons, a congeries of small groups and acronyms gathered more to fulfil the numeric threshold posed by the Rules of Procedure than to achieve a policy unity and political synthesis. The Grand Autonomies and Freedom (GAL) group in XVII legislature at the Senate constitutes an expression of it, with fifteen majority and opposition senators sharing the belonging to the same entity and seven different recognized sub—groups inside the main group, that takes the political form of an institutionalized mixed group.

In any case, parliamentary groups respond mainly to organizational necessities, providing an internal subdivision helpful to achieve a more democratic, orderly and balanced equilibrium in the proportional representation of the parliamentary scenario both in the plenary session and in the single Committees or Joints. Gathering deputies or senators in a macro-unit not necessarily defined according to political criteria, but rather with a minimum quota (20 at the Chamber, 10 at the Senate), the group simplifies internal procedures for the allotment of the resources, not only in terms of money, but also in terms of working spaces or time in the floor for example. Also the distribution of

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<sup>5</sup> A similar experience has started in the middle of the XVII legislature when some former members of the Democratic party have joined the group Free, Ecology and Freedom adding the label Italian Left. Such aggregation intends to create a new leftist political party.

the institutional offices, as we will see in the next section, responds to group-based mechanisms (Manzella, 2003; Mannino, 2010; Lupo, Gianniti, 2013).

Beyond the numerical criteria, the Rules of Procedure consent the formation of parliamentary groups, under the prescribed threshold, that demonstrate the existence of a tie with successful electoral lists. This possibility in both the Houses takes the form of a concession granted by the Bureaus, through interpretations of the Rules provided by the Rules Committee. In the last Parliaments, especially the XV legislature, the first under the new electoral law, the Bureau has authorized the establishment of new groups whose name represents parties that have submitted electoral list in the respective house, in some case with a minimum threshold<sup>6</sup> (Cozzoli, 2002, 2014; Castaldi, Cozzoli, 2008).

The groups have also an incumbency advantage in the following elections: as confirmed by the new electoral law (art. 2 comma 36, l. 52/2015), no collection of signatures is required only to parties and political groups already represented in one of the two houses that want to run at the election presenting lists with the same name. Such provision realizes a sort of cartel between insiders, removing obstacles for the electoral participation to those experiences yet consolidated in the past and indirectly asking for a considerable effort in term of organization and legitimation for new comers.

Moreover, the groups through their leaders, internally elected, are all represented in the Conference of Group Chairpersons, the most relevant body at political level chaired by the Speaker of the Chamber of the Deputies or the Senate. The Conference mainly sets the agenda of the plenary sittings, not only on the base of the bills considered by the Permanent Committees. In the practice, given its high political representativeness and its leading value as place of political mediation and bargaining,

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<sup>6</sup> . At the Chamber, “the Bureau may authorise the establishment of a Group with less than twenty members provided that it represents a nationally organised party that has presented its own list of candidates, under the same emblem and in at least twenty constituencies, and has obtained at least one quotient in one constituency and national electoral returns of at least three hundred thousand valid list votes”. At the Senate “The Bureau may authorise the formation of a Group with fewer than ten members provided that it represents a party or an organised movement in Italy which has submitted its own lists of candidates for the elections to the Senate in at least fifteen Regions, using the same party symbol, and whose candidates have been elected in at least three Regions, provided that such Group comprises at least five Senators, even if elected under different party symbols” (Rules, 14.2 rC, 14.5 rS).

the Conference has experienced an extension of its functions, deciding about matters generically attributed to other bodies such as the Bureau, the Rule Committee or even the Permanent Committees (Di Ciolo, Ciaurro, 2013).

Particular attention deserves the Mixed Group, a fraction composed of all the members that do not indicate an affiliation with a “political group” and that for numerical reasons, in absence of other electoral requirements, could form a sub-group within the group. The progressive enlargement of the mixed group by party switching has been a steady trend in the last legislature, although the electoral system should suggest a strong affiliation between MPs and the party, as shown in XV and XVI legislature. In 1997 the internal organization of the mixed group was regulated (Rule 15-bis rC) in order to clarify the formation of the sub-groups, political or not. At least ten Deputies are required to form a new intra-fraction - or at least three deputies for groups that represent linguistic minorities, elected within lists connected to them, or parties that ran for the election to the Chamber of Deputies.

The peculiarity of Mixed Group introduces a form of shared patronage, with a single financial source of income that becomes object of a further internal distribution between the single sub-groups. In this sense, the Mixed Group works as a sum of sub-groups and independent MPs, not always related to a party, but also connected with an association of deputies or senators.

Just recently defined by the Rule of Procedure at the Chamber as “associations of deputies”<sup>7</sup> in the lack of any other legal definition than “juridically unrecognized associations”<sup>8</sup>, the parliamentary groups are also legal entities entitled to stipulate contracts for goods and services and hire personnel by private contracts (Rescigno, 1961, 2010). They are able to do it in force of the public contributions secured by the budgets of the Houses that, on the basis of the decisions taken by the Bureaus, assign public resources for the efficient working of the parliamentary groups (Antonelli 1979;

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<sup>7</sup> Rule 14.01, rC added on September 2012 and in force from October 2012, stabilizes that “Parliamentary Groups are associations of Deputies established pursuant to the provisions set forth in this rule. Inasmuch as Parliamentary Groups are entities necessary for the functioning of the Chamber of Deputies, pursuant to the constitution and rules of Procedure, they shall receive funds from the Chamber of Deputies budget to carry out their activities”.

<sup>8</sup> Cassation Court (United Civil Sections) ord.n. 3335, 19<sup>th</sup> February 2004.

Bin 2009), mainly on the base of their size<sup>9</sup>. Here the amount of money at disposal of the groups in last two terms are presented.

	<b>CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES</b>	<b>SENATE OF THE REPUBLIC</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
<b>2008</b>	33.900.000,00	37.260.648,96	71.160.648,96
<b>2009</b>	35.100.000,00	36.776.240,40	71.876.240,40
<b>2010</b>	35.700.000,00	37.948.625,62	73.648.625,62
<b>2011</b>	36.250.000,00	37.415.224,90	73.665.224,90
<b>2012</b>	35.450.000,00	37.352.070,92	72.802.070,92
<b>2013</b>	32.630.000,00	21.305.189,64	53.935.189,64
<b>2014</b>	32.000.000,00	21.193.956,32	53.193.956,32
<b>TOTAL</b>	241.030.000,00	229.251.956,76	470.281.956,76

Tab. 4.5 Funds for parliamentary groups (2008-2014).

Our elaboration from Chamber and Senate final budgets.

The extreme closeness between party and parliamentary groups, that in some cases becomes a real coincidence, and the weak ability for parties to attract private resources, explained in section 3.3, elevate the centrality of parliamentary groups in

<sup>9</sup> According to unofficial estimates, a single deputy, being member of a given group, contributes to its budget approximately with 50 thousand euros per year, while a senator approximately 60 thousand euros. Rules 15.3 and 15.4, rC declare: “To enable Parliamentary Groups to fulfil their functions, they shall be allocated premises and equipment in a manner determined by the bureau that takes account of the basic common requirements of all Groups and the size of their membership. To cover all the costs, including staff costs, as indicated in paragraph 4, each Group shall be guaranteed a single all-inclusive annual contribution from the budget of the Chamber in the manner determined by the Bureau. The contribution shall be calculated with reference to each Group’s numerical strength. The facilities and contributions allocated to the Mixed Group shall reflect the number and size of the political groupings therein established so that they may be apportioned among such political groupings with reference both to the common requirements of all members and to the numerical strength of each political grouping. 4. The contributions referred to in paragraph 3 shall be used by the Parliamentary Groups exclusively for institutional aims connected with their parliamentary activities and to cover associated research, publishing and communication functions, as well as costs, including staff remuneration, pertaining to the administration of their internal bodies and structures”. Rule 16, rS states: “1. Parliamentary Groups shall be given premises, assets and a single annual contribution from the Senate budget, in proportion to their size and for the purposes under paragraph 2 below. 2. Contributions from the Senate budget to a Parliamentary Group, as determined and defined under relevant decision of the Bureau, shall be allocated to such Group solely for official purposes relating to parliamentary business and related political activity, research, publishing and communication connected to those, and operating costs for a Group’s bodies and structures, including staff remuneration.”

supporting political activities also connected to the legislative initiatives, providing personnel and financial resources for policy studies and event organization. As effect of ‘party in public office’ predominance, the core of the party organization has moved from a polycentric structure rooted at local level to a central elite that controls the resources and distributes them inside the institutions. The parliamentary groups, representing a *longa manus* of the parties within the Parliament, furnish them additional resources acting as collective patrons in distributive processes just like the parties.

Under the growing pressure of the public opinion on the costs of the institutions and the waste of public money, new rules for the management of the parliamentary groups have been provided in 2012, starting from a minimal definition of what parliamentary groups are. Since then, the groups are asked to adopt a statute – published on the institutional website- and present every year a budget (Rule 15.2-bis, 2-ter rC; Rule 15.3-bis, 3-quater rS). If they fail to present it, they risk to lose the contributions. Moreover, the Rules for Procedure explicitly states that the budgets should be submitted to audit firms<sup>10</sup> individuated by the Bureau “in order to ensure transparency and probity in their financial and accounting management” (Rule 15-ter comma rC, rule 16-bis comma 2 rS).

The transparency and disclosure on the statutes and the final budgets of the parliamentary groups enacted from 2013 allows us to draw a minimal common trend about their internal structure, their working and their expenses. An internal hierarchy comes to light from the review of the statutes: we essentially individuate an internal elite within the group organization, as the iron-law of the oligarchy has described (Michels, [1911], 1962).

All the deputies and senators form the assembly of the group, the broadest body that elects the chairperson of the group and votes about the budget proposed by the administrative manager and deliberated by the group treasurer (a MP). The assembly constitutes the place for the political debate and for the general addressing to administrative policies of the group. The management of specific administrative policies

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<sup>10</sup> Some doubts have been put forward about the choice of audit firms as external controllers and the consequent exclusion of *Corte dei Conti*. (Biondi, 2012)



in spending and hiring is attributed to the board of the group, an inner body composed basically of the chairperson, deputy-chair person, treasurer and some members of the group elected by the assembly (as in the case of Democratic Party) or appointed by the chairperson (as mandated in Forza Italia-Pdl statute).

In some cases, as the M5S group statute, the expenses above 100 thousand euros about single or homogenous voices have to be voted by the Assembly, whereas the expenses between 10 and 100 thousand euros have to be communicated to the Assembly at least every three months (art. 4, comma 9). The statute reflects so the collegial nature of the Five Star Movement with a lesser degree of delegation to the board of the group, whose functions are directly assigned time by time by the Assembly (art. 7.1).

In the most part of the groups, a more centralized power is placed in the hands of the board where the treasurer along with the technical assistance of the administrative manager play the key role in proposing the expenses. The board guarantees a basic efficient organization under the supervision of the group chairperson that, in many cases, is the legally responsible for the group. A further innovation from M5S has to be traced in the periodical turnover of the offices and their flexible nature: the chairperson is elected every year, the deputy-chairperson that serves both as vicar and spokesperson every three months, the treasurer every year (art. 3, M5S Chamber Group Statute).

The decision-making on expenditures that derives from the analysis of the statutes appears, indeed, diffused in a central elite led mainly by the chairpersons of the group and the treasurers. Their leadership, though, constitutes just an apical hierarchy with no exclusive power and influence on the hiring processes. Parliamentary groups serve so as collective patrons with a basic internal agreement about the distribution of jobs whose work will be to advantage of all the members of the group.

