

Antoni Maćzak

# Unequal Friendship

**The Patron-Client Relationship  
in Historical Perspective**



**Antoni Mączak**

## **Unequal Friendship**

This book analyzes the patron-client relationship over both space and time. It covers such areas of the globe as Europe, Africa and Latin America, and such periods in time as ancient Rome, seven-teenth- and eighteenth-century Poland, as well as twentieth-century America. It also analyzes clientelism in U.S. policy toward the Vietnam War and in Richard J. Daley's mayoral rule over Chicago. In his comparative approach the author makes broad use of theories from such fields as history, sociology, anthropology and linguistics while considering the global scale of the patron-client relationship and the immense role that clientelism has played in world history.

### **The Author**

Antoni Mączak was full Professor of History at the University of Warsaw. He was Fellow of Collegium Invisibile, as well as Corresponding Member of the Polish Academy of Sciences. He lectured at many academic centers worldwide, including the University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana, University of Notre Dame and McGill University. He wrote about the economic history of Poland and on the comparative history of Poland and Europe.

## Unequal Friendship

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# Introduction

*Patronage is the outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace, and that is Power.*

Benjamin Disraeli<sup>1</sup>

*I am afraid certain things will go on in the world for ever, whether we profit by them or not. And if I grant that patronage is sometimes a public evil, you must allow that it is often a private benefit.*

Maria Edgeworth<sup>2</sup>

The reader deserves a few words of explanation regarding the content and form of this book. It is a work based on certain assumptions: that issues of power are comparable in time and space; that it is worth addressing the past and present with a common set of questions; that – more often than we would like to admit – we are held captive by a certain accepted language and a certain terminology; and that it is our task as scholars to tear down barriers that divide the academic disciplines. In part for these reasons, I did not – for the Polish version of this text – translate some of the quotes taken from foreign-language (mainly Anglo-American, but also German and French) academic literature and other sources.<sup>3</sup> I am aware that this choice might make reading my text more difficult and that it might encourage readers to skim over the foreign-language texts, but the fact is that, in this book, semantics play a large role as early as the first chapter; I will often analyze the meaning of words and will draw conclusions on the basis of terminology. In keeping foreign-language texts in their original, though I might open myself up to criticism that I have – perhaps unconsciously – catered to globalism, I can say with confidence that I do not feel guilty of snobbism.

I might also add that, when dealing with such a large subject, I feel a certain humility; I am aware that, given the subject's complexity and its great number of

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1 Simpson 1988. Simpson also chose to use Disraeli's quote as a motto.

2 Edgeworth 1814, vol. 1, 163.

3 Translator's note: For the English version, I have continued Professor Mączak's policy in this regard. Of course I have translated all Polish text into English, but where Professor Mączak kept, for example, German and French texts in the original, I have done the same. That having been said, in those few instances where a Polish word is, for all practical purposes, untranslatable into English, I have kept that word in the Polish and attached an explanation to its first appearance.

culturally conditioned aspects, my conclusions in certain areas must remain little more than hypotheses. I am also aware that more than one chapter might become a specialist's treasure trove, and for this reason I dare not write that these issues are too complex to leave to specialists.<sup>4</sup>

## 1. On This Subject and its Fate

[...] *convenons que la peur panique de l'anachronisme, aussi nocive que l'anachronisme lui-même, nous empêche de comprendre certaines constantes de l'Histoire engendrées par les situations analogues.*

Elie Barnavi<sup>5</sup>

The historian's fear of the anachronism! The subject of this book is the result of research I have conducted over many years on modern Europe, but it is also the result of my reflections on the contemporary world around us. Patrons and clients have intrigued me as a research topic for such a long time that it is difficult for me to admit how long.<sup>6</sup> I have a personal relationship with these issues. Back when the idea occurred to me to take up such work, it was difficult to find one of the subject's key words – "client" – in the historian's (not just the Polish historian's) lexicon. Today the situation is different, a fact which deprives my subject of originality but gives me the satisfaction of active participation in a project of interest to others, just as – I might add – it gives a scholar hope for reciprocity: will historical works someday be read, for instance, by anthropologists?<sup>7</sup>

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4 A fragment from the introduction to my favorite book by Edmund Leach (Leach, 1982) is appropriate here: "Nor is my book addressed to professional colleagues, most of whom are likely to be contemptuous of the style of writing which it advocates and which they may well denounce as egocentric, unscientific, escapist, lacking in coherence, political commitment, and so on."

5 Barnavi 1980, 189.

6 I can justify the arduous process by which this book has emerged by citing the words of William Cecil Lord Burghley, the secretary to Queen Elizabeth I: "Your Lordship must pardon my evil scribbling for I am called so often from it as at every X lines I am forced to break off." For this quote, see Beckinsale 1967, 19.

7 This is not just a matter of barriers between disciplines, but also a lack of foreign language skills, which is how I explain the absence of German works in the English and French literature on the subject, including works by Peter Mühlmann and Roberto J. Llaryora and the multi-lingual collection *Klientensysteme* 1988. The existence of online catalogues to the great libraries of the world makes it difficult to argue that a lack of access is the problem.

I have examined this topic alongside one of my earlier academic hobbies, namely the history of travel in Europe in modern times. Both subjects have given me great satisfaction, which finds expression in the form of this book: I write in the first person and I do not hesitate to include in this text personal observations and comments. In this regard I hope I can count on the reader's approval.

Both of these thematic threads have convinced me that comparative concepts – both in space and in time – are indispensable. However, my reading of synthetic and theoretical works on patronage has not been very satisfying; generally speaking, discussion of the issues presented here lacks a colorful and diverse cultural context. Thus I developed the idea to write a sweeping book that would allow me to tie several issues together in a single volume, in which I would not have to avoid polemics, and which I could write without fear of raising untidy issues or asking questions which I might not be able to answer. I wanted to refer to phenomena that are culturally distant from me, fully aware though I was that certain aspects of these topics would have to remain beyond the horizon, and that, with regard to many other issues, my views and comments would be derivative, based on arguments presented by others in monographs.

Sometimes, and perhaps unexpectedly for the reader, I will cross over from a discussion of various and broad historical issues to Polish issues in particular. Such a move is not so much a return to terrain that is familiar to me as it is a reflection of the fact that – *primo* – clientelistic systems played a particularly important role in the old Polish *Rzeczpospolita*<sup>8</sup>, and that in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries they defined its system of governance<sup>9</sup> and united it internally. *Secundo*, in the second half of the twentieth century, indeed still today, we Poles live in a system that one might call diachronic, in which various (traditional and modern) clientelistic systems co-exist and play an enormous role in how our society functions. At the same time, informal systems of power are particularly well developed. All

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8 Translator's note: The term *Rzeczpospolita* refers to what is also called the Polish First Republic, or Commonwealth, 1569–1795. I will use the term *Rzeczpospolita* throughout this English translation.

9 Translator's note: Professor Mączak's broad use in this book of the Polish term *władza* presents a problem, one to which he himself refers below, in the introductory section to Chapter 1. *Władza* has at least two meanings in English, namely "power" and "authority," which would indicate that *system władzy* means "system of power" or "system of authority," both of which are, admittedly, a bit awkward in English. Other translations are also possible, including "system of rule," "system of governance," and in certain contexts even "regime." Throughout this translation, I avail myself of all these possibilities, the goal being to strike a balance between readability and precision.

of which explains why I draw comparisons over time and space that are broader than is normally accepted in our historical literature.

At this point it is appropriate to clarify why I will overlook two spheres of historical research in which the word “patron” is used probably the most often: the Catholic Church and the world of artistic patronage. In both of these two spheres we talk of patrons but not of clients, even though – in the Church and in many areas of artistic patronage – the question of service in return for support from a powerful or wealthy protector is prominent.<sup>10</sup> In any case, the social organization of the Church in its historical development, particularly the Roman Curia, is a subject in and of itself, one that has been thoroughly worked through by academics in terms of the topic of interest to me here, above all with regard to the Renaissance and Baroque periods, and particularly in the context of canon law.<sup>11</sup> The situation is similar in the case of cultural patronage, though there are certain differences. When a patron orders an art work, the client – in the colloquial sense of the term – is the buyer; at the same time, the artist can be dependent on fulfilling orders placed by the patron, and as such (as someone “who knows what his lord wants”) and in this (as it turns out) evangelical sense, he is not a servant but a client.<sup>12</sup> But it is above all the case that the clergyman, scholar, writer and artist have always lived in a broader environment, one that in the past was the court/manorial environment. To be sure, the battle over a creator’s freedom, even personal freedom, and the creator’s struggle for recognition and promotion within the social hierarchy, are constant elements in the history of culture; their significance in the formation of elites has been huge. But they involve a subject that is rather distant from the discussion of power, which is the subject of this book. And perhaps most importantly, they go beyond this author’s competence.

A few other notes: I will refer in this work to themes contained in an earlier book of mine, *Klientela. Nieformalne systemy władzy w Polsce i Europie XVI–XVIII w.* (The Clientele: Informal Governing Systems in Poland and Europe from the Sixteenth through the Eighteenth Centuries), but I will do so through an expanded set of questions and a broader scope of research. At the same time I will try to avoid repetition.<sup>13</sup> In this light, the two works together make up a whole. I will

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10 A rare but important exception is the thorough prosopographic monograph on the Cathedral chapter (*Domkapitel*) in Speyer: Fouquet 1987.

11 See Reinhard 1972; Ago 1990.

12 See the below section “Christ and Aristotle.”

13 Thus, I do not include in this book chapters, for example, on Spain and Italy. See Mączak (1994) 2000, chapters “Hiszpania: *criados i bandos*” and “Włochy: patronat

also draw from experiences gained through my writing of an earlier book devoted to a different topic altogether, namely travel in European history (*Życie codzienne w podróżach*, published in English as *Travel in Early Modern Europe*). At various junctures of the current book I will insert what amount to informational “interludes,” in which I direct the reader’s attention to particular and important cases (I do so knowing that they might temporarily distract the reader from the main topic at hand); each “interlude” will be blocked off from the main text, and each will have its own title.<sup>14</sup> Such an approach might give the impression that these interludes are like the anecdotes that appeared in *Travel in Early Modern Europe*, but the fact is that the content here is more serious. Systems of “unequal friendship” function in highly diverse cultural contexts, and in these contexts they play a diverse set of roles that are correspondingly colorful. *Godfather*, *compadre*, and finally (in Polish) *kum*, provide a common denominator, but these phenomena are highly diverse. Analyzing these matters, I was not always able to devote adequate attention to broader civilizational issues, and my interludes are thus intended to address topics that illustrate distinctly and expressively this book’s theses; often they are, I admit, somewhat peculiar (as indicated by some of their titles), but – within the framework of the subject of this book – such peculiarities are in fact the rule.

## 2. An Author’s Debts

*This project has followed me (or I have followed it) around for several years and, under its spell, I have talked about it with almost everybody who had the patience to listen or the interest to discuss it.*

Mario Biagioli<sup>15</sup>

I could easily adopt as my own the above words by this author of a fascinating book on Galileo. Over the course of my research I made many friends, both academic and personal, whom I value greatly. It is fitting to mention these individuals,

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w krajobrazie miejskim.” But it is proper to return to the subject of corruption and give a new interpretation to the document written by “Anonym 1598” (See, for example, the section below entitled “Liberty and the Raison d’état: ‘Anonym’ on the *Rzeczpospolita*”).

- 14 The first such “interlude” appears in Chapter 1 under the title “Sir Walter and the Eroticism of the Clientele.”
- 15 Biagioli 1993. Professor Larry Wolff, a friend for many reasons, sent me a copy of Biagioli’s book, which no doubt would have escaped my attention.

though writing acknowledgments is neither an easy nor small task, and it is one that is broadly neglected in Poland. Renaissance and Baroque authors increasingly resorted to elaborate rhetoric bearing witness to their patron's generosity and proclaiming his greatness.<sup>16</sup> Today, British and American authors make a ritual out of acknowledgments; they give thanks for financial support and other support provided by host institutions. But on the European continent a long list of names of colleagues and first readers would be viewed as a sign of snobbery; names of supporting institutions are tossed onto a book's title and publication pages. In this schizophrenic situation, feeling these pressures of custom (I am free only of the sins of youth), I will try simply to be myself.

It was in Munich where I conducted early work on the issue of clientelism, thanks to a fellowship from the Historisches Kolleg, and at this stage of my work the friendly interest shown by the prominent scholar of ancient history, Professor Christian Maier, was of the greatest importance; in his research, particularly on Rome in the late Republic, he devoted a great deal of attention to patron-client issues. My first discussion with him, which took place in Toruń's town hall in 1981, strengthened me in my belief that such research was purposeful. A conference that I was able to organize within the framework of the Historisches Kolleg in October 1984 represented the first opportunity for an exchange of opinions from historians-modernists and medievalists on clientelism in Europe. For me, this conference confirmed the significance of the subject; it brought together an international circle of historians who approached clientelism from various angles and with their own distinct research experiences.<sup>17</sup> I collected material on Mediterranean and non-European areas while lecturing at Notre Dame (Indiana, 1988/1989) and McGill University (Montreal, 1991). After that I continued work abroad under scholarships at Potsdam and Berlin and (with kind invitations from professors Jan Peters and Winfried Eberhard) in Leipzig (1994/1995). Without access to the libraries in Berlin and Leipzig I would not have been able to adequately research this topic. In 1998 I received two grants that were extremely important to me, one of which was from the Komitet Badań Naukowych (Committee for Scientific Research), which supported me in my continued research in libraries abroad. The second one, a professor's grant from the Fundacja na Rzecz Nauki Polskiej (Foundation for Polish Science), involved a different research subject, but over the course of all of my work it has been difficult to distinguish between

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16 See Merlin 1993.

17 *Klientelsysteme* 1988.



one library search and another. Thanks to the Fundacja, I was able to extend my work in libraries abroad, to purchase books, and to support the research of my colleagues.

While writing this book-essay, I began to doubt whether I should be prowling through territory that had been carefully and competently cultivated by other scholars, but I could not stop myself from investigating how the social systems of interest to me function in other civilizations. I have succeeded in infecting several people with this subject, but I do not feel guilty. I would feel differently if I had bored anyone with the subject.



# Chapter 1: The Clientele as the “Pornography of Politics”: Words and Their Meaning

*Patronage is the pornography of politics, enticing to some, repulsive to others, justified as inevitable, condemned as immoral, a practice seldom considered a fit subject for polite discussion.*

Jeffrey Simpson<sup>18</sup>

This book could well have been entitled “The Pornography of Politics.” Simpson, a Canadian political scientist, highlighted the particular attitude that scholars have held toward patronage-clientele phenomena, their fascination with such phenomena, along with their timidity, which has only recently been overcome.<sup>19</sup> He stated that while some scholars accept clientelism as an inevitable phenomenon, others condemn it as immoral; earlier it was improper to write about this subject or, at any rate, to focus on it (just as in the case of pornography).<sup>20</sup> The experiences of the twentieth century on the one hand, and the development and integration of the social sciences on the other, turned our attention toward topics that reached well beyond traditional textbook schemes. Before that, the legitimization of power, understood as the right to exercise such power, had aroused doubts only during periods of severe political crisis or revolution. Today, we see more clearly the intricacy and ambiguity of the notion of power. I draw a distinction between this notion’s ambiguity and its multiple meanings, because while in some countries it is the product of the experience with resistance against Communism (especially “Real Socialism”), in others countries where citizens were spared this experience and where the law meant (and still means) simply the law, the conflict between

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18 Simpson 1988, 6.

19 That this timidity is fading can be confirmed; unfortunately I am not able to make use of the most recent work on the subject: *Clientelism, Interests, and Democratic Representation. The European Experience in Historical and Comparative Perspective*, ed. S. Piattoni (Cambridge, UK: 2001).

20 The works of Giuseppe Galasso, a famous historian and Neapolitan politician, provide an interesting example of this timidity. In a short chapter on systems of power entitled “Burocrazia e clientelismo,” I found nothing of interest to me on this topic! See G. Galasso, *Potere e istituzioni in Italia. Dalla caduta dell’Impero romano ad oggi* (Torino 1974), 206–209. This fact is astonishing for an Italian from *Mezzogiorno*.

public opinion and the apparatus of justice sometimes makes societies aware that they are under the control of parallel illegal and half-legal systems of power.<sup>21</sup> However, this is not what I am talking about here, and what I want particularly to point out is that *informal* systems of power do not necessarily imply the criminal sphere. On the contrary: going back as far as ancient history, the division between private and public spheres has been neither clear nor dichotomous. This fact is true even today.<sup>22</sup> It is similar in the case of power. Broadly understood, power is sometimes described as:

a social relationship between two individuals or two social groups based on the fact that one party, in a way that is sustained and authorized, is able to force another party to act in a particular way and has the means to supervise this procedure.<sup>23</sup>

There are many similar definitions, and it is not my intention to either choose from among them or offer my own.<sup>24</sup> I prefer to show how complicated things get when we invoke different languages. For example, in English we do not have a precisely equivalent term for *władza*, which in Polish has many meanings, including “power” and “authority.” While Webster’s dictionary defines “power” as, among other things, a “capacity to control and to impose one’s will,” it defines “authority” as the “power, legal right to command and to enforce obedience.”<sup>25</sup> It goes without saying that these problems are too complex and important to be considered solely by linguists, especially given the fact that other terms – such as “influence” (*wpływ*) and “force” (*siła*) – also come into play. “Force” is not “power exercised” because:

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21 *Kefauver* 1951. The Senate committee headed in 1950–1951 by Senator Estes Kefauver served a crucial role, having investigated the forms and scope of organized crime. Similar parliamentary and judicial organs, set up *ad hoc*, have revealed over and over again the effect of their investigations in Italy, but the results of their work did not inspire optimism. It is significant that the countries involved were Italy, the U.S and Germany (see the following footnote), which are countries with deep legal traditions.

22 See remarks below by the German political scientist, Wilhelm Hennis. Regarding the public-private issue, an open legal conflict broke out in the mid-1970s in connection with the taping of conversations in the White House related to President Richard Nixon and the Watergate scandal.

23 *Nowa encyklopedia powszechna PWN*, vol. 6, 818.

24 An in-depth, though not always critical, overview is provided by Lemieux 1977, chapter entitled “La notion de patronage.”

25 *Webster Universal Dictionary* (New York: 1970), 1101, 98.

the essential difference between power and force is simply that in a power relationship one party obtains another's compliance, while in a situation involving force, one's objectives must be achieved, if at all, in the face of the other's *noncompliance*.<sup>26</sup>

This suggests that, by "power," Bachrach and Baratz mean that power is exercised with the consent of subordinates, or at least without their objection – that is, without the use of force.<sup>27</sup> "Influence" is defined much like "power," the only difference being that the aim is achieved without the application of sanctions. The authors also discuss the term "manipulation" (*manipulacja*), a hackneyed word in the modern Polish political discourse, one that is used when person (or group) A – one which is influential – conceals the essence and source of its demands on person (or group) B. A complete success ensues when B remains unconscious of the fact that it is the object of the action.<sup>28</sup> Manipulation is a matter of "force," and not "power." Typically, another term, namely "authority," is extensively discussed.<sup>29</sup> I would argue that Bierstedt's simple distinction is relevant here: "influence is persuasive, power is coercive," but "authority" – in light of its Latin tradition – constitutes institutional power.<sup>30</sup> In my opinion, "influence" suits the power of a patron (and thus of clientelism), even though the term can be strictly rendered in Polish neither as *wplyw* nor *wplywy*.<sup>31</sup>

An old French word, *crédit*, very often used in Bourbon court circles, was closely related in meaning and described an intermediary, a person with connections and influence who was capable of dealing with the task entrusted to him.

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- 26 Bachrach and Baratz 1970 (chapter 2), 17 ff. (block quote from p. 27): "Key Concepts: Power, Authority, Influence, Force." I take this topic, as depicted by these authors, as a starting point for my reflections, since they take into account relations in Third-World countries, which will be discussed later in this book. Below, see also my comments on the ancient *auctoritas*; Syme 1964, 157 (and the index).
- 27 By the way, an intermediary in a patronage pyramid – that is a "broker" – is often defined as a "power broker," especially when it comes to political patronage.
- 28 Bachrach and Baratz 1970, 30.
- 29 See, for example, Laswell and Kaplan 1950; Bierstedt 1950; Friedrich 1958.
- 30 Bierstedt 1950, 731.
- 31 The German language makes room for other possibilities. Terms related to power/rule in Poland at the time of the partitions include: *unter russischer Herrschaft*; *unter russischer Gewalt [nach der Unterdrückung des Aufstandes]*; *unter österreichischem Regime*; *unter der preußischen Gebietshoheit*; *unter preußischer Macht*. These terms were used in Stanisław Jarkowski, "Die polnische Presse in Vergangenheit und Gegenwart," *Zeitungswissenschaft* 12 (1937), issue 8, 505–612; quotations from pp. 538, 540, 541, 555, 566 (author's emphases – A.M.). Unfortunately, it was not specified if the terminology is the Warsaw author's or that of the editorial board of the German newspaper.

That having been said, *crédit* was an invaluable virtue of the patron, particularly if – as a broker – he had at his disposal connections, relations, “ears,” etc.<sup>32</sup> Such relations represented the essence of court life. In Poland there was an entire range of equivalents, mostly colloquial, such as *mieć znajomości* (to have connections), *dojście* (to have/gain access), *układy* (to have dealings with someone), *chody* (to have pull with somebody). Such examples are as plentiful as the number of Eskimo words for snow. A related, noble-sounding word in English is “trust.”

The issue of vocabulary does not end here. Both the reader and I will have to battle with it until the last pages of this book.

## 1. In Search of Words

“Patron” and “client” are two words I have decided to use in this book’s subtitle, and I will thus attempt to refrain from using them in chapter titles. Having said that, I shall explain my motives, since these words are at the center of this work. Few other terms are as ambiguous, and thus potentially misleading, as “patron” and “client,” even though the patron-client relationship, a “lop-sided friendship,” is one of the basic and most durable of all social relationships. The metaphor of the “lop-sided friendship” was introduced by a pioneer of research in this field, the British scholar Julian Pitt-Rivers.<sup>33</sup> A “lop-sided friendship”? In a book title, such a phrase would sound bad. Well-considered metaphors can be useful, but we should return to basic vocabulary. The first term – client – is commonly associated with someone who purchases something at a store, and the other term – patron – is often associated with a guardian saint. But while in France *le patron* is – among other things – the boss, the master, the employer, the lord, the principal, or even the defense attorney,<sup>34</sup> “the patron” denotes a visitor, a regular customer, a “regular.”<sup>35</sup> This simple switch in pronunciation from English into French, with no changes

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32 See also Kettering 1993, 76. “Creditt” appears in an analogous, though characteristically republican context in *A Relation of the State of Polonia and the United Provinces of that Crowne Anno 1598* (for more on this work by an anonymous author, see the section below entitled “Liberty and the Raison d’état: ‘Anonym’ on the *Rzeczpospolita*”): during elections, senators “weigh no more than every common gentlemen, advantaged onely so muche, as they have creditt, and authoritie to drawe their creatures, dependanttes, and well willers to their partes” (*A Relation of the State of Polonia*, 52).

33 Pitt-Rivers 1972.

34 A “patron from the tribunal,” or a lawyer, also appears in Mickiewicz’s ballad *Pani Twardowska*: The patron “turned into a mutt.”

35 Or simply a client, as in the warning: “Patrons leaving their belongings here do so at their own risk.” Cited in Bourne 1986, 3.

in spelling, results strangely in an entirely reverse meaning, as though it were a symbol of the abyssal depths of La Manche, separating the two civilizations. While searching databases that index essays and summaries of articles in the social sciences, one will mainly find, under the search term “client,” items related to commercial services and – surprisingly to me – medical services. Many institutions are client-oriented, like department stores, dental offices and psychoanalytical practices,<sup>36</sup> among which it is difficult to find the terms “patron” and “client” in their main, original meanings (below we will face similar problems with the terms *fidèle* and *fidélité*). At the same time, this is precisely the meaning assigned to “patron” and “client” when they appear in newspapers. Marek Karp once wrote in the Polish daily *Gazeta Wyborcza* about the structure of power in Russia:

In Russia, to an extent greater than we imagine, there prevails a well-developed “patronage” system. The leader and local authorities – local both in terms of *oblasti* [provinces] and across entire republics – are simply empowered to direct opinions held by citizens and “their people.”<sup>37</sup>

But in terms of Poland, the same newspaper makes the following observations:

The plebeian mentality features a particular understanding of loyalty, according to which loyal is equated with subordination. A traditional, rural model of a family is based on hierarchical ties of subordination, which are held together by the principle of obedience. There is no space for partnership that allows dissent. [...] Of course, not only does

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36 While browsing through the collection of the well-digitalized Indiana University-Bloomington library in order to gather material for the section below “The United States: The White House and Its Surroundings,” I came upon an interesting-sounding (though mysterious) article entitled “Unclogging the Arteries: The Defeat of Client Politics and the Logic of Collective Action” (G. Mucciaroni, *Policy Studies Journal* 19 [1991]), concerning political programs for which interest groups might mobilize a broader electorate. The connection with clientelism *sensu stricto* is marginal (even though “vote-hungry politicians” are mentioned), but the article presents an instructive lexical effort put forth by political scientists: “client politics” is another way of saying “interest group liberalism” or “policies with diffuse costs and concentrated benefits.” The author argues with Mancur Olson, which I mention because his case study represents a known problem for us in Poland: ending tax breaks in return for lower tax rates. In an online *Deutsche Nationalbibliographie*, one can find under the entry “client” the frivolous *Emmanuelle* (bestseller, many editions). In an online catalogue of the British Library I happened to see a title-warning: *Never Sleep with a Client* (author: Ronald Handyside, with the subtitle *Reminiscences of Guido Orlando as told to the author*, 1964). Having scanned the volume *in situ*, I must admit with embarrassment that I failed to grasp what this work is about, though it is definitely not about what the title suggests.

37 M. Karp, “Słabszy musi być twardy” (a conversation with E. Krzemień), *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 21 March 1996, 10–11.

it apply to relations within the family, but also to relations among people in general. As long as this model leaves space for loyal service to a patron, it does not leave room for loyal and effective advice. Most intellectuals (with some exceptions) find it difficult to tolerate the requirement of indisputable loyalty, and a plebeian patron interprets any attempt to initiate discourse as arrogance or betrayal.<sup>38</sup>

The former Polish premier Tadeusz Mazowiecki adopted this terminology in a speech he delivered at the Democratic Union party conference in 1995. He accused the ruling parliamentary coalition (made up of the Democratic Left Alliance and the Polish People's Party) of, among other things, having made no "structurally significant decisions" and thus promoting "clientelism" – that is, a system of governing in which the majority of decisions were *uznaniowy* in character (essentially, not based on the law). Mazowiecki said that the Polish president should not be "a protector of clientelism, even if he is the most intelligent."<sup>39</sup> Whether or not the former premier used the term correctly is a decision the reader will have to decide once he has finished reading this book or a posthumously published work by sociologist Jacek Tarkowski: *Patroni i klienci*.<sup>40</sup> But we must note that the phenomenon of clientelism has been characterized as a system in which motivations behind a certain behavior are neither clear nor objective. It can also be stated that Mazowiecki's use of the term probably marked the first time it was ever used in the context of Polish political polemics.

The vocabulary tied to this subject is rich, derived from colloquial language, from kinship relations, and from sociologists and anthropologists and their inventions. It may be surprising that there is no consensus regarding a general term that would cover the entire range of phenomena discussed here. Gioia Weber-Pazmiño has pointed out that while ethnologists most commonly use *Patron-Klient Beziehungen*, sociologists and political scientists mostly use *Patronage* and *Klientelismus*.<sup>41</sup> Opposing tendencies may be noted: either to use these and related terms interchangeably or to clearly differentiate between them.<sup>42</sup> The latter approach,

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38 J. Chłopecki, "Funkcjonariusz i trybun," *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 18/19 November 1995.

39 EM, WZ, "Nierządy koalicji," *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 9 October 1995.

40 Tarkowski 1995.

41 Weber Pazmiño 1991, 1–2. This dissertation written by a Swiss author illustrates the problem particularly clearly in comparison with other monographs and theoretical works on the topic. See also Pflücke 1970, Burkolter 1976, Burkolter-Trachsel 1977, and Lemieux 1977. *Nota bene*, in contrast with Weber Pazmiño, Pflücke (1970) proposes the term *Gefolgschaft*, which has good connotations in German.

42 See also Medard 1976, 103 (footnote 1): *Les mots sont interchangeables*. Quotation according to Weber Pazmiño 1991 (p. 2, footnote 50) who in footnotes on p. 2 presents the different views and juxtaposes positions taken in various disciplines within the social sciences.



developed extensively by certain German scholars, may lead (and I agree with Gioia Weber-Pazmiño in this regard) to “allzu komplizierten und eher verwirrenden Begriffs ielfalt” – that is, to a confusing chaos. Historians, including the German historian Wolfgang Reinhard, argue in this spirit as well.<sup>43</sup> At the same time, Joseph La Palombara seems to have accurately observed that while “patronage” assumes a perspective from above, “clientelism” assumes quite the opposite perspective, rather of an individual client.<sup>44</sup> That having been said, this matter is tied to linguistic sensitivity and sometimes – simply put – to sentence construction, and not to the need for terminological precision.

Whereas most terms are derived either from antiquity or are the product of various analyzed communities (African, Asian, Latin American<sup>45</sup>), Anglo-Saxon scholars have taken words from their language and cast them into the international anthropologist’s vocabulary, such as *broker* and *power broker*, which refer to an intermediary between client and patron<sup>46</sup>. The latter is – to simplify what often are complicated schemes – the patron of the former, but he also has his own patron, and thus constitutes a sub-link in a more complex chain.<sup>47</sup> Some scholars call such a storeyed scheme “a pyramid,” as opposed to a direct relationship, which can be called a “patron-client cluster.”<sup>48</sup>

The anthropologist tends to use the vocabulary of researched communities, which usually operate in concrete terms and which, above all, have very precise names to denote the relations of kinship and affinity, most famously

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43 Weber-Pazmiño 1991, 2 (footnote 6); Mühlmann and Llaryora (1968) and, above all, Pflücke (1970) complicate the terminology. Historians: *Klientelsysteme* 1988; *Patronage* 1989.

44 La Palombara 1964; Müller 1991, 86 (footnote 92). In order not to complicate things, I cite J.-F. Médard’s take on the issue, as presented in his work on post-colonial Africa, though it is probably most useful elsewhere: “Clientelism is based on personal loyalty. Patronage is less personalized. It could be defined as a particularist mode of distribution of public resources in exchange for political support.” Médard 1996, 88.

45 It is worth mentioning here the Spanish term *caciquismo*, which made its way to Poland with a humorous-critical connotation. See also Tusell 1976 and 1977; the author deems the phrase in the title to be a matter of course, though a definition and historical background of the word “Caciquismo” is given in *Gran Enciclopedia RIAL*, vol. 4, 1971, *sub voce*, 664–665.

46 Sometimes the words “middleman” or “mediator” are also used.

47 For more on the “broker,” see Weber-Pazmiño 1991, 35–46.

48 Many scholars have written on this subject; particularly interesting are the general remarks of James C. Scott (Scott 1972); see also Reinhard 1972. Sometimes it is a dyad with a vertical pattern, which is then called a pyramid.

“godfather.”<sup>49</sup> In many cultures he is linked through an artificial (“spiritual”) relationship to a godchild, and godparents are obliged to support the natural parents in the child’s religious upbringing.<sup>50</sup>

In their disagreement over terminology, scholars usually fail to notice differences between the languages in which monographs are written, and many misunderstandings stem from the legacy of the Tower of Babel. Thus, paradoxically, there is no word in Italian for “patron” *sensu stricto* – that is, for one side of the patron-client pair – since *padrone* is not an antonym for client, but for “servant” (*La serva padrona*).<sup>51</sup> In Polish *patronaż*, being a calque of the English word “patronage,” is – for me – phonetically difficult to accept, even though Jacek Tarkowski used it<sup>52</sup>; the Polish *patronat* (patronage), in turn, extends over something, or something may be embraced by it, but this is a different matter. *Klientelizm* in Polish does not sound good, though its use is increasingly common. And finally, *klientela* denotes only a group (or, as a sociologist might say, a quasi-group) and requires specification as to whose group it is. Ultimately, this word appears neat enough to me, though it constitutes only a *pars pro toto*.<sup>53</sup> Which is precisely why I will resort to the term “clientele” whenever sentence structure requires it.

Let me also mention the French term *favoritisme*, pushed by Francophone Canadians or, as Lemieux calls them, *linguistes officiels*.<sup>54</sup> This expression has not come into wide use because of pressure from the American vocabulary and – my intuition tells me – because of a certain elegance that does not suit all of the situations it is supposed to cover. Later on, we will have an opportunity to discuss the shades of meaning of “favorite.”

Returning to the issue of godparents: the Polish *kum* (godfather, crony, friend), and in particular *kuma* (the feminine version), not to mention *kumoszka* (a crone, a gossip), seem to be modest and parochial. It is similar with *kumoterstwo* (cronism, nepotism, favoritism), a social structure that “real socialist” propaganda

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49 See the entry “Chrzestni rodzice” in *Encyklopedia katolicka*, vol. 3 (Lublin: 1985).

50 For more on this topic, see chapter below: “The Third World: Unity and Diversity.”

51 Hence the journal *Cheiron* (vol. III, no. 5, 1986), which published translations of certain papers delivered at a conference in Munich (see *Klientelsysteme* 1988), which Mario Achille Romani entitled *Padrini e clienti nell’Europa moderna (secoli XV–XIX)*.

52 See Tarkowski 1994, 38.

53 See also *The Penguin Dictionary of Ancient History*, ed. G. Speake (London: 1995), *sub voce*: “Clientela: form of Roman patronage. Clientela is a Latin term used to describe the relationship of clients and patrons.”

54 Lemieux 1977, 3.

broadly advertised – through harsh stigmatization – but never uprooted.<sup>55</sup> When discussing *kumoterstwo*, it is worth noting that scholars working on informal structures focus on the inequality of partners and usually undervalue partner relationships based on equality or something that approximates equality, of which there are plenty.

The word “friend” must also be included in the clientele vocabulary. This word is particularly handy, given that “client” carries with it an element of inferiority, sometimes even humiliation, and it is difficult to address anyone with such a term. A “client” is a non-vocative noun, which distinguishes it markedly from a “friend.” In the past, whoever would call himself a client in a letter to a powerful addressee did so to clearly stress his humility, his submissive position. Whether in Roman antiquity or in Europe in the sixteenth through eighteenth centuries, humility often served – in correspondence with someone in a position of power – as a powerful tool to gain protection.<sup>56</sup> Usually, however, it was the patron who needed a particular form of address or way to describe his relations with a client, and – as we will see – phrases like “friend” and “my friends” played this role perfectly. Still, expressions of courtesy were far from homogenous. Not only the sense of social inequality, but also the requirements of politeness and courtesy implied the need to stress distance and humility (unfortunately often only professed). Alongside the terms “*śluga i podnózek*” (servant and footstool), the word “client” also appears at the close of letters,<sup>57</sup> which seems elegant and erudite, though it appears only in letters written in Latin.

### a. Sir Walter and the Eroticism of the Clientele

Perhaps I will disappoint some readers by writing that this subject is yet to be examined by an interested and competent author. But I would only like to point out here how the language of court poetry, the language of courtly eroticism, may have served to cultivate clientelistic bonds. Sir Walter Raleigh, a courtier and possibly also one of Elizabeth I’s lovers, is a character who is – I might add – sophisticated as a courtier, impressive as a soldier and conquistador, tragic as a human being,

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55 There is no shortage of Anglicisms in Polish, but the elegant English term *cronyism* is not one of them.

56 See the section below entitled “The Era of the Republic: The Classic Clientele” (on the term *amicus*); Saller 1990; Wallace-Hadrill 1990.

57 *Serenissimae Celsitudinis Vestrae pedum Scabellum* alongside *minister et cliens* or *Servitorum et Clientum deditissimus*. I have examined correspondence between the Polish nobility and the dukes of Prussia in the Geheimes Staatsarchiv Preussischer Kulturbesitz Berlin-Dahlem.

and father to a family.<sup>58</sup> The same man of the late Renaissance was also a poet. Leonard Tennenhouse writes about the vocabulary Raleigh used:

He used the language of love, particularly in the spirit of Petrarch, for issues that he shared with the social and economic vocabulary of patronage. Such words as “service,” “to court,” “suitor,” “love,” “favor,” “envy,” “scorn,” “hope,” and “despair” could be used to create a romantic fiction and to characterize the dynamics of a real client-patron relationship. In this way, the dramatic circumstances of an amorous relationship could be manipulated for poetry to convey the wish for service, the need for support, and the frustration of political ambitions, as well as the various compliments that assured loyalty and declarations of fidelity.<sup>59</sup>

Raleigh (as of 1585, Sir Walter) occasionally composed poetry that contained allusions which are difficult for us to decipher today, but which – both for the addressee (the Queen) and the courtiers – often referred to the levels of a game being played out on this strange, masculine Court governed by a woman.

Sir Walter had to change his tactics for Elizabeth’s successor, though his diplomatic talent did not succeed at stopping the executioner’s axe. Raleigh is *mutatis mutandis* an example of how to adopt clientelistic tactics, how to shift from active to defensive tactics, as Wojciech Tygielski wrote in his work on Chancellor and Hetman Jan Zamoyski and his clientele.<sup>60</sup>

Let us now move on to something more recent. Today, no one defines himself as a client, though the term may be useful from the viewpoint of a third person, a narrator, a scholar, who is either in search of a uniform terminology, or – most commonly – is adapting himself to the customs and sensitivities of a described community. We can find examples in the twentieth century, such as the political advisors surrounding presidents John F. Kennedy and Lyndon B. Johnson (as described in the excellent analysis by David Halberstam) and how they handled the Vietnam conflict. Halberstam devoted a great deal of attention to relationships of dependency, though he writes about “clients” only in reference to the foreign politicians and groups who were dependent on the U.S.; in the American establishment there existed “protégés.”<sup>61</sup> In an English-language context the French term sounds more elegant.

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58 Irwin 1960; May 1989; in addition, the literature in *ibid.* and in Tennenhouse 1981.

59 Tennenhouse 1981, 238.

60 Tygielski 1990.

61 Halberstam 1993, *passim*. See the section below entitled “The United States: The White House and Its Surroundings,” in particular the interlude entitled “The Best and the Brightest.”

Sometimes we lack appropriate terms. The question of who accompanies a person of influence is an important measure by which to evaluate that person's power, position and prestige, and thus to accompany a patron may well be – as in Cicero's Rome – the client's main duty. But in this respect the Polish language is insufficient in the context of past, or even contemporary, social reality. There is a word *świta* (retinue, entourage), but this denotes a formal procession or a group of people accompanying a prominent person. And *kawalkada* (cavalcade), borrowed from the Latin (*cavalcata*, a procession of riders or horse-drawn carriages), has been forgotten. The Polish language lacks equivalents for the German *Gefolge*<sup>62</sup> or the English "retinue," "suite," "train," or "following" and "followers."

The Polish writer Tadeusz Żeleński-Boy frightened us with a half-joke: "gdzie zetraca się pojęcie, tam i sama rzecz umiera" – wherever the concept is lost, the thing itself dies. But in the case we are describing here (much like the case described by Boy), that statement is not necessarily true. Though the word is important, it is no more important than a meaningful gesture. "Godfather" has become popular above all through the film *The Godfather* directed by Francis Ford Coppola and based on Mario Puzo's novel of the same title. The unforgettable and symbolic scene in which the hand of the new *capo di tutti capi* (Michael) is kissed will be a recurrent item in this book. The body language of clientelism could probably be discussed much more thoroughly, and for each culture as something distinct.<sup>63</sup>

Research in the social sciences (including history) on clientelism produces some interesting results. Scholars can be divided into two clear groups; while some disregard clientelism altogether (they treat it "like air"), others find it almost everywhere. I have noticed such a division in my reading of monographs on the state and society in modern Europe and on the history of Africa and Latin America. The same may be said about works on the *Rzeczpospolita*. Having already written a book on clientelism in Europe in the sixteenth through eighteenth centuries, and having published conference research papers on related topics, I regard myself as belonging to the latter group. However, I realize (and I want to emphasize) that belonging to this group is not without risk, given that it is easy for one to exaggerate, to succumb to some sort of clientelistic theory (modelled on a conspiracy theory) of history.

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62 Pflücke 1970. See also the words of Herman Goering to Captain Nicolaus von Below quoted below in the interlude entitled "The Führer's *Gefolgsmann*."

63 See chapter 3 below, entitled "Gestures of a Lop-Sided Friendship."

Another danger comes with the pursuit of words, when one is guided by selected dictionary terms, when words – and not issues – are tracked.<sup>64</sup> Such an approach causes phenomena to be omitted when they are not appropriately defined. To what extent I manage to avert these dangers will be up to the reader to decide.<sup>65</sup>

## 2. Formal/Informal

This section title suggests a discussion of “informal” structures of power. But this distinction of being “informal” – necessary though it is, in my opinion – is neither strict nor obvious. It entails the modernization of the phenomenon, and a historian could easily be accused of presentism – that is, in this case, of the transference of notions into the past that are contemporary to him. Therefore, it is right that I should explain my intentions.

There are certain forms – especially institutions of official and public (another ambiguous term!) power – that are (by nature, as it were) sanctioned by law, such as king, government, parliament. But sometimes parallel “systems” exist that are just as binding on people even if they are not recognized in law. Even in ancient Rome (from which we have inherited the basic terminology and principles of clientelism, in its various forms), these systems were governed by both custom and civil law. In later European culture, patrons and clients sometimes appeared on the surface of the law, and at other times they existed contrary to (or despite) the law. This apparently non-existent phenomenon was occasionally discovered by certain scholars, only to be negated or disregarded by others. To put it extremely simply: there is no doubt that a king, a bureaucracy, an army and a Church existed in seventeenth century France or Sweden, but the existence (and functioning) of patron-client relationships was detected there only recently, and not every scholar takes them into consideration. *Nota bene*, Roland Mousnier’s monumental work on the institutions of the French monarchy is the only synthesis of the history of political systems that I know of that analyzes patron-client and *maître-fidèle* relations as phenomena of public importance, as *institutions*.<sup>66</sup>

If we were to treat the informal character of this relationship as being strict and distinct, we would find ourselves in serious trouble, because there is no short-

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64 For more on Roman antiquity in this regard, see also Rich 1990, 123–130.

65 Occasionally, however, an academic investigation in library catalogues using search terms like “patronage” or “client” allows us to access works that are otherwise inaccessible. In the online catalogue of the British Library I stumbled upon such interesting and exotic works as Chow 1992 and Klieger 1992.

66 Mournier 1974, chapter III “La société de fidèles”; see also Mousnier 1971, 529–534.

age of its formal, ritual manifestations. Sometimes both parties to an agreement are interested in maintaining the clientele system and in making sure that it is ingrained in the social consciousness. An extreme – indeed exceptional – example might be the Scottish *bonds of manrent* that characterized especially the sixteenth century.<sup>67</sup> In seventeenth-century Poland, this asymmetrical bond was expressed in the form of kneeling down, a tribute on “bended knee,” ceremonial gestures that closely resemble those associated with feudal allegiance. “Informal” does not necessarily mean “hidden” or even “discreet.” On the contrary, a bond’s manifestation – whereby it is often the client’s main obligation to openly pronounce his patron’s greatness, generosity, might and splendor – is a rule. Some sort of ceremony has to seal the relationship, to represent the acceptance of mutual commitment, and to confirm the introduction of a new member into the circle (practically a corporation) of clients.

### 3. Open Questions

At the beginning of research on clientelistic bonds, the scholar must adopt a certain working hypotheses and yet somehow, at the same time, avoid prejudice. A historian will wonder whether to apply the patron/client concept to a broad context, with such a broad meaning and irrespective of temporal limits. The more cultures we consider, the more the term’s capacity shrinks. What remains is banality: people are not equal, they persist in a continuous inter-dependency. Diachronic analogies concern rather than please a historian, because he fears (above all else) committing anachronisms. Thus he usually prefers to abandon analyzing phenomena in a wide temporal context. Broader reflections are best left to casual conversation, to a chat, or perhaps to a lecture.

I find it difficult to identify who might be the historian’s scholar-partner in the study of clientelism. I would speak of the “anthropologist,” but I realize that this term is not very precise. In Germany, anthropology still triggers unpleasant associations with the Nazi *Rassenkunde* (although the journal *Historische Anthropologie* was recently released, which gives some attention to problems that require an interdisciplinary approach). In Poland, it is rather common practice to use the title “ethnologist,” one which promotes the ethnographer to a higher rank, which is justified if he, while not avoiding the description of phenomena, carries out their interpretation. I will use the term ethnology when I want to accentuate *ethnos* as a determinant of a described phenomenon. Generally speaking, however, I have

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67 Wormald 1985.

chosen the English term “anthropologist,” more precisely “social anthropologist” as understood by Edmund Leach,<sup>68</sup> because the issues at hand involve primarily social structures.

An anthropologist is less sensitive to the category of time than a historian; he would rather focus his attention on the dependencies of nature in general, on “common” phenomena, and he does not mind invoking analogies to distant cultures. If he is interested in clientelism, he establishes close ties with colleagues in political science (such ties have borne fruit in some highly valuable works on the Mediterranean region, Latin America and Africa), the reason being that the subject of the clientele requires a variety of perspectives, an interdisciplinary approach, not solely in terms of the choice of sources and methods, but also in terms of how to frame the questions. But I have written this book as a historian, one who – deeming patron-client relationships as a matter of a profound importance – understands the need to draw from the achievements of other social sciences, an approach that is still not obvious to many historians. I greatly admire anthropologists who conduct fieldwork among people with foreign cultures and languages. I try not to lose sight of the time factor, but whenever I notice an analogy or a striking contrast, I will not hesitate to take a bold leap across the timeline.

The reader will not find in this book any weighty final conclusions, because they would be little more than banal, just as a definition which could fit the description of all people in every epoch of their existence would need to be extremely general and thus shallow. I believe that what is most important is analysis of the context in which researched phenomena are set; of the forms they can take; and – finally – of their relations to other forms of power, social bonds, traditions, and cultural expressions. It may be, however, that I have caught from anthropologists something that a more traditional historian would regard not as a cold, but as tuberculosis. I was taught that a historian should beware of anachronisms and I try to be faithful to this lesson. Of particular importance, I would think, are phenomena that are continuous or recurrent in a society or culture, and an overwhelming fear of an anachronism might prohibit the observation of these phenomena, which include certain aspects of feudalism and indeed the patron-client relationship itself. Feudalism (*féodalité*) as it relates to clientelism is something I will keep on the margins. I have examined this issue in an earlier monograph; it is, after all, a problem that is largely formal.<sup>69</sup>

The reading list of monographs in the field of social and cultural anthropology presented me with another problem, and it did so not for the first time,

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68 Leach 1982.

69 Mączak (1994) 2000.



given that I had already encountered the problem while working on the history of travel in Europe. As Franz Boas optimistically put it: “When we have cleared up the history of a single culture [...] we can then investigate in how far the same causes were at work in the development of other cultures.”<sup>70</sup> The problem is that such an approach sometimes becomes interpreted as a right to apply conclusions drawn about a single society to other societies. While writing my book on travel in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, which was naturally based on individual cases, I believed that those cases would indicate the extent of the various possibilities; I discussed their contexts, their differences and similarities. Here I will attempt to proceed in a similar fashion, keeping always in mind the question of a given phenomenon’s representative nature.

Some of this book’s chapter titles and the contexts I provide may give the impression that my focus here is the criminogenic sphere. Earlier I mentioned *The Godfather*, and later I will discuss the Sicilian mafia. I have also managed to fit in a chapter on corruption. Despite that, it would be a mistake to regard the patron-client issue as one that is “dirty.” According to the most general thesis of this book, the patron-client relationship is present in various cultural and historical contexts, where it plays the role of a chameleon; while it is sometimes the essence of a social system, it is at other times marginalized. It can be the basis for stable economic development, the essence of a political system, though in many instances it can distort and deform that system. By studying this one element, we familiarize ourselves with the intricacies of social, economic, political, and cultural structures such that they are perceived from within, from their informal (sometimes embarrassing) perspectives, which are usually poorly understood. At the same time – *si quid id est* – this is an exciting activity, because the clientele can be found under various names and tied to various symbols.

Below I present an attempt to interpret two classical texts.

#### 4. Christ and Aristotle

While the term “patron” is deeply rooted in Christian culture and in church organizations generally, one would search in vain for the word “client.” In encyclopedias, lexicons, and dictionaries (especially older ones), most definitions and examples of the word PATRON(AGE) refer to church institutions. The right of

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70 F. Boas, “The Limitations of the Comparative Method of Anthropology,” *Science* 4 (1896): 907, as quoted in Friedrich 1965, 207. Paul Friedrich follows the Boas quote with a concluding sentence: “In this spirit I have limited my remarks to the *caciquismo* in one pueblo.”

appointment to church posts was called *ius patronatus*. I have already spoken of the fortunes of the term “*cliens-client*” and I will raise the issue again later since, when the topic of discussion is church institutions (Catholic or Protestant), that word is not always accompanied by “patron.”

One expert on the old German Reich and its institutions, Volker Press, saw in Martin Luther the most influential patron in the history of Germany, in light of the fact Luther appointed ministers who were loyal to him and favored by him in every country where reforms initiated by him had triumphed, both inside and outside the Reich.<sup>71</sup> Here, *sacrum* and *profanum* were closely connected.

A term used in the academic literature on African studies is “‘saintly’ clientelism,” particularly in Senegal and other countries of West Africa (from Nigeria to Mauritania) that have developed under the Islamic influence. At the root of this form of the patron-client relationship are “the disciple’s conviction that his salvation depends on the intercession of his Marabout, and the latter’s realization that his status in society depends on the personal devotion of his followers, as well as their contribution in kind or cash.”<sup>72</sup> Certainly the position of the Tzadik, greatly respected by Orthodox Jews, is no different – though only in this particular respect. *Sacrum* may take on an altogether mundane form.

What has often escaped the scholar’s notice is the meaning of the message in the Gospel According to John (15:14–16).<sup>73</sup> In the cenacle, Christ says:

Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you. Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you [...].

These words demonstrate an essential and a delicate problem that we will have to face again and again, namely the difference between a servant and a client in the broadest sense of these words. During the Last Supper, having revealed to his disciples the Mystery of His Divinity (John 14:1, 10, 11), Christ raises them from the position of servants to the honor of being friends, which suggests a subtle yet significant difference, which in turn provides a valuable clue as to how

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71 Press 1988, p. 21; for more on Luther in this volume (*Klientelssysteme* 1988), see pp. 49, 58, 353.

72 René Lemarchand, “Political Clientelism and Ethnicity in Tropical Africa: Competing Solidarities in Nation-Building,” *The American Political Science Review* 66, no. 1 (March, 1972): 74.

73 Translator’s note: This biblical citation (as with all biblical citations in this translation) comes from the King James Version.

to interpret the complicated relationships surrounding a patron.<sup>74</sup> At the same time – characteristically – Christ’s message contains a condition that stresses heavily the inequality of this friendship, and indeed sounds rather threatening: “if ye do whatsoever I *command* you” (author’s emphasis – A.M.).

There is nothing more in the Gospel that would allow us to interpret it further in this spirit, though I would note that the disciples *followed the master*. We read: “And he said to them, ‘Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.’ [...] Immediately they left the boat and their father and followed him.” (Matthew 4: 19, 20, 22).

There have been attempts to find similar bonds in other biblical texts, though they were made in connection with another notion, namely “fidelity.” But perhaps we should not translate the French term *fidélité* as Roland Mousnier and members of his school understood it.<sup>75</sup> One of Mousnier’s students, Yves Durand, interprets this matter very broadly, and though he does not analyze the texts of the New Covenant, he cites passages where there is talk of fidelity, namely by the nation of Israel toward God, particularly in the Psalms.<sup>76</sup> Nonetheless, fidelity to the Master, the relationship between Yahweh and the chosen people, are not directly relevant to our topic. So by way of conclusion it is worth posing a question: is it just by accident that this particular form of friendship can be found only in the Gospel According to John – that is, in a text written under Hellenistic influences?<sup>77</sup>

Ideas upon which Aristotle reflected in the *Eudemian Ethics* refer to a different social reality, but they have also escaped the attention of scholars of clientelistic relationships. With regard to various forms of friendship, we read:

And since there are three sorts of friendship, based on goodness, on utility and on pleasure, and two varieties of each sort (for each of them is either on a basis of superiority

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74 Further on, however, it reads: “Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you [...]” (John 15:20). A separate theological problem, one which I will but mention here, is a dilemma regarding whether it indeed results from the Gospel and the Acts of the Apostles that Christ’s disciples had understood his revelation before the descent of the Holy Spirit.

75 See below the section entitled “*Fidélités-Clientèles*: Roland Mousnier and the Anglo-Saxons.”

76 Durand 1981, 6; reference here is to Psalms 88, 99, 105, 116 and 118.

77 Norbert Rouland writes about Christ acting as a patron (Rouland 1979, section “L’analyse patristique du lien clientélaire et sa traduction dans l’éthique chrétienne,” 614–617). Rouland does not refer to John, but to Augustine. In *Civ. Dei* II. 20, Augustine condemns the greed of patrons and clients, but in so doing he does not criticize patron-client relationships. Immensely interesting, in turn, is the interpretation of *Serm.* CXXX, 5.

or of equality), and what is just in relation to them is clear from our discussions, in the variety based on superiority the proportionate claims are not on the same lines, but the superior party claims by inverse proportion—the contribution of the inferior to stand in the same ratio to his own as he himself stands in to the inferior, his attitude being that of ruler to subject; or if not that, at all events he claims a numerically equal share (for in fact it happens in this way in other associations too—sometimes the shares are numerically equal, sometimes proportionally: if the parties contributed a numerically equal sum of money, they also take a share equal by numerical equality, if an unequal sum, a share proportionally equal). The inferior party on the contrary inverts the proportion, and makes a diagonal conjunction; but it would seem that in this way the superior comes off worse, and the friendship or partnership is a charitable service. Therefore equality must be restored and proportion secured by some other means; and this means is honor, which belongs by nature to a ruler and god in relation to a subject. But the profit must be made equal to the honor.<sup>78</sup>

Next come deliberations on friendship among citizens and between *poleis*.

We will confront the Aristotelian problem of arithmetical and proportional (geometrical) relations later on in the context of justice,<sup>79</sup> but here the “proportional friendship” is precisely the relationship in which inequality in the distribution of goods is supposed to be compensated for by showing the wealthy party respect. Aristotle closes the matter with: “But the profit must be made equal to the honor.”

The two texts – the evangelical and the Aristotelian – are not mutually contradictory; they touch upon diverse aspects of the same phenomenon, though I detect a connection between them. There is “obedience” here and “reverence” there; Christ’s disciples do not contribute the “shares” about which we read so often in Aristotle, yet the relation of the evangelical dyad is undoubtedly “proportionate”; note for instance how Christ is called “Lord,” “Master.” It is not surprising that the Early-Catholic theologian and the ancient philosopher, representing different cultures, observed the phenomenon’s different features. On the other hand, it is interesting that these words of Christ were not conveyed in the Synoptic Gospels, but rather in the Gospel According to John, who was the only Evangelist under the influence of Hellenism.

Though Aristotle and the Evangelist spoke different languages, it is only today’s academic texts in the field of history and anthropology that evoke associations with the builders of the Tower of Babel.

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78 Aristotle, *Eudemian Ethics*, 7.1242b.

79 See section below entitled “Liberty and the Raison d’état: ‘Anonym’ on the *Rzeczpospolita*.”

## Chapter 2: Elements of Theory

*There is an assumption throughout the whole of their recent work that in the hands of sociologists historical evidence can easily be made to yield the secrets which it refuses to historians. Hence the embarrassingly ambitious – and to a historian embarrassingly crude – treatises on society in general, property in general, class in general, which are produced by sociologists on the basis of evidence, originally collected by historians. Hence, also, the attempts to wring from historical facts theoretical lessons, lessons which send shivers up the historian's spine for the violence they do to facts, the simplicities they impose upon life.*

Michael M. Postan<sup>80</sup>

A historian who looks into the subject of informal systems of power faces problems he has probably not previously encountered, ones which anthropologists, sociologists and political scientists approach from different perspectives and with different methods (methods with which they are usually more experienced). Though they are all interested in man as a social being and thus in the institutions established by man, they rarely come together through the common object of research, and when they do it is most often in private contacts in the common rooms of Anglo-Saxon colleges and universities. Lately, however, this situation is changing, mainly due to substantial research being conducted by British and American historians, who better than anyone else are familiar with the results of studies conducted by sociologists and social anthropologists who talk in a language similar to their own.<sup>81</sup> The issue of the language of science goes beyond questions of terminology; it is also about the manner in which terminology is used, about how descriptions of phenomena are constructed, and – last but not least – about the choice of research goals. Having read papers in the social sciences published in journals, specifically American journals, I have become convinced that, first of all, scholars from various specializations share a way of viewing and analyzing phenomena described (in an abbreviated way) as patron-client relation-

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80 Postan 1971, 30.