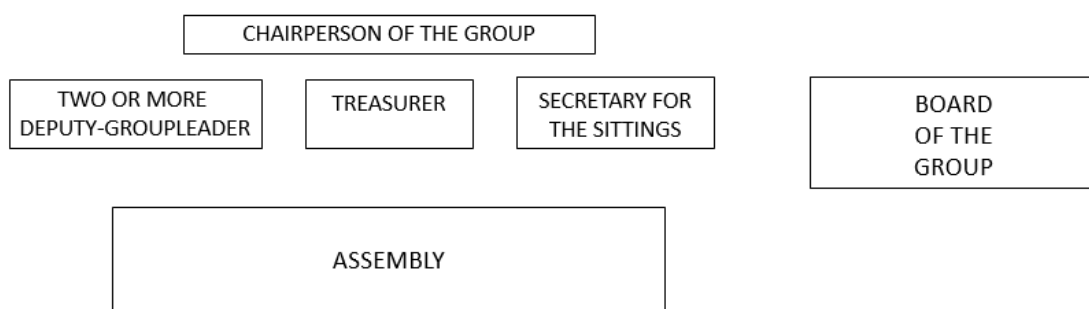


Figure 4.1 Internal composition and bodies of a parliamentary group by statute (MPs)<sup>11</sup>

A thorough examination of the groups' budgets available from 2013 brings us to conclude that on average approximately the 70% of the group budgets is allocated for the expenditures related to personnel (fixed term or consultancy contracts) with more than 500 persons hired (Caroli Casavola, 2014). We do not report here about the description of the expenses of single groups since the aim of this dissertation is to provide a general framework of parliamentary patronage, rather than a focus on single party's practices. This orientation will guide also the empirical research.

The remaining part of the budget is mainly allocated on the expenses for goods and services. So jobs prevail in the list of the costs sustained by a parliamentary group and this reinforces the assumption of a particular presence of patronage within this structure. A common trait in the groups' organization, basically inherited from the past also by the new groups, is represented by three main macro-areas individuated for the effective development of parliamentary activities: 1) the legislative office, that prepares texts and drafts of the parliamentary initiative (bills, motions, resolutions, questions, interpellations) and conducts preliminary policy studies; 2) the communication office, the evolution of the traditional press office at the age of online communication, engaged in the organization of press conferences or in the drafting of press releases and other communication activities; 3) the office for the sittings, that works as a linkage between the parliamentary bureaucracy and the groups about the communication and the

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<sup>11</sup> The Secretary for the sitting (one or more according to the size of the groups), even if not included in the procedural spending mechanisms, carries out a fundamental function for the works of the sittings, informing about their schedule and acting as a point of reference for the parliamentary group members in the floor activities such as the taking of the floor, the timing of the speeches and an informal coordination in voting.

organization of the plenary and committee sittings. The administrative offices support the organisational and administrative activities of the group.

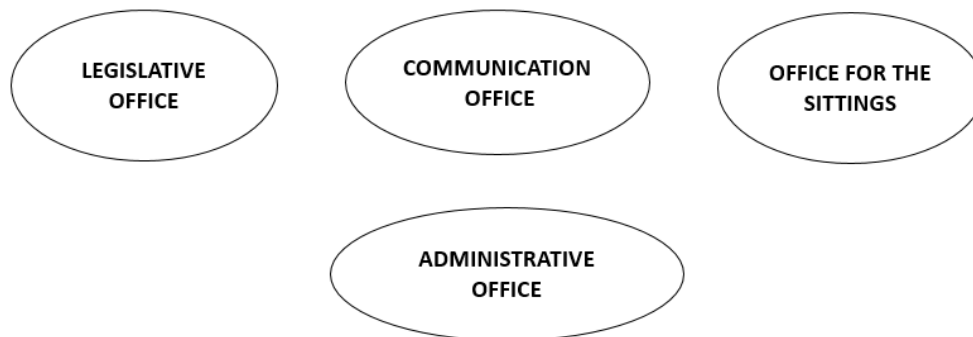


Figure 4.2 Basic internal organization of a parliamentary group (employees)

This quasi-departmental division partly affects the patronage mechanisms and also patronage motivations depends on the nature of the jobs, according to the principle “Find the man for the job, not the job for the man”<sup>12</sup>. These assumptions will be directly tested in the empirical research.

#### **4.4 INDIVIDUAL PATRONS: THE INSTITUTIONAL OFFICE-HOLDERS.**

A further sub-institution that offers resources for patronage is represented by the institutional office-holders, deputies or senators that serve as chairpersons of committees (standing or not) or as members of internal apical boards, such as the Bureau<sup>13</sup>. The rationale under this patronage opportunity, explicitly allowed by both the Houses, does not differ from the motivations that consent patronage to the parliamentary groups: concerns the effective and proper working of the offices, expecting that additional efforts are demanded to the office-holders because of their role. In this section we present a mapping of these patrons and examine the nature of these offices with its possible consequences on patronage motivations.

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<sup>12</sup> This slogan was used by Mrs. Thomas Red Powell, of Massachusetts (National League of Women Voters) in the campaign for a better government. (Madera Tribune, Number 54, 7 January 1936).

<sup>13</sup> At the Chamber of Deputies, this matter is ruled by the presidential decree 2nd may 1997, n. 42. Other information and data are not available given the strict access to administrative documents of both the Houses. In 2012, the Chamber reduced the salary of all the institutional office-holder staffers by 25%.

*a) Members of the Bureau*

Facilities in term of staff -albeit in different quantity related to the office- are allowed to all the members of the Bureau, the body responsible for the administrative coordination and management of the Chamber and of the Senate (Deodato, 2002a).

After the election of the Speaker, four deputy Speaker, three Quaestors and eight Secretaries have to be elected in order to establish the Bureau. All the Parliamentary Groups existing at the time of the election of the Bureau must be represented in it and, before the voting, the Speaker encourages agreements between the Groups (Rule 5 rC, 5 rS). The electoral system (a limited vote with two preferences for the deputy speakers, two for the quaestors and four for the secretaries) guarantees and facilitates the role of the minorities whereas, at the Chamber, the Speaker, for its *super partes* and neutral position, is elected with three different quorums: the two thirds of the members of the Assembly in the first ballot, the two thirds of the votes including in the votes the blanked ballots in the second poll and after it the absolute majority of the voters (Rule 4 rC)<sup>14</sup>.

As mentioned in the second section, the Bureaus, chaired by the Speakers, constitute the collegial body with the highest responsibilities in the administration of the parliamentary apparatus (r. 2, rSPC), deciding the yearly amount of the financial resources necessary for its working and adopting the budget and norms or rules about the internal arrangement of the offices and the personnel (r. 12, rC, rS). It holds also the power to fix the penalties to MPs for their misconduct during the parliamentary works and authorized the constitution of the new groups, deciding also about the complaint related to it and to the composition of the committees. Some sub-committees are established with a narrow composition, oriented to coordinate the policies of specific sectors such as communication, safety and security, personnel management, equal opportunities and documentation quality.

Beyond the overall view, different functions respond to each different office that take part to the Bureau, in so assuming a different political weight and a different power

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<sup>14</sup> At the Senate the quorums differ: absolute majority in the first two ballots; absolute majority of the votes cast, including blank papers at the third ballot; runoff ballot between the first two candidates with the largest number of votes, won by the candidates that obtain largest number of votes (r. 4 rS).

of moral suasion. The Speaker represents the House, chairs the debates ensuring the compliance with the Rules (rule 8, rC, rS) and is substituted in turn by the four deputy-speakers (rule 9, rC, rS). The rC appears to give more relevance to this office than the rS does: the vice-presidents “collaborate with the President” in the lower house whereas in the upper house they “represent the Senate at official ceremonial offices”.

The three Quaestors (usually two from the majority groups, one from the opposition) supervise jointly the effective working of the House, secured by the Speaker; exert relevant powers in spending matters and draft the budget to present to the Bureau (rule 10, rC, rS).

The Secretaries, instead, assist in rotation the Speaker during the sittings in practical activities such as calling the roll or checking the results of the vote and overview the drafting of the minutes of the sittings (Deodato, 2002b). If the number of groups grow during the legislature, the number of the Secretaries (one for each new group) is likely to increase in order to guarantee the representation of all the groups within the Bureau<sup>15</sup>.

All these offices presuppose considerable efforts in term of tasks to accomplish or meetings to prepare and attend<sup>16</sup>. This commitment that justifies, according to the parliamentary internal rules, the concession of a facilitating staff paid by the Parliament, but contractually bound to the chairperson in a fiduciary relationship that ends when the patron wants.

Some technical differences exist between the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate of the Republic in the process of attributing the budget. If at the Senate the budget is fixed on a simple quantitative base with a certain amount of money, at the Chamber this process is mediated by the correspondence of each contract to a not fixed

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<sup>15</sup> An unwritten rule, consolidated in the practice and confirmed by the political negotiation that precedes the vote for the secretaries, assigns one secretary to one member of Sudtiroil Volkspartei, the regional party based in Bolzano’s province that represents the linguistic minorities.

<sup>16</sup> For this reason, the rC and, not directly, the rS recognize the possibility to absence during the votes if they are occupied, out of the houses, for institutional activities (*missione*). In this case, their daily allowance is not diminished. At the Chamber, when the institutional office-holder are in *missione*, they are considered in the calculation of the legal number (r. 46.2, rC). At the Senate, instead, they are not (r. 108.2, rS). These rules are valid for all the institutional office-holders.

percentage of the salary provided to an official of the IV or the V level. This is valid for all the staffers of the institutional office-holders.

#### *b) Committees' Chairpersons*

The most part of the parliamentary legislative work takes place in the standing committees, simplifying entities that in the most part of the cases constitute the first and immediate place for the legislative debate (Elia, 1961). Committees respond mainly to an internal subdivision of the workload basically organized by issues in the assignment of bills to discuss, draft and vote in a preliminary step. For their preparatory nature and huge efforts required in their functioning, committees' works are expected to affect the clarity of the laws (Murgia, 2012), leaving a minor space for the changes during the plenary sittings. Committees also could express opinions about bills examined in other committees only about the matters closely related to their field of interest. Hearings - even investigative- and questioning could be inserted in the schedule of the committees, making these internal bodies an inescapable point of reference for the general parliamentary activities. The Rules of Procedure individuates fourteen standing committees at the Chamber and at the Senate (rule 22 rC; rule 22 rS).

In the establishment phase, the parliamentary groups appoint their own members to the standing committees, with an equal allocation in each committee and obviously replicating the political scenario of the plenary assembly. No deputy may be appointed to more than one Committee at the Chamber (rule 19, rC) while at the Senate a slightly exception is valid for the members of the XIV committee that could take part in two committees (rule 21, rS). On the first meeting, each committee should elect its own Bureau composed of a Chairperson, two Vice-Chairpersons and two Secretaries (Rule 20 rC, rule 27 rS). The duration of these offices lasts two years from the date of their establishment, after this period their members may be confirmed. Internal variations could occur during the two-years period in a process coordinated by the single parliamentary groups that could internally substitute their representatives.

The chairpersons of the Committees represent each committee and convene and chair their meetings holding a relevant power of agenda-setting (rule 21.1, rC), however shared with the committee bureau and often with the leaders of each group represented

in the committee (Della Sala, 1993; Fasone, 2014). Considered their influence on the working of the committees -always subjected to their duty to protect the opposition rights, as expressed in the general setting of the rule of procedures-, they are usually individuated among the parties that support the government on the basis of political negotiation and so are established after the cabinet formation. The latter bargaining is expected to affect this “chair patronage”, usually balanced with a perspective that tries to find an equilibrium between the two houses<sup>17</sup>.