81 The accomplishments of sociologists and political scientists have recently inspired some historical works by Spaniards who are sensitive to personal relationships in systems of power. See below for more on how social scientists avoid historical themes and historical perspectives.

ships; and secondly, that understanding is hindered by the different languages used in the various disciplines; and finally, that different perspectives are the product, in large part, of the different research techniques that scholars employ and the different approaches they take to the category of time. Such issues as “sociology vs. history” have been extensively investigated and it is not my intention to systematically refer to this literature here. Rather, I will limit myself to the narrow area of informal systems of power.<sup>82</sup>

## 1. The Two Languages of Science

*[...] words used to describe human actions and social entities draw us into a kind of Plato's cave.*

Anthony Black<sup>83</sup>

In everyday life, whether at the crossroads of ethnic cultures or of urban and rural civilization, people are affected by the different ways we, as humans, express ourselves, the different languages we use. These differences can arouse ridicule or even aggression. Patronage and clientelism are discussed in several languages that resemble each other only remotely. One is the language of the source, the language of the client; the other is the description and definition of these same phenomena used by academics. The latter is divided into two subclasses: while historians tend to use a language I would call “generally intellectual,” many of us – as in the example, perhaps, of Stefan Kieniewicz – try to use, wherever possible, the language of the source. The social anthropologist enthusiastically adopts the terms noted while conducting fieldwork, but he sometimes tends to explain things in a way that a historian can begin to understand only after repeated readings. Risking a hasty generalization, I would say that I perceive a certain contrast, in turns of the language used, between monographs analyzing fieldwork experiences and synthetic-theoretical papers. In one of the latter, for example, I read that in societies dominated by clientelism:

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82 While working on this book I made great use of a lecture by Michael Postan entitled “History and the Social Sciences” (1936); see Postan 1971, 15. *Nota bene*, in this discussion about terminology I avoid the concept of paternalism. On the relationship between “patronage” and “paternalism,” see Goodell 1985, 247–266 (in particular p. 252). In this regard, see my chapter below on post-colonialism in Africa.

83 Black 1997, p. 68. The next sentence reads: “For even in the original languages we are looking at mental constructs of social constructs, themselves in part the product of mental activity.”

social actors show [...] a relatively low degree of autonomous access to the major resources needed to implement their goals and to the control, in broader settings, of their own resources.<sup>84</sup>

My education and experience as a historian are also not sufficient to digest the following sentence:

Thus the structuring of relations between generalized and specific exchange implied in the clientelistic model is characterized above all by a special type of the two linkages between the aspects of institutional structure mentioned above as crucial to the structuring of such relations. The first such linkage is one between the respective standing of the potential patrons and clients in the semi-ascriptive hierarchical sub-communities or sub-sectors of the society on the one hand, and the control of access – to the center or centers of the society [...].<sup>85</sup>

And so on and so forth. I would not want to attempt to translate that passage into Polish. But one could further complicate the matter even without using any academic slang. Take, for example, the following passage from a not distant domain (Poland): “A ‘wave’ [a form of hazing] – an army prosecutor said in a radio interview – is an irregular kind of relations among soldiers with an unequal length of military service.”<sup>86</sup> This sentence is one of those that is “partially true.” There is no mention of patronage in the statement, but it is worth quoting because this simple anecdotal set of definitions (“irregular” and “unequal length”) shows how words put together grammatically correctly can camouflage matters one would not like or find proper to discuss. It is significant that the term “wave,” which comes from barracks vocabulary, has penetrated so deeply into the press and civilian’s cognizance that the prosecutor felt the need to define it. I have detected similar problems while reading texts on political relations in the USA (I will revisit this issue later on). The ghost of political correctness eliminated from the language of American domestic politics such terms as *spoils system*, and one can easily determine, after reading just a couple pages of any book on Chicago during the mayorship of Richard J. Daley, whether the author is “for” or “against” the mayor simply by noting the author’s choice of words.<sup>87</sup> Precisely such situations were what the Canadian Jeffrey Simpson had in mind when he compared patron-

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84 Ogiński 1984/1985, 238, with a reference to Eisenstadt and Roniger 1980, 64.

85 Eisenstadt and Roniger 1980, 59.

86 An interview on Polish Radio III, 27 July 1995.

87 For more on this topic see William Safire’s columns in the *New York Times* (later published in collections). Safire is an author with an exceptional instinct for the language of politics. For information on Chicago during the Daley years, see the section below entitled “Chicago: Mayor Richard J. Daley and the ‘Democratic Political Machine’.”

age to pornography, a subject of which one is aware but which one does not find fitting to discuss.<sup>88</sup> Until a collection of articles edited by M. J. Heidenheimer et al. was published, the issue of corruption was either ignored or whitewashed in encyclopedias of the social and political sciences.<sup>89</sup> For this reason, numerous monographs on the issue of power in African countries, financed by national and international organizations (UNESCO, banks), are useless in the examination of informal structures of power because their authors avoid words that make them uncomfortable and ignore certain problems (or even whole sets of problems) that they find inconvenient.<sup>90</sup>

Proposed definitions – whether in full or in part – are usually not mutually exclusive and differ from one another mainly in terms of their level of specificity and in the material they were meant to interpret.<sup>91</sup> Thus, for example, the dichotomic division of political and economic patronage is not always accurate and fact-based. While an anthropologist doing field research in a Latin American peasant community would stress the peasant's dependence on the land owner or another person of power who guarantees them land tenure, a scholar studying the European aristocracy and Europe's courts would emphasize the element of affection, even turning it – as Roland Mousnier did (as we will see below) – into the phenomenon's underlying motive. De Heusch, in turn, contrasts “reciprocity” with “subordination.” “Clientship” signifies for him a system of domination with the appearance only of reciprocity, its purpose being to build an authoritarian society; it is an “unauthentic” and “perverted” system of reciprocity.<sup>92</sup>

While Western anthropologists-Marxists ask themselves how patrons and clients are to be qualified from a class perspective (do they fit into the Marxist

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88 See the epigraph to Chapter 1.

89 *Political Corruption. A Handbook*, eds. M.J. Heidenheimer and V.T. Levine (New Brunswick: 1989).

90 A record number of facts seems to be unspoken in volume VIII of *Histoire générale de l'Afrique. L'Afrique depuis 1935*, dir. par A.A. Marrui, C. Wondji (Paris: 1998) (éd. abrégée), published by UNESCO. There is neither any mention of problems in Rwanda-Burundi and Congo nor of dictators, rapes and wars. It is difficult for me to believe my own notes and to understand what fills these several hundred pages.

91 For example, E.L. Peters (“The Tied and the Free. An Account of a Type of Patron-Client Relationship among the Bedouins Pastoralists in Cyrenaica,” in *Contributions to Mediterranean Sociology* [The Hague: 1968], 167–188) notes that, one way or another, a dependence occurs in almost every form of social relations, and thus it lacks a distinctive usefulness. A patron-client relationship requires that a patron represent a client before the law; at the same time, the two cannot be related to one another (Davis 1977, 133).

92 Trouwborst 1987, 129.



interpretation or do they rather blur the problem's essence?<sup>93</sup>), Soviet Marxists ignored the issue altogether.

But the question is how to define the phenomenon. What is it we are really talking about here?

## 2. Proposed Definitions

Sydel F. Silverman formulates the following proposal: "The relationship is on a personal, face-to-face basis, and it is a continuing one."<sup>94</sup> Other scholars with a similar research approach are of a similar opinion, though they introduce certain variations on the theme. James C. Scott wrote about:

a predominantly instrumental friendship in which an individual of higher socio-economic status (the patron) uses his own influence and resources to provide protection or benefits, or both, to a person of lower status (the client) who, for his part, reciprocates [...] by offering the patron social support and assistance, including personal services.<sup>95</sup>

Meanwhile, Wolfgang Reinhard, a pioneer in historical research on this topic who analyzed relationships in the Roman curia and Upper German cities, puts it simply: a patron-client relationship is a "relatively durable relation between unequal parties in which the more powerful partner guarantees the weaker one protection, in return for which he may demand services."<sup>96</sup>

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93 See also, in particular, Gilsenan 1977; among Marxists-Africanists, it is Fatton (1986) who noted patronal issues, and who viewed in patronage a form of repression; Gilsenan writes mainly about Senegal.

94 Silverman 1965, 176: "Patronage as a cross-cultural pattern may be defined as an informal contractual relationship between persons of unequal status and power, which imposes reciprocal obligations of a different kind on each of the parties. As a minimum, what is owed is protection and favour on the one side and loyalty on the other. The relationship is on a personal, face-to-face basis, and it is a continuing one."

95 Scott 1977, 21. Definitions can be freely formed; they can accentuate or soften certain aspects of the phenomenon, even with the change of a few words. Five years earlier, Scott wrote: "The patron-client relationship – an exchange between the roles – may be defined as a special case of dyadic (two-person) ties involving a largely instrumental friendship in which an individual of higher socioeconomic status (patron) uses his own influence and resources to provide protection or benefits, or both, for a person of lower status (client) who, for his part, reciprocates by offering general support and assistance, including personal services, to the patron." Scott 1972, 92.

96 "Relativ dauerhaftes Zweckbündnis von Ungleichen, bei dem der mächtigere Partner dem Schwächeren Schutz gewährt und dafür Gegenleistungen beanspruchen darf." Reinhard 1988, 50. Exactly the same message may be conveyed in this language in a

But simplicity and brevity are not absolute virtues. It is easy to exaggerate, as illustrated by the proposal put forward by Sabri Sayan, who has studied political patronage in contemporary Turkey. He writes:

We may define patronage as a mechanism which regulates social relationships between individuals and groups with different levels of access to economic and political resources.<sup>97</sup>

I cannot accept such a definition; it confers *ex definitione* or *ex officio* the status of patron upon rulers and institutions of totalitarian systems and thus ennobles them.<sup>98</sup> The consensual nature of the patron-client relationship (though that consensus is often limited) is an important element of the phenomenon. The following reflection emerges: the main difficulty in establishing a definition lies not so much in the need for it to be all-encompassing, but rather in the elimination of those things that the definition will not encompass. We should also bear in mind that “diverse” – not “unequal” – access to resources constitutes the basis of any kind of exchange, but not to a submissive relationship. The above definition is thus too loose.

The kind of definition employed by an author depends not only on the school of thought he follows or his style of academic writing, but also to a significant extent – as mentioned above – on the community being researched. For example Jan Breman, who describes agrarian relationships in India, does not discuss a dyad, but points rather to “hierarchically shaped groups” related through a system of rights and obligations, which are not formally stipulated but are commonly accepted, and which involve mutually “preferential” treatment. The bond between patron and client is personal, consensual and unlimited in time.<sup>99</sup>

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more abstruse manner, at which Pflücke excels: “Als ‘Patronage’ bezeichnen wir im weitesten Sinne jeden dyadischen, interpersonalen Kontrakt formellen oder informellen Charakters, durch den eine Person P auf Grund ihrer größeren Chancen einer anderen Person C relativ dauerhaftes Schutz gewährt, wofür C spontane oder gestundete Gegenleistungen erbringt; diese Gegenleistungen pflegen ebenso wenig wie die Leistungen von P vertraglich festgelegt zu sein, sie stehen jedoch auf die Dauer stets in einem asymmetrischen Verhältnis zueinander, wobei die Leistungen von P für C, um dessen Abhängigkeit zu erhalten, in der Meinung der Betroffenen nie ausgleichbar sein dürfen.” Pflücke 1970, 113.

97 Sayan 1977, 103.

98 However, with regard to Hitler, see the interlude below entitled “The Führer’s *Gefolgsmann*.”

99 Breman 1974, 18: “By patronage I mean a pattern of relations in which members of hierarchically arranged groups possess mutually recognized, not explicitly stipulated rights and obligations involving mutual aid and preferential treatment. The bond be-

The latter definition is surprising because it assumes a *consensus* regarding the notions of “patron” and “client,” though there emerges from within it a system of rights and obligations that is typical of informal relationships, which are not clearly determined but are mutually accepted. And certain elements to which most scholars devote a great deal of attention are omitted here. Let us now consider, one by one, the most important components of various definitions that a person reading about patron-client relationships will encounter.

As a rule the *control of resources* is regarded as a basic component of the relationship. “How else” – writes Keith R. Legg, a political scientist interested in modern Greece, summing up the early stage of research – “could a relationship of dependency be established and maintained? Usually, the measure of unequal control is assessed by an outside observer on the basis of the relative wealth, status, or influence of the parties involved.”<sup>100</sup> I quoted this passage because it characterizes a certain kind of alienation and separation on the part of the scholar-observer; after all, patrons and clients themselves fully realized what they had at their disposal and what was of interest to their partner, and who could possibly know the “measure of unequal control” better than they? The relationship had existed before any learned anthropologist conducting field research registered and analyzed it! Nonetheless, external observers have often attempted to categorize these resources themselves, which in my view is unnecessary and ignores the principle of Occam’s razor.

The resources at a patron’s disposal affect the size and range of his clientele; if he lacks resources, or has at his disposal only those that are of no interest to his potential clients, then a relationship either does not develop or disintegrates.<sup>101</sup>

Jeremy Boissevain, the author of pioneering works on Malta and Sicily that today are classics, suggested that we differentiate between resources that a patron controls directly (first-order resources) and resources that – though they remain within the patron’s reach – belong to another person or institution (second-order resources).<sup>102</sup> Such a differentiation has not taken hold in academia with precisely these definitions, and “second-order resources” remain rather a specialty of middlemen-brokers.

James C. Scott, in turn, classified resources according to their level of certainty and dependability. He deemed personal virtues (knowledge, skills) the

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tween patron and client is personal and is contracted and continued by mutual agreement for an indeterminate time.”

100 Legg 1975, 4.

101 See Scott 1972, 94–95.

102 Boissevain 1966 and 1969.

most certain, followed by personal property, and finally indirect control and the opportunity to control the resources of others.<sup>103</sup> But such a classification implies a particular and extremely broad understanding of the term “resources.” Practically everything could be viewed as a resource, thus rendering the term meaningless. Everyone has certain virtues: strong muscles, a powerful voice, or a good spine, all to recognize the patron’s magnificence, which – in many traditional relationships – is the client’s main task. To take it to the absurd, one could say that the patron strives for the resources – those listed here – of potential clients.

Thus it seems to me that it would be more useful to limit the meaning of “resources” to material resources that are at the patron’s disposal and to the field of access in the public sphere that he could open up to his clients. Some exceptions to this rule are admissible, but adjusting the definition to the gist of this definition would render it chaotic. Still, one such exception is worth examining separately below, namely the ballot or – going back in history to the political life of the Polish *Rzeczpospolita* – the *kreska na sejmik* (a vote cast during a *sejmik*<sup>104</sup>).

The issue of resources is closely linked to the *immediacy of relations*. As we will observe here on several occasions, this direct contact plays a huge cultural role in some societies; sometimes the significance of the broker – who mediates in both directions between patron and client, and who, in larger pyramids, is able to maintain personal contact with clients in which the patron is no longer interested or which would not be realistic – is based precisely on such contact. The reason we consider the topic in such general terms is that the circumstances are diverse. In particular the electoral clientele – a phenomenon which in Poland dates back to the early modern period – created a situation in which a patron is able to contact his clientele only symbolically.<sup>105</sup> Scholars researching various societies wonder to what extent this practice reduces the size of the clientele. We must bear in mind that, at least in traditional societies, the patron-client relationship implies an emotional bond. Anthropologists researching the clientele in peasant societies are inclined to associate such a bond with the traditional world (they dare not call it undeveloped or backward<sup>106</sup>), and political scientists would

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103 Scott 1972; Scott is the author of several pioneering works on Southeast Asia.

104 Translator’s note: A *sejmik* (plural: *sejmiki*) was an assembly of landed nobility, effectively a local parliament. For the sake of convenience, I will retain the Polish terms *sejmik* and *sejmiki* throughout this English translation.

105 See the below interlude entitled “To Like as Much as One’s Interests Command.” Scott attempts to provide some estimates; see Scott 1972, 95.

106 Laura Guasti introduces the term “misdevelopment” as “a more honest word to use to describe Third World societies.” Guasti 1977, 422, 435.

agree with the argument that clientelism as a political phenomenon is particularly related to the emergence of liberal institutions in nineteenth-century developed societies.<sup>107</sup> The pursuit (thus understood) of systematization involves an attempt to arrange phenomena which, on a historical scale, take shape very chaotically or – we could say – randomly. As we will see below, the very concept of “political clientelism” raises doubts.

It amazes me the ease with which political scientists discern the conceptual range of *political* clientelism, which for some is politics, but which for others is the basis of existence or a prerequisite for survival. Therefore, we must introduce two separate concepts into our historical analysis that have been created for the examination of modern social relationships based on field research. On the one hand, the political scientist’s clientage/patronage is a system in which the client strives above all for social promotion and a career. By contrast, the social anthropologist’s clientage denotes inferiority, submission in exchange for a chance to maintain status or simply survive. The distinction between these two concepts is important, though what it illustrates in fact is the different areas of interest within the two social sciences, whose representatives approach their research of the same society from different angles and with different methods.<sup>108</sup>

But both terms, translated literally from English into Polish, form a disturbing, artificial calque. I prefer to modify them so that they highlight not so much the one-sidedness of academic disciplines as the diverse goals of a client or the character of a society in which the clientelistic relationship has been established. “Survival clientele” (*klientela przetrwania*) nicely conveys the notion of the social anthropologist’s clientage. I will also revive the handy term “clientele of a mighty neighbor” (*klientela możnego sąsiada*), and not only when I write about relations during the *Rzeczpospolita*. In a pure form, such a case emerges when both patron and clients come from the same estate, in particular the landed gentry. A client expects the patron’s protection (in today’s colloquial meaning of the word), and it is precisely the patron who gives the client an opportunity to advance, either with his (the patron’s) own resources or – working as a broker – with public resources. Certain elements of the “survival clientele” can be detected here, important conditions being that the clients are considerably isolated from the outside world and that they are connected to that world mainly through the patron.

Pioneers of anthropological research in the Mediterranean region, Julian Pitt-Rivers and John Campbell, have devoted much attention to the spread of client-

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107 Legg [1975], *sine loco*.

108 Weingrod 1968, 378 ff.

telism tied to the growth of public institutions. The inhabitants of a *pueblo*, hidden in the mountains of Andalusia, were helpless in the face of the state's long arm and its search for military recruits and taxes.<sup>109</sup> Contact with the outside world was maintained by such individuals as the preacher, policeman, pharmacist, and finally lawyer (generally speaking, you could count their number on one hand), which raised them to the position of brokers, or even patrons. A similar situation can be observed among the mountain people of the Epirus region, among whom Campbell settled to carry out his research.<sup>110</sup>

Finally, the extensive body of literature on political parties in Italy leaves no doubt that, in the fertile ground of Mediterranean-European politics, votes are a coveted product for politicians, and here Italian middle-class political parties provide a textbook case.<sup>111</sup> The phenomenon of electoral patronage, which I mentioned earlier in the context of the *sejmik* of the eighteenth-century Polish Republic, has taken on considerable importance over the last two hundred years, though only in certain countries and regions of the world. We will re-examine this topic later; at this point I would just like to emphasize that precisely these resources – scattered in the hands of prospective clients – have established systems of political patronage on a mass scale.

Rarely does the literature convey the essential importance, in the broader clientelistic system, of the patron's ability to draw from public resources. The term "public sphere" (*Öffentlichkeit*) contains within itself many separate issues and usually relates to developments witnessed over the last 250 years.<sup>112</sup> But none of this is very exact, because as a rule the possession of formal power created – and still creates – a solid foundation for the construction of a clientelistic network. Conversely, the loss of political standing and of access to state resources could – and still can – signify a reduced patronage network.

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109 Pitt-Rivers 1972, *passim*; the author conducted research in the *pueblo* of Grazalema in the first years after World War II; after several decades I have learned from German and Swedish tourist information materials that there is a bus tour route across the *pueblo* and a Hilton Hotel nearby.

110 Campbell 1964; As a British citizen, Campbell was deported from Greece during the Cyprus dispute; consequently, he did not manage to complete his field research. Typical for anthropologists conducting field research in the Mediterranean regions of Europe is their close, often warm approach towards respondents and their society as a whole. A researcher's objectivity does not exclude sympathy but it contains efforts to understand the plight and strivings of the inhabitants of a given society.

111 *Clientelismo* 1974; Zuckermann 1979; White 1980; Resta 1984; Turone 1985.

112 Habermas 1962; Angermann 1976.

Paradoxically, a somewhat blurred division between what is public and what is private may favor the development of patronage based on public resources. Many of the ministers serving absolute monarchs, including Olivares, Richelieu and Mazarin, built their authority on the fact that they held lucrative positions. The fall of Olivares, the king's favorite, showed just how dependent his position as a patron was on the king's favor. As a minister, he drew from the pool of public resources and thus acted as a middleman-broker at the highest level.<sup>113</sup>

*Informality* is a component that raises many concerns, and it is precisely this aspect of the patron-client relationship that I introduced into the title of a different book on the topic, though I was fully aware that the term is not precise.<sup>114</sup> Nonetheless it was – and remains – important to me to juxtapose, on the one hand, matters that are encapsulated in legal provisions and, on the other hand, those that are customary, regulated by “relationships” (the latter are often downplayed by historians). The main arguments I could put forward against this juxtaposition include, to a certain extent, *clientele* in ancient Rome and, to the greatest extent, sixteenth-century Scottish *bonds of manrent* and the broad swaths of clientelism that were at the heart of the feudal system. At the same time, when considering “formal” matters broadly, it would be appropriate to also mention, on the one hand, customs and ceremonies at a magnate's court and, on the other hand, the rituals, for example, of secret mafia associations. But the decisive factor in determining the informal nature of “lop-sided friendships” as a system of power is their footing in the private sphere, which is perfectly illustrated by ancient Rome.<sup>115</sup> Along with the development of public institutions, the contrast between what is regulated by law and what remains a matter of custom increases, even when custom reaches the margins of what is legal. As patronage ceases to bear the hallmarks of a *system*, the informal character of a relationship grows, and that relationship

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113 On ambiguity of the term “favorite” in different languages, see Mączak 1999a and below; for more on Olivares, see Elliott 1986, particularly the king's letter to the Duke of Medina de las Torres after the dismissal of Olivares (p. 649). Elliott draws attention to the fact that, according to the king, the addressee was and remained his *hechura* (a favorite, or using French terminology, a *créature*) and not Olivares' Conde-Duque, although the letter itself implies that only then had the Duke of Medina been informed of the fact. See also the interpretation of William of Orange in his patronage in Nierop 1984, *passim*; Koenigsberger 1988, 127–148, and Mączak (1994) 2000 in chapter “Wilhelm Orański – broker zbuntowany.”

114 Mączak (1994) 2000.

115 Not without pedantry, I also present the case of Nigeria; see below.

gains meaning in social practice because it contrasts with the solidification, the formalization of relationships prescribed by law and accepted in the public sphere.

*Reciprocity and the personal character of bonds.* The idea of reciprocity causes no concerns; services and benefits must be perceived by both partners as binding and mutually profitable.<sup>116</sup> Here lies one of the differences between a patron-client relationship (in the strict sense) and a lord-vassal relationship. While, in the latter, services performed by the wealthier party (the lord) consisted chiefly in granting a fief, the patron-client bond is associated in academia with the theory of gift exchange,<sup>117</sup> the result being that some mutual services are symbolic, in particular expressions of admiration and acts of homage (and the gifts that go along with it). Sometimes a small gift highlighting the giver and receiver's unequal social status is, by custom, a precondition for personal contact with the patron.<sup>118</sup> As a rule, there is an exchange of *various* goods and services, and though I would not use the expression "of equal value," I would introduce the phrase "of equal importance" or the word "equipotency," the reason being that the measure of such an expression is a customary norm that is often imperceptible to an external observer. This norm takes into account the partners' life circumstances, for instance in a peasant society<sup>119</sup> where it covers disease in a family, a poor harvest, or a generally temporary inability to fulfill obligations. It is a phenomenon well-known in pre-industrial agriculture, and can be compared – as Hippolyte Taine put it – to a situation in which a man is standing up to his ears in water.

Reciprocity does not mean a separation of the (patron-client) dyad from its social setting. The notion of dyad is all too often accentuated in anthropological literature. By viewing patron and client as two partners, one can easily overlook the fact – in terms of definitions rather than in studies – that what is significant within a social reality is the cluster or (in Italian) the *cosca* – that is, the group

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116 This does not mean that there are no theoretical doubts. Howard Becker wrote: "I don't propose to furnish any definitions of reciprocity; if you produce some, they will be your own achievements." *Man in Reciprocity* (New York: 1956), 1 (as cited in Gouldner 1977, 28). The latter mentions several other authors who dodge the definition of this social relationship. See also a discussion of exchange and exploitation: Gouldner 1977, 31–33.

117 Mauss 1973. For more on the topic in the context of "patronage," see Tarkowski 1994, 47–52.

118 Banfield (1958, 76–77) provides outstanding examples from a traditional Italian village.

119 In line with the anthropological literature, I distinguish between a peasant and a farmer.



of clients tied to the same patron. Custom dictates that a patron treat his clients individually, especially given that there are naturally more clients than patrons and that, whenever the gap in social status is wide, the situation can easily become confused. Besides, relationships among clients themselves, along with the possibility of contacting other patrons and brokers, influence the patron-client relationship. Finally, an interesting case analyzed by Stanisław Orzechowski in the sixteenth century indicates that it was the patron's task to maintain harmony between and among sometimes unruly clients.<sup>120</sup>

This issue can be interpreted even more broadly. The exchange of goods is an element of social stabilization, and Bronisław Malinowski, Marcel Mauss and other anthropologists have demonstrated the social significance (in part as a stabilizing force) of various forms of exchange (including the "gift"), particularly in "primitive" societies. But of course relationships between communities, like an inter-tribal exchange, cause different problems than do relations that are predominantly between individuals. An individual, in our case a patron or a client, who violates principle not only devastates the "dyadic" system, but also the social order. If that individual is the wealthier partner, namely the patron, then he gears the system towards the exploitation of clients (this is how Stanisław Orzechowski viewed Piotr Kmita). The situation is different when that individual is the client: such a rebel could destabilize the system and thus arouse in the patron feelings of distrust towards "his people." Because – as Edward Westermarck, cited by Alvin Gouldner with approval, wrote: "To requite a benefit, or to be grateful to him who bestows it, is probably everywhere, at least under certain circumstances, regarded as a duty."<sup>121</sup> Gouldner himself puts forward the following theses, which are in my opinion more accurate:

- Specifically, I suggest that a norm of reciprocity, in its universal form, makes two inter-related, minimal demands: (1) people should help those who have helped them, and (2) people should not injure those who have helped them.

Connected to the above components is the *time factor*. As in the case of observations made by anthropologists on ritualized exchange in primitive societies, here too mutual services are asynchronous. There are two underlying issues at play here: first, fulfillment of (or release from) an obligation would terminate the relationship, the essence of which is continuity of exchange; and second, some obligations to the patron have meaning for him only in particular moments.

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120 Mączak (1994) 2000, chapter «*Quod servitus, si hoc est clientela?*»

121 E. Westermarck, *The Origins and Development of the Moral Ideas*, vol. 2 (London: 1908), 154 (as cited in Gouldner 1977, 35). For the following block quote, see *ibid*.

Scholars of relationships in Sicily – Boissevain, Mühlmann and Llaryor – put it this way:

It is in the interest of both parties to keep the [communication] channel open, either by underpaying or overpaying at a later date.<sup>122</sup>

It is in the interest of a P[atron] to bond with a C[lient], which is why C must become a debtor. [...] The duration and influence of mental models tied to the natural economy promote freedom of action, because – one has to realize – the indication of a “common denominator” of exchange between two partners is a function played by money.<sup>123</sup>

Indeed, as in the feudal relationship, some obligations are beneficial only in certain situations, which does not mean only extraordinary situations. A characteristic example here is the obligation to form a procession – a “cavalcade” – that is, to accompany a patron in moments of glory or threat, when a boisterous military parade with horses was designed to display his strength and mass support – as described below.

### a. *The Cavalcata in the Service of Church Reform*

Stanisław Rozrażewski’s account of attempts to reform the Pomeranian and Kuyavian monasteries by his brother Hieronim, bishop of Kujawy, offers a classic example of a cavalcade (procession) as a means of exerting pressure. The implementation of Tridentine decrees regarding wealthy monasteries in these regions faced resistance; it was proving difficult to carry out these decrees through the proper channels (as viewed by canon law and monastic rules) – that is, through the religious orders’ central authorities. Bishop Rozrażewski tried to combine methods of pressure and persuasion.