	<b><u>CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES</u></b>		<b><u>SENATE OF THE REPUBLIC</u></b>
I	Constitutional Affairs, Presidency of the Council of Ministers and Interior Affairs	1 <sup>a</sup>	Constitutional Affairs, Affairs of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers, Interior Affairs, Organisation of the State and the Public Administration
II	Justice	2 <sup>a</sup>	Justice
III	Foreign and European Community Affairs	3 <sup>a</sup>	Foreign Affairs, Emigration
IV	Defence	4 <sup>a</sup>	Defence
V	Budget, Treasury and Planning	5 <sup>a</sup>	Economic Planning, Budget
VI	Finance	6 <sup>a</sup>	Finance and Treasury
VII	Culture, Science and Education	7 <sup>a</sup>	Education, Cultural Properties, Scientific Research, Entertainment and Sport
VIII	Environment, Territory and Public Works	8 <sup>a</sup>	Public Works, Communications
IX	Transport, Post and Telecommunications	9 <sup>a</sup>	Agriculture and Food Production
X	Economic Activities, Trade and Tourism	10 <sup>a</sup>	Industry, Trade, Tourism
XI	Public and Private Sector Employment	11 <sup>a</sup>	Labour, Social Security
XII	Social Affairs	12 <sup>a</sup>	Health
XIII	Agriculture	13 <sup>a</sup>	Environment, Environmental Properties and the Land
XIV	European Union Policies	14 <sup>a</sup>	European Union Policies

Table 4.6. Standing committees in Italian Parliament.

<sup>17</sup> An exception to this unwritten rule occurred in 1976, at the time of *compromesso storico* with the involvement of Communist Party in the parliamentary majority, when some Communist MPs were elected as committee chairpersons (De Caro, 2011, 143). A recent confirmation to this rule, instead, was provided in July 2015 when, at the Chamber, at the end of the two-years period committee chairpersons belonging to Forza Italia were not confirmed after the passage of the group in the ranks of the opposition.

The tables below. present the distribution of committee chairpersons between the majority parties in last three Parliaments, indicating their share of seats to trace a certain proportionality in this distribution happened at the beginning of the legislature. This allocation process resembles a high -and probably the most evident- form of intra-coalitional patronage in the light of the dynamics explained in the first section of the previous chapter.

Although the political and policy weight of some committees such as the I and the V for their leading role in the formation of the law is not considered, the figures reflect the fragmented scenario and the internal tension within the majority already after 2006 vote with a crowded negotiation and some difficulties in reaching the agreement at the Senate. The scheme of the last two legislatures shows in the 2008 case an incontestable simplification with a two-groups alliance at the beginning of the term, when the committees are composed while in 2013 the “simplification” comes directly from the *große koalition* deal made by three-groups.

CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES					SENATE OF THE REPUBLIC				
Parliamentary group	Committee chairpersons (n)	% of the total number of chairs	Members of the group (n)	% of the seats at the beginning of the leg.	Parliamentary group	Committee chairpersons (n)	% on the total number of chairs	Members of the group (n)	% of the majority seats at the beginning of the leg.
L'Ulivo	8	57,14	218	63,56	L'Ulivo	9	69,23	108	70,13
Rif. Com.	1	7,14	41	11,95	Idv	1	7,69	5	3,25
RNP	1	7,14	18	5,25	Rif. Com.	1	7,69	27	17,53
Com. Ita	1	7,14	16	4,66	Verdi	1	7,69	11	7,14
Idv	1	7,14	20	5,83	Udeur	1	7,69	3	1,95
Verdi	1	7,14	16	4,66	(Forza Italia)	(1)			
Udeur	1	7,14	14	4,08					
Total (majority)	14	100	343	100	Total (Majority)	13	100	154	100

Table 4.7 Chairpersons per group in XV legislature and ratio between the number of the members of each group involved and the sum of the members of all groups involved. Our elaboration from Parliament data.

Note: at the Senate the thin majority in 2006 allowed the opposition to elect two chairpersons: one of FI and one of the IDV not supported by the majority, but formally belonging to it.



Parliamentary group	Committee chairpersons (n)	% of the total number of chairs	Members of the group (n)	% of the seats at the beginning of the leg.	Parliamentary group	Committee chairpersons (n)	% on the total number of chairs	Members of the group (n)	% of the majority seats at the beginning of the leg.
Pdl	10	71,4	275	82,1	Pdl	13	92,8	146	84,9
Lega Nord.	4	28,6	60	17,9	Lega Nord.	1	7,2	26	15,1
Total (majority)	14	100	335	100	Total (Majority)	14	100	172	100

Table 4.8 Chairpersons per group in XVI legislature and ratio between the number of the members of each group involved and the sum of the members of all groups involved. Our elaboration from Parliament data

CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES					SENATE OF THE REPUBLIC				
Parliamentary group	Committee chairpersons (n)	% of the total number of chairs	Members of the group (n)	% of the seats at the beginning of the leg.	Parliamentary group	Committee chairpersons (n)	% on the total number of chairs	Members of the group (n)	% of the majority seats at the beginning of the leg.
Pd	8	57,1	293	67,1	Pd	8	57,1	106	48,7
Pdl	5	35,7	97	22,2	Pdl	5	35,7	91	41,7
Sc	1	7,2	47	10,7	Sc	1	7,2	21	9,6
Total (majority)	14	100	437	100	Total (Majority)	14	100	218	100

Table 4.9 Chairpersons per group in XVII legislature and ratio between the number of the members of each group involved and the sum of the members of all groups involved. Our elaboration from Parliament data.

Beyond the internal value of the office of committee chairperson, this chair actually takes on greater relevance also in its external projection, especially for the sector and the stakeholders that the committee focuses on. Usually selected not only by political criteria, but also by competence and expertise on the issues that the relative committee will deal, the chairpersons are acknowledged as experts in those issues and so have particular advantages in terms of network building with the stakeholders and media exposure.

They are supposed to be also in constant contact with the executive and the ministers whose activity turns around the common subject matters and with the Speaker that can convene the Conference of the Committee Chairperson. As a consequence, they tend to be more influential than other MPs not only in their group, but also in their House and in the Parliament. As far as we know from informal information gathered during the interviews, their staff is composed from three to six persons.

*c) chairpersons of bicameral committees and others*

The prevailing role and influence of standing committees does not exclude the existence of other collegial bodies with chairpersons elected among MPs according to the chair patronage pattern. Also in these cases the chairpersons have at disposal a certain amount of budget provided by the Chamber or the Senate in order to build a staff<sup>18</sup>. We briefly examine here a list of these bodies, explaining their functions.

Bicameral committees are established both by constitutional provisions and laws. The first case concerns the Committee for Regional Affairs (art. 126, Const.) with consultative functions about the dissolution of the regional councils (and about the bills that contain provisions on regional powers, according to art. 102.3 rC, art. 40.9 rS); the second case includes a wide set of committees with inquiry, address or control power about specific issues.

The inquiry committees (art. 82 Const.) could be bicameral (constituted by law) or monocameral (constituted by a resolution) and are composed by the representatives of the group in proportional way. They are usually chaired by MPs that support the majority and have the “same powers and limits of the judicial authorities” (rC. 141.2, rS 162) (Dickmann, 2009). There are no requirements for the members and the chairpersons, but usually an expertise of the object to inquire or interests related to the constituency lead the composition.

The most relevant address and control committees at bicameral level are the Committees for the address and the vigilance in the radio and television sector (Rai) and the Parliamentary Committee for the Security (Copasir). Acting as parliamentary scrutiny on sensitive issues such as communication in public service and national security, both of them are usually chaired by members of the opposition.

Special committees are necessary, instead, at the beginning of the legislature when the standing committees are still not composed, as happened in 2013 to convert the law-decrees in law. In general, their activities are increasingly low.

A further set of bodies is established for internal goals. The so-called *giunte* and jurisdictional committees represent the branch through which the domestic jurisdiction

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<sup>18</sup> In the case of bicameral committees, the budget for the chairperson staff is at the expense of the Chamber if the chairperson is a deputy and at the expense of the Senate if the chairperson is a senator.

is exerted. The Committee for the Authorization to Prosecution <sup>19</sup> and the Committee for the Election (unified at the Senate in one committee) are mainly called to evaluate respectively the requests from the judicial authorities about coercive measures upon MPs and the full entitlement of the elected candidates to serve as MP. Both committees are chaired by the members of the opposition as a counterweight and a guarantee of the best functioning<sup>20</sup>. Also the chair of the jurisdictional internal committees guarantees a limited amount of budget for the external personnel.

Other committees are constituted as delegations in parliamentary assemblies of bodies such as Nato, European Council and Osce. For its rotating presidency (a turn every 10 months), it is interesting to mention also the Committee for the Legislation, instituted at the Chamber in 1998 to assess with opinions the formal quality of the bills examined in the standing Committees.

The total sum of the expenses for the staff of all the individual patrons (members of the bureau, committee chairpersons and others offices considered so far) are summarized in this table.

	<b>CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES</b>	<b>SENATE OF THE REPUBLIC</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
<b>2012</b>	14.600.000,00	15.384.381,91	29.984.381,91
<b>2013</b>	11.300.000,00	11.107.147,69	22.407.147,69
<b>2014</b>	10.300.000,00	9.602.850,87	19.902.850,87
<b>TOTAL</b>	36.200.000,00	36.094.380,47	72.294.380,47

Tab 4.10 Funds for staff of institutional office-holders from 2012 to 2014 (€).

Our elaboration from Chamber of Deputies and Senate final budgets

<sup>19</sup> The Bureaus of these Committees compose the bicameral Committee for the prosecution of the President of the Republic, regulated by constitutional law 1/1989.

<sup>20</sup> Other *Giunte* are the Rule Committee chaired by the Speaker in both the houses and, only at the Senate, the Committee for the Library and Historical Archive.

*d) MPs without any institutional office*

In a very extensive sense, we can consider as individual patrons even the “simple” MPs. The reason why we include them in this list, even if they do not hold any institutional office, is mainly connected to an economic factor. In addition to the allowances and the expenses, both the Chamber and the Senate recognize to MPs a special entry: the reimbursement of the expenses for activities related to their office.

Part of this public money should be allocated for the contracts of aides that facilitate MPs’ works. Actually this kind of patronage is so scattered and depending on individual factors that it appears difficult to outline its mechanisms. For this reason, we mention here its existence, but we do not consider it in the empirical research.

	<b>CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES</b>	<b>SENATE OF THE REPUBLIC</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
<b>2012</b>	23.250.000	21.097.000	44.347.000
<b>2013</b>	27.900.000	16.100.000	44.000.000
<b>2014</b>	27.900.000	16.100.000	44.000.000
<b>TOTAL</b>	79.050.000	53.297.000	132.347.000

Tab. 4.11 Funds for the reimbursement of the expenses related to the MP office. (€)

Our elaboration from Chamber of Deputies and Senate<sup>21</sup> final budgets.

It is worthy to offer here a comparative perspective in order to point out the Italian anomaly and its (non)regulation<sup>22</sup>: this long-standing problem has been also discussed by the Bureau at the Chamber in 2012, hoping for a legislative innovation inspired also to the best practice in Europe. The matter was debated also in the floors of the Chamber when a bill passed in October 2012, but its iter (AS 3508) was interrupted at the Senate because of the end of the legislature.

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<sup>21</sup> At the Chamber, in January 2012, the contribution “elected-electors” has been substituted by the reimbursement of the expenses for activities related to their office. At the Senate, in November 2012, a modification to the rule replaced the “contribution for activities to support senators” (art. 1.8.3 of the budget, allocated to parliamentary groups) with the reimbursement for the expenses related to the office (1.2.4).

<sup>22</sup> For a comprehensive re-examination, see the preparatory dossier n. 399/2012 to Senate works on the bill AS 3508 (Study Service, Senate of the Republic).

The bill tried to recognize the figure of the parliamentary assistant, proposing a full institutionalization of this role within the Parliament structures, without any effect on the parliamentary bureaucracy, and asking for a greater involvement of the parliamentary administration in this practice both in terms of control and payment.

The European experiences offer a many-sided regulation: in the European Parliament, a differentiation between local and accredited assistant exist<sup>23</sup>. The first are linked to the MEPs with contracts of employment under national private law and work in their country of election, whereas the latter work in the European Parliament buildings and are paid from it. All the names of the assistants and the respective MEPs are published on the website, securing the due degree of transparency. At the beginning of each legislature, the EP Quaestors fix the maximum number of assistants that each MEP could hire (art. 9.4, EP Rule of Procedures)

The French National Assembly allows to the deputies a financing up to three assistants tied with the patron by private contracts. If the deputy does not use this financing both partly and wholly, this financing can be assigned to the parliamentary group. A similar arrangement is stated at the Senate, where the senators are the employers and can hire three full-time assistants or six part-time assistants.

In Spain, the so-called *Personal Eventual* (r. 2 of the Rules of the Personnel at *Cortes Generales*) provides the direct and trusty aid to the members of the Bureau, the Committees Chairpersons and the single parliamentarians. As in the Italian context, these jobs are distributed formally by the Speaker upon the proposal of the MP and their salary is calculated on the base of the rules applied for the parliamentary bureaucracy. The contract lasts until the MP remains in charge of the office. In detail, the *Congreso* data show that, by the 31<sup>st</sup> December 2014, 240 persons worked as *Personal Eventual* (one for each Committee Chairperson, two for each member of the Bureau with no distinction between deputies-speakers and secretaries).

Lastly, each member of the House of Commons in UK receives from 2009 an allowance for the Staffing Expenditure whose control and payment procedure are assigned to an independent agency (Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority, IPSA). Casual, fixed term, permanent contracts could be signed according to the

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<sup>23</sup> As stated by the Council Regulation (EC) No 160/2009 of 23 February 2009 amending the Conditions of Employment of Other Servants of the European Communities.

exigencies of the MP. Also internship contracts could be provided. The salaries should respond to certain standards fixed by IPSA. Three main figures of parliamentary assistants are individuated: the Secretary/Office Manager, that usually cares about MP agenda and meetings; the External Relations Manager that cares about the relationship with stakeholders or the constituency; the Research/Parliamentary assistants focused on policy studies.

## CHAPTER 5

### PARTY PATRONAGE IN ITALIAN PARLIAMENT: THE EMPIRICAL RESEARCH

*The groups are our only real party. Our initiatives originate there and we need the best persons in order to achieve the best result.*

(An interviewee)

In the two previous chapters we have taken into consideration and examined the actors and the possible objects of exchange involved in patronage relationships: parties and Parliament, the latter in this research assumed as an essential part of the state. On one hand we have analysed the parties, the party system and their transformations, both at organizational, electoral and financial level. On the other hand, we have assessed the function of the Parliament and its internal working and structures in Italy, identifying the spaces for patrons and their nature.

The acquisition of all elements and potential factors involved in patronage brings us to formulate some hypotheses also in the light of previous analyses about patronage already discussed in the first chapter of this dissertation. The following hypotheses will be tested in the empirical research, in a synchronic approach that portrays the parliamentary patronage as it is and not its evolution across the time.

*H1 Party patronage in Parliament has a limited extent. Its quantity is though not insignificant.*

The differences between parliamentary apparatus on one hand and other apparatus, such as ministries, non-departmental agencies-bodies and executing institutions in Italian system, already objects of previous researches about patronage, describe a different degree of penetration by the party influence, excluding the distribution of appointments in strict sense. Parties hold a well-defined power to distribute jobs according to the rules and norms set by the administration and the parliamentarians in their administrative apical roles. The scattering of patronage, albeit not concentrated in few institutions, has

only a superficial anchoring without any ability to gain entrance in the administration at any level.

*H2 Reward motivations prevail compared to control motivation in the selection of the clients in Parliament, but they are limited by the functional demands.*

The nature of the jobs allocated as parliamentary resources could motivate the distributive criteria that patrons, both individual or collective, follow exerting their power. These consolidated practices do not imply a substitutive value to the existing bureaucracy that keep reining the administration in: the control motivations emerged in the previous studies about the public ‘managerial patronage’ are supposed to disappear, making room for the reward motivations and using them as a post-electoral resource. The reward motivation works as a facilitator just at the beginning of the relationship, since the patrons are interested in building a staff functional to the demands arisen from the practical exercise of their mandate.

*H3 Party linkages help, but always filtered by expertise and personal networks.*

Parliamentary groups and individual patrons, as a “department” of the parties within the institutions, are supposed to choose their clients from an array of party activists or workers and assign them internal positions in their staff both at top and high level, but the affinity with a party is a condition neither necessary nor sufficient. The evolution of reward motivation illustrated above is indeed symmetrical to the evolution of the importance of party networks in patronage mechanisms, connected to a minimum set of professional skills from which patrons take advantage. The residual role of the party is then demonstrated by the strength of the personal networks.

*H4 Elections affects timing and mechanisms of patronage distribution, providing in case of the primary elections a new source of recruitment.*

The availability of resources already after the elections, at the beginning of the legislatures, makes possible for the parties to estimate the number of clients that could be satisfied when they install themselves in parliamentary structures. Patrons could decide to leave some spaces for personnel to hire on the occasion of other intermediate elections (European or local) or at the end of the legislature close to the new national



elections. Equally, new forms of elections, such as the primary elections for the nomination of MPs in the party lists, are expected to influence the recruitment of clients, receiving a preferential treatment in the distribution.

## **5.1 THE METHOD AND THE QUESTIONNAIRE**

Our empirical research is inspired by - and learns from- the study conducted in fifteen countries by Kopecky, Mair, Spirova and other scholars (2012) that defined so far patronage in the most innovative and useful meaning for our analysis. Since their study anchors that research mostly within a governmental environment intertwined with party government, this dissertation necessarily departs from that theoretical and empirical experience in many aspects and requires a partially alternative method for the correct and exhaustive comprehension of the phenomenon.

Scholars have adopted different approaches to measure patronage concept in their research. Kopecky and Spirova (2012) have collected them in four categories: 1) patronage recipients survey approach 2) career pathway analysis of the patronage recipients 3) aggregate indicators. 4) expert estimates. No one of these, in its pure essence, completely respond to our needs in this almost primordial stage of the research about the topic. Aggregate indicators are not easy to be built in the lack of data about this practice. An exclusive focus on patronage recipients would assess our hypothesis in the wrong way, since patronage is not in the hands of the clients. Equally, asking experts opinions and impressions about a matter that they do not handle directly could lead to misleading representations.

This research takes into account all these approaches in a first preparatory step, preliminarily to the interviews from which we try to build a dataset. Experts and clients and experts are considered as facilitators in explaining how the arenas for patronage are set and established, why clients ask for patronage and how they come in touch with patrons. Fifteen interviews in conversational way with open questions about procedures and client mechanisms have been held to three high-ranked officials at the Chamber of Deputies, two high-ranked officials at the Chamber of Deputies and ten clients with a long experience within the Parliament structures.

This preliminary work just prepares the ground for a more demanding effort: patrons have to be directly addressed in order to achieve worthwhile results and explicatory findings. Their point of view could unveil from the top the patronage practices, casting new light on their discretionary power to distribute jobs.

Following the mapping of the potential patrons -and the consequent patronage opportunities- developed in the fourth section, we have essentially individuated three main patrons: the parliamentary groups as collective patrons, the member of the Bureaus and the institutional office-holders at individual level.

So parliamentary patronage has been studied by a dataset of 64 interviews to patrons as privileged witnesses, selected from the two last parliamentary terms (XVI and XVII), from 2008 until today. The effective number of interviewees is slightly lesser since some of them have been patrons or co-patrons in both the terms, outlining so a diachronic and very opportune perspective. Interviews were conducted from 2013 to 2015, involving influential members of Parliament (Quaestors, secretaries of the Bureau, committee chairpersons and members of the board of the parliamentary groups as its representatives)<sup>1</sup>. Also political personnel at top-level in the parliamentary groups (administrative chiefs, responsible for financial activities of the parliamentary groups, and organization coordinator, responsible for legislative, media and other offices as a whole) have been included in the interviews, given their important role as supervisors of the patronage process.

For an authentic representativeness, the distribution of the patrons among the interviewees has been weighed according to their capability to distribute resources: groups have at disposal a larger amount of money compared to the members of the Bureau in their whole and committee chairpersons. Also the ratio of each kind of patrons to the total number of patrons has been considered as a measure to adjust the internal subdivision of the interviewees. Particular attention has been then deserved to represent majority and opposition groups in the proper way. The final scheme is

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<sup>1</sup> This research takes substantial advantage from a scattered fieldwork lasted almost two years in Parliament, mainly in the Chamber of Deputies. This not deliberate approach had several positive consequences on the findings of this study, such as for example a higher probability to receive sincere and complete answers from the interviewees and a thorough inside perspective that enabled us to arrive where an outside observer may not get.

reported in the Appendix, showing that all the parties represented in Parliament, even the anti-system parties, use patronage. Whether they use more or less than the others is not a question that we want to debate here.

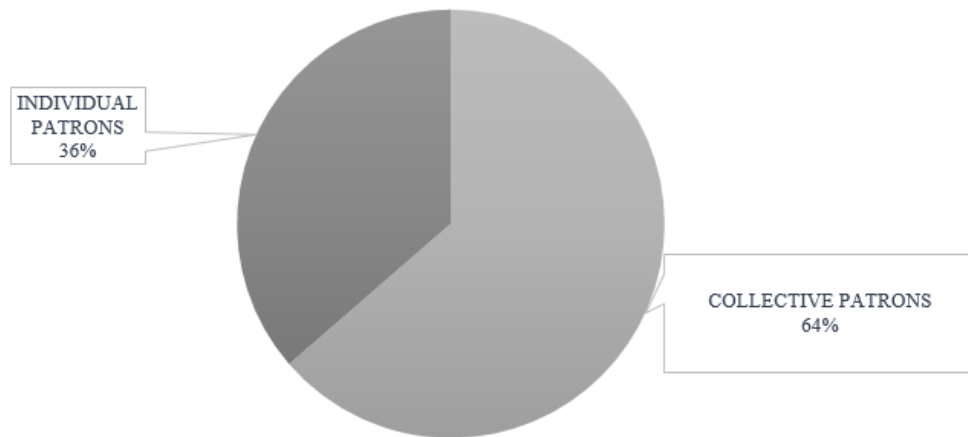


Figure 5.1 Distribution of individual and collective patrons in the interviewees

The interviews were guided through a semi-structured questionnaire with a conversational strategy, guaranteeing the anonymous management of the answers with no specific references here to their party. An exception to this is represented by the question about the role of primary elections, held only by Democratic Party and Sel. The first part of the questionnaire is mainly borrowed and adapted from that used by Mair and Di Mascio in their studies, sharing with them their goals in a different environment. Each individual answers about its direct and personal experience. Q1 asks the patrons about the patronage opportunities for parties allowed by the Parliament itself. The same interrogative has been object of discussion in the first-stage conversations with clients and experts. The three sub-dimensions of patronage (depth, quantity, range) are investigated respectively through Q1a (asking at what level the distribution occurs, three possible answers: Low/intermediate/high, graded with 1/2/3), Q1b (asking how much parties distribute, five possible answers: Little/ enough/ much/ very much, graded with 1/2/3/4), Q1c (asking how many internal institutions are involved: Few/ several/ a lot/ all). Later, Q2 investigates the motivations at the basis of the distribution (three answers: Interest in rewarding their loyal party activists and members/ The full functioning of their presence within the Parliament / Control the

institution by having personnel linked to the party), whereas Q3 assesses the criteria that guide the distribution (professional qualification/political link/personal allegiance). These questions were proposed twice, firstly asking for just a single option and secondly for two options combined.