There was – as Stanisław explained – an old practice among the Polish bishops that brought together a certain number of noblemen to teach them good manners and to take part in the bishop’s procession. Rozrażewski had at his disposal around 200 noblemen, and while travelling to the Pomeranian region *ubi non vulgares adversarios habuit* (where his adversaries were formidable)<sup>124</sup> he assembled many more. Thus he arrived for his visitation with the Norbertines in Strzelno, and while travelling to the Cistercians in Żarnowiec he was accompanied by 300 mounted men. With these 300 noblemen still at his side, he set off for Koronów “to improve

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122 Boissevain 1974, 159

123 Mühlmann and Llaryora 1968, 35.

124 *Korespondencja Rozrażewskiego 1939–1947*, vol. 2, XLVII; for the remaining information and citations, see XLV–XLVII.

conduct among the monks [and] the [local] abbot immediately summoned the same number of noblemen-clients in order to match the bishop's power, to not give in to the bishop."<sup>125</sup>

At the foundation of such a cavalcade, whether led by a bishop or an abbot, were petty noblemen (in Polish, *drobna szlachta*) who held land in tenure; there is no evidence to support the idea that the bishop of Cuyavia had so many secular courtiers. The *wilkierze* (documents consisting of an official set of records of laws) of the Chełmno Chapter indicate *per analogiam* that the petty nobility's material status and the range of their political autonomy, at least in some regions, did not differ significantly from those of the land-owning peasant, or *gbur* (a free peasant with some wealth), but the terminology and titles used in the *wilkierze* for noble-owned villages varied broadly in order for noble class-pride to be satisfied. It was a nobleman's obligation to serve a cavalcade whenever summoned, and – burdensome though it may have been – it was an obligation that highlighted the cavalier's knightly status.<sup>126</sup>

The above-mentioned remarks made by Mühlmann and Llyayor on the natural economy seem to be only partially correct. *Willkür* (arbitrariness, capriciousness, or – in a political context – despotism) may indeed enable a patron to exploit his clients, but in the constant flow of items of material value (sometimes flowing both ways!) and of various services, one had to possess a sense of balance (imperceptible to the outside observer) in the patron-client exchange, a balance that corresponded to their unequal status.

Another temporal aspect of the clientelistic dyad is presented in a scathing remark about the patron made by the already famous Samuel Johnson and addressed to Lord Chesterfield, who was offering Johnson protection:

Is not a Patron, my Lord, one who looks with unconcern on a man struggling for life in the water, and, when he has reached ground, encumbers him with help? The notice

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125 “[...] cum antistes trecentis etiam equitibus stipatus Coronoviam invisisse sit adactus ut mores religiosorum redintegrare cuperet in visitationibus, verum abbas sine mora tot *clientes* nobiles convocavit, ut potentia non impar esset antistiti, ut antistiti non cederet [...]”

126 In the Kujawy region, Chełm land and Gdańsk Pomerania, peasants and the *szlachta zagrodowa* (a subgroup of petty nobility who owned small plots) were significantly better off than in Mazovia. A *wilkierz* of the bishop of Chełmno informs us of the feudal duties on clerical estates in noble villages in Lubawa *powiat* (published in 1756). This *wilkierz* greatly resembles an earlier one created for villages of prosperous peasants (*gburski* villages). *Wilkierze* 1938, no. 19 (noble) and no. 18 (*gburski*).

which you have been pleased to take of my labours, had it been early, had been kind; but it has been delayed till I am indifferent, and cannot enjoy it.<sup>127</sup>

This case is a special example. What emanates from the words of the great English lexicographer is satisfaction with the fact that – based on a strong position rarely obtained by a client but already obtained by Dr. Johnson – he may decline the offer of patronage. In a way, it is as if Dr. Johnson is assessing an offer of credit that might once have been attractive to him, but no longer is, which – taken together – provides another argument in favor of the market character of a patron-client relationship. To be sure, supply and demand often play roles on the free market, and sometimes freedom is reserved for the patron. Indeed, there is a wide chasm that separates the famous writer or artist, for whom the bond with a patron is an honor (Who could possibly list the names of all of Galileo's patrons? See section below entitled "The Astronomer as Courtier"), from a Sicilian tenant-sharecropper, who is dependent on a *gabellotto* and a baron (see section below entitled "Sicily"). Still, if they have a certain freedom to act (and depending on the circumstances), then both patron and client take stock of a situation. Being a patron of a famous artist or writer was a reason to be proud; in some circles it was a good practice to support the arts, though the fact is that from the Renaissance through the Enlightenment, the supply of artists increased significantly and Lord Chesterfield was not the only one not willing to take a risk.<sup>128</sup>

Now let us consider the Chesterfield-Johnson *casus*. Having been discovered early, the young and talented writer would not have cost Chesterfield much given the fame Johnson would have won for his patron as the author of a dictionary, though he was well known only in the London circle of intellectuals. Seen from this angle, patronage would have been a highly rewarding investment, comparable to the purchase of stock or paintings of an unknown but promising artist.

We often emphasize yet another component, namely the *personal character* of a patron-client relationship; clients had to be particularly sensitive to this point (we will return to this issue later on<sup>129</sup>). But in the search for this phenomenon's most general determinants, one must take into consideration examples when the clientelistic party is a collective. We can find one of the few such examples in the definition given in the six-volume PWN Encyclopedia (a "relationship between

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127 An excerpt from the *Life of Johnson* by James Boswell as cited in: Gundersheimer 1981, 11–12.

128 Gundersheimer 1981, 12 and in general *Patronage in the Renaissance* 1981, *passim*.

129 See the section below entitled "The Clientele in Graphics: Jean-Pierre Norblin" and (also below) the case of the grand treasurer Fleming.

two individuals or two social groups”) where such “social groups” can be remarkably diverse. Starting from a place that is native to me, I would count among them *gniazda drobnoszlacheckie* (“nest of the petty nobility”; a family “nest,” a group of families stemming from the same “nest”-village) that acted vis-à-vis a wealthier and more powerful neighbor as a community during a *sejmik* or served him as part of a *cavalcata*.<sup>130</sup> But a “social group” may also denote here a formalized community, namely – for example – the state. Both in classic antiquity and in modernity and late modernity we can find examples of states with a subordinate status; while in Rome such a state was described as *socius atque amicus populi romani*, today it is sometimes shamelessly masked (“real socialism” under the Soviet Union had a fitting term, namely the “Treaty of Friendship and Mutual Assistance”).

Two British sociologists invited to a discussion on the clientele in antiquity directed our attention to a theoretical aspect that is essential to research on the subject. Patronage, they argued, can be defined both as “a particular kind of relationship” and “a system of relationships.” Thus, it can be a social relationship, an individual (though common) phenomenon, or a social system based on this phenomenon.<sup>131</sup> The decline of the patron-client relationship as a system – they continue – does not have to mean the disappearance of the phenomenon; it only means a shift in (reduction of) its significance.<sup>132</sup> Later on I will have an opportunity to further discuss this distinction.

## **b. St. Paul and the Christian Community in Corinth**

I think that what I am presenting here might well be the most far-reaching of all clientelistic interpretations, an attempt to explain everything. A historian from Hong Kong, John K. Chow, interprets the conflict depicted in Paul’s First Letter to the Corinthians as a sign of a dispute over patronage in the Christian community in Corinth.<sup>133</sup> Paul refused to accept money, which meant a violation of the convention of friendship, an act that some Christians there may have viewed as an insult against wealthy patrons of the local Church. “The divisions at the Lord’s table,” we read, “probably reflect something of the same distinctions between patrons and inferiors. It may also be assumed that the tensions in the church

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130 See the above interlude entitled “The *Cavalcata* in the Service of Church Reform.” Translator’s note: PWN is the Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe (National Scientific Publishers), whose focus has long been encyclopedias and textbooks.

131 Johnson and Dandeker 1990, 220.

132 Ibid., 221; see also *Klientelsysteme* 1988.

133 Chow 1992, 11–12.

were caused or exacerbated, to some extent, by competition among patrons in the church.” The author also cites the view that those who ate sacrificial meat in the church belonged to the *patronal class*.<sup>134</sup> Chow believes that those who ate at an idol’s table were powerful members of the church who had not broken their connections with more powerful patrons in the colonies. The work’s final sentence is emphatic: “Moreover, Paul’s directives were aimed at strengthening the horizontal relationships in the church and these directives, in effect, carried subversive implication for vertical patron-client ties in the church.”<sup>135</sup>

The author’s reasoning seems to be based on a verbal misunderstanding: not every vertical structure (in this context, the existence in the community of a large and influential elite) implies a clientelistic bond. We can speak of patrons *largo sensu* – without clients; today we would talk about “sponsors.” The apostle’s intervention, based on the invocation of God’s authority, could well have been understood as a threat to the power of local elites, who – as one might easily conclude after reading the first chapter of the letter – were worried that he would curb the rights to baptize (1 Cor. 1, 12–17, maybe also III, 4,6). These elites might also have been dissatisfied (“contentions among you,” I,11; “jealousy and quarrelling,” III,4) with the fact that it was forbidden to eat sacrificial food (ch. VIII), which indicated close contact with pagans and, according to Paul, represented a sin “against the brethren” (VIII,12).

A “lop-sided friendship” can sometimes be crippled because scholars do not always draw both parties to the relationship with equal clarity. In the context of the clientele, no attention has been devoted to the matter that one might call the “collective clientele,” examples of which are diverse and scattered in time. Over the course of this book I will point to some examples that are markedly distinct from one another, and in this light I would point first to Octavian Augustus, who consciously built his authority-*auctoritas*, his personal *auctoritas* of the one princeps, which was replaced by a traditional virtue to which the Senate as a collectivity and each of the *principes viri* as individuals were customarily entitled.<sup>136</sup> Setting aside ethical values and political consequences, I will refer to two dictators, namely Joseph Stalin and Adolf Hitler, who also created, each in his own way, a *personal* bond with their subjects, though in reality – paradoxically – they both avoided actual contact with them. In each of these two instances this bond was created outside the system, or rather parallel to the system. In the end we will meet

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134 G. Theissen, *The Social Setting of Pauline Christianity: Essays on Corinth* (Philadelphia: 1982); citation from Chow 1992, 189; chapter VIII; X, 28.

135 Chow 1992, 190.

136 See Syme 1960, 322.

a crowd of Sicilians expressing their loyalty to a late patron, with whom many of them had no direct tie.<sup>137</sup>

All of the cases mentioned above involve – in different forms and with various levels of intensity in particular conditions – mass clientele-like phenomena, in which clients, who serve no particular function towards the patron, are united in awe or allegiance, the result of which is their submission to him. A leader's charisma takes on certain features of a patron-client relationship, which is most clear in the case of Octavian, who – through a system of extended patronage – developed a new system of governance, the principate. The leader, commander, father, big brother or patron – an emphasis on one of these authority figures (who is charismatic to some, but threatening and hostile to others) represents a basic element of political culture and political tactics. But their link to patron-client relationships is sometimes very clear.

An equally important matter, alongside accurate and useful definitions, involves the ways in which we conceive the problem. As I have noted several times, the literature on the subject oscillates between abstract theory and highly detailed records of observations from field research. While the latter, for me at least, have usually proven impenetrable, I would argue that, from a historian's viewpoint, the theoretical approach is often hardly fruitful.

The Canadian scholar Vincent Lemieux has examined numerous regional instances from all over the world, from the Arctic to Sub-Saharan Africa (though he omits Sovietological literature). For each case, he conducts a systems analysis of relationships between two partners according to the square of opposition of possible *relations élémentaires*, from *pouvoir positif de A et non-pouvoir de B quand A fait faire à B l'action voulue...*, to *non-pouvoir de A et pouvoir négatif de B*. Such a concept is served by notions that include *suprapuissance*, *surpuissance* (together with their “non”-negations), *relations de coimpuissance*, *généralement marquées par le pouvoir négatif, sans plus, de chacun des deux acteurs*, etc.,<sup>138</sup> and are accompanied by a straightforward dictatorship of preferences that distinguish the subtleties between *supra*- and *sur*-.

The author uses the results to draw appropriate diagrams, whose content can generally be presented in a single sentence. It is interesting that, by including clientele, we complicate the graphic with a new element (which on the diagram is circuitous). Meanwhile, in real life, from the perspective of participants (“social

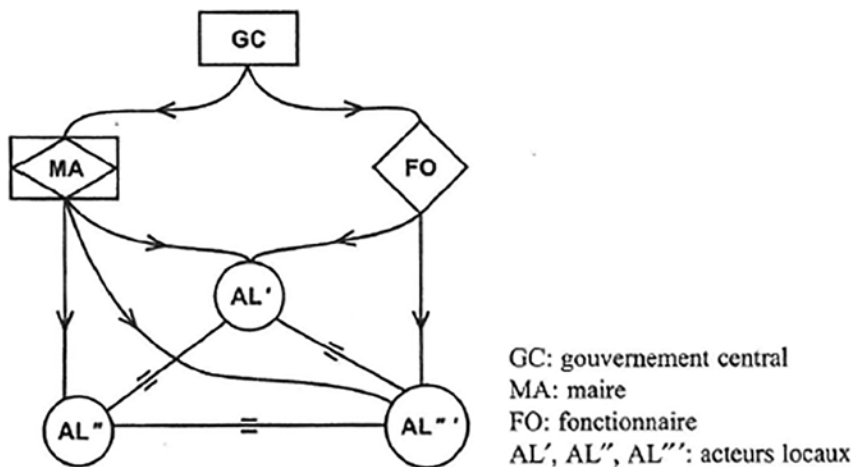
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137 See the section below entitled “The Mafioso and his Clientele: From the *Feudo* to Crime Syndicate.”

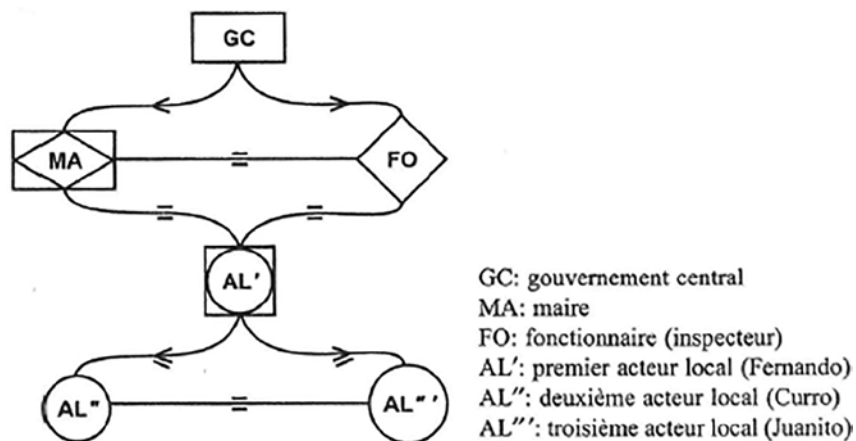
138 Lemieux 1977, 21 ff.

actors”), a personal bond simplifies the matter. Graphique 10 from Lemieux’s book, reproduced here along with others, indicates only that AL (that is “Fernando,” one of Pitt-Rivers’s respondents) monopolizes contacts of other *acteurs* with local authorities.

Graphique 9: Relations de puissance à Alcalá, moins les liens de patronage



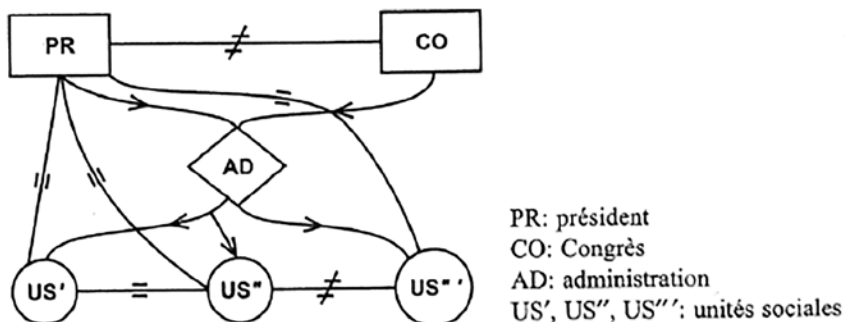
Graphique 10: Relations de puissance à Alcalá, y compris les liens de patronage



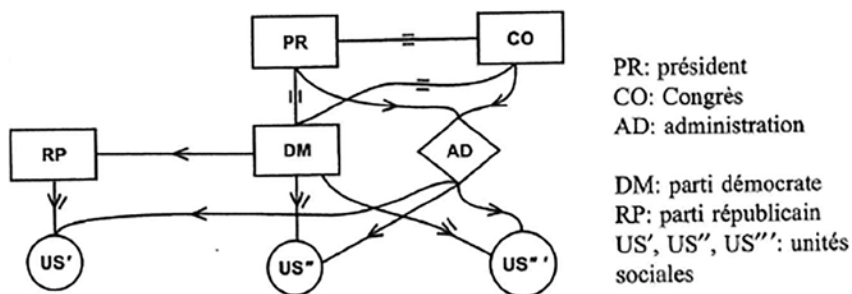


Solving the puzzle in diagrams 11 and 12 is also not difficult, but is the puzzle necessary? Does the diagram reflect reality?

Graphique 11: Le système officiel des relations de puissance aux États-Unis



Graphique 12: Relations de puissance aux États-Unis, compte tenu du patronage des partis



Let us consider the problem from the RP's perspective: I understand that as long as the democrats are dominant, the RP has no ties with the administration (AD), but as the diagram indicates, it also has no *relation de puissance* with either the CO (Congress) or the president. Really? A simplification, and – in addition – a misleading one.

To sum up – invoking the author's terminology - I feel a certain *co-impuissance*. When discussing delicate and complicated relationships in contemporary political life, it is better to use graphic schemes carefully and in small doses, so that the reader does not regard them as apparent issues or sterile puzzles.

Thus, for this book, I have decided to avoid such techniques in favor of a middle-of-the-road approach: I attempt to present and analyze indications of

informal power and to place them in their social and civilizational contexts. I am also interested in the perspectives of scholars in a variety of specializations at the intersection of various academic disciplines on the human condition. Hence, I will now discuss the work of Roland Mousnier and his antagonists.

### 3. *Fidélités-Clientèles*: Roland Mousnier and the Anglo-Saxons

*Today he [Roland Mousnier] is in danger of becoming a historiographical villain or, at any rate, an Aunt Sally<sup>139</sup>, so it may be worth saying, before going any further, that Mousnier's argument about orders has had the great virtue of forcing us all to clarify our ideas about old regime society.*

Peter Burke<sup>140</sup>

Two French historians have played a particularly important role in historical research in clientelism, Numa Denis Fustel de Coulanges<sup>141</sup> and Roland Mousnier. The first of them, an outstanding scholar of late antiquity, is one of the few historians referenced in the basic works on clientelism, particularly those conceived from the perspective of anthropology and sociology. His view of the Roman collocate and the genesis of the feudal system, entirely independent from later and long-lasting discussions among historians, enjoys respect in the social sciences. But it is surprising that the social sciences have not discovered Mousnier, who dedicated his first book to none other than Fustel. No other humanist has lent such importance to informal systems, to *fidélité*, and to *clientèles*.

Much like his great antagonist Fernand Braudel, Mousnier was a secondary school teacher and wrote his first *opus* in the era of the Second World War, *La vénalité des offices sous Henri IV et Louis XIII* (1945, 1971). But any similarities between the two scholars end there; they created two contrasting schools of thought that reflected, among other things, the deep political divisions that characterized Paris intellectuals at the time. The significance of L'École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales (originally VI Section École Pratique des Hautes Études), along with that of the Maison des Sciences de l'Homme, has been the subject of many studies and is famous among scholars, including Polish scholars, who have maintained contact with these schools since 1956. Mousnier viewed ties between the field of history and the social sciences very differently than others, and differences in method manifested themselves not so much in polemics among scholars as in

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139 This is, of course, a reference to Tom Sawyer's aunt.

140 Burke 1992, 2.

141 Fustel de Coulanges (1864) 1908. I make use of the 20th edition from the year 1908.

the fact that they ignored each other, which took a toll on relations with regard to the subject of interest to us here. In his reflections on method, Mousnier came out against the application of contemporary categories onto the study of the past, and he emphasized the legitimacy of introducing working hypotheses based on researched source material.<sup>142</sup> He did not allow himself to be called anything like a systems researcher or a historian of either society or economy. Rather, he was interested in civilization broadly understood,<sup>143</sup> the connecting thread throughout the modern age being bonds of various kinds, particularly *fidélité*. In his two-volume *Les institutions de la France sous la monarchie absolue, 1598–1789*, first published in 1974, Mousnier devoted an important chapter to “fidelity,” and in so doing knocked down the structures by which the history of systems had been synthesized. *La fidélité* became for him a sociological and historical category of particular importance.

In 1975 Mousnier published the results of a questionnaire involving matters of interest to him which did not get the expected reaction, and which indeed were ignored outside of France.<sup>144</sup> Such a response might well have been expected since the subject – as conceived by the author – was rather abstruse. In the introduction we read (to convey nuance, I prefer to quote from the original French): “Le sentiment de fidélité [...] semble cependant un lien essentiel des solidarités dans la société.” Among the meanings-applications Mousnier points to are:

1. “la fidélité des dévoués, de donnés, c’est-à-dire la relation ‘Maître-Fidèle’,

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142 See Mousnier 1964; Y. Durand, “Hommage” in *Hommage Mousnier* 1981, p. X. As the best example of ways to apply the method, see *Problèmes de stratification sociale. Deux cahiers de la noblesse, 1649–1651*, ed. R. Mousnier along with J.-P. Labatut and Y. Durand, Faculté des Lettres et Sciences humaines de Paris, *Textes et Documents*, vol. 9 (Paris: 1965).

143 See *Les XVIe et XVIIe siècles: la grande mutation intellectuelle de l’humanité: l’avènement de la science moderne et l’expansion de l’Europe* (Paris: 1954; with many later editions).

144 Mousnier 1975; a copy in, among other places, *Hommage Mousnier* 1981, XXI–XXIII, which is what I have used. For results of an earlier questionnaire and research involving the concept of *fidélité* as understood by theoreticians of the law in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, see Mousnier 1972. Before cooperative research broadly focused had been carried out, prominent scholars organizing and issuing questionnaires attempted to cooperate with others and to collect data from colleagues working on related subjects. But such efforts were not fruitful; see Bloch 1936 and more recent attempts by Pierre Chaunu in his *Histoire et décadence* (Paris: 1981).

2. ‘Protecteur-Créature’, ce dévouement mutuel corps et âmes de deux êtres qui se sont donnés l’un à l’autre, sans forme d’hommage, ni de serment.”

The second application of the word involves “*homme*” du “*maître*” who owes obedience, advice, assistance, complete honesty and loyalty in return for protection, support, and finally *confiance*, *confidence* et *affection*. It continues:

3. “la fidélité des peuples, par serment explicite des individus ou implicite par l’intermédiaire du serment des autorités et des corps constitués”
4. The vassals’ fidelity toward the lord, the tenant toward the lord, along with [...]
6. The fidelity of equals (*des pairs*) within the framework of a corporation or territorial community, or in the womb of a party or pressure group.<sup>145</sup>

The last three examples listed above broaden the scope of the term beyond its usefulness, but Mousnier goes further with point 5, which refers to fidelity in marriage and among lovers: *ce don mutuel, réciproque, total, de soi, pour toujours*. In addition, mutual *fidélité* between children and parents. I will skip these variants. Finally, point 7 describes faith in God – *personnel et transédent* – and its relationship to systems mentioned earlier. The author’s final recommendations are to examine mental phenomena and their intensity, and to take into consideration semantic subtleties, changes over time, etc.

One outstanding aspect of Mousnier’s thinking is his belief in the role of sincerity in the patron-client relationship, a deep and durable affect that appears – in his larger argument – to be inviolable. It is difficult to share such a belief. In many instances expressions of sincerity are more than manneristic forms, and as we will see, more recent research indicates that the manneristic and baroque *noble client* was, at the same time, able to maintain a sober understanding of his own interests; and when those interests were threatened, he was able to find a new patron. Faith in declarations was often risky, even if they were given with complete conviction (including at the altar – see point 5). Regardless, the form of declarations of faith and devotion deserve to be researched through the application of psychological theory and literary criticism, and of course by comparing concepts from various languages.

Significantly, Mousnier did not take note of problems that stem from language and the complications that come with translations.<sup>146</sup> And it is unclear what *con-*

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145 For analysis of the classic meaning of the Latin term *fides*, see Rich 1990, 128–130.

146 There was nothing exceptional about this; for example, Edmund Leach showed that certain conclusions drawn by French structuralists based on French language material did not prove entirely reliable when applied to the English language. Similarly,

*cept correspondant* (alongside *fidélité*, which was mentioned in the questionnaire) was involved here. Under such conditions, calls for the creation of an international commission and a national commission in each country (we read: “avec sans doute des sous-commissions”) would have to remain utopian dreams quite apart from the general difficulties involved in implementing such projects.

We find *concept correspondant* in a programmatic article by Yves Durand, which opens a collection of works by students of Roland Mousnier, and which is a thorough and substantive text in praise of the Master.<sup>147</sup> In this text *Fidélités* appear in constant connection with *clientèles*, and often *au pluriel*. But the term *clientele* is defined as a more spacious concept: we read early on in the work that “*clientèles* have existed in all epochs,” though they are able to connect interests without the “full devotion of one group of people toward the other.”<sup>148</sup> One might regard “*clientele*” so defined as a phenomenon that is more prevalent than “*fidélité*.” But in Mousnier’s view the Hundred Years’ War led to the fall of feudalism, which led in turn to *la France des fidélités*<sup>149</sup> – and not clientelism. The “Era of Fidelity” was verily *le Grand Siècle*!

### a. King Henry and the Knight Errant

Of all the examples of *fidélité* and its effects cited by Mousnier, the below quote is the clearest. It comes from the extensive journals of the future French courtier François de Bassompierre, and it most certainly reflects the youthful sentiments of the author, who was born in Lorraine (thus on the Empire’s territory). Like many of his contemporaries, he searched in his youth for opportunities to serve

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*fidélité* and “*fidélité*” have different shades of meaning, a fact that – after all – is not limited to these two languages. The historian Robert Mandrou dedicated a book *À Lucien Febvre en toute fidélité*. How can one render this in Polish without causing embarrassment and without offending our peculiar taste? See Mandrou 1961, VII. Sensitive to this issue, I once noticed, while in the Paris metro, the following text under an announcement from the director of the passenger services for line no. 1.

*Merci pour votre fidélité,  
Pascal Garret  
Responsable clientèle.*

147 Durand 1981, 5.

148 With courteous but emphatic criticism, the American expert on the French power system, J.H.M. Salmon, writes about a clear distinction between the psychological phenomenon of *fidélité* and the self-interested *clientèle*. See his review of *Hommages Mousnier* 1981 in *The Journal of Modern History* 54 (1982): 786–789, and Salmon 1981.

149 Mousnier 1969.

various princes in Europe. In Prague he came into contact with the future military commander and duke Albrecht von Wallenstein, who at this time had nothing yet to offer. He found no position in the emperor's army, but he was dazzled by the personality of Henry IV of France. Henry was a king with great personal charm in speaking not only to women but also knights. Jakub Sobieski also remembered him warmly.

The future marshal of France recalls his first, youthful conversation with King Henry:

I told him [...] that he had so charmed me that, if he would want my services, I would serve him until death and that I would seek no other master. He embraced me and assured me that I would not be able to find a better master than he, one who would bestow upon me greater affection or provide me greater fortune and promotion. That was Tuesday the twelfth of March [1599] and ever since I have considered myself a Frenchman.<sup>150</sup>

Regarding a different case, unfortunately for France, Prince Eugeniusz Sabaudzki, a relative of Cardinal Mazarin, did not become a Frenchman. Leopold I accepted him into his service and *Prinz Eugen der edle Ritter* (from a collateral line ruling in Sabaudia, which was then a small state controlled at times by the Habsburgs, at times by the Bourbons) became the most famous commander-legend of the Austrian army, conqueror of the Turkish army and (along with the Duke of Marlborough) of the French army.

Certain divisions are long-lasting, but never are divisions drawn so sharply as they are in the very heart of the Parisian *rive gauche* over the issue of how to research and interpret the clientele. But as opposed to several unusually lively – and loud – historiographical debates that touch upon the modern era, discussion (this word should be put in quotes) of the function and importance of clientelistic systems is conducted in silence. One could even locate this division in the topography of Paris. Until recently, while the term *fidélité* was everything in the Latin Quarter and at the Sorbonne within Mousnier's circle, the terms *clientèle* and *fidélité* did not exist as an object of academic inquiry along Boulevard Raspail, where both institutes established by Fernand Braudel – L'École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales (ÉHÉSS) and the Maison des Sciences de l'Homme – can be found. The

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150 Mousnier 1974, vol. 1, 86. See also Mączak (1994) 2000, 8. A description of Basompierre's travels and his attempts to enter the Emperor's service are contained in his *Journal de ma vie. Mémoires de Maréchal de ...* ed. de Chantérac, vol. 1 (Paris: 1870) (Société de l'Histoire de France, vol. CLIII). His search for a patron makes him one of the many knights errant who pestered rulers and military leaders throughout Europe mainly in search of employment for themselves and their sword.

past tense is appropriate here given that since Mousnier's death the intensity of scholarship in the Master's spirit has weakened significantly. At the same time, disapproval of Mousnier's theses in the "Annales School" came not in the form of criticism but in complete silence. Nothing – or next to nothing – was published on this subject in *Annales*<sup>151</sup>, even though patron-client relations comprise a typical "long term" phenomenon from the interdisciplinary sphere that students of Marc Bloch, Lucien Febvre and Fernand Braudel emphasize so much, and despite the fact that they represent a topic that fits perfectly with the subtitle of the School's main journal: *Economies, Sociétés, Civilisations*.