The remaining part of the questionnaire is mainly held in conversational way and open questions, observing:

- 1) the turnover of the clients (Q4) trying to evaluate the renewal and the persistence of the clients, and indirectly the frequency of patronage distribution within a legislature;
- 2) the effect of group splits (Q5), supposed to reduce the resources for patronage and reset patronage relationships, letting “survive” only some clients;
- 3) the influence of the elections (Q6-Q9) in the distribution of the resources, distinguishing between the initial step when most part of the resources are distributed (here almost assessing again the reward motivation), the intermediate stage, when other elections occur at local or supranational level and at the exit stage, when parties get ready for the new elections. Q9, instead, introduces the impact of primary elections on the distribution of patronage. This question has been addressed only to those patrons whose parties run such kind of internal elections.

Lastly, a focus on the parliamentary group will be developed, also assessing the party allegiance in each internal department. Through Q10, indeed, we ask collective patrons to rank from 1 to 5 (1=insignificant, 5= highly significant) the level of party allegiance / affiliation in the Legislative Office, in the Press Office, in the Office for the sittings/Administrative office/ Other. The internal structures of the individual patrons have a differentiated composition according to the organizational and functional needs of the single patron and so make meaningless to ask such question to them.

All the answers were gathered in three main datasets: total answers, total answers by individual patrons, total answers by collective patrons. The list of the questions is reported in the Appendix.

## **5.2 DEPTH, QUANTITY AND RANGE OF PARTY PATRONAGE IN PARLIAMENT**

In order to assess the extent of party patronage in Parliament, we consider it as the sum of three different dimension: the depth, that is at what level the distribution of jobs arrive considering all the apparatus; the quantity, how many jobs are at disposal of the patrons; the range, how many internal institutions, not only political, are involved in the patronage practices.

The pervasiveness of parliamentary patronage in the eyes of the patrons is finally situated on a middle value that almost resembles a compromise/balance between the quantity of contracts and their inability to install the party within the administration. With the words of an interviewee, “the jobs for me are important, but for the administration they are a wallflower, letting apart the costs”.

The additional value of these jobs for the patrons does not correspond to the residual value for the bureaucracy that refer them just as a *trait d'union* with the MP or the groups. From it derives that the crowd of the patronage recipients, still numerically non defined, remains stable on the surface, distributed in a remarkable set of political internal bodies or institutions that though become smaller considering the whole array of services and offices under the responsibility of the Secretary-General.

The perception of depth is slightly stressed for the collective patrons mainly for the occurrence of a peculiarity: a special category of clients that actually do not need to find any patron. According to the rules, the so called *Allegato A<sup>2</sup>* provides a list of persons that for particular conditions (stipulated in the past) were essentially hired by the Parliament with no objective public procedure and allocated formally in the Mixed Group. They can be called by the other groups that actually are almost forced to do it, since their budget is diminished if they do not. In this obscure middle way between the bureaucracy hired through competitive examinations and the jobs with a fixed duration,

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<sup>2</sup> Deliberation of the Bureau n. 79/1993 with following modifications and integrations

a noteworthy niche contributes to expand the depth of patronage in the Parliament, anticipating an evident persistence of the clients.

<b>SECTOR</b>	<b>DEPTH</b>	<b>QUANTITY</b>	<b>RANGE</b>	<b>INDEX</b>
Individual patrons	0,24	0,78	0,27	0,43
Collective patrons	0,32	0,52	0,36	0,40
Total	0,29	0,62	0,33	0,41

Tab. 5.1 Extent of party patronage in Parliament

The final index, presented in standardized values with a range from 0 to 1 (0=low, 1=very much), is an average of the three other values, each one of them calculated internally in each sector as the average of the responses. The total index of each dimension is calculated weighting with a coefficient<sup>3</sup> the greater relevance of the collective patrons rather than the individuals. The final index does not take into account this weighting intendedly.

A specification is necessary about the quantity index: the individual patrons consider substantial the amount of resources at their disposal whereas the collective patrons evaluate them sufficient. Probably the answers are a little biased by the marginal utility of clients. The higher is the number of clients available for a single patron, the lesser will be marginal utility. On the contrary, in small contexts the marginal utility to have one more contract to distribute is higher.

By the way, assessing the extent of party patronage here precludes essentially to weight the strength of the parties in changing the rules of the game at their advantage. Since the entire issue could be discussed within institutional bodies such as the Bureau, where extensions of the budget are possible if voted and internal measures in terms of personnel could be adopted, it depends on the external legitimacy of the parties whether increase or not range, depth and quantity of the patronage.

In the last years, after a long season marked by the expansive management of the Parliament administration (and not only that one), the issue of the costs of politics has arisen almost like the only one priority that politics should face. Some interventions

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<sup>3</sup> 36 for individual patrons, 64 for collective patrons. The result is divided per 100.

have reduced actually their costs, but, to be honest, patronage opportunities have not varied in their extent. Their existence sounds like a traditional prerogative of the patrons - especially the individual ones- difficult to dismantle.

### **5.3 WHY DO PATRONS DISTRIBUTE JOBS?**

The twofold essence of the parliamentary institutions that “hosts” both permanent bureaucracy (with its elites and other ordinary bureaucrats) and fixed-term political/institutional positions finds the best and clearest expression in the results related to patronage motivations in Parliament. As also explicated by the internal rules, patrons can rely on public resources just for the achieving of their administrative and functional goals.

That is why the “clash” between reward and control motivation does not fully comprehend the possible motivations and a further motivation appears: the functioning motivation that we can define here as the control of the office and the connected activities that only in few cases could imply, in a quite very broad sense, the control of the institution.

Here we mainly refer to the Bureaus whose members have a power to intervene about the situation of the administration, even if softened by the consensual (but not shared) management of the questions on the table. The preparatory work of these meetings is often -not entirely- demanded to the staff in order to provide a synthetic framework of the problem and a possible proposal of solution. Their influence is so mediated twice (by the patron in the first step and above all by the bureau).

This rationale could be also valid -with prudence- for the staff of the main influential patrons such as the chairperson of the group or of the committee. In general, the patron themselves hold the control on the institution with their majorities, suggesting political inputs to the bureaucracy. In both cases, the clients come after and follow the processes accompanying their patron according to his or her political inputs.

Apart from this very narrow and specific cases at top level, patrons have underlined their orientation in selecting “whoever works”, offering jobs in exchange of the achievement of regular tasks and assignments. As a consequence of the professionalization of the political staffs, the interviews seem to confirm this trend in

general, claimed nowadays almost as an urgency especially by the MPs that belong to small parties and groups, with less resources at disposal, more or less the same machine to manage and a lot of activities to organize in order to increase their presence and effectiveness in the parliamentary works.

This feature is also present in the groups that represent local parties, forced to keep the ties with their constituency through an intense parliamentary and institutional work, and generally in opposition parties, called to be more active and alert than majority parties that usually rule the agenda. This happens also for other graspable reasons: majority parties have more resources at their disposal outside the Parliament, gained by their presence within the cabinet.

The answer with single options<sup>4</sup> put patronage as reward on the background not as a priority to fulfil, but as a motivation that has to cross the functional prerequisite and that alone is not sufficient. It is likely that, inherited from the past, this motivation finds more recognition within the parliamentary groups that through their elites have a stronger connection with the party than the simple MPs, but according to some “patronage supervisors”, the decrease of the resources at disposal that has concerned in last years both the groups and the parties has sifted that reward patronage devoid of any functional reasons.

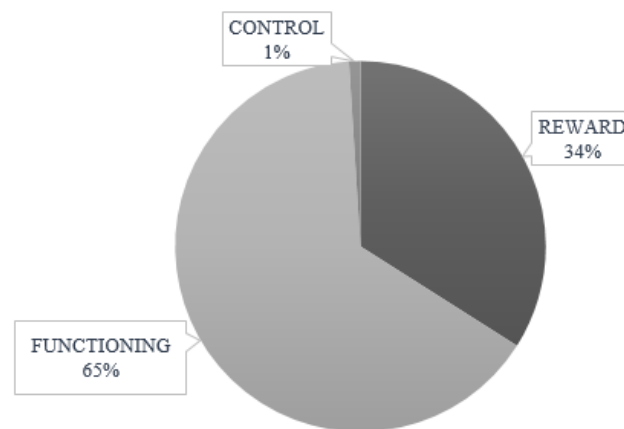


Figure 5.2 Motivation of patronage in Parliament (one option). Total

<sup>4</sup> The answer with double options are not reported graphically for their weak explanatory power. An overwhelming majority of the reward+ functioning motivation (99%) has been registered with a prevalence of the control + functioning in individual patrons' motivation compared to the collective, as in the general trend.



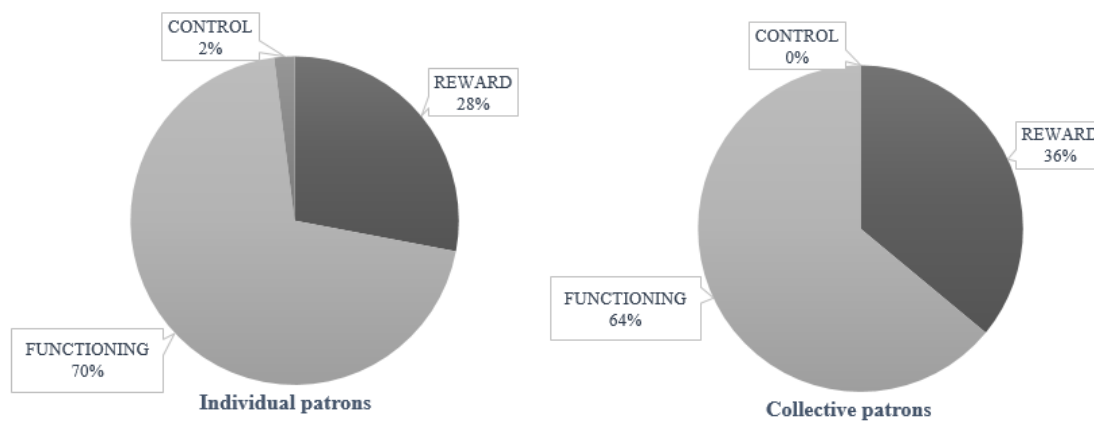


Figure 5.3 Motivation of patronage in Parliament. (one option).

#### Individual and collective patrons

Reward motivations still resist in the distribution of low-ranked positions with less responsibilities and less demanding efforts. They tend to lower when the responsibilities are significant. Reward motivations may also conduct to short-term contracts focused on specific projects, not central in the activities of the patrons and with an accessory role not fully established and defined within the organization or the staff. The daily activities instead require functional-oriented personnel, with clear assignments and consolidated positions that could be confirmed in the next legislature.