Other conflicts over clientelism, which also played out "through forbearance," have an international dimension. One could say that the fascination that Anglo-Saxons have with French history and the expansion of their research into the Valois-Bourbon dynasties were not reciprocated south of La Manche. Anglo-American publishers put out a large number of works on the regimes of modern France, but the response in French academic journals and literature has been rather weak, which is too bad, because the Anglo-Saxons – particularly James Russell Major and the young generation of Americans – have developed new approaches to the subject of informal power structures. While William Beik, who is Major's successor at Emory University in Atlanta, has put forward a convincing argument for how the French absolute monarchy functioned, Sharon Kettering – in a series of articles and books – has analyzed from various angles the clientelistic mechanisms at work in the court and in distant provinces during periods of crisis and stabilization.<sup>152</sup> One can regard the material she has presented as a response to Mousnier's questionnaire. Periods marked by religious war are particularly indicative; several Anglo-Saxon scholars have shown an interest in this problem. Robert Harding, who has researched provincial governors as a collective, tied their significance to the level of royal patronage at their disposal, which decreased in years when the monarchy found itself in crisis as discipline within religious factions grew. This fact explains why more than one governor supplemented "the old networks of personal and reciprocal loyalties with new impersonal and ideological ones." The new, denominational ties disciplined the nobility and made possible control over local institutions<sup>153</sup> – that is, of course, if the governor was tied to them. The Englishman Mark Greengrass focused attention on the clientele

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151 *Annales. Economies, Sociétés, Civilisations* (originally *Annales d'histoire Économique et Sociale*) is the main organ of the ÉHÉSS.

152 Beik 1985 and 1996.

153 Harding 1978, 68–87; for the quoted text see pp. 106–107.

of a single potentate home, namely Montmorency-Danville.<sup>154</sup> The nature of the subject and his methods of analysis led him to conclusions that were somewhat different than Harding's.

After the religious wars had come to an end, Prince (Duke) Henry I, as governor of Languedoc, found himself in a difficult financial situation. He had to adjust the number of courtiers to the means at his disposal, a fact that could not but influence the strength of his bonds with the nobility. Tracing the vicissitudes of the long life of Henri de Montmorency (governor as of 1563, died in 1614), Greengrass detected changes in levels of devotion and obligation among his people (*affinity*), though the author bases his conclusions regarding the situation during the civil wars mainly on retrospection.

Sharon Kettering, in turn, collected a wealth of prosopographic material on three clientelistic networks at work in southern provinces (mainly on the territory of Provence, but also in Burgundy and Languedoc).<sup>155</sup> Kettering wrote that:

provincial clientele were absorbed into Catholic and Calvinist parties, or even sometimes created from them, and continued to operate within them and remained when these parties were disbanded. Patron-client relationships were characterized by personal loyalty but the degree of loyalty varied with the relationship. Not all clients were *fidèles* who were loyal until death – in fact, *fidèles* were in the minority among a patron's clients – and material interests and the amount of patronage available to a patron for distribution to his clients helped to determine the longevity of patron-client relationships.<sup>156</sup>

In the three researched cases, the share of *fidèles* in relation to clients was at least 10%. Clients, as the American scholar has shown, were thus guided more by interests than sentiments. Patron-client bonds were sometimes strong and long-lasting, but they were in the minority. In the context of the terminology used by the Mousnier school, *clientèle* and not *fidélité* comprised the foundational social bond. Doubts arise, however, about whether – during a political or religious crisis – one can juxtapose past loyalty to a patron (an ideational motive) with a client's immediate material interests. The outbreak of religious conflict created

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154 Greengrass 1986. The sharp criticism expressed by the young American Sharon Kettering can play a certain role in the delicate Anglo-Saxon/French relations (see Kettering 1986. For example: p. 19: "Mousnier's use of the term fidelity [...] is misleading"; p. 20: "Mousnier has overemphasized the importance of loyalty"; p. 21: "Mousnier has overlooked [...]"). See also Arriaza 1980. As far as I know, Mousnier never responded to this criticism (the accusations in Arriaza's work are very serious and principled).

155 Kettering 1989.

156 Ibid., 221. See also p. 239.



alternative stimuli and factors determining identification. For some it created alternate secular bonds and ways of declaring oneself in favor of God. And a certain role was played by tactical considerations.

Picard Huguenots defected from the religious party headed by Condé as the result of their disagreement with his political and military tactics. Some of the Picard Huguenots may also have been Condé's clients abandoning personal loyalties at the same time. We do not know if their disagreement was the result of other ideological commitments.<sup>157</sup>

Let us shift from clientelistic and religious-political bonds within the noble milieu to another aspect of clientelism: Elie Barnavi examined Paris during the League (1585–1594), which was a group that Helli Koenigsberger regards as a prototype of modern totalitarian parties.<sup>158</sup> In order to create a new, ideological bond, the League had to break old bonds, particularly those connecting subjects with the king, which was not an easy task; a keen observer, the Venetian ambassador Lorenzo Priuli, believed in 1582 that monarchical authority was one of the main factors in preventing the break-up of France.<sup>159</sup> But Barnavi has argued that the League created a new model of patronage, a collective one that could not be deprived of a leader through the death of its leader-patron. Here fidelity (though certainly – I might add – fear) played a dominant role. However, this was an episodic phenomenon.

The dominant (and long-term) interest in patron-client relationships resulted from the fact that an essential element of these relationships was social position, prestige, and participation in power broadly understood. William Beik, in his analysis of relations in Languedoc, showed that in the seventeenth century a significant portion of public resources – mainly revenue from taxes – remained in the region, thus within the province and in the hands of notables.<sup>160</sup> It is not possible to carry out similar calculations in many other regions of modern Europe, though the mechanisms of a patron-client system, in various forms and levels of intensity, assisted and stimulated the apparatus of formal power everywhere. Below, in the chapter devoted to Poland, I discuss the significance of the *starostwo* (a local government position) and the public functions of those with power in terms of magnatial patronage – the thin line between the public and private spheres. One could apply *mutatis mutandis* such circumstances to other countries, but

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157 Ibid., 236.

158 Barnavi 1980; Koenigsberger 1988.

159 *Le Relazioni degli Ambasciatori Veneti*, ed. E. Albèri, ser. I, vol. 4 (Firenze: 1869), 418–419 (in Luigi Firpo's edition, vol. 5 [Torino: 1978], 628–629).

160 Beik 1985, chapter 11: "Tax Flows and Society," particularly pp. 258–268.

equally important is the lack of a clear division between “interests” understood directly and bonds of trust between people of unequal position. The “transaction of favours was as important as the transfer of money,” stated Greengrass, who saw in this an analogy between modern France and today’s society – researched by anthropologists – in the Indian state of Orissa.<sup>161</sup> Such a transcultural viewpoint – I might add – is in complete agreement with the method proposed by Mousnier, who saw “societies of orders” even in the twentieth century, for instance in Hitler’s Germany<sup>162</sup> (*Unser Glaube heißt Treue!*). But is this not just chasing after a *word*?

Roland Mousnier often cited statements by clients that indicated their sincere allegiance – both by choice and by sentiment – to their patrons, and the above-quoted Bassompierre is his classic example. This nobleman from Lorraine was at that time a knight errant in search of a patron, one of many in Europe whose family wealth could not support a proper existence. The journal of one of Bassompierre’s contemporaries, the Prussian Fabian von Dohna, and the fate of that Prussian’s family, offer evidence of very similar circumstances.<sup>163</sup> One might expect that these seekers, travelling through foreign countries, would have been able to easily attach themselves to a new lord, who would become for them the main – or even only – source of support in a strange land. But they in fact remained on the margins, even in the turbulent times of the Thirty Years’ War.

Research would require psychological and stylistic analyses of whether there was a particular way of thinking and feeling at play here that told Frenchmen of the Mannerist and Baroque periods to emphasize feelings of devotion to (or simply love of) the patron, which would suggest an analogy to the tears that were shed more easily by men of the Romantic era than those in many other cultural epochs. Yves Castan, writing about the connection in those days between politics and private life, did not argue with Mousnier; in fact he did not even cite him,

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161 Greengrass 1986, 71; cited here are works by Frederick George Bailey.

162 Mousnier 1969.

163 Dohna 1905; for more on the history of the Dohnas see *vide Neue deutsche Biographie*, s.v. Interesting (but unfortunately very complicated) is Fabian’s commentary on the subject of Stefan Batory: He would have gladly served him, though he could hardly stand Poles. Another Dohna, Fryderyk, was dramatically concise: “Hic in Borussiae patria nemini inservio, omnibus sum oneri magistratui officiali tetuli in Marchia olim, nupere in Borussia. Repulsam tuli. Inde conicio Deum me alio ex huc conditione vocare.” Dohna 1898, VI. On the subject of the fates of the younger sons of England, see Thi sk 1969.

even though he entitled a subsection “Political Adventure and Clientage.”<sup>164</sup> One of his heroes is Henri de Campion, a Norman nobleman, the youngest of the family and destined to serve as an ensign in a royal border regiment. His protector was François de Bourbon, Duc de Beaufort, who

lived with me at that time and ever after in almost obliging fashion and with greater civility than princes ordinarily show to those who have given themselves to them; so that I immediately felt a zeal and an affection for him that no ill treatment has been able to make me lose.<sup>165</sup>

Nonetheless, through a relative (acting as an intermediary) he accepts a proposal of service from Gaston, Duke of Orléans, wanting to “achieve my end by none but honorable means,” so that – as Castan concludes – Campion could resign his commission without committing open desertion.

I would have a valid reason to exonerate me, in that I would not have acted as a deserter and, Monsieur [as the Duke of Orléans was called] being the brother of the king and heir apparent to the throne, no one could accuse me of treason, especially [...] since this prince, claiming no lapse in the obedience he owed H[is] M[ajesty], had no quarrel but with his enemy the Cardinal [Richelieu].

In the wake of the Duke’s failed conspiracy, Campion took part in a conspiracy against another cardinal (1643). His patron was again the Duke of Beaufort, with Campion writing: “I had resolved to follow him come what may and never to abandon him whatever decision he might take.” But the duke intended to murder Mazarin, and the Norman nobleman could not approve of this scheme. He explained his feelings to his patron, though he declared that he would “serve him loyally and as a man of honor.” Yves Castan summarized his thoughts about Campion’s motives:

But as for direct motives, honesty and loyalty, those two guarantees of honor, though sufficient to cause change, are in themselves invariable. They are part of the reservoir of affection, which is so powerful a force in Campion’s life once he has accepted the accident upon which his friendship, love, or paternal amazement is built.

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164 Castan 1999. This subsection on “political adventure” is contained in a broader essay (“Politics and Private Life”) that is, like the entire publication (*A History of Private Life*, vol. III: *Passions of the Renaissance*) highly interesting, despite the fact that there is no indication in the essay title that it covers only France (as if that country were identical to Europe); examples and illustrations touching on other Western European countries appear only when it occurs to the author.

165 *Ibid.*, 30 ff.; this quote and following quotes come from H. de Campion, *Mémoires* (Paris: 1967).

This explanation is not clear to me; I would frame it differently: our nobleman emphasizes his concern that his career (“fortune”) coincides with honor. “I was in truth,” Campion writes, “only a poor cadet seeking to make his fortune. But I wished to achieve my end by none but honorable means.” I might add that “fortune” – success and promotion – was not in those days exclusively a personal matter, but rather also a matter of family obligation, even when it revolved around *un fils cadet*. Campion sees no other way to realize his goal than to tie his fate to a powerful patron. His Majesty is far away, and in normal conditions is out of reach. It is different with a potentate who is creating a faction or needs people who are devoted to some sort of action. Bassompierre, who happened to join up with King Henry right way, nonetheless resembled the provincial Campion, who waited – like Bassompierre – to exchange his talents, fidelity and devotion for *civilité*, and undoubtedly for direct contact, for a word and a glance from the lord, who might spot him in the group of those who, in Cicero’s times, were called *amici minores*.<sup>166</sup>

Mousnier’s concept of society provoked lively discussion among Anglo-American historians, discussion that was not without its political overtones. Mousnier expanded significantly the range of such notions as “order” and “society of orders,” which he applied even to the twentieth century. As a person of the political right, he was reluctant to refer in his works to Marxism and the concept of class.<sup>167</sup> Meanwhile, the Marxist inclinations of many of his American critics were often quite clear; indeed, they are essential to understanding the *fidélité-clientèle* debate and the resistance among Marxists-anthropologists to Mousnier’s concept.

In contrast to William Beik, David Parker approaches the ruling system in the ancien régime from the perspective of historiography and not through regional *Stichproben* that show the reality of how it functions.<sup>168</sup> Parker juxtaposes French absolutism with England, the point of his attack being directed against both traditional Marxists (like Porszniew) and revisionists (in the English sense of the word), who stubbornly negated differences between the powers on both sides of La Manche. His attitude toward Mousnier’s concept of a society of orders plays a key role in his thinking.<sup>169</sup> Parker rejects its essential elements, including the view that, from the Middle Ages through the seventeenth century, social respect, honor

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166 See the below section entitled “The Era of the Republic: The Classic Clientele”

167 Wolfgang Reinhard showed that, according to the rules of political correctness, Mousnier carefully removed from the second edition of *La vénalité des offices sous Henri IV et Louis XIII* certain traces of Marxist terminology. Reinhard 1974. For more on Mousnier and his political evolution, see Reinhard 1999, 207.

168 Parker 1996.

169 *Ibid.*, 23–26; see also Parker 1990.

and status were tied above all to military affairs, with the ability to command and to offer others protection. In a society of orders, wealth's main role was to make possible a lifestyle that would build and sustain the family's status; wealth was not a goal in itself. Attitudes in this regard began to change only in the second half of the eighteenth century.

Parker's opposing arguments are diverse in nature. I regard as rather insignificant his accusations that Mousnier was idealistic and his general habit of qualifying theses according to the labels applied to them.<sup>170</sup> But his observation is accurate that, even though Mousnier viewed society under the *ancien régime* as it was viewed by people at the time (mainly through the eyes of the *noblesse de robe*), he also takes the perspective as provided in Charles Loyseau's monumental *Cinq livres du droit des offices*.<sup>171</sup> For Parker, seventeenth-century French society was a class-based society in the Marxist sense of the term. Whatever the ancestral nobility said about the *noblesse de robe*, they were tied together in a broad front; for their part, *les robins* worked as quickly as possible to resemble the old families as much as possible. Parker concludes that "the ruling class – those who 'commanded' in Loyseau's terminology – was composed of an amalgam of robe and sword and can be defined not only by a common relationship to the means of production but also by a corresponding set of ideas about property, lineage and family."<sup>172</sup> Regarding *clienteles*, he adds:

The fact that upper-class relationships were so overwhelmingly mediated by lineage, kin and *clienteles* informs and illuminates both the rivalries that divided them and also the common interests which bound them together. *Clienteles* were an upper-class phenom-

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170 Parker 1996, 25: "Mousnier's idealism was explicit. [...] Mousnier pushed his idealist methodology to the point at which it became exceedingly vulnerable to criticism." Parker continues: "[...] it would be relatively easy to dismiss Mousnier's work on the grounds that his hostility to Marxism, his ingrained idealism and his deep social conservatism profoundly distorted his historical judgment [...] His idealized constructs [...] are certainly incompatible with any sort of materialism." But one then wants to ask: *So what?* And it must be added that David Park himself argues strenuously against the classical Marxist concept of the capitalist origins of absolutism as put forward by Porszniew, Robert Brenner and Perry Anderson. Nonetheless, he likes to classify: *marxisants*, cultural Marxism, etc. Parker is interested particularly in the classic Marxist issues of base and superstructure.

171 Charles Loyseau, *Cinq livres du droit des offices* (Paris: 1610); see also Loyseau, *Traité des ordres et simples dignités* (Paris: 1649).

172 Parker 1996, 134.

enon and did not extend in any meaningful way across the divide between the privileged and non-privileged.<sup>173</sup>

Parker devotes little time to defining such terms as “ruling class” and “upper class.” We read that the “royal administration had literally been bought up by the seigneurial office holding elite” and that – here a paradox emerges – it is difficult to find a better example of the “vulgar Marxist notion of an instrument in the hands of the ruling class [...]”<sup>174</sup> But this sentence represents, in my view, an example of the glaring circularity of argument that he accuses Mousnier of committing. After all, what is the ruling class supposed to do if not rule?

Several conclusions emerge from the methodological dispute briefly discussed here. Parker’s observation is probably correct that only members of the upper classes concluded clientelistic agreements in France under the ancien régime, which is of significance because it did not comprise a universal rule that applied to all of Europe at that time. Were we to apply such a rule, one would have to include under the notion “upper classes” the *hobereaux* in many provinces, and the Spanish *hidalgos* and many *letrados*.

Returning to the dilemma of the class structure of the society of orders, it is easy to see that the concept of “means of production” does not fit here. The possession of an estate was a symbol of a certain social status; it was a condition for membership in the elite. It was a source of income, but revenue from land rent did not ensure a rapid increase in wealth. The enterprise that did lead to quick riches was the state. The nobility handed out tax privileges, and state office increased the value of participating in the profits of this enterprise, whose shares were not universally accessible, the conclusion being that, for the “ruling classes,” the “means of production” was participation in the exercise of power. If the concept of class requires a clear definition of its composition and of conditions for membership in that class, it would be difficult to find formal criteria that are more precise than those for *noblesse* presented in Loyseau’s *Traité des offices*.

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173 Ibid.

174 Ibid., 135.

## Chapter 3: Gestures of a Lop-Sided Friendship

The term “informal,” which I use often in this book, means something different in the context of social relations (particularly in the context of the structure of power) than it does when we are speaking of human behavior. The second “behavioral” aspect is clearly not detached from the first, though it sometimes clearly contradicts it. I would like now to shed some light precisely on these sometimes paradoxical phenomena.

### 1. The Social Function of the Kiss

The “kiss” appears in the pages of this book several times, but its erotic function is not the issue here. Like the word “friendship/friend” it is often a symbol that, even in Western culture, takes on many meanings and defines a wide variety of relationships between partners. In Christian tradition, the kiss is usually a sign of peace, but also a sign of devotion and reverence.<sup>175</sup> In the Synoptic Gospels there is no doubt that the kiss was a normal custom in those days; it was a form of greeting and a way of paying homage, as in the Gospel According to Luke (7:45): “Thou gavest me no kiss: but this woman since the time I came in hath not ceased to kiss my feet.” In the end, even Judas’s kiss of betrayal suggests that among Israelites 2000 years ago the kiss was a common form of greeting.<sup>176</sup> The Pauline and Petrine epistles<sup>177</sup> end with a call for a parting kiss. There is no mention of this ritual in the Epistles of John.

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175 Only in societies that are most expressive toward the priest’s call on parishioners to give the “sign of peace” do the faithful kiss each other on the cheek. But Major (1987, 515) writes that, in England as of the middle of the eighth century, the “kiss of peace” was replaced by kissing badges with the image of Christ or a saint. Let me also mention that – as the French ambassador in Saint Petersburg, Maurice Paléologue, reported – Prince Feliks Jusupow, having arrived for his victim, Rasputin, on the evening of 29 December 1916, greeted Rasputin “in *Russian fashion*, with a great show of affection, he gave the *staretz*, a resounding kiss on the mouth.” To which Rasputin apparently responded: “Heavens! What a kiss, boy! I hope it isn’t the kiss of Judas ... Come, let’s go! You go in front.” (note dated 6 January 1917). Maurice Paléologue, *An Ambassador’s Memoirs: The Last Russian Ambassador to the Russian Court*, trans. F.A. Holt, vol. III (August 19, 1916 – May 17, 1917) (New York: George H. Doran, no date [1923]), 143. However, this was only a rumor running through the diplomatic community of Petersburg.

176 Luke 22; Matthew 26; Mark 14. However, John 18 makes no mention of a kiss.

177 St. Paul: Romans 16:16; 1 Corinthians 16:20; 2 Corinthians 18:12; 1 Thessalonians 5:26; St. Peter: 5:14.

The American scholar of the Late Middle Ages in France, James Russell Major, collected a wealth of information from this period and showed that, in the early fourteenth century, a kiss between men began to be associated with homosexuality,<sup>178</sup> which had a certain influence on the disappearance of the reverential kiss exchanged between vassal and lord. In 1439 the English House of Commons called for the kiss to be omitted from the homage ceremony for knight-service (citing “an infirmity most infectious”). But the issues involved here were significantly wider and included such symbolic behaviors as kneeling, taking the patron’s hand, etc. And for my purposes they have a double significance. First, they refer to the sphere that connects formal and informal systems (and behavior); and second – and we will discuss this separately – they signify the evolution from the feudal system to clientelistic systems.

The wealth of material collected by Major indicates that the slow decay of lord-vassal relations manifested itself in the weakening, even the disappearance, of the symbols that marked these relations. This development occurred under pressure from vassals. A contributing factor might well have been also the fact that sometimes, given the conditions under which feudal dues were paid, the lord became the vassal of his vassal in the context of various other pieces of land. The later, sixteenth-century *coutumes* compiled by Major highlight this tendency. Was this an expression of attempts by vassals to emancipate themselves? No doubt one can consider this a phenomenon that accompanied “bastard feudalism” and the monetarization of relations among free people in the West. So how did things in Poland develop in this regard?

## 2. Equality – Subordination – Subservience

The dilemma indicated in the above title manifested itself more clearly in Poland than in any other country of Europe. In the *Rzeczpospolita* equality was inseparable from liberty, and though both of these ideas were limited (obviously) to the noble order, they were limited only in large measure given what Andrzej Wyczański has argued, namely that in the sixteenth century the barriers between orders were porous. This is true regardless even of matters described by the early-modern Polish writer Walerian Nekanda Trepka.<sup>179</sup>

Edward Opaliński collected abundant phraseological material in this field and cited, among other things, a statement made by the castellan in Kraków Jerzy Zbaraski, who characterized in the following way the unity of law, blood and liberty between the senatorial and knightly estates.

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178 Major 1987.

179 Wyczański 2001, 9–34.



[...] it is pleasant that we have in Poland *duos ordines*, one senatorial and another knightly, though they both come from the same blood and move from the knightly to the senatorial. But I see and can understand no distinction between them other than *ratione* and a bit higher *superioris*; such a *gradus* must characterize every group of people.

The emphasis on noble equality (encompassing both orders) might easily upset the reader; it fails to keep in full view the contradiction between equality (stubbornly emphasized) and careful efforts to acquire posts, positions and titles: *nobilis* for the petty (*czastkowa, zagrodowa*) nobility, *generosus* for the *folwarczny* (farming) nobility, and *illustrissimus dominus* for the senators and some estate officials.<sup>180</sup> The “nobleman on the farm” and Adam Mickiewicz’s *niech Pocięj Macieja, nie Maciej Pocięja ma za dobrodzieja* (roughly: “let Pocięj treat Maciej as a benefactor and not the other way around”) must be understood not as confirmation of the real state of affairs, but rather as paradoxical conclusions drawn from everyday disregard for the rules. The talks to equality were broadly discussed – this motif appeared in commentary surrounding the Zebrzydowski Rebellion (1606–1608) – but the clearest opinion on this subject, as Opaliński notes, was the voice of the (minor) magnate Jan Gostomski, the voivode of Inowrocław: “It is in vain that I praise freedoms when the most free are the most powerful.”<sup>181</sup> Significantly, all the political phraseology about liberty-equality, all the political conflict within the Polish parliament (the Sejm) between the lower house (the *izba poselska*, or chamber of envoys) and the Senate, along with widespread disapproval of ancestral ordinations (viewed as conflicting with the principle of equality),<sup>182</sup> were accompanied by the subordination of an increasing number of noble groups. I will discuss this development in other chapters below; here I am interested in its external signs-postures in the literal sense of these words.

The contradiction between the equality of the entire noble estate (which consisted of two estates, knightly and senatorial, in the Sejm) and the obvious in-

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180 Random searches that I carried out years ago within the framework of a proseminar in modern history at the Historical Institute of the University of Warsaw revealed that at least some officials in Małopolska, when recording payments tied to conscription, precisely described the status, and thus the titlature, of those making payment; he was guided by what the nobleman owned in a given parish. Thus the owner of a village in one parish, and the owner of a piece of farmland in another, could in the first case be an *urodzony* (well-born) and in the second case barely “noble.” He could be “noble,” but did not have to be, depending on how the writer (the official) was feeling. One would have to check in this regard the *rekognicje podatkowe*, whose value as a primary source in the context of the above-mentioned records have been analyzed by Andrzej Wyczański.

181 Opaliński 1995, 86; the vote in the Sejm in 1616.

182 Zieliński T. 1977.

equality among noble individuals was, in a certain sense, a matter of appearance. The views quoted above touched upon two distinct situations. On the one hand, there was discussion of the equality of estates in the eyes of the law: the Senate was not a “higher chamber” relative to the Sejm. On the other hand, the position of each member of the noble estate, individual and familial, was emphasized at every step, the criteria being the “antiquity of the family” (along with the possession of given stretches of land), blood relationships, office holding, and finally individual virtues. Social hierarchies were a matter of many degrees, and I would argue that the dichotomic division of senators from the rest of the nobility was of limited significance and did not lead to the rise of a Polish *Herrenstand* because, among other reasons, the Senate itself was highly hierarchic. The system of voting (*wotowanie*) in the Senate, starting from the election of the highest officials – as opposed to the system of voting (*głosowanie*) in the Sejm and *sejmiki* – deprived the *drążkowe*<sup>183</sup> senators of any real meaning. After all there existed a constant influx of new people, and thus families, to the *drążkowy* section of the Senate chamber, which was caused both by the fact that senatorial families were dying off and by the power of royal patronage, but which was, to a large extent, also stimulated by the *magnateria* (the magnate class, the high aristocracy) itself.<sup>184</sup>

This social hierarchy had many levels, starting at a very low rank. Many compensated their very modest fortune with a municipal position or official post (Mickiewicz, author of the 1834 epic poem *Pan Tadeusz*, paid a great deal of attention to this fact). But what was necessary to achieve this goal were personal quali-

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183 Translator’s note: The adjective *drążkowy* cannot be practically translated into English, so throughout this English translation I will keep the term in its Polish original. For our purposes, it is enough to say that a *drążkowy szlachcic* was a poor nobleman and a *drążkowy* senator was one of lesser significance.

184 The *drążkowy* layer of senators deserves its own prosopographical analysis not so much as a kind of noble “sub-estate” in the *Rzeczpospolita* but rather in the context of magnatial patronage and power over the broader nobility. See the following quote from a sermon, which I draw from the as yet unpublished work by S. Baczewski, “Elementy ideologii szlacheckiej i ich funkcje w XVII-wiecznych polskojęzycznych drukowanych kazaniach pogrzebowych” (Lublin: KUL, 2001): “Those in the *Publika* have to stand while the Senators sit; but all of them as sons of the Crown are equal in *libertate, foro et capacitate bonorum, honorum, dignitatum*; equal in liberty, equal in the law [...] also equal in the fact that a king can give a voivode a lease or a *starostwo*, and he can also give the poorest nobleman (such noblemen are plentiful here) that which turns him into a lord. Every nobleman is capable of being the head of a *starostwo* or voivode.” A. Radawiecki, *Prawy ojcowic w kazaniu na pogrzebie... Mikołaja ze Żmigroda Stadnickiego* (Kraków: 1630), 22.

ties that were valued in this milieu and support from those with decisive power within parliamentary circles. True independence was a good in short supply.<sup>185</sup>

What influence did all this have on the behavior of the noble brothers, on their attitudes and gestures? Are we able to recreate to some degree the iconosphere of the early modern clientele?

The task of answering these questions is not simple because the kind of gestures of dependence and subordination that one might expect from a client do not necessarily differ from any other forms of subservience. How could the kind of subtle differences between “friend” and servant we are talking about here stand out in an attitude or a gesture, or in the form of dress? Beyond that, it is not easy today to distinguish between changing forms of politeness and courtesy, between various ways of bowing, even though contemporaries were able to easily tell what each of them were supposed to mean.

As Tadeusz Manteuffel noticed a half century ago, the system of dependencies between the nobility and the magnates of the *kresy* (eastern borderlands) in the *Rzeczpospolita* of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries generated customs and ceremonies that are well known to scholars of medieval feudalism.<sup>186</sup> However, this system of dependencies was already marked by a kind of “Sarmatian” anachronism, and Western observers reacted to Polish and Lithuanian gestures with amusement. The Frenchman Charles Ogier, before he really got to know Poland, marveled at the quaint gestures given by a Polish parliamentarian (actually he was Inflantian) whom he met in Copenhagen.

So how did the patron-client dyad appear in the Sarmatian and Eastern European social landscape? It is a phenomenon that is not easy to represent

### 3. The Clientele in Graphics: Gérard de Laresse

An inquiry into the rich graphics collection of the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, carried out in connection with the publication of conference materials on the subject of clientelism in modern Europe, did not bring the expected results. Editors did not succeed in finding an appropriate illustration for the book’s cover.<sup>187</sup> At the

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185 Mączak (1994) 2000, 220.

186 Manteuffel 1964, 1976.

187 This inquiry was carried out by Dr. Elizabeth Müller-Luckner, to whom I owe a great debt of gratitude. On the cover to the material from this conference there is a group from Jean-Pierre Norblin’s drawing *Sejmik w małym miasteczku*, about which I will talk more below (*Klientelssysteme* 1988). But this was not our only difficulty. The recently published collection *Le clientélisme politique dans les sociétés contemporaines*

same time a close examination of Daniel Chodowiecki's work does not bring the desired results. Images of the lord and the servant bent before him appear rather often, much like *Vor-* and *Untergesetzte* appear in various publications. But on the road between Gdańsk and Berlin, in the militarized and bureaucratized Kingdom of Prussia, it was not easy to find in those days examples of informal systems. What a shame it is that we have neither sketches nor profiles done by Johanna Schopenhauer (1766–1838) – whom I mention here not for the last time<sup>188</sup> – because it is at the point where two cultures meet (in Schopenhauer's case, the German and Polish cultures) where contrasts in behavior are drawn mostly clearly.<sup>189</sup>

But in the eighteenth century great interest was shown in the gesture, both with reference to the individual and the group. Albums on this subject enjoyed great success.<sup>190</sup> The most popular author of such works in this period was the Swiss Johann Caspar Lavater (1741–1801), a protestant mystic who wrote the 4-volume *Physiognomische Fragmente*.<sup>191</sup> The moral and – I would say – mawkish goal of this book provides little that is of interest to us, though another, younger graphic artist – namely the Dutchman Gérard de Lairese (1640–1711), author of the *Großes Mahler-Buch*<sup>192</sup> – offered readers the easiest possible examples for amateur works

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has on its cover a photograph of a group of prisoners behind bars guarded by Italian *carabinieri*. Surely that photo comes from some trial of members of the Sicilian mafia. The connection between this photo and clientelism appears to be weak; see *Clientélisme politique* 1998. The oft cited *Liens de pouvoir ou le clientélisme revisité* is decorated with a drawing by Honoré Daumier portraying Don Quixote and Sancho ("Terrain" 1993). For the cover of my book *Klientela*, I myself chose a drawing from the manuscript *Lex Regia* portraying Frederick III King of Denmark. I admit that Denmark in the seventeenth century was not a model of the clientelistic structure, but in a way the drawing seemed perfect to me, not to mention eye-catching.

188 See the below interlude entitled "The Polish Nobleman in the Eyes of a Woman from Gdańsk."

189 Schopenhauer 1959, 46.

190 I omit here a great deal of historical literature on the subject of the gesture because I did not find in these works any material about – or even allusions to – the specific subject of interest to us.

191 Lavater 1776, of which there are many editions and translations. From the Johanna Schopenhauer's diary, compare: "I wanted at least to capture the silhouette of the shadows, this substitute of a portrait that I knew from Lavater's *Fragments* and which have started to be fashionable." Schopenhauer 1959, 100. Here Schopenhauer was remembering her youth, 1783–1785.

192 Lairese 1784. I made use of copies from the Nationalbibliothek in Vienna and the library of the National Museum of Warsaw, having checked if other available copies in the National Museum do not differ from the German editions in significant ways; certain illustrations are missing from some editions, for example the French edition,

of art, those particularly directed at enlightened ladies. This work, which circulated in many editions and translations throughout the entire eighteenth century, was enclosed in stiff, classical convention. The author was not interested in the personal features of the models used in the drawings, and he did not include in his work, as Lavater later would, portraits of rulers, commanders and aristocrats, in order to broadly – but entirely arbitrarily – illuminate what character traits are revealed in facial features.<sup>193</sup> At the same time, he conceived group scenes mainly according to ancient conventions and using ancient dress. Many illustrations were accompanied by sometimes extensive comments containing specific recommendations for readers and directing their attention to significant details. Also included was an illustrated chapter entitled “Von der freywilligen Unterhängigkeit” (About Voluntary Subjection), in which we read:

Here we see a frightened one as he hands his sword to another, holding it by the blade, while the other holds it by the handle. It is as if the interaction, like the feelings of both characters, is two-sided. One presents his timidity, the other his bravery. The one lowers his head deeply, his eyes directed at the other’s feet; he stands on legs that are bent, as if under a burden. He is either about to hold his left hand out or press it against his chest, as if to say: “Here is everything that I have; into your hands I commend my body and my life.” At the same time, the other one stands straight and strong on his legs, with his right foot forward and left hand behind; on his face is a threatening expression; his lips are closed, and his lower lip and jaw are slightly extended, while he looks with contempt at the man handing over the sword.<sup>194</sup>

This publication contained another element that had a certain connection with the subject of clientele, namely *Mildthätigkeit* (Acts of Generosity).

A respectable man, who has given a handful of money to someone in need, is reaching out with his right hand and looking at the poor man with a satisfied and wonderful expression on his face. He stands straight with his body facing forward, as if he is about to walk away. But the poor man quickly approaches him, bows, and reaches out with both hands. His hands are open to form a kind of bowl, and – with his face lowered – looks with delight at the gift. His eyes are wide open and his lips appear to say: “O ho!”<sup>195</sup>

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though the text was retained. One book on Lairese and his work that caught my intention is that of Francis Haskell, *History and Its Images: Art and the Interpretation of the Past* (New Haven-London: 1993 [1995]).

193 See, for example, Lavater’s statement: “Uladislaus VI. [s] König in Polen und Schweden. Der äussere Gränzumriss des Gesichts hat was entsetzlich gemeines, rohes, pöbehaftes; nicht denkender, forschender Sinn, aber auch nicht Stumpfsinn ist im Auge, so wie es erscheint. Viel Sinnlichkeit, wenig Cultur, planlose Festigkeit, oder Schwachheit vielmehr – ist der Ausdruck des Ganzen.” Lavater 1776, vol. 2, 203.

194 Lairese 1784, vol. 1, 75.

195 Ibid.

These are two clearly different examples. In the second example we see a “lord” and “beggar,” though the description attached to the drawing does not correspond strictly to what we see in the drawing itself because the beggar’s mouth is in fact closed. In the first example, on the other hand, the bond between the characters is less obvious. I will attempt to indicate why illustration 1 contains signs of the bonds that come with a patron-client relationship.<sup>196</sup>

This drawing depicts unequal partners that are not tied by a handful of money but by a sword being transferred from hand to hand. Whereas, in the case of the “lord” and the “beggar,” we see a poor man (*der Arme, Dürftige*) who is approached with reluctance (temporarily, *vorübergehend*) and to whom one gives a handout, here the two partners stand face-to-face. In handing over his sword, *der Arme* appears to be saying: *Ich stelle meinen Leib und Leben in eure Hand* and I put myself into the hands of the powerful one, though it is he who is handing the sword over, which means that he too is worthy (even if lower) since he is of the knightly order. But the fact is that the author neither drew nor described the act of submission to a feudal relationship and its fixed ceremony. Rather, he depicts a gesture that is less formal. Like the scene with the handout, the scene with the sword illustrates *freywilligen Unterhängigkeit* or “voluntary subjection” and is meant to give a sign of mutual affection (*Gegenliebe*). It is also quite significant that Lairese is not able to specifically define both partners’ positions; he avoids concrete nouns, using instead “the one who is handing over” the sword, the “other,” etc.

In any case, the scene with the sword is better suited to a “lop-sided friendship” than the scene with the man bent at the knees and the expression of contempt (*siehet den Geber verächtlich über die Achseln an*) on the face of the powerful one, who is probably the patron. The drawings are not exactly fine pieces of art; they are very academic in the negative sense of the word. The body language of the characters is more strongly emphasized than Velleius’s statement would recommend: “the humble look up to the powerful without fear, while the powerful do not despise the humble.”<sup>197</sup>

#### 4. The Clientele in Graphics: Jean-Pierre Norblin

We move from abstract and classical convention, suspended in space and time, to the family atmosphere of the noble fair and *sejmik*, which Jean-Pierre Norblin (first from nature, and then from tenacious memory) sketched critically but with

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196 A similar drawing in Lavater’s work (1776, vol. 2, 198) presents a fat suzerain reaching out slightly with his left hand. Before him in the distance is a humble subordinate with unkempt hair clutching his cap to his body. That having been said, we cannot interpret this image in the way we interpret *illus. 1*.

197 Velleius II, 126; see also Brunt 1971, 48.

sympathy and always with understanding. Among the hundreds of characters participating in the noble *sejmik* we also find individuals clearly entangled in a relationship of dependence.<sup>198</sup>

Alicja Kępińska, who has written broadly on Norblin's *sejmik* scenes, attached the title *Magnat z klientami* (The Magnate with Clients) to one of the Norblin drawings she reproduced.<sup>199</sup> Here and elsewhere she has used the term "magnate" excessively simply because the size and shape of the figure on the left suggests (to her) wealth, even though his clothing is not typical of a magnate. His partner is a typical skinny character, one who – in this case – has not taken off his cap and – like the magnate – is gesticulating wildly<sup>200</sup> (illus. 2). It is worth taking notice of two motifs that appear repeatedly in Norblin's noble scenes and that are as symbolic as they are realistic. The first involves the question: who is wearing a cap and who has his head uncovered? And the second involves obesity, which is an eternal and intercultural stereotype (in Europe, at least, *tolstyje liudi* or *popolo grasso/popolo minuto*), which was materially justifiable even if Zbigniew Kuchowicz's thesis about the nutrition and poor health of the *magnateria* has not been proven.<sup>201</sup>

The contrasts of social position are outlined more clearly in another drawing (illus. 3), even though it is in fact barely a sketch.<sup>202</sup> Here we see a group of three noblemen chatting (perhaps minor noblemen, since they are modestly and carelessly dressed), and it is immediately apparent who is most important and who must show respect. A bent figure, cap in hand; a nobleman listens humbly – perhaps even reverentially – to the words being spoken to him while offering a gracious gesture (or perhaps one of warning) with his left hand.

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198 Kępińska 1958.

199 Ibid., illus. XVII, 2. The Muzeum Narodowe in Kraków, the Czartoryski Collections. R. r. 1420 (1802).

200 I am omitting here a too small (8.4 x 5.2 cm) drawing from the Gołuchowski collection (Muzeum Narodowe in Warsaw, Rys. Pol. 9355 dated 1795), in which an obese nobleman is pontificating to three others. See also Kępińska 1958, illus. XII and XVI (scenes from two *sejmiki* in a church – the Gołuchowski album and the Körnicki Collections). Kępińska, like other historians, is too quick to exploit the status of magnates. In the scene *Sejmik przed kościołem* (Muzeum Narodowe in Kraków, Czartoryski Collections. R. r. 962; Kępińska 1958, illus. II and XIII), a supposed magnate is rather a nobleman with authority who, as *sejmik* director, is attempting to calm the crowd's excitement. I could envision Marcin Matuszewicz in such a situation.

201 Kuchowicz 1966.

202 Kępińska 1958, fot. XVII. Muzeum Narodowe in Warsaw, Album Gołuchowski, Rys. Pol. 9469. The drawing is damaged; two heads of hair and caps were glued with a strip of paper, which has no bearing on the iconographic and symbolic subject of interest to us.

But Norblin's best graphical image – indeed, the best that I know – illustrating clientelism is a fragment of a *sejmik* scene played out in the open air (illus. 5; see also illus. 4).<sup>203</sup> The large drawing in its entirety depicts a real scene as if from a Soplicowo service set.<sup>204</sup> Particularly in the fragment of interest to us, there is no doubt who is who. The most important character stands at the left. A fat nobleman, dressed in a *kontusz* and holding a walking stick in his right hand, looks forward, barely noticing that another man, having removed his cap (his clipped hair is visible) has dropped to one knee before him. At the same time the lord, pointing with the index finger of his left hand, seems to be giving some sort of instruction. One could join the following text to the image – “Oj, remember, dear sirs, brothers ...” – and these words would be more justified than those Lairese associated with his image: “O ho!”<sup>205</sup>

A bit in the background and between the two unequal partners we see a third important figure, no doubt a steward (*włodarz, ekonom*), who is leaning forward politely and apparently taking note of something. Is he recording some sort of verbal agreement, perhaps a promise given by the gentleman, perhaps a promise given by the client? Is he establishing the client's position in the patron's entourage?<sup>206</sup> This additional figure is like a third dimension in the relationship. But the chain of subordination seems not to end with humans; at the front of the scene an emaciated mongrel roams through the square. “The patron turned into a mutt” (Mickiewicz).

This little scene was visible in an earlier drawing by Józef Wall entitled *Sejmik w małym miasteczku*,<sup>207</sup> which was no doubt a prototype of the 1803 Norblin drawing under discussion here (though the dog's place in Wall's scene is less prominent).

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203 Kępińska 1958, illus. IV. Körnicki Collections, MK 3380 dated 1803.

204 Translator's note: This is a reference to a service set (*serwis soplicowski*) with images depicting life in old Poland. It is tied to the town of Soplicowo from Mickiewicz's *Pan Tadeusz*.

205 See also the drawing *Sejmik w kościele* in the Körnicki Collections, MK 4351.

206 What comes to mind is Jędrzej Kitowicz's description of a situation that was intolerable for the nobility, namely when Jerzy Fleming, the *podskarbi* (grand treasurer) of Lithuania, “having given [a nobleman] a position, noted – for his own memory – his salary, meals, and feed for the horses, and then sent him off to the *klucz dóbr* [a large group of estates located close to one another and under the same administration]”; the author (much like Marcin Matuszewicz) highly disapproved of a lord behaving in such a way. See also below the interlude entitled “To Like as Much as One's Interests Command” and Mączak (1994) 2000, 263–264. It is conspicuous that “the third” item in the above-mentioned triad of the Gołuchowski album looks similar.

207 Biblioteka Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, Zbiory Graficzne, T. 1098, nr. 164.



1. Postures signifying “voluntary subjection”



2. A group of noblemen: Norblin the caricaturist realistically (despite everything) distinguishes between a fat and rich nobleman from a thin and poor one.



3. *Conversation between unequal friends*



4. The expression "I fall at your feet" has a literal application here. Two noblemen visible at the left appear to illustrate noble body language as conceived by Johanna Schopenhauer.



5. A fragment from a sejmik scene in front of a church. Here, a third partner – the steward – is depicted even more clearly than in illus. 3. And in addition, a dog. Realism or a symbol?



6. Jean-Pierre Norblin, "Magnat z klientami," fragment of the drawing Sejmik przed kościołem, pencil, sepia, 1790.



I have attempted to interpret these drawings as a way of presenting the basis of my reasoning and argumentation. Others may interpret them differently. But what more might a historian or anthropologist want, who is in search of the iconography of clientelism? It is a shame that Marcin Matuszewicz did not have the talent and ambition to sketch that he had for translation of Horace's *Satires*. One must add here that his speeches directed at courtiers (as if they were co-clients), whose favors he had to buy, are unusually vivid. It is easy to imagine him in a situation like that depicted by Norblinski in front of the church, where the nobleman appears, with dignity, to be calming the excitement of the crowd (illus. 6).

#### **a. The Polish Nobleman in the Eyes of a Woman from Gdańsk**

The groups of noblemen sketched by Wall and Norblin bring to mind what the keen observer from Gdańsk, Johanna Schopenhauer, wrote:

Sometimes it happens that in the excitement caused by alcohol it occurs to two of them to pay compliments to one another in a courtly and polite manner. In order to accomplish their mutual task they bend down so far as to almost touch their foreheads to the

ground, they kiss hands, they embrace according to Polish custom [...] each of them extends his head as far as possible over the shoulder of his friend to place a kiss on the back of his neck. Viewing this, there is no way to keep a straight face, one cannot help comparing these individuals to a pair of orangutans.<sup>208</sup>

How and when in this period was a *Zivilisationsprozeß* (Norbert Elias) carried out on the Polish nobility? Was this process not accelerated by the partitions of Poland in the late eighteenth century?

## 5. The Gesture on the Upper Nile, the Hudson, and the Vistula

It is not Schopenhauer's orangutans that encouraged me to direct my reader's attention to Africa, but rather the abundance of literature on the subject of patronal relationships there. That having been said, clientelism, though it is a phenomenon that is easily recognizable as a social system, is not one that eagerly strikes a pose for the artist, including photographers. Illustrations included in monographs on systems of rule in Africa or Latin America, particularly those focusing on clienteles, do not provide us much useful material. Modeling stiffly (usually *en face*), "social actors" do not appear in the context of any meaningful mutual relationship, even if signs of social inequality are clearly visible among them. Often we see portraits of characters about whom we read in the text, but more often we see "typical" or "characteristic" characters or groups standing stiffly and looking straight at the camera, a bit like European children admiring the photographer's lens. In only one piece of Africanist literature that I know of did the author, Jacques J. Maquet, reproduce a photograph entitled *Tutsi lord and Hutu client*.<sup>209</sup> The former is seated on high drinking through a reed straw from an amphora, which is held by the latter. From this photo it is not clear why he is a client and not a servant. Does he know his patron's thoughts?<sup>210</sup> However, the fact that the two characters are positioned on unequal levels is both banal and typical of many cultures.<sup>211</sup>

In the Western world, meaningful and characteristic clientelistic gestures manifest themselves in other contexts. Let us return to the powerful and significant subject of the kiss. Too bad no one photographed the famous *bouche à bouche* that Italian Prime Minister Giulio Andreotti is said to have given the Sicilian *capo dei capi*, Totò Riina, a fact that might well have saved the former prime minister in

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208 Schopenhauer 1959, 43.

209 Maquet 1961, frontispiece.

210 Maquet carried out his research in 1949–1951. Around fifty years later, in the year 2000, it occurs to me that such a scene is no longer possible.

211 See the section below "*Mchod-Yon: Patronage and the Sovereignty of Tibet*."

the autumn of 1999 from a jail sentence.<sup>212</sup> But the significance of such a gesture would not have been obvious<sup>213</sup>: A sign of dependence and subordination, or fraternity? *Ambo meliores*.

Similar reflections are inspired by the well-documented (and memorable, through all the television coverage) meetings between Leonid Brezhnev, Edward Gierek, and other “first secretaries” of the Soviet satellites. The kiss-on-the-lips (or, as it was called in Poland, “mouth-to-mouth resuscitation”) was supposed to emphasize Big Brother’s approval of his partner, and thus it became a kind of extreme unction or perhaps a renewal of the homagium that demonstrated at the same time the dialectical equality of both parties to the kiss.<sup>214</sup> But this scene provoked reactions, at least among Polish viewers, that were unpredicted (and undesired) by official propagandists, who quickly suppressed them.

We must again recall that unforgettable scene from Francis Ford Coppola’s<sup>215</sup> *The Godfather* in which, after Vito’s death, the *capi* kiss his son and successor not on the cheek but on the hand.<sup>216</sup>

Though organized crime is a phenomenon that is only marginally – and historically – tied to the inter-personal and patronal relations under discussion here, I would like to note that its literary image, or – if I may put it this way – its literary iconography, appears to have an irresistible charm for novice *mafiosi*, evidence

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212 In the Polish press, events were recorded in the following way: “According to Balducio de Maggio, the *capo di tutte capi* Totò Riina’s chauffeur, Andreotti met secretly in Sicily with Riina, who was then in hiding, and even shared with him a kiss on the lips – a sign of affiliation with the group of ‘men of honor.’” See M. Jędrzyk, “Pocałunek mafi,” *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 23 May 1994. The prosecutor in Palermo brought a case against Andreotti, whom the court – after a trial that lasted five and a half years – found not guilty of collaborating with the Sicilian mafia. For more on this trial, see J. Moskwa in Matard-Bonnucci 2001, 281–298.

213 The conditional is used here out of respect for the court or as an expression of understanding of its helplessness.

214 Socialist ritual called on only leaders to greet each other with a kiss; members of their entourage did so in more economical ways that were marked, no doubt, by what one might call neo-byzantine behavior. Parenthetically one might add that, in post-Soviet circles, the political kiss has given way to the Western “hug,” though one that is more powerful than the kind given by politicians in the West. These would represent the next stage in the elimination of the ritual kiss, discussed above, which had begun already in the late fifteenth century. For more on this subject see the section above entitled “The Social Function of the Kiss” and Major 1987.

215 See also Pantaleone 1962, 198; Mangione 1985, 21; Matard-Bonnucci 2001, 148, 219.

216 See the text below on public forms of honoring mayors on the part of the Sicilian capo, don Vito Cascio Ferro of Bisacchino.

for which can be found in Moscow and Łódź, Brooklyn and Chicago. In Łódź, for example, an investigation into organized crime active in that city claimed, among other things, that the local boss, nicknamed “Popelina,” was a passionate fan of films on the Sicilian mafia. He tried to model his behavior on Marlon Brando’s character in *The Godfather* and he went to great lengths to do this: he imitated Brando’s voice, he grew a mustache, and he bought a signet ring. But he took this ceremony to the point of kitsch that neither Brando nor Coppola – nor perhaps any of the original characters in Mario Puzo’s novel – would have allowed themselves: our own (Polish) “Popelina” gave his people audience by ordering them to kneel and kiss his ring.<sup>217</sup> How very expressive and yet unexceptional. After all, the FBI has claimed that suggestive literature, and crime films in particular, enjoy great success within crime syndicate circles.<sup>218</sup>

So one can say without exaggeration: realistic art co-founds social (criminal) reality, but it also creates a new custom. And in this regard I see a winding road: from the Sicilian Don Corleone, through New York and Chicago – along with a pizza – to Poland.

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217 “Jak ‘Tato’ ośmiornicę hodował.” A report by J. Banasik, *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 29–30 January 2000. The motif is still vital; in December 2000 we read from the report of a trial in Szczecin: “Oczko’ in the last word: ‘Tula’ says – after the behavior of other people it was apparent that it was I who was the boss. *They kissed my hand* [...]?! The press view this thing as performances.” A. Zadworny, “Proces ‘Oczki’. To nie Wolf?,” *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 7 December 2000. Author’s emphasis – A.M.

218 American scholars of Cosa Nostra have written about this fact. See H.S. Nelli, *Organized Crime* 1986, 1: “Syndicate members are also among the biggest fans of crime books and movies.” In the home of Philip “The Chicken Man” Testa, police found a video cassette of *The Godfather* and a film about the gangster Jimmy “The Weasel” Frantianno. Salvatore (Bill) Bonanno, son of one of America’s most prominent mafia bosses, wondered on whom the novel’s Don Vito Corleone was based, and he saw in that character certain features of his father, Joseph Bonanno (1905–2002); G. Talese, *Honor Thy Father* (New York: 1971), 311–312; “The Mob’s Ché Generation. Greedy ‘Imposters’ are Replacing Older Dons,” *Newsweek* (U.S. and Canadian issue), 7 May 1989, 75. The author detected an “identity crisis” in the mafia; uncertain about how to behave, members of the mafia were passionately reading novels and reports about themselves. “‘It’s like they’re searching for their roots,’ said one investigator. ‘They’re looking to the movies, to see how to act.’” Two FBI agents, having installed listening devices in the home of one New York mafia boss, overheard conversations that confirm such interests on the part of gangsters. See O’Brien and Kurins 1993, 59. That having been said, the Italian-American Civil Rights League, an organization set up to defend the good name of Americans of Italian descent, criticized *The Godfather*, both the novel and the film, for having defamed them as a group and for having nothing to do with reality.





## Chapter 4: Antiquity: The Forgotten Clientele

Forgotten? Not exactly. The classic philologist, the expert in Latin literature, and more than one historian of more modern times, have never lost sight of the clientele in ancient Rome.<sup>219</sup> But in the social sciences, the ancient lineage of this phenomenon and its terminology have become highly blurred. We are not always aware of the barriers that even dynamic developments in academia have not been able to tear down. Generally, only Lily Ross Taylor's book and her article published in *Friends, Followers, and Factions*<sup>220</sup> consistently show up in the extensive bibliographies found in works written by non-historians on patron-client relationships. But similar collections, usually intended for student reading lists, may actually limit the horizon of knowledge for some scholars.<sup>221</sup> For anthropologists, especially those conducting field research in Latin America, the term "patron" is usually not associated with the ancient *patronus*, but rather with the Latin American *patrón*.<sup>222</sup>

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- 219 It is certainly not insignificant that ancient history on American universities has been detached from history course work and tied to "classical studies." Alongside the above-cited works by ancient historians, others that are highly important for the subject of clienteles include Paul Veyne, *Le Pain et le cirque. Sociologie historique d'un pluralisme politique* (Paris: 1976) and "Clientèle et corruption au service de l'Etat: la vénalité des offices dans le Bas-Empire romain," *Annales E.S.C.*, vol. 36, no. 3, 339–360.
- 220 Lily Ross Taylor 1977; sometimes her entire monograph is mentioned. Attached to this collection alongside Taylor's work is a fragment from Marc Bloch's *Feudal Society*.
- 221 The most easily accessible material in university libraries, for example the information under the entry "Clients" in the *Enzyklopädie der Altertumswissenschaft*, might well disappoint anthropologists. But the complete omission of the work of Norbert Rouland (Rouland 1979, 1980) indicates a double barrier: between disciplines and between languages; the first of the two works cited here even includes in the title *dépendance personnelle*.
- 222 The American Keith E. Legg writes that "it is not insignificant that clientelism, as a political phenomenon, is particularly associated with the emergence of liberal institutions in developed societies in the nineteenth century," and then in footnote 8 he adds that "patron-client relationships have a much longer history," at which point he cites the "illuminating work" of Lily Ross Taylor, as if she had discovered this phenomenon in ancient Rome (see Legg, without pagination). Perhaps this is the effect of the habit in the American social sciences of making use of collected articles

Today such a gap in social memory and inadequacies in humanistic education are glaring, which have led one eminent American-born British historian of the ancient world, Moses Finley, to write:

I make scarcely any reference to the recent outpouring of sociological and anthropological literature on patronage because I have found little of it helpful. The field of study is restricted to an odd combination of small societies in the colonial (or ex-colonial) world, backward agrarian regions in the Mediterranean basin, and machine politics in big American cities. The vast expanse of historical societies is ignored, so that, e.g., A. Weingrod has produced a typology in which the Roman *clientela* cannot be accommodated (though “patron” and “client” are of course words coined by the Romans).<sup>223</sup>

Many of Moses’ colleagues have no doubt shared this point of view, though – as we shall see below – reflective analysis of more recent patron-client relationships, even modern ones, can be fruitful.<sup>224</sup> That having been said, relations between anthropologists and historians of the ancient world are still often one-way. Among social scientists even the widely-read Gioia Weber-Pazmiño, author of a dissertation entitled “Klientelismus. Annäherungen an das Konzept” – which she defended at the University of Zürich; which suffers from a gap between the ancient Roman *patrocinium* (sic!) and modern *Patron-Klient Beziehungen*; and which cited the above-mentioned Alex Weingrod – cites the supposedly two authors of *The Ancient City* (Fustel de Coulange & Numa Denis)<sup>225</sup>. “Numa married Pompilius” ...<sup>226</sup>

An important European cultural bond was broken when the traditional canon of education was set aside, with its emphasis on Latin, Greek, and classical culture, which encouraged knowledge of the Roman authors, which preserved in the memories of elites the correspondence between Cicero and Atticus, the poetry of Juvenal and Martial, where the subject of *clienteles* came up quite often. As I have

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intended mainly for students, though Jerzy Topolski, knowing Latin, also believed that it was historians who invented the concept of “patron and client.”

223 Finley 1983, 35, footnote 25. On the other hand, one might add that, at several junctures in his book, this British professor of ancient history from Cambridge judged too harshly bold attempts by social scientists to interpret ancient societies.

224 Of course it does not *have* to be fruitful.

225 Weber-Pazmiño 1991, 19. In fact, this is a reference to the classic work *La cité antique* (Paris: 1864; English translation 1865), whose author was the French historian Numa Denis Fustel de Coulanges (1830–1889). It is surprising that Weber-Pazmiño’s *Doktorvater* did not notice this mistake.

226 Translator’s note: This is a reference to a comedy by the French writer Jean-Pierre Claris de Florian entitled *Numa Pompilius* (1786), which ends with a farcical marriage.

written elsewhere, it was good custom in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, when asking for support or protection, to define oneself as *cliens*, and – *si quid id est* – in farm (*folwarczny*) accounts in seventeenth-century Poland the lowest and youngest servant was registered as *clientulus*. In the legal Latin of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries *nexus clientela* is denoted as a feudal tie.<sup>227</sup>

One could easily call Marcin Matuszewicz – himself an expert on clientelistic politics – a man of success. He built himself into an authority in the province, and by the grace of God he took a seat in the Senate and a career path for his descendants was opened. An earlier and less happy client, one who had no chance to achieve a position of middleman-broker, namely the above-quoted Stanisław Orzechowski (1513–1566), passed along the following legend about the genesis of patronage.