Parliamentary patronage could work as a post-electoral resource, not necessarily linked to the direct vote-seeking, but with the commitment in electoral activities, such as offline and online communication and a contribution in the campaign organization. Obviously this does not mean that the electoral headquarter directly moves itself within the Parliament after the elections. As we will see later, the elections provide occasional linkages with the patrons, but not always this tie is enough stable to guarantee a job.

The decrease of the reward motivation alone confirms the gradual and steady weakness of the party within the society also as a political entity able to satisfy its activists, promoting them from outside to inside the buildings. The parliamentary staffs so stand as an ivory tower compared to the party, managed by party elites and elites of staffers. Probably other resources in terms of policies or money could be distributed from the center to the periphery and sometimes groups substitute the party as far as they can, not only in its representative function, but also in the organizational needs. The first

findings explained so far tend to outline a very soft form of non-bureaucratic *clientelismo* (reformulated from Kopecky, Scherlis 2008) with a distribution of discrete number of posts in non relevant levels of the administration; and the appreciable presence of reward as a motivation.

#### 5.4 TO WHOM DO PATRONS DISTRIBUTE JOBS?

The selection criteria adopted in patronage process sketch out the profile of the clients in Parliament, adding further confirmation to the growth of professionalization in political activities. Personal contacts and long-lasting relationships, initiated also outside the “building”, matter in a combined mix with an acknowledged degree of expertise and competence, not necessarily focused on specific issues. Party allegiance comes after, fuelling the linkage with common political values and identities and shared points of view on policy setting.

Party networks seem more evanescent when individual patrons distribute. This could be explained by two reasons. Firstly, a shorter distance from the party in its organizational structure puts the parliamentary groups in a more frequent contact with it not only about the policy and political issues, but also about the organizational needs. Secondly, a more shared decision-making process in distributing jobs, exerted mainly within the boards or informally by its members in sub-groups, weakens generally the single personal networks and leaves enough space for an evaluation on the intensity of party affiliation, demonstrated across the time.

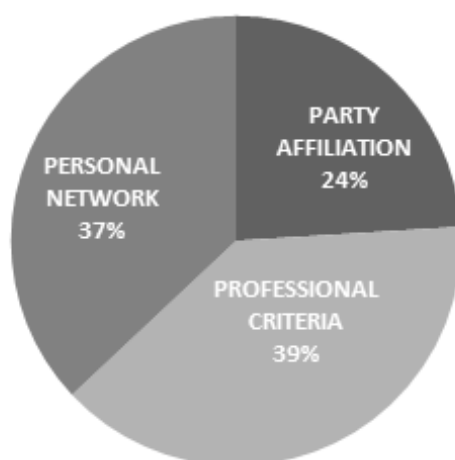


Figure 5.4 Client profile in parliamentary patronage. (one option). Total

Party affiliation could contribute to get jobs from individual patrons when they recognize that their office is a benefit gained also by the party and basically shared with it. In this case, they could ask directly the party to suggest them some names or they already know the potential clients in combination with a personal tie. The more independent the individual patrons are, the less is likely that party allegiance will be taken into account, privileging personal networks over the rest.

It is not rare to find in the largest groups -and also in those groups that resemble more a coalition of elected people with a low level of political homogeneity- some forms of internal factionalism even in the distribution of the jobs. This fact has a twofold interpretation: in this case factionalism could be seen both as a concentration or a sum of merely individual personal networks, all attributable to a certain faction, or - more frequently- as a strong and staunch association to a community network with peculiar and distinct features.

Often factionalized patronage in its original sense admits the coexistence of different sub-groups that contribute with their presence in the group to its budget and recognize them a minimal role. A correct use of factionalized patronage seems aimed at preventing conflicts in the organizational and political management of the group, with the secondary consequence that the real patrons here are the factions, leaving just a formal role to the collective patron. The professionalization of this kind of clients could be lower, remarking the reward motivation and assigning them not important functions.

Without any political meaning and only with an organizational goal, the Mixed Groups follow a similar scheme recurring to an almost arithmetic apportionment among the sub-groups, in this case not politically connected one to another. This collective patron has a quasi-technical and formal function, dividing the resources and leaving directly full autonomy to each sub-group in their management. The sub-groups have not huge availability of jobs and if they represent political parties or association (usually equally small or local), a stronger party affiliation is registered.

It is to be said that professionalization represents also a cure for the by-products of factionalism. Experts are often considered as third and impartial figures oriented to propose technical solutions (the best drafting of legislative and non-legislative acts or the individuation of resources to cover the expenses caused by policy proposals, for

example) not dependent on the policy or political content. In turn, this depends on the political input that the patrons address to them.

From the answers of the interviewees it also emerges a nuanced form of party affiliation, a broader political allegiance, actually not related to the party membership card (in a general context with a decrease of the membership), but connected to the sharing of generic political values, often defined by difference (liberal or not, leftist or not). This “least common denominator” enhances the possibility to establish strong ties with the patrons, especially with the individual ones, that resist during the time also to the party transformations or failures.

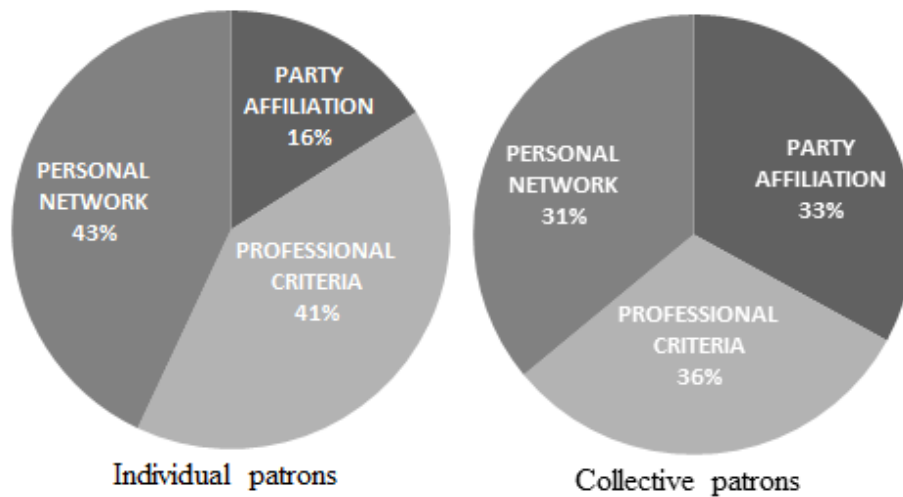


Figure 5.5 Client profile in parliamentary patronage (one option).  
Individual and collective patrons

The mechanisms at the base of individual patrons’ choice appear guided by a consideration of the client as a trusted person in a face-to-face relationship. This trust can be based on personal reasons if the patrons already know their client for a common past experience, even outside politics, in which its skills have been already tested. In this case, given also the high turnover of MPs, a double learning process in a new environment could limit the possibility to effectively achieve even the minimal goals.

That is why a certain stratification of different generations of clients, professionalized during the time, has occurred in the years, promoting a professional trust based on an evaluation of the previous experiences within the Parliament. The personal networks so also include the familiarity with former MPs, not necessarily from the same party, that can suggest some persons. This selection by-word-of-mouth-

oriented gives a competitive advantage to the incumbent clients, in so diminishing the power of parties to distribute jobs by party affiliation.

A brief mention deserves the distribution of jobs by the committee chairpersons. The professional requirements, very frequently demanded, are not necessarily linked to a specific knowledge of the subjects dealt with by the committees. A general comprehension of the parliamentary mechanisms and a command of public policy analysis are sufficient for the patrons to receive the proper political consultancy. For this reason, clients hold mainly political sciences and law degree and may have previous experience in public affairs companies. The high quality of preparatory dossiers and consultancy provided by the parliamentary bureaucracy without any political involvement diminishes the patrons' dependence on their clients about this aspect.

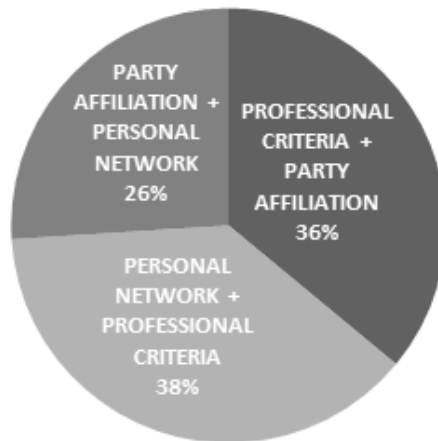


Figure 5.6 Client profile in parliamentary patronage. (two options). Total

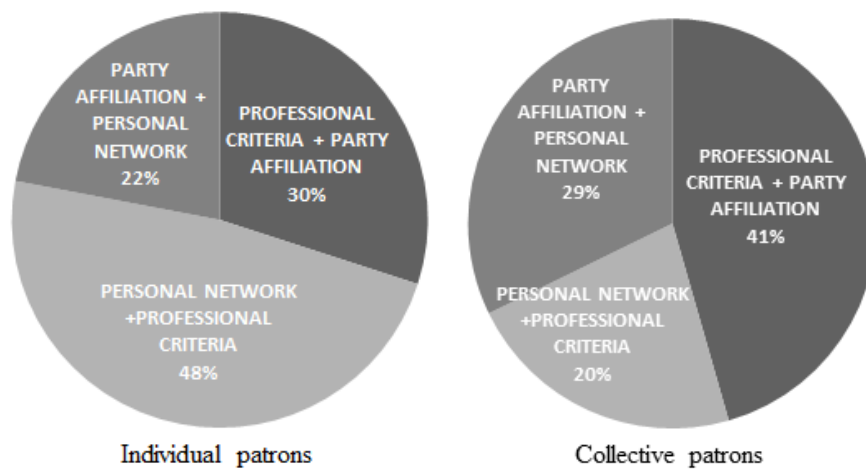


Figure 5.7 Client profile in parliamentary patronage. (two options). Individual and collective patrons

The mechanism explained so far partially changes when parliamentary splits occur. In such situation, a “selection within a selection” takes place because of the reduction of resources at disposal. Patronage relationships are affected on two sides. On one hand, the group A from which a sub-group of deputies splits has to select those clients to dismiss (if they decide that expenses for personnel have to be cut, as it usually happens). In this emergency situation, small reward patronage is at risk, letting prevail long-lasting clients.

On the other hand, the new group B that led the split emerges as a new patron, drawing the interest of new clients and securing some jobs for their loyal staff both at personal or party level. Collective party switching, indeed, could help to increase the likeliness to save those old patronage relationships fostered by personal networks, rewarding also the faction affiliation. Professionalization always matter, but subordinate to other reasons. Some interviewees stated that the bigger the size of group B is, the more likely is for professionals to find opportunities.

This trend gives us the opportunity to explain the role of personal networks within the parliamentary groups, a context that, for its nature, seems to promote them less than the individual patrons. All the interviewees, no matter the size of their group, agree that the chairperson of the group acts more as a coordinator of the distribution, sharing this process mainly with the treasurer and the administrative manager. At the beginning of the legislature, when the staffs are created, it is the board that manage the selection process. The personal networks are so related both to MPs that serve in the boards or to other MPs that support their hiring, quite often object of bargaining.

It is clear that the patronage mobility is harder to be observed in those parties with long experiences, consolidated practices and trusted relationships: the most part of their staff serves as a group of clients that have just to wait the end of the elections before to come back at their office. On the contrary, as the 2013 elections show, the emergence of totally new political groups, not anchored within the old party system, improves the turnover of the clients, opening some space for the outsiders. This improvement is though constrained by a certain conservatism of the parliamentary rules that financially support the hiring of long-standing clients, in so contaminating the staffs. This is the case of Five Star Movement and Civic Choice.