## 1. Two Legends

They say that there was, in the time of Romulus in Rome, a certain man who was extraordinarily noble, generous to everyone, a defender of those in need, Patronus by name, who used it [the name] with the utmost kindness toward everyone, and who left this name behind him to all those who treat people with benevolence.<sup>228</sup>

This version of the ancient legend of the exemplary patron was what Orzechowski, whose own problems with a patron-magnate, Piotr Kmita, turned him into a theorist of the system.<sup>229</sup> But this is neither the only version nor the best version of the story; it gives the impression of something invented *ad hoc* by a lean man of letters to emphasize goodness, kindness and especially generosity as the keys to defining a patron. Those in ancient times needed legends that were richer in content, particularly those that gave meaning to institutions and created the traditions on which they were based, and for this task Dionysius of Halicarnassus was perfectly suited. Though it has not been able to defend itself against criticism directed against it from historians, this version of the ancient legend is worth citing because it played an important role in Roman tradition, particularly because it reflected certain social tendencies in the era from which it emerged.

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227 This is particularly true with regard to territories.

228 “Fuit enim Romae Romuli tempore, u ferunt, homo quidem apprime nobilis ac benignus in omnes, tutor ac adiutor egentium hominum, Patronus nomine, qui summa benignitate eum uteretur in omnes, hoc nomen post se reliquit omnibus his, qui beneficiis homines adiuverant.” Stanisław Orzechowski to Jan Przyłuski (1547?), *Orichoviana* 1891, 103.

229 See Mączak (1994) 2000.

According to Dionysius (and, significantly later, to Orzechowski) we must date the creation of this patronal system to the times of Romulus because it was he who is supposed to have divided the city's population into two classes: patricians and plebeians. From among the patricians each plebeian chose for himself a patron. Patrons were to clarify the law to their clients, who were unaware of its contents, to tend to their interests even in their absence, and in so doing "to forget nothing that a father does for his sons" in questions involving money and the law. If someone cheated a client in such matters, the patron was to bring charges against the perpetrator and to defend his client during any subsequent trial. Briefly put, he was to assure peace and tranquility (*tranquillitas*) in the client's matters both private and public. In exchange, the client was to assist the patron when he lacked resources for his daughter's dowry; to contribute funds to buy back his children from slavery; and to – as the patron's relatives would – lend the patron money (which was not, in fact, to be paid back), which could be used to pay off debts associated with a legal setback or to cover costs incurred by the patron while carrying out his official duties.

Under laws against betrayal and treason, neither party could take legal action or vote against the other party, and neither could join forces with a common enemy. Under Romulus, those guilty of breaking the law in this regard could be put to death and offered as a sacrifice to Zeus.

This system is said to have functioned without change through many generations; each patron attempted to win over as many clients as possible. Both parties tried their best to fulfill their duties, and patrons – it is essential to understand – took care to worry their clients as little as possible. They did not accept cash gifts from them; they limited their pleasures, and they took *virtus*, and not *fortuna*, as a measure of happiness. As a result, Rome saw neither blood spilt nor murder; "by mutual persuasion and education, by mutual give and take they succeeded in resolving their grievances in a manner consistent with their common citizen status," until – that is – Gaius Gracchus "used the power of the tribunate to destroy the harmony of the state."<sup>230</sup>

This last remark highlights the political tendency of the legend, but it is worth noting that Dionysius conveyed a vision of a bygone utopia in which every patron was good to the client and none of them exploited the advantage given to him by Romulus. It is significant that a status granted in the distant past remained un-

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230 Antiquitates Romanae 2, 9–11. Andrew Wallace-Hadrill, *Patronage in Ancient Society* (Routledge, 1989), 243–245.

changed, and that the patron-client dyad perpetuated itself through inheritance. We read Dionysius further:

As a result patron-client relations subsisted for many generations, much like relationships by blood, and descendants were obligated to follow them. For members of distinguished families significance was derived from having as many clients as possible by maintaining patronal bonds that were inherited throughout the generations, and by creating new bonds thanks to their service.

What parts of this patronal idyll were the Romans able to carry over to the Republic?

## 2. The Era of the Republic: The Classic Clientele

The above idealized image was, in fact, just another myth about the City's origins, though there is general agreement that this image reflects a certain reality in subsequent years. Andrew Drummond has argued that Dionysius simply extrapolated backwards from the patron-client relationships at work in his own day – that is, around the end of the second century B.C. Relevant here is the fact, mentioned by Dionysius, that patron-client bonds were inherited and that patrons and clients were prohibited from taking legal action against one other, though the Greek historian's belief that all plebeians were originally clients of a patrician corresponds to paternalistic tendencies in Roman historiography and has little basis in fact. The reality of the earlier Roman clientele remains a matter of speculation.<sup>231</sup> Citing a lack of evidence, Drummond rejects the hypothesis that posits the existence of clan (*gens*) clienteles, just as he rejects the argument that *clientes* were tied to the land. Citing Géza Alföldy, he thus accepts as probable the hypothesis that clients were an armed entourage of individual aristocrats. One must reject out of hand Dionysius's attempt to identify patrons with patricians and clients with plebeians.<sup>232</sup> Dionysius did not fully understand Roman institutions and he did not grasp the peculiar nature of clientelistic relations, namely that they were not sanctioned by law, but rather were the product of powerful social tradition.<sup>233</sup> In the Republic the clientele indicated a relationship of dependence between two citizens in which an inequality of power and status was clear and distinct. In principle it was a personal and voluntary arrangement, and the initiative to establish such a relationship often came from the potential client. Much

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231 Drummond 1990, 91, 95–110.

232 Wallace-Hadrill 1990, 66.

233 This is something that Theodor Mommsen did not understand; Rich 1990, 118–119.

like the friendship-*amicitia* and hospitality-*hospitium*, the patron-client relationship was often hereditary, to no detriment to the client. Services-obligations were mutual and not limited to a single field or discipline. Members of the republican elite needed a significant number of free but dependent people as a visible sign of their power and importance (about which Dionysius writes). Such people also helped them solve their problems related to everyday services.

Recently Andrew Wallace-Hadrill published a broad synthesis of how patronage functioned during the Roman Republic. He gives particular significance to the informal (private) character of the commonly recognized system, as well as to its flexibility. "Patronage explains how in the context of laws of equality, the great families always kept their power [...] Clientele was not in the laws [...] but it reigned in society," Wallace-Hadrill writes, referring approvingly to the above-mentioned work by Fustel de Coulanges and to the classic works of Matthias Gelzer.<sup>234</sup> All Roman people, both those in governing circles and the mass electorate whom they governed, were entangled in – and tied together by – countless relationships based on *fides* and personal bonds, which took shape in *patrocinium*, political friendships and financial commitments. These relationships set the terms for the division of political power. To maintain their rights and powers, both citizens and subjects were forced to search for protection among the rich and powerful.<sup>235</sup>

This general observation, and particularly the last sentence, *mutatis mutandis*, applies as well to other societies. The strictly political element played a small role because in the electoral system the votes of poor citizens barely counted. Wallace-Hadrill points out that a significant part of legislation was directed against the clientelistic system, a fact that angered Cicero, who argued that it helped undermine *auctoritas*. Policies initiated by the Gracchi to redistribute land and distribute subsidized grain imposed on the state the obligation to care for the poor, which earlier had been the domain of the patrons.

In terms of the subject matter of this book, the Roman clientele during the Republic is chronologically marginal (I do not want to immerse myself too deeply in antiquity). However, it is of fundamental significance to me as an archetype of the bonds between the powerful and those at the bottom of society, between the

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234 Fustel de Coulanges 1864; Gelzer 1912. The Fustel de Coulanges quote can be found in Wallace-Hadrill 1990, 68.

235 It is surprising how modern the arguments made in Gelzer's short book sound, even though it was written almost a century ago. Wallace-Hadrill called it a seminal contribution to social history that found its continuation only years later. Its English translation was published in 1969.

rich and poor, in the face of underdeveloped public institutions. Viewing the issue from such a large perspective, it is easy to take a diachronic approach and find for clienteles of various eras a common denominator. The American scholar of Rome under the empire, Ramsay MacMullen, writes – in opposition to Finley – that we owe a debt of gratitude to anthropologists, particularly Sydel Silverman and Jeremy Boissevain, and he refers not just to William Beik (seventeenth-century France<sup>236</sup>) and other modern historians from the American school, but also to *The Brothers Karamazov*. His main theme, however, is eternal: corruption. Wallace-Hadrill also cites Silverman’s work on Umbria over the last two centuries.<sup>237</sup> I myself associate this with the old Polish “clientele of a mighty neighbor,” which I mention several times throughout this book.

Much like both of the above modern examples, poor Roman citizens were not able to realize their ambitions and rights without assistance from the wealthy and powerful, who had connections at the center of power. Wallace-Hadrill concludes: “The clients could not do without their patrons. Patronage thus serves as a mechanism for reproducing social power.” That might be clear, but it is not obvious how and to what extent a patron was able to satisfy the material needs of the large number of citizens attached to him. In both Rome and the above-mentioned cases, potential clients had no other chances than those created for them by a wealthy and powerful middleman. Wallace-Hadrill writes: In a situation “where all need resources that are in short supply, it is easier for the patrons to secure control of the routes of access, so rendering access impossible except through a patron.”<sup>238</sup> Should one thus say that the patron only “seemed to create a chance for them”? It is worth remembering this interpretation of patronage as matter of hope and the “only chance,” because such an interpretation can be applied to mass clienteles in modern society.

This hypothesis explains the powerful mechanisms of social control created by the patronal system, which did not so much ensure “fair and equitable satisfaction” of clients’ needs as it did create for all of them the possibility of such satisfaction. At this point several questions emerge, in particular:

1. What sort of hierarchy existed within the client milieu?
2. How stable were these relationships?

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236 Beik 1985.

237 MacMullen 1988, 70, 99, 107; Wallace-Hadrill 1990, 72–73; Silverman 1965; Chubb 1982. See also Cregeen 1968; Kettering 1986.

238 Wallace-Hadrill 1990, 72–73.

3. What role did cliental bonds play in the expansion of the Roman Republic on the peninsula and then in the Mediterranean region broadly defined?

Though the clientele is, in principle, a binary structure, a personal connection between two people, there is no shortage of evidence to suggest that individual clients tied themselves to two or more patrons, which means that any particular connection did not have to be all-consuming. Such a situation was very possible, and particularly visible, at the highest levels of the social hierarchy; morning greetings – a characteristic and everyday ritual in Rome – could be exchanged only with one patron, but other tasks and obligations toward the wealthy and powerful could have been reconciled with one another.<sup>239</sup> Depending on his position and wealth, the client had various levels of value for the patron and enjoyed corresponding patronal favors, all of which manifested themselves in the morning greeting; the priority and attention that a master would give to a given client, and later the place he would grant that client in his entourage at the Forum, clearly defined for observers the significance of particular social actors. In the late Republic/early Empire there were corresponding terminological distinctions. The term *cliens* (and its later derivations) sounded bad, particularly – though not only – when using the second person; in Latin, as in other languages, it is a noun without vocative. To address someone in this manner would be awkward, even offensive. Thus, in Rome, the client was defined not with *cliens*, but eagerly with the word *amicus*, and over time there emerged a subtle distinction between *amici superiores* and *amici inferiores*.<sup>240</sup>

**a. Plutarch: Marius**

Caius Herennius was also cited as a witness against Marius; but he alleged, that it was not customary for patrons (so the Romans called protectors) to give evidence against their clients, and that the law excused them from that obligation. The judges were going to admit the plea, when Marius himself opposed it, and told Herennius, that when he was first created magistrate, he ceased to be his client. But this was not altogether true; for it is not every office that frees clients and their posterity from the service due to their patrons, but only those magistracies to which the law gives a *curule* chair.<sup>241</sup>

This episode, remembered and clarified by Plutarch in his *Life of Marius*, has been widely debated.<sup>242</sup> The actual issue involved, though it was key for the

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239 For more on clients with several masters, see Wallace-Hadrill 1990, 67.

240 Saller 1990, 61.

241 *Plutarch's Lives* 1871, 288.

242 See commentary in *Patronage in Ancient Society* 1990, 59, 60, 66, 146; see also E. Deniaux, “Un problème de clientèle: Marius et Herennii,” *Philologus*, vol. 117, 1976–1996.



accused, is to me insignificant; what is significant to me is the existence of inherited bonds, to which Herennius referred, and the equally interesting argument made by Plutarch, namely that *sella curulis* freed an individual from his status as a client. As we will see, this situation was subject to change as Roman society and the Roman state developed at the end of the Republic. Plutarch's version of events indicates, in the end, that a client's status was not voluntary and, concretely put, Marius and his family could not unilaterally withdraw from that clientelistic relationship.

But clients as a collective whole were even more diverse than that. Around the end of the Republic they included senators with lower status, whom British authors have called *protégés* and the French would call *créatures*. Such an inequality-dependence was typical of *nobiles* in the late Republic. Those officials with a lower rank in the senatorial milieu required, in furthering their career, the support – even the constant protection – of wealthier and more powerful colleagues. The above comments indicate that the clientelistic bond was a common manifestation of social organization in Rome. Roman literature and epigraphy reveal countless examples of clientelistic relationships, but viewed from a broad perspective, what was most significant about these networks (or this pyramid) is their density and multi-level nature. They bring to mind the English term “complex society,” which I apply here in a literal sense. These patron-client dyads, simple in their basic form, created together a complicated and intricate social structure, one in which the status of patrons was extremely diverse and bonds were multi-layered. Thus, a dichotomic division of Roman citizens, like that in the Dionysian legend, did not develop. This system, taken in its entirety, was an efficient tool for social control, though one might rightfully doubt that it worked well during the period of crisis as the Republic was falling. Peter Brunt expressed serious reservations in this regard, pointing as he did to the fact that Velleius Paterculus (c. 19 BC – AD 31), the author of a history of Rome that reached into the year AD 30, was not interested in relations between patrons and free-born clients, and that – except for the cited passage on Marius – Polybius was silent on the matter. The era of civil wars reveals the general instability in – indeed the unreliability of – clientelistic relations.<sup>243</sup> The ease with which legions recognized one or the other pretender to power indicates that material benefits and the possibility of victory were often more powerful factors than loyalty. This observation, which limits considerably the functionality of patronage to conditions of relative stability, has a significance – in my view – that reaches beyond the history of Rome.

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243 Brunt 1988.

But this personal system also had its territorial-political dimension; in a highly flexible way it tied the center of power with the peripheries, and it turned out to be particularly beneficial to the future Eternal City as Rome expanded its authority into areas that were infinitely vaster than Rome itself, and as it incorporated – in various ways – different *poleis*, tribal territories, and then the Hellenistic kingdoms in the East. Treaties regulated relations between the *coloniae* and *municipia* and Rome. *Socii* (allies) and *amici* were rather restricted, particularly in terms of external contacts, but in all issues that depended on decisions made by the Roman Senate they required an influential middleman-protector in the City.<sup>244</sup> It was no different when the territory under Rome's control expanded; administrative authority was usually wielded by representatives of Rome, often called proconsuls, who simultaneously established clientelistic relations within individual municipalities under their rule. A community of interests emerged between Roman and provincial elites. Within the scope of the Mediterranean world, this system of patronage became (practically speaking) global, which is a fact that I will raise again later in the context of modernity.<sup>245</sup> It was a phenomenon that fostered corruption, but one which, to a certain extent, guaranteed that the system would be flexible, that that system could be administered at low cost, and that the people would have peace.<sup>246</sup> The conflict between personal benefit and official duties (the public interest) was the result not only of the patron's greed, but also of his status as a middleman. A significant majority of the requests and recommendations that one can find in Cicero's correspondence involve, in one way or another, tax relief or other exemptions. Protection in the face of attempts by the state to raise revenue, for which the influence of powerful friends in the Senate was necessary, was – in the eyes of provincial clients – the patron's main task.

Thus both the *raison d'état* and the immediate interests of the senatorial estate, from which provincial leaders were derived, were guardians of a system in which authority underwent a kind of privatization that was not limited to the level of

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244 Badian 1958; Braund 1984; Rich 1990.

245 Cicero characterizes the prevalence of patronal terminology: “cum lex ipsa de pecuniis repetundis sociorum atque amicorum populi romani patrona sit.” For this, see Braund 1990, 141. On the subject of polite terminology (*tutela*, but never *servitium*), see Braund 1984, 23. This was not subject to change. “*Clientela* is a metaphor in the context of Rome's foreign relationships, a metaphor seldom used by our sources.”

246 Braund points out, however, that “the usurious dealings of individual Romans threatened to bankrupt at least some kings. Bankruptcy meant destabilization and was therefore to the complete disadvantage of the Roman state, which [...] derived considerable benefits from the smoothly-functioning king and kingdom.” Braund 1984, 185.

proconsul. Ramsay MacMullen highlights the very small (compared to our times) number of bureaucrats involved here (including even lictors) and writes:

The reach of formally constituted authority, directly through a spoken word, a physical presence, or indirectly through a written directive or law, is nowadays almost everywhere and was once almost nowhere. Hence, in the civilized administration of less “civilized” peoples, government and the powers outside had to work together; but the latter did the most, by far.<sup>247</sup>

By the phrase “powers outside” the American scholar understands kinship bonds, a network of interests and protection, which gave local officials significant space for real independence, though only – of course – if they satisfied the demands of power brokers in Rome.<sup>248</sup> The capital that these local officials had at their disposal was contacts and relationships. Here it must be emphasized that patronage on the part of wealthy and powerful Romans was carried out by virtue of the office they held, though they emphasized its personal character even when it was directed toward a collective client.

What is involved here, in my opinion, is what the German medievalist Peter Moraw has accurately called *Mitunternehmertum* (about which I will have more to say below in the modern-day context).<sup>249</sup> In the Polish language what comes to mind is a term such as *własne poletko* (one’s own plot), one which is cultivated in the public sphere by a statesman, a bureaucrat or an elected official. But as opposed to the principles of the modern *Rechtsstaat*, the public law of ancient Rome was flawed in its reflection and regulation of reality, and the state – at least during the Republic – did not claim the right to a monopoly of power. In this regard, ancient Rome resembled the Polish First Republic.

How did the fall of the Roman Republic change this situation?

### 3. On the Monopoly over Clienteles

[...] *haec inter bonos amicitia, inter malos factio est.*

Sallust<sup>250</sup>

The Mediterranean empire and, in a sense, Horatian poetry leads us to a new clientelistic system in Rome, one that was created at the end of the Republic by

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247 MacMullen 1988, 99.

248 Here MacMullen refers to the analogy with seventeenth-century Languedoc discussed by William Beik (Beik 1985).

249 Moraw 1988, 4.

250 Sallust, *Bellum Iugurthinum*, 31, 15; cited in Syme 1960, 157.

the civil wars and then by the Principate. Chaos – more specifically, an uncertain situation – raised the significance of the clientelistic relationship; while rivals for power attempted to tie themselves with strategically important regions, residents of those regions were in search of protection. Much like the term “subject” from the Middle Ages and into modern times, the substance behind the term “client” was from now on no longer unambiguous.<sup>251</sup> The traditional clientele that we know from Cicero’s correspondence with Atticus and his letters *ad familiares* still existed. But clienteles, on a grand scale, had become a tool in the battle over state authority, and powerful rivals tried to bring entire provinces under their patronage. Pompey took the lead in bringing the East and the Spanish provinces under his authority.<sup>252</sup> In turn Caesar, Antony and Octavian established their rule over Egypt. But the fact was that their power was organized as personal power, through which competing patrons were eliminated. Conflicts in the provinces and among *socii* involved attempts to seize the clients of one’s opponents, to which Ronald Syme pointed as a factor in Octavian’s ultimate success. Syme also emphasized the significance of clienteles in the formation of his unquestioned authority. Octavian brought the *Principis viri*, the senators included, along with the Senate as a public institution, into the service of the *populo romano*. In practice they lost *auctoritas* to the princeps, and “plebs and army, provinces and kings were no longer in the *clientela* of individual politicians.”<sup>253</sup> Though such facts might seem to run against the thesis put forward by P.A. Bruns, the two can in reality be reconciled: Many earlier scholars attached the patron-client label to various bonds that emerged during the era of social crisis and civil war without paying sufficient attention to their weakness and short duration.

The Principate, though alluding to tradition, changed a great deal in this regard. The clientelistic mechanism tied to elections disappeared, given that the princeps named his officials himself in the knowledge that they would owe everything to him. Stabilization put the patronal form on show. Augustus was the only patron, though there remained, as Tacitus put it, “the respectable portion of the people [...] connected with the great families.”<sup>254</sup> Viewed with distrust, this phenomenon lost its political meaning but preserved its customary meaning, as Roman writers confirmed. The *Pater Patriae*, who had created out of chaos the true *Res Publica*

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251 This is particularly true in the Polish language. However, German terminology was significantly more developed and precise: *Untertan, Hörige, Leibeigene*, etc.

252 Amela Valverde 1999.

253 Syme 1960, 404.

254 Tacitus, *The History of Tacitus*, ed. Alfred John Church and William Jackson Brodrick (Macmillan, 1905), book I: 4, 3.

(this was an important part of official propaganda) maintained contact with the people in the circus and theater and in spaces that provided testimony to his generosity and served as a perfect backdrop for signs of tribute and explosions of enthusiasm.

Octavian-Augustus's main achievement was the centralization of power, with one of his goals being to establish a monopoly over patronage. The imperial era can be viewed as a combination of centripetal and centrifugal aspirations, the latter of which would, over time, become prominent; his early rule was practically defined by the centralization question, which writers at the time (whose focus was the center itself) overestimated. Juvenal and Tacitus emphasized the transition from patronage of the wealthy and powerful to patronage of the ruler.<sup>255</sup> One issue becomes clear that I will return to many times over the course of this book: the centralization of power comes with a tendency to eliminate peripheral patrons. A ruler wants to be the direct patron of every subject-client. In a vast Roman empire, intermediation by the wealthy and powerful was often a necessity, but it was one that had to remain under control, a process that was served by various kinds of cults; the imperial cult, which cultivated direct ideological-religious-political bonds, was particularly important given that mediation by officials on many levels within the administrative apparatus was unavoidable. It is amazing how much single-leader systems throughout history have had in common in this regard (I will talk more about this issue below).

Clientelistic relations gained new significance near the end of the empire in the midst of deepening crisis.<sup>256</sup> A speech from the second half of the fourth century – or rather an open letter directed at Emperor Theodosius – has been preserved beseeching the ruler to strengthen the practical application of a law (issued by Valens) that forbade peasants from submitting themselves to military patronage.<sup>257</sup> The author of this letter was concerned about *patrocinium*. The empire's growing debt at this time encouraged farmers to search for protection against state officials and their extortionary tactics. At the same time lawlessness within the military was on the rise.<sup>258</sup> But Libanius described a much more complicated situation in the borderland regions:

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255 Mratschek-Halfmann 1993, 18, 131.

256 See Veyne 1981.

257 Libanius 1953, 275. The decree was issued by Valens in 368 or 370, and Libanius's "speech" is dated 391 or 392.

258 MacMullen 1967, 113–117.

There exist large villages, belonging to many owners. These have recourse to the soldiery stationed in them, not so as to avoid trouble but so as to be able to cause it. [...] Protected by their arms, the donors have purchased for themselves complete license. And now they inflict toil and trouble upon their neighbors by encroaching on their lands, cutting down trees, looting, slaughtering and butchering cattle, and feasting themselves on it.

What follows is a vivid description of incidents of violence carried out by villagers: the soldiers' protection "has put into their hands the steel – not the steel beloved of the land, but that which kills." Such patronage, Libanius continues, "provides the motive force for injuring others – among them the collectors."<sup>259</sup> As the author and commentator of the Polish translation put it, *patrocinium* meant the search for the protection of a wealthy and powerful individual (a great property owner), which led to a concentration of property, but also a search for protection within the military, which led to decay in the state. In both cases the health of the state treasury was damaged.<sup>260</sup>

Libanius's observations, which applied to many of the empire's distant regions (not just to Syria, where he was located), represented an appeal on the part of the author to the Emperor, an appeal for which he sought suitable arguments. But the great property owner, the patron, would have viewed things differently: *patrocinium* ensured peace and security in the *colonia*. Paradoxically, and under diametrically opposed conditions, a situation had been restored – after Rome's thousand years of existence – in which the patron-client relationship was one of the pillars of the social system.

Much has been written about the colonate and its connection with the origins of the feudal system. I will not enter into this discussion because the subject of *féodalité* would overstep the confines of this book, which helps explain why I will jump right away into a discussion of the modern clientele and leave behind a thousand-year hole in time.

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259 Libanius 1953a, 503, 505 (XLVII, 4 and 6).

260 Libanius 1953, 279.

## Chapter 5: The Modern State and its Variants

*When we have duly acknowledged that all over Europe, England and Scotland, in any century of pre-industrial society, men sought lords to protect them and lords sought men to serve them, then lordship and service, within any society and from one society to another, become a subject of "infinite variety", with the same endless and elusive fascination as Shakespeare saw in Cleopatra.*

Jenny Wormald<sup>261</sup>

In order to associate the subject of clientele with Shakespeare and Cleopatra one must be born on the Shakespearean Island (Is it not true that Egypt entered into a clientelistic relationship with Rome, while Cleopatra entered into an entirely different kind of relationship with Antony?). Nonetheless I detect in the passage quoted above an accurate observation, namely that the phenomenon of the clientele is in some sense immortal, or rather is always revived, and its identity is concealed in its countless variants. Perhaps like womanhood?

The author of the above passage, writing about the period from the fifteenth through seventeenth centuries, showed that even north of the river Clyde the diversity of clientelistic relationships was significant; in the long eighteenth century, that variety grew wider. This is a matter of space and time; after all, informal systems of power were at work (the case of Scotland escapes this definition precisely because the patron-client system had been formalized) that filled gaps and niches in such different regimes as those in Castile, England and the Empire, not to mention the *Rzeczpospolita*, creating a highly colorful kaleidoscope in which changes took place over time that often pulled in different directions. Hence the surprising comparisons and contrasts within the confines of Europe – a phenomenon that has arguably influenced the processes by which regional societies and systems evolved in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

My above discussion about Roland Mousnier, his *fidèles* and his antagonists had the Bourbon monarchy as a backdrop. In a book published several years ago focusing mainly on the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries I analyzed clientelism in the *Rzeczpospolita* and several other countries in an attempt to isolate specific phenomena and identify certain features.<sup>262</sup> I do not intend here to summarize

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261 Wormald 1985, 13.

262 Mączak (1994) 2000.

the arguments I made there, which explains why, particularly with reference to France, I will touch upon only a few issues. Having said that, I would like to fill certain regional gaps; hence, the sections on Scotland and Sweden.

*Państwo nowożytne*: here we must use the English-language term “modern state,” because while we in Poland tend to include in this category all states existing in Europe in a given era, this term in the West refers exclusively to regimes that began to take shape there as of the late Middle Ages and then developed further after the end of the eighteenth century. The period after the eighteenth century is defined by the phrase “origins of the Modern State,” when different states took different tracks, not all of which led directly to modernity.<sup>263</sup> I do not intend to get mixed up in this historiographical debate; I will discuss the *Rzeczpospolita* in its own chapter as a peculiar case, though one that is, at the same time, particularly important to the broader subject at hand.

The ongoing (and increasingly intense) debate over absolutism and the essence and function of the royal Court cannot but influence our evaluation of patron-client relations. The court was the main stage in monarchical Europe on which patron/client action – whether drama or comedy – played itself out, which is why, before I examine several individual regional examples of how clientelistic systems functioned, I will devote some attention to general issues.

## 1. The Royal Court: “The Sun and its Reflected Rays”

Norbert Elias, who for a quarter century was the highest authority in the field of Court theory, found himself posthumously the target of intense criticism.<sup>264</sup> Many of the directions this criticism took – accusations from theory, sociology, and philosophy – are not closely related to the topic of interest to us here, namely informal relationships, though some scholars have recently emphasized that, by focusing our attention on the person of the ruler and his ways of subjugating the elite, we lose sight of other functions played by the Court, namely its function as a “point of contact,” a forum for the higher nobility. The numerical size of the nobility, its stratification, and the extent of access to the court (or *Hoffähigkeit*, a highly suitable German term) enjoyed by the nobility, the bourgeoisie and the *robins* (that is, the *noblesse de robe*) – all of this defined the character of the Court, the ways in which it was connected to elite groups, and – more broadly – the ruler’s style and

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263 *Visions* 1993; this series of volumes published under the auspices of The European Science Foundation encompasses topics from the eighth through the eighteenth centuries, though we placed emphasis on the last three of those centuries.