## 5.5 PATRONAGE AND ELECTIONS

The timing of patronage distribution does not appear conditioned by the elections held in the course of the legislature, both at European and local level. The reasons lie basically in the nature of the parliamentary groups, not supposed to serve as an electoral staff. They could contribute to the electoral campaigning by orienting their legislative and communication activities toward local issues or EU policies, but essentially the most part of the staff is hired at the beginning of the legislature without any massive, direct (or compulsory) involvement in the electioneering.

Patronage is just rarely used as a pre-electoral/pre-reward resource in terms of personnel, especially in the small parties through contracts limited in the time. Some patrons, both individual than collective, argue that the low dependence on the groups in the electoral campaigning is not connected to the party's ability to sustain by itself the electoral campaigning. On the contrary, it is exactly in this case that the difference between the parties and the parliamentary groups emerges as a constraint to the full development of the electoral activities. Also the different professional skills required in administrative or legislative practice play a key role: parliamentary staffs are not ready to face an electoral campaigning.

As we have seen, the elections could affect the patronage practices immediately after the national campaign in order to partially reward the activists. The core of the staff, especially in the big groups, is though conditioned by the low turnout of the clients, a persistence of the staff that makes almost impossible for new clients to compete with them. This is the reason why the post-electoral motivations tend to disappear across the time in the groups that are present, with the same name or not, from long time.

“Exit patronage” is not considered as a resource for the patrons, neither as a pre-electoral tool. Budgets are planned at the beginning of the legislature without any orientation to spend money at the end. Usually the legislature ends almost two months before the election day: at the conclusion of the term, MPs reduce the intensity of their activities and are merely oriented to the building of alliances, the composition of the lists (quite decisive in the old electoral system) and the pursuit of a candidacy and a seat. This activity is mostly individual and consequently the clients in the collective

groups have not particular workloads. It can happen that by their choice, clients with a higher degree of party affiliation may contribute to the electoral campaigning. This choice is implicitly 'forced' when clients of individual patrons follow him or her in this preparatory work before the new elections in order to confirm their own position. Here personal networks are also implicated. The importance of the vote is double for the survival of both patrons and clients.

The next nation-wide elections are though the litmus test for the parties' resistance. Parliamentary groups related to parties with no chance to gain seats are or not related to any party experience a sort of dissolution in advance: their clients act in this step principally in terms of office-seeking behaviour, no matter the party or the provenience of the patrons. As for the individual patrons, local ties may encourage the strengthening of the relationships with a common involvement in the same constituency.

The emergence of primary elections has been considered in the premises of the empirical research as an innovative tool to recruit new clients, opening new channels and occasions for people interested in working in politics at parliamentary level. The results contradict the hypothesis: for Democratic Party and Free, Ecology and Freedom, primaries at parliamentary level have not remarkable impact on the recruitment of clients (just the 9% of the patrons argues in the opposite sense, mainly individual ones).

As we have discovered during the interviews, collective patrons suffer a certain persistence that we have not considered in the preliminary analysis. According to a patron, the patronage procedures represent "almost a ritual with no surprise, just like the primary elections in some cases". The predictable results could condition the composition of the electoral staff, quite reduced if the efforts to win are not considerable (and this could be related to the general expenses in terms of money).

To be honest, the low institutionalization of primary elections, especially at parliamentary level, makes difficult to generalize the trend observed, but the explanations provided by the patrons seem to indicate to some extent the prevalence of internal dynamics in the competition controlled by the parties, with scarce opportunities for the outsiders to ascend vertically to new positions, be them candidacies or jobs. This



preponderance of incumbents and insiders is not related only to the closed nature of the primaries.

Long-time relationships are reinforced in primary elections that represent on one hand for the MPs' staff a short and demanding electoral campaigning in a well-known context and on the other hand for the new comer's staff an occasion to start a professional career challenging the existing situation. If the outsider registers a success at top level, it is possible a replacement of patronage by the leader. This is true for the national primaries that s-elected Matteo Renzi as the new Pd secretary, letting emerge a new party elite, even if not fully reflected within the parliamentary groups that were actually the expression the previous leadership. Once in the government, this elite with new inner circles has used also patronage, intended in broad sense, to change the situation around it (the reform-patronage), privileging personal networks with high personal trust and some political affiliation and rewarding also the fund givers.

Even if primary s-elections mobilize the so-called party on the ground in formal and temporary way, asking for a legitimation that risks to fade some time later, the involvement of activists and party workers appears limited at local level and in a reduced lapse of time (two weeks at maximum), without any possibility to be promoted -if they want.

Primaries have been a tool to recruitment just for the outsiders elected. This does not imply a total renewal of the clients, since they may change patron also at local level and contributes to the election of a new patron. In their first experimental episode, primaries have slightly modernized the public of the clients, with less probability to affect the parliamentary groups and more ability to penetrate among the individual patrons, including also the MPs without any institutional office. It is mainly in this category that clients may find good opportunities to success, supporting their patrons in the course of their political career firstly at local and then at national level.

## 5.6 A FOCUS ON THE PARLIAMENTARY GROUPS

As we have proved in the first part of the empirical research, the parliamentary groups to some extent look like the last domain reachable by the parties. Often crossed by factionalism and internal divisions, the groups constitute the richest patron in Parliament, in so making them the most likely landing place for clients to satisfy with reward practices.

The last question of the interviews aimed at individuating the degree of party affiliation in each internal sector involved in the group activities. The final outcome introduces and confirms what we have advanced in the first chapter: party affiliation does not exclude professionalism, but actually makes it more meaningful and oriented to the political goals.

The case of the press office clearly demonstrates this assumption: beyond the fulfilment of professional criteria (in this case the registration/subscription to an *albo* of journalists obtainable after several exams), a sort of partisan trust, more than personal, is necessary to achieve the best communicative performance, in a sector with a highest relevance and external impact. Also a ‘political’ trust lying on a common cultural background is sufficient, in times of eternal perturbation of patrons that can change label and redefine just partly policy platforms and internal structures and organization.

The figure synthesizes the answers of patrons, providing standardized values with a range from 0 to 1 (0= insignificant, 1= highly significant).

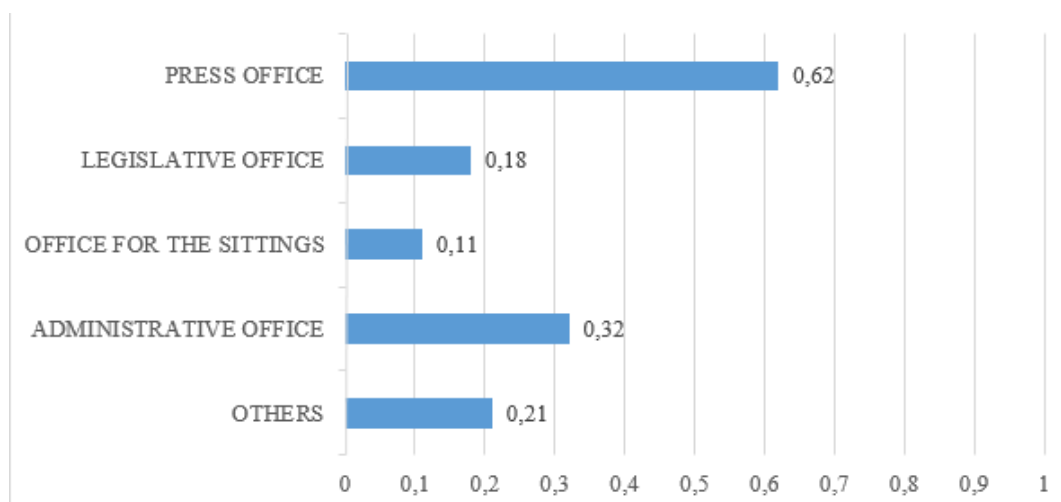


Figure 5.8. Party affiliation in internal bodies of parliamentary groups.

Other departments show lesser levels of party affiliation. This is due mainly to the nature of their tasks and to a stronger persistence of clients in those sector. Collective patrons, indeed, admit a limited turnover precisely in offices for the sittings, legislative offices and administrative offices. After a certain amount of time, communication professionals may need more stimulating work environment, looking for new job opportunities outside the 'building', but not without a political involvement, as the political interference on media could confirm in the best cases.

It is also possible that people registered in 'Allegato A' are usually assigned to those functions (mainly offices for the sitting and administrative offices), diminishing the influence of party loyalty in those activities that take the form of almost routinary and ordinary work, with no political colour and involvement.

Requiring considerable expertise for technical reasons, legislative offices are not usually domain of party influence, also for their impartial role in providing assistance to the parliamentarians. Lastly, in the big groups, the administrative offices could include at the top level people with previous strong party affiliation, later turned into a personal confidence in the management of the group. This is true also for the small groups, where, in addition, professional skills are taken into great account, especially in the new groups.

Other departments or sub-departments could be constituted within the parliamentary groups. The 'policy units', for example, aim at preparing reports on bills or laws examined by the committees or into the floor or at collecting preliminary information for the drafting of the bills. The same tasks are institutionally assigned to some offices of the parliamentary bureaucracy, but their outcomes lacking any political and party sense could be not so helpful for the MPs.

This work is usually demanded to young people with an appreciable academic background and a light party affiliation. In the groups, the pendulum switches from the 'job for the boys' to the professional criteria, passing also by a given amount of fixed clients. In few cases, patrons admit the existence of former MPs within the group staff: they are hired as any other client, but with no specific roles and a certain degree of autonomy and independence, allowing them a sort of honorary reward.

In conclusion, the control of the party as a whole on the parliamentary groups seems quite scant compared to the past, as patrons with long experience describe. The evolutionary study of party patronage in Parliament is something that we leave to further researches. Here it has been our interest to highlight how parties take advantage from the state resources, in our case on parliamentary budgets. Creeping, but neither permanent in the space nor enduring in the time, the party influence conceived in strict sense, appears limited in Parliament to low level and temporary rewards and to some top level internal position in the parliamentary groups. They constitute a very fenced and delimited area within an institution that allows a limited quota of permeability just related to functional reasons.

## CONCLUSIONS

This study of party patronage in Parliament inaugurates a new current of multidisciplinary research situated at the intersection between political science, legislative studies and parliamentary law and procedures.

Starting from the notion of party patronage as the power of party to appoint people to public or semi-public positions, this dissertation has developed and observed this practice in the parliamentary arena, a differently fertile ground for the installation of party patronage and the occurring of distributive processes that involves patrons and clients in exchanging jobs and expertise.

In front of a potentially puzzling and misleading concept, the disentanglement of parliamentary patronage in all its many-sided expressions represents the starting point for further researches, also in the Italian experience, aimed at exploring in depth the relationship between the parties and the parliamentary structures, mainly filtered by the parliamentary groups in the case of that parliamentary patronage analysed through our empirical research.

At the extreme degree one can say that two flows of patronage emerge: one from the state to the parties that claim for resources as clients -and are able to set them according to the rules as legislators and regulators- and another from the parties to the clients that search for a job.

The concession of some circumscribed autonomous spaces is oriented to functional reasons and to the effective working of patrons' activities, in so appearing as an exclave in the state, without any possibility to permeate its bureaucracy. In this case, the internal *lottizzazione* of public resources available in Parliament is conditioned by the rules and by the political dynamics, with the formation of the parliamentary groups, no matter which majorities and oppositions exist.

The other forms of parliamentary patronage individuated deserve much more empirical attention. Each one of them could spread meaningful examples of how the parties acting as parliamentary groups or a sum of single MPs distribute or participate to/control the distribution of the public offices, be they at their disposal or not.

The allotment of portions of power through intra-party and inter-party agreements lies at the base of chair patronage, bestowing influence, control power and prestige on the recipient of the office. The manner in which this power to control is exerted -both at individual level with personal beliefs and as representative of a parliamentary group with specific policy orientation- could be an interesting field of research to build in the most comprehensive way the chair patronage model on the client perspective. Furthermore, a patron-oriented approach in chair patronage studies could contribute to better define the hierarchies and balance of power between majorities and oppositions or allies in executive coalitions.

The external patronage in the hands of the Italian Parliament, as representative and expressive institution, guarantee-holder and institutional counterweight, has caused, in combination with degenerate participatory, distorted output in the public management and institutions, advancing *lottizzazione* not only in the media public company, but also in domains like the CSM, reachable by the factions. Originally this kind of patronage would respond to a democratic function and promote pluralism, representing all the social and cultural streams within the institutions. Like in the African ethnical patronage, the risk, or the by-product, is the internal reproduction and recomposition of external factionalism that could burden the institutional efficiency. Studies about external patronage could also point out the formation of the majorities in electoral processes in which the opposition should be included.

Lastly, the inner patronage notion could help to explain how, how much and how often the bureaucratic elites circulate and conversely how they perpetuate themselves. Research about these practices could have a strong explanatory value in showing how the upper bureaucracies change *ceteris paribus*. The possible modifications of the rule of the game are always in the power of the parliamentarians within the competent bodies, but the strength of consolidated customs and lastly the incapability of a fragmented party system to reform the parliamentary rules could limit remarkable shifts in the paradigm.

The findings of the empirical study on the Italian case let emerge three main trends in a general context little permeated by the parties: 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, 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.

As a paradox, even the party patronage in Parliament reflects the decline of the parties: the parliamentary groups, the organizations that at maximum degree express and actualize in the floor and in the committee political values, identities, policies and commitments, constitute the last resistance of a weak party allegiance mixed to a certain level of professionalization at the top position and in some roles.

The proliferation of the parliamentary groups through splits and new aggregations from party switching, not always connected with the emergence of new -successful- parties, worsens the situation, making party linkages less and less unstable. In such conditions, clients are aware that only an acceptable level of professionalization may ensure them a new patron, both individual or collective. As a consequence, the barriers that divide inside clients from outsiders are quite easy to be overcome, even if a certain persistence of the clients has emerged from the interviews as a heritage of the old structures, often merged among them.

Personal linkages are obviously present in patronage relationships, always based on a minimal evaluation of the professional skills. Individual patrons are more exposed to this trend, since their power to distribute jobs is usually not shared with their parliamentary group and is considered, as it is, a prerogative of the office.

Moreover, the scarce influence on the control of the institution has to be emphasized, restating the motivations at the base of the parliamentary patronage. Functional reasons prevail in the choice of the clients in a patronage linkage not necessarily long-lasting and anyway limited by the duration of the legislature. In this sense, we can define parliamentary patronage as a passing patronage on the surface that actually reproduce all the features of a job market, with its peculiarities.

In this research we have intendedly excluded a cross-party analysis, facilitating the first step of the study about the topic, also avoiding any meaningless comparison between the legislatures and the Chambers. This empty space could be filled in future with the increasing availability of data and information thanks to a less secretive, but fully legitimate orientation of the bureaucracy and a greater open-ness of the patrons, already demonstrated in this research during anonymous and private conversational interviews. The study of the patronage as conducted in this dissertation could be extended also to the regional assemblies, highlighting the role of the local party elites in distributive process and the permeation of the parties inside these institutions.

All the considerations made so far about the enhancement of studies on party patronage in Parliament rely on two preliminary and unavoidable premises, one intertwined with another:

- 1) Transparency helps to understand patronage and encourage study on patronage

Patronage studies have undergone not only a transformation and an evolution in terms of conceptualization, but they suffered also from the lack of reliable data and the difficulties to operationalize the concept. Our research, based mainly on a patronage suppliers survey, would have not been equally significant with a quantitative approach, oriented to use aggregate quantitative indicators as proxy estimates for patronage jobs. The sources of information available do not clearly and fully provide the proper tools to the scholars to dissect the phenomenon by that method. The transparency of parliamentary budgets, both related to the whole administration and to the single groups, is nowadays taken for granted, but in some cases it is a recent achievement, slowed down during the time not only by the presence of a domestic jurisdiction.

A full transparency of patronage practices in Parliament, with a lesser degree of discretion in making open the processes at informational level, will add new findings and explanations about parliamentary patronage features individuated so far and will let emerge new features. An open access to the documents -some of them until now unavailable even for MPs- and additional duties of transparency required to patronage recipients will clarify not only the regulatory framework in the use of public resources,



allowing a more effective systematization of the information collected, in the perspective of a career pathway analysis as well.

## 2) Patronage is not an evil, but it is the fuel of democracy

The second premise derives from the first one: the lesser hidden will be the patronage, the more accountable will be the patrons, the more accepted will be the client condition, often considered in contradiction with the exercise of the citizenship. Patronage has been so far considered as a matter for insiders, an exclusive practice ruled by elites of patrons and distribute to elites of clients.

The professionalization of political and institutional staffs, confirmed by this research, seems to overrule this conventional wisdom: it is the degree of the professionalization that makes the difference in the selection of the clients. Personal channels could obviously facilitate the establishment of a relationship, but they are always filtered by a preliminary evaluation of the professional skills. Patronage adds expertise and competence to democracy, decreasing the level of partisanship in policy initiatives.

In this sense, it is debatable the long-lasting assumption that patronage represents an evil, capturing public resources for party interests. The growing public scrutiny over the use of public money has surely forced the patrons -and the institutions that they represent- to a more transparent management of these funds. One can discuss about the appropriateness and the quantity of the public resources made manageable by the parties, but the trends seem to indicate a substantial decrease in direct provisions, such as the public financing.

Without a necessary quota of patronage, parties could not secure their correct functioning within the government and within the assemblies, overloading the work of bureaucracies and misleading their third and impartial functions. With this belief, we can say that the history of patronage is an history of democracy, concretely developed and exerted in its daily practices and activities, and that the correct use of patronage could provide new legitimation to the parties now acting as public utilities. This

consideration calls to mind the Popper saying, “institutions are like fortresses: they resist if garrisons are good”.

A final reflection about the future of party patronage in Parliament is necessary in the light of the upcoming institutional changes: the electoral reform already enacted in law (l. 52/2015) that will come in force from July 2016 and the constitutional reform that will change the institutional arrangement if it will be approved by the confirmatory referendum in the next autumn.

The new *Italicum* (a two-round system that secure the majority to winner) is expected to shape the party competition, leading probably to the formation of huge and catch-all party lists interested into achieving the highest possible percentage of votes already in the first ballot in order to overcome the 40% threshold. The structure of the runoff, without any resurrection of alliances and coalitions, is likely to produce big blocs with a variety of differences in policies and identities, but increasingly forced to an internal mediation or synthesis managed by the leader. A bi-party system should be the final result of the electoral process.

The party fragmentation could though discourage these aggregations considering also the low threshold (3%) for the access into Parliament. As usual, the outputs of the new electoral law will be partly guided by the input of the political supply and obviously of the voters, with a strong influence of the party politics leaderization.

Previous experiences, as after the 2008 elections, have already performed the composition of a simplified and essentially two-party system, deconstructed after few years by party splits in Parliament and the emergence of new political players, such as the M5S. For this reason, we believe that, with the same parliamentary rules, the endurance of *Italicum* outputs will be tested in the parliamentary arena, the place where cleavages occur and come back again about policies and chairs.

As a consequence, the future parliamentary patronage could be affected by the reduction of the number of collective patrons, increasing their availability of resources thanks to the large number of MPs enrolled in it. The 3% threshold could permit to small parties to receive seats and form small groups, recognized not for numerical reasons, that may distribute little resources. Clients competition so could be directed to

the big groups and at the same time these groups could hire personnel with party allegiance.

The total supply of patronage would change also in its mechanism because of the transformation of the Senate in a non-elected assembly that gathers local politicians. It will be particularly interesting to observe if patronage in the new scenario will be driven from above, as an extension of the local representatives, or if the existing model will persist, with party linkages - whether existent- formed at national level. Also the rearrangement of the Senate functions is expected to change the functions of clients in an institution less central both in the political debate and in the legislative process.

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Every fault is under my responsibility.

## APPENDIX

### QUESTIONNAIRE

Q1. Is this institution formally reachable by political parties? Do people linked to political parties have the power to distribute jobs within this institution?

Q1a. If so, at what level? Low/intermediate/high

Q1b. If so, how much? Little/ enough/ much/ very much

Q1c. If so, in how many internal institutions? Few/ several/ a lot/ all

Q2. Why do you actually distribute these jobs?

- Interest in rewarding their loyal party activists and members
- The full functioning of their presence within the Parliament
- Control the institution by having personnel linked to the party

Q3. Do people receive their jobs because of

- Their professional qualification
- Their political link
- Their personal allegiance

Q4 Is there any internal turnover of people hired from the beginning to the end of each term? If yes, how often do patrons change clients?

Q5 How parliamentary splits affect patronage practices?

Q6 Does the electoral campaign organization affect patronage at the beginning of the term?

Q7 During the legislature, other elections at different levels take place. Do they and their performances affect patronage during the term?

Q8 Few months before the end of the legislature, parties prepare electoral campaigning. Does this fact affect patronage in the final part of the term?

Q9 Did primary elections organization affect the distribution of jobs? If yes, how much? (This question has been addressed only to those MPs or administrative coordinators that belong to parties that have promoted primary elections)

Q10 How would you rank the level of party allegiance/affinity for people appointed in following fields within the parliamentary groups? (from 1 to 5, 1=insignificant, 5= highly significant):

Legislative Office/Press Office/Office for the sittings/Administrative office/ Other

**LIST OF INTERVIEWEES**

	<u><b>2008-2013</b></u>				<u><b>2013- CURRENT</b></u>			
	<b>CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES</b>		<b>SENATE OF THE REPUBLIC</b>		<b>CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES</b>		<b>SENATE OF THE REPUBLIC</b>	
<b>BUREAU OF THE PRESIDENCE</b>	Member		Member		Member		Member	
	Member		Member		Member		Member	
	Member		Member		Member		Member	
<b>PARLIAMENTARY GROUPS</b>	ADMINISTRATIVE COORDINATOR	Majority Group	ADMINISTRATIVE COORDINATOR	Majority Group	ADMINISTRATIVE COORDINATOR	Majority Group	ADMINISTRATIVE COORDINATOR	Majority Group
		Majority Group		Opposition Group		Majority Group		Opposition Group
		Majority Group		Majority Group		Majority Group		Majority Group
		Opposition Group		Majority Group		Opposition Group		Majority Group
		Opposition Group		Majority Group		Opposition Group		Majority Group
	MEMBER OF THE GROUP BOARD (MP)	Majority Group	MEMBER OF THE GROUP BOARD (MP)	Majority Group	MEMBER OF THE GROUP BOARD (MP)	Majority Group	MEMBER OF THE GROUP BOARD (MP)	Majority Group
		Majority Group		Opposition Group		Majority Group		Opposition Group
		Majority Group		Majority Group		Majority Group		Majority Group
		Opposition Group		Majority Group		Opposition Group		Majority Group
		Opposition Group		Majority Group		Opposition Group		Majority Group
<b>PERMANENT COMMITTEES</b>	Committee chairperson		Committee chairperson		Committee chairperson		Committee chairperson	
	Committee chairperson		Committee chairperson		Committee chairperson		Committee chairperson	
	Committee chairperson		Committee chairperson		Committee chairperson		Committee chairperson	



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