264 Elias 1979; Duindam 1995; Schmale 1997.



the court's political culture. It has long been recognized that Elias limited his focus to Versailles, which is why other works have emerged that reflect the spirit of his theory but which describe relations that prevail at the Hofburg, at the Münchner Residenz<sup>265</sup>, and at the seats of other dynastic powers, above all in the Empire and Spain. Elias's conception of the Sun King's strategies, which were designed to subdue the nobility by attaching its members to the throne and concentrating their interests within the royal residence, found its best confirmation in a program that has gone almost unnoticed by historians, namely the one drawn up for the Duke of Schleswig-Holstein-Gottorp by one of his officials, Dr. Andreas Cramer.<sup>266</sup> He recommended (in 1660) that his lord develop the hierarchical system already in existence by expanding precedents by which poor nobles would be entangled in expensive marriages and would be given posts that lacked sufficient salaries. He also warned the protestant duke against ever limiting the luxuries enjoyed by the nobility, which would deprive its members of *vires patrimonii*. I view this as a truly Machiavellian plan in which hatred for the nobility (based on estate or class?) is palpable, and I say this because I do not believe that the Court-country tensions in the early seventeenth century in this corner of the Empire were very high. In any case, we do not know the actual repercussions of Cramer's efforts.

These issues are tied to the concept of absolutism, but can we really apply this term to Europe? British scholar Nicholas Henshall has expressed doubts in this regard; such doubts – the extreme nature of Henshall's theses notwithstanding – have sparked further debate<sup>267</sup> and have led mainly to attempts to define the limits of royal power, both formal and real. In this context, the differences between various states and changes over time are highly significant. We can set aside the semantic and terminological arguments, but we should note that negating the traditional understanding of absolutism opens up the field of analysis and interpretation of informal systems and bonds between Court and Country – to use a phrase that was popular several years ago.

From this perspective the Court emerges above all as a forum for various groups and members of various social strata, or a forum of competition rather among individuals and factions (assembled *ad hoc*) than between groups of courtiers. This forum's exclusivity mainly involved ancestral noblemen – *noblesse d'épée*, *noblesse de sang* – because formal considerations were at play: the hierarchy of titles and their duration, along with the royal posts and office that individuals

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265 Ehalt 1980, Kruedener 1973.

266 Cramer 1978; see also Mączak 2002 and 1996.

267 Henshall 1992; see also Schmale 1997.

held. If we look beyond this formal *Hofstaat*, behind the Court's existence, we recognize its character as a marketplace, not so much of vanity, but of positions, privileges, and profits. One need not take literally the centralized monarchy's desire to monopolize patronage, because a significant part of the (mostly minor) benefits were handed out through the mediation of courtiers, ministers and lower officials in court circles, and it was on this mediation that the Court's attractive powers were based. On the other hand, this oligopoly of mediation in the distribution of favors caused feelings of aversion among those who did not participate in this system but who were dependent on it.

No small role was played here by tactics used by the monarchy, which – beyond the tricks that Cramer dreamed of – had at its disposal methods that were significantly simpler and less cynical: distribute favors that are as short-term as possible to force petitioners to constantly come back for more. Using the vocabulary of business: No sale, no emphyteusis, but rather a short-term lease. In the *Rzeczpospolita* the law did not allow for this tactic since an official post was usually for life (or, in practice, exchangeable for a better post), but western princes had in this regard greater freedom for maneuver. As Matteo Pellegrini suggested in 1624, “it is in the royal interest to keep everybody suspended between fear and hope.”<sup>268</sup>

This method also (perhaps even especially) applied to artists and intellectuals, with whom court patronage was most closely associated. Patrons often viewed artists and intellectuals, because of their talents, as necessary players in court life; they even decorated the courts with their art. At the same time access to the Court meant that artists might enjoy social advancement and receive orders for work, which would free them from restrictions imposed by the guild. The only problem was how to gain access. It was rarely a buyer's market, as in the case of the “inflation of honors” during the reign of James I Stuart, who paid his debts to courtiers through the sale of baronetcies *in blanco*.<sup>269</sup> It was a market governed by supply and demand, though it was not a perfect market with equal access for all. Access to patronage was not a question of information that one might find in the yellow pages of a telephone book. The client's access to the patron was conditioned by the position each party held in the social hierarchy.

Historians of art and literature have thoroughly mapped out the social systems in which many modern artists and writers have worked. I consider particularly interesting (and complex) the case of Galileo, for whom – as a mathematician – it was not easy to gain the recognition of either courtiers or rulers.

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268 M. Pellegrini, *Che el savio è convenevole il corteggiare libri III* (Bologna: 1624), 57. Quoted from Biagioli 1993, 20.

269 Stone 1968.

## 2. The Astronomer as Courtier

Arguably Galileo Galilei was in no way a “typical” character, neither as a scholar nor as a courtier. But his battle for a position within the Courts deserves our attention and can not only beautifully illustrate, but also accurately explain, how court mechanisms worked. Although Galileo’s biography has been written in countless volumes and a great deal has been published about his main patron, Cosimo II de’ Medici, the clientelistic aspect of the astronomer’s career has only recently come under examination, by the American historian of science Mario Biagioli.<sup>270</sup> I refer here to Biagioli’s main arguments, even if I do not always follow his train of thought. The man who discovered the moons of Jupiter was the son of a musician. He studied medicine in Pisa but then, having not completed his degree, he began his study of mathematics beyond the university. Soon he was teaching perspective at the Accademia delle Arti del Disegno in Florence and mathematics, astronomy, mechanics and the construction of fortifications at Padua, Pisa and Siena. He supplemented his modest university salary by teaching privately and providing lodging for students, and he enhanced his career (which was typical of a lower class scholar; the academic salary of a mathematician was six to eight times lower than it was for a philosopher or theologian, which says a great deal about his social status) by designing instruments (geometrical and military compasses), which were produced by a craftsman he hired, and which were purchased mainly by his students. Such work provided no opportunity for the kind of great recognition and career that, in Tuscany at this time, only the Court could assure, to which he gained some access through his acquaintance with a Medici family physician. Galileo first stepped into the Court as the mathematician to the young Duke, but this did not offer him a great chance at the kind of favors that the future discoverer most desired, namely a well-paid university chair at Padua, on Venetian territory. His path to gaining direct contact with Cosimo de’ Medici was long. In his first letter to the Grand Duke, Galileo emphasized his embarrassment and mentioned that, before he turned to him personally, he would first send the Grand Duke “the necessary signs of reverence through my closest friends and patrons” because:

I do not think it appropriate – leaving the darkness of the night – to appear in front of you at once and stare in the eyes of the most serene light of the rising sun without having reassured and fortified myself with their secondary and reflected rays.<sup>271</sup>

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270 Biagioli 1993.

271 Ibid., 19–20.

Were these just common courtly figurative expressions, or were they the astronomer's own allusions? According to Biagioli, Medici was perfectly capable of subordinating his clients to him, and the young duke's teacher had to check each year (through the courtiers) to know if he could retain his position. But Galileo's case shows us much more, namely how that relationship was, for both parties, a delicate matter: The astronomer counted on the duke's protection in Padua but the decision was in the hands of appropriate Venetian officials, and the Republic's prestige could not tolerate pressure coming from the dukes. Using such an argument, the Duke avoided direct intervention in Galileo's case, handing it over instead to his representative in Venice. Such an approach would have far-reaching consequences.

The tactics of this learned client, who was not short on talents both practical and – so to speak – “vital,” led him in the direction of a university chair at the university in Pisa and a post at the Florentine court, and to reach his goals he took many paths. He competed for a position as the young duke's permanent caregiver, and he dedicated to Cosimo a compass he himself had constructed. He contacted the duke through a series of mediators and courtiers, and through the duke's family members. His multi-year effort to attain a certain position for himself at the Medici court bore fruit after Galileo gained fame for having discovered four moons orbiting Jupiter (he called them the “Medician Stars”). He exploited his discovery of the moons and he did so quite brutally. He took the risk of professing the principle that to serve any patron (and to accept payment for a work) would amount to *servitù meretricia*, or meretricious servitude.

The discoverer's great strength were his scientific discoveries, if they would assure him fame, much like an artist's strength was his recognized works of art and a soldier's military victories. But Galileo's success also benefited his immediate patron; Cosimo now began to shine his “reflected light” on the subject as a protector of science. The fact that Galileo had dedicated his work to the duke could bring great benefits, but direct services-in-return could also mean the end of the relationship. Given what was most important for Galileo, payment in gold would only highlight his low, craftsman status. In the year 1610, Galileo – having announced his discoveries – moved forward in a different way: to put it colloquially, he put all his eggs in the Medician basket, and in so doing – his biographer argues – he violated the very principle by which favors are exchanged. A year earlier, in August 1609, he had offered the Venetian Senate a telescope produced by him. He relinquished his right to build further telescopes, suggesting in a letter to the doge a suitable favor-in-return would be a tenured professorship at Padua. But after he was awarded such a position (with a suitable salary) he suddenly resigned

from Padua and directed his attention toward the Medici. He dedicated Jupiter's satellites to the duke and not to the Venetian Senate, which was further offended by the way Galileo resigned the university chair that he had just accepted. But he was particularly clever in how he initiated his new patronage relationship in Florence. He published at his own cost a treatise on the discovery of Jupiter's moons, *Sidereus nuntius*, and he had several telescopes built (he was not supposed to do this!) that Florentine diplomats gave away as gifts to rulers and cardinals in several countries so that they too could admire the "Medician stars." The duke correctly understood the intention behind such gifts and, in return, he offered Galileo small gifts – a medal, a golden chain, etc. A second, Italian edition of *Sidereus nuntius* was published in order – as Galileo himself put it – to "reflect the greatness of the Patron rather than the weakness of the client."<sup>272</sup> Galileo's strategy seems to have been well thought out: the subtle game of gifts exchanged between scholar and ruler was based on the fact the gifts from the former (a military compass with instructions, telescopes, and dedications paid in homage) were not directly recompensed. The mathematician-astronomer, highly prized by the elite, gained an ever more solid position within the Medician court.

After the crucial year of 1610 Galileo no longer needed to annually renew his position. Even though this manufacturer of compasses and telescopes was craftsman-like by nature, his intellect cast its reflective rays also on his patron (now without an intermediary), which marked the further development of a tradition of patronage culture in which the Medici took pride going back at least to Lorenzo the Magnificent. Since Galileo did not work based on orders placed by clients and was not paid for his works, he became a *gentiluomo*. He expected and received further privileges, most importantly a position in the duke's milieu. This man, who started as a professor of mathematics grinding out a position for himself in the *artes liberales*, had become the court's chief mathematician and philosopher (the university chair at Pisa did not involve any new responsibilities). He also maintained contact with the young duke, which allowed the astronomer to exert some influence on him, which in turn gave Galileo hope that the relationship would continue. This was important, because only his status as a philosopher allowed him to carry over his mathematical-astronomical studies into the sphere of natural phenomena.<sup>273</sup> But not without risk, as it turned out.

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272 Ibid., 46.

273 Though he did not possess an academic degree, Galileo was able to lecture mathematics at the university level because it was considered a technical discipline; in mathematics one could earn between 1/8 and 1/6 of a philosopher's salary.

Regarding the position he expected, a certain commentary applies, in the context of the theory of gift exchange. Pellegrini, already quoted once above, wrote:

The great princes act as if they had everything. What other people do for them is not called *beneficio* but dutiful obligation. To acknowledge it is a sign of *gratia*, not of debt. Private citizens are generous when they give; princes are generous also when they accept.<sup>274</sup>

And further in this spirit: Pellegrini was no doubt going through a difficult personal experience, but he surely should have added that a monarch, even in the silver baroque century, had to cultivate generosity. Galileo's fascinating history as a courtier and head of a family, for which he exerted his versatile talents, is a lesson in the practical application of Marcel Mauss's theory of "gift exchange," though with reference not to primitive society but to the complex society that was the modern Court. I might surprise readers when I add that – in light of Galileo's activities at the Florentine court – one can enrich Mauss's theory with the principle of the above-mentioned "Maciek nad Maćkami" not just because this poor nobleman satisfies his own pride when he obligates a richer partner to be thankful (as a courtesy to the Dobrzyńskis I do not call this richer nobleman a patron). These circumstances puts Maciej in a favorable, even honorable position: he can count on long-term favor, and in a sense he is investing in his patron.<sup>275</sup>

Let us return to Galileo and his times. From the beginning Galileo invested in his court intermediaries-patrons by showing them that it was worth it to provide support. After all, the courtier-broker's power rests on the promotion of suitable clients. In addition, a client (even one in a low position) might in turn become useful someday and may thus gain some sort of desired access. And as one man who knew what he was talking about, a former secretary to Cardinal Orsini, put it:

[...] even patrons of great fortune who aim at having a great following of clients and courtiers do not lose the opportunity to congratulate even their inferiors because all friendships are useful at some point, especially if they have been cultivated.<sup>276</sup>

This was not just any courtly politeness, though in Mickiewicz's *Soplicowo* it would be looked down upon as "mercantile."

The drama that turned Galileo also into a literary hero played itself out not in Florence but in Rome. After the death of Cosimo and because the atmosphere in Tuscany during the minority reign of his successor was not suitable for a court

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274 Pellegrini, *op. cit.*, 27–28; see also Biagioli 1993, 51.

275 See the section above entitled "Equality – Subordination – Subservience."

276 Panfilo Persico, *Del segretario libri quattro* (Venetia, 1629), 317. For quote, see Biagioli 1993, 26.

career, the astronomer moved to Rome. Good relations with the curia had been necessary for him earlier, particularly in 1616, when Copernicus was condemned. Biagioli is of the opinion that before the year 1609 Copernicus' astronomy played no great role in Galileo's work and that his discoveries undermining Aristotelianism were not necessarily tied to Copernicus' new views. His correspondence from 1597 (including with Kepler) indicates that he was at that time "a Copernican sympathizer but not yet a committed defender" of the hypotheses put forward by the canon of Warmia, who had died a half century earlier.<sup>277</sup> What it was really about was the fact that Galileo, while coming out in favor of Copernicus, emphasized the originality of his own work, and that to retreat from such a position would represent a disgrace that he could not tolerate. Galileo came away unscathed from the Church's condemnation of the Copernican theory in 1616; he was thus not mentioned as one of his followers. Presumably it suited the Jesuits to see the prestige of mathematics raised in relation to philosophy – a process to which Galileo contributed greatly.

Soon, however, the regency governments after the death of Cosimo II encouraged Galileo to move from provincial Florence to Rome. He brought with him letters of support and could count on influential power brokers in the city. Relationships functioned differently in the curia; the deciding factor was the papacy, whose character had been determined over the course of centuries, and whose head changed often,<sup>278</sup> one consequence being the rapacity of both religious and secular courtiers, which included nepotists who were not able to make long-term plans.<sup>279</sup> More than in any other Court, social advancement was possible, though the flip side of the coin was a lack of stability within curia circles.

Galileo's trial is instructive not so much (and not just) because of the ideological and doctrinal complications in the Roman Church but because of the lesson it gives us on the subject of the "fall of a client." The patron should know how to defend a client who is the target of other wealthy and powerful individuals by demonstrating his power and by giving his client a sense of security against *external* threats. But in Rome, Galileo's status as client was not clear.

Pellegrini makes a great deal of accounts by lords-courtiers that involved the erotic, lust and jealousy – generally speaking, such feelings of passion. Uncertainty

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277 Biagioli 1993, 100.

278 Reinhard 1972; Partner 1990.

279 As Biagioli mentioned, Maffeo Barberini's wealth when he became Pope Urban VIII amounted to 15,000 scudi, but after 5 years as pope his brother's wealth reached a total of 1.5 million scudi and he himself – as reported by the Venetian ambassador – was able to purchase for his nephew a property worth half that amount.

regarding favors was often the patron's most powerful tool, and in this regard (we might add) he could count on the support of jealous co-clients. "The fall of the favorite should be fast and merciless." Only when that fall is complete is it recognized as a sign that the lord has absolute authority over the definition of his courtiers' fate. He must also indicate some sort of reason for the disfavor, which was not to involve a previously mistaken or hasty judgment of a client (about which Pellegrini writes), for that would undermine faith in the patron's infallibility. It was supposed to appear as if the lord had blessed his favorite courtiers out of a sense of justice – which he epitomized.

Queen Elisabeth I understood this perfectly well.

### 3. "Merrie Olde England" and its Court

The evolution of the English system of rule took a different path than it did anywhere else on the continent, indeed differently than it did in Scotland. One might say that that state and society were built – as the *Rzeczpospolita* was – from the typical western blocks put together in their own peculiar way. Victor Morgan, summarizing in 1984 the current state of British research on clientelism, used in the title of his piece the expression "some types of patronage," which suggests the lush multiplicity of the phenomenon that emerged in part from the Middle Ages.<sup>280</sup> Its earliest and traditional manifestation was, in Morgan's view, the commendation, which retreated in the fourteenth century in the face of the system in which the fief – in the form of land – played over time a significantly smaller role, if any role at all.<sup>281</sup> As Morgan argues, alongside military service (the Hundred Years' War, the War of the Roses), requirements involving "technical skills in estate management, personalized religious service in the household and in the chantry, and above all legal services," also played a role.<sup>282</sup> Compensation came in the form of in-kind board and so-called *Jahrgelt* (an annual salary usually paid quarterly) and office obtained through a patron. The people serving a lord made up his "affinity"<sup>283</sup> – that is, the entire group of people surrounding him that were tied to him and dependent on him. Of course this dependence was two-sided,

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280 Morgan 1988, 91–101.

281 The discussion of "bastard feudalism" was opened by K.B. McFarlane (1943) 1981, though the term itself emerged in 1885 as an symptom of Charles Plummer's "anti-feudal" indignation (Wormald 1985, 7); Jenny Wormald discussed the connection between this type of dependence and clientelism (*ibid.*, 7 ff.).

282 See Morgan 1988, 101.

283 This expression suggests the traditional and broadly defined term *familia*.



because the patron's position depended on the number of clients, along with their level of loyalty, their overall quality, and thus their personal virtues and position in society. The most prominent of such clients formed their own "affinities," which had an indirect impact on the patron's power. The group's identity was strengthened by its livery – the color of its attire and other (e.g. armorial) symbols of service and ties to the lord. Such a situation was also convenient for the state (the king), since it could lead to the formation of military detachments. That having been said, the power of these affinities stood in the way of centralization under the Tudors, which helps explain the ban on private liveried retainers, which was renewed in 1505.<sup>284</sup> This law expired with the death of Henry VII, but Cardinal Wolsey continued to refer to an older law from the year 1468. In 1519 Sir William Bulmer incurred the monarch's wrath for having put himself "in the Duke of Buckingham's service" and refusing the king's service, contrary to an oath he had given, and for wearing the duke's livery in the king's presence. Such behavior was clearly treated as an insult to the ruler, which represented an opening for the trial and judicial murder of the duke.<sup>285</sup>

This situation remained significant until the beginning of the seventeenth century, when it entered a state of decay and was overlain with other phenomena: alongside the above-mentioned stances taken by rulers there was the crisis in family fortunes and the prestige of the English aristocracy, which has been a contentious historiographic issue ever since the appearance of the now classic works by Lawrence Stone on the subject.<sup>286</sup> It would be worth examining more closely the intensity of monetary circulation in this era, which had been increasing since the Middle Ages, which fostered the dissolution of traditional bonds and the development of bastard feudalism, and which – in turn – gave rise to the gradual elimination of bastard feudalism and to the development of another phenomenon that is controversial in British scholarship, namely the "county society" – that is familial, political and other kinds of bonds among families of the gentry within the borders of a single county. In the end, the significance of public institutions-functions (the sheriff, the justice of the peace, among others), whose make-up was influenced by local elites, grew, as did the influence of the central authorities (namely the Privy Council). We will return to this subject later.

Right after mentioning "bastard" feudalism, Victor Morgan mentions "fiscal" (or "financial") feudalism, which I regard as a word game, an accusation with

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284 Laws under Henry VII, 19 Henry 7, c. 14; see *Tudor Constitution* 1972, 34.

285 Miller 1989, 109.

286 Stone 1965 and 1968. Morgan's article is, to a large degree, an argument against Stone's works.

which the author – paradoxically – would probably agree.<sup>287</sup> Increasingly aggressive fiscal policies, which were the effect of the state’s (including the royal court’s) new needs and aspirations, manifested themselves in – among other things – the Crown’s search for forgotten titles, a practice aimed primarily at the interests of the aristocracy. Over time, under Charles I, the resulting conflict would pit the monarchy against parliament, but at the time it encouraged the gentry to defend themselves against royal prerogatives and fiscal policies under the wings of HRH’s wealthy and powerful subjects, especially the English peers. In this context, it is worth mentioning the particular role played by yet another fascinating discussion, carried out over the last half century mainly by Anglo-Saxon modernists, on the subject of “court” and “country.”<sup>288</sup>

Morgan’s main criticism of Stone and other scholars involves their belief in the gradual decline (or “linear decline”) of patron-client relationships in the face of a growth in central state institutions. I would argue that it is just as doctrinaire to assume such a trend as it is to assume that a gradual evolution was impossible. Basically what is involved here is a difference of opinion over the degree to which state institutions (above all centralized institutions) in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were modern.<sup>289</sup>

Many regional studies focusing usually on the gentry of a single county in a certain period under the Tudors, the Stuarts or the Commonwealth point to a diversified world with specific regional structures, which – however – are to an ever greater degree tied to London, with the so-called “home counties” expanding at the expense of the deep provinces. What follows are several regional examples that I present here in the context of the kind of bonds that are of interest to us in this book.

Wales: in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries the Welsh were proud of the fact that the king (Henry VII) was one of their own<sup>290</sup>, but over time Westminster’s intervention in local matters was accepted only reluctantly. The office of the Lord Lieutenant and a kind of *levée en masse*, which was called by the Tudors and directed by the Lord Lieutenants, did not eliminate the power (including military power) of the local aristocracy. At the same time, while the number of local aristocratic houses was in decline (Gareth Jones writes of

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287 Morgan 1988, 102, where he writes that such forms of feudalism shared “with preceding types little more than a name.”

288 I wrote concisely on these matters in Mączak (1986) 2002, 252–254 (first edition).

289 Morgan’s criticism, which was clearly directed at Stone, never received a response.

290 Here I refer mainly to Gareth Jones’s monograph (Jones 1977), mainly pp. 23–30, and here specifically p. 23.

six such houses around the year 1588, and then of three), the influence of the court in Westminster was growing and the local “establishment” was pulled toward London with increasing force. Robert Dudley, the Earl of Leicester, was active in Wales as the Baron of Denbigh, the royal commissioner in charge of recovering land illegally appropriated by the gentry, which provides us an example of Westminster’s “fiscal feudalism” in action! Leicester exercised the prerogatives given to him from the center of English power with the help of influential figures among the local nobility, including Henry Sidney, who was Lord President of the Council of the Marches, and from the Wynns of Gwydir, the most powerful family in Caernarfonshire. However, despite such solid foundation for his authority, the Baron of Denbigh was forced to face opposition from other, deeply rooted families. The Court itself got involved in local issues, which explains the Elizabethan Privy Council’s amazing awareness of what was going on in the distant land, though a great deal depended on local relationships, and – as in the court milieu – “factions” created in provincial societies were of great importance.<sup>291</sup> But conflicts in the province took different forms; in the days of Elizabeth I, each feud in any Welsh county could turn into a blood war between powerful retainers – armed clients of wealthy families. Local societies were dominated by the gentry, who were able to exploit the loyalty of their leaseholders, but in northern Wales Henry Herbert, the Earl of Pembroke, who was related to Leicester by marriage, who owned properties in several counties, and who as of 1586 was lord president of Wales, treated the city of Cardiff as one of his personal possessions. Thus, various kinds (or scales) of patronage coexisted in Wales, and one can regard such coexistence (granted, in various proportions) as typical, as a phenomenon that defines each county in some measure, on the one hand, through patronal relations particular to that county and performed by local “knights” and “gentlemen” (because of the functions they performed in the county) and, on the other hand, through magnatial patronage broadly defined.

The county of Norfolk and the marches of Scotland can serve as examples of how magnatial patronage was dominant in the Tudor era. The fates of the stewards of both of these regions illustrate the bonds that the center had with the periphery.

Thomas Howard, 3rd Duke of Norfolk (1473–1554), his son Henry, the Earl of Surrey (1517?–1547), and his grandson, the 4th Duke of Norfolk (1536–1572) represented three generations of a family that exemplified coexistence between

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291 Ibid., 44–46.

the aristocracy and the Tudor dynasty.<sup>292</sup> The 3rd Duke of Norfolk, as a result of his marriage to King Edward IV's daughter Anne, was brother-in-law to the first Tudor to take the throne. One of the most powerful of all English peers, he was an opponent of the main protagonists of modernization in the English state – Wolsey and after him Thomas Cromwell (whom Norfolk once arrested on orders from the king). He supported – it is clear – the king's marriage to his niece, but as Lord High Steward he presided at her trial and then oversaw her execution. The fate of another relative, his niece Catherine Howard, weakened his position in the Court, though what was influential here was his indecisive stance toward the Pilgrimage of Grace, which in the end he – as president of the Council of the North – brutally suppressed. When his son was accused of treason, imprisoned, and beheaded, the Duke found himself threatened by the same fate. But the court of peers delayed its proceedings and the king's death prevented the execution. His son, Henry Howard, took only the title Earl of Surrey.<sup>293</sup> In her short period of influence, Anne Boleyn tried to arrange Howard's marriage to Mary Tudor, a marriage that would have had huge political implications.<sup>294</sup> But in the end he married the equally outstanding Frances de Vere, the daughter of the 15th Earl of Oxford. However, his quick rise (his further ennoblement, the Order of the Garter, Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster) ended in tragedy. Surrey did not hide his conviction that his father, as the first peer of England, would have the right to the regency during Edward VI's minority, an idea that was widely regarded as proof of a conspiracy against King Henry! Additional evidence of Howard's aspirations came when he allegedly added the insignia of Edward the Confessor to his coat of arms. Both father and son found themselves in the Tower, and the Earl of Surrey, as a favor, was able to avoid being hanged and quartered; instead he was awarded the executioner's axe. His father, however, who spent the period of Edward VI's rule in prison, was restored to the dukedom and recognized as an heir to the family Mowbray.

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292 Thomas's grandfather, John Howard, 1st Duke of Norfolk, died at the Battle of Bosworth leading archers under King Richard. Thomas Howard, 2nd Duke of Norfolk, spent four years in the Tower, but afterwards was restored as Earl of Surrey. After victory over the Scots at the Battle of Flodden (1513) he was made Duke of Norfolk.

293 Chapman 1960.

294 Such an agreement was supported by the Spanish ambassador, who was counting on the possibility that it would divert the Duke of Norfolk's focus away from Anne Boleyn and toward Catherine of Aragon; the Pope was interested in the idea, but Emperor Charles V did not support it.

The son of the Earl of Surrey, Thomas, who was beheaded at the age of thirty and who was – in addition – a talented poet, inherited the title of duke during Mary’s reign and started a great career no less dramatically than his father.<sup>295</sup> Highly regarded under the governments of both women, Thomas waged a war under Elizabeth with the factions led by William Cecil and the Earl of Leicester. His tragedy was tied to Mary Stuart. In 1568 he headed a commission whose aim was to settle the dispute between the queen and her subjects but soon, encouraged by one of Mary’s supporters (William Maitland of Lethington) and without asking Elizabeth, he launched a scheme to make Mary his wife, and he even got himself entangled in a plot. Suicide! Imprisoned in the Tower for ten months, he was released after the Revolt of the Northern Earls had been suppressed, but his participation in another conspiracy, the Ridolfi plot, whose goal was to put Mary on the throne of England, cost him his head.

Here we have three generations of a prominent family dramatically torn by conflicts with the throne, indeed by battles for the throne. The author of a biography on the poet Henry, Hester W. Chapman, wrote:

In his thirtieth year Surrey was executed by Henry VIII partly because he had never been able to grasp the nature of a modern state. Although his poetry was half a century in advance of his age, his political outlook was two hundred years out of date.<sup>296</sup>

Henry Howard’s life and career were too short for him to be able to comment on this subject, but the author’s thought might well apply to his father and his son without having to interpret it differently. The Howards represented an interesting (and perhaps the most distinct) example of tenacious endeavors to attain power. Accusations that they organized conspiracies did not point to some sort of court putsch but to broad rebellion, which required people and weapons. Today it is difficult to come down one way or the other regarding their political guilt or innocence (after all, the Tudors were extraordinarily sensitive to “treason” and searched for it everywhere), but it is important – in our discussion of patron-client relations – that the Howards accumulated their power both at the Court and in their lands.<sup>297</sup>

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295 Williams 1964.

296 Chapman 1960, 7.

297 The concept of treason was defined precisely in the Treason Act, 26 Henry VIII (1530), c. 13; of the 394 accused of high treason in the years 1532–1540, at least 184 – and perhaps as many as 250 – were found innocent. Guilt involved, for example, statements regarding who was to inherit the throne and raising doubts about the king’s sexual potency.

The power of the 4th Duke of Norfolk in this county was almost absolute; the city of Norwich, along with five other cities and municipalities, were governed from Kenninghall Place, the duke's headquarters. His political patronage encompassed five boroughs, which sent deputies to the House of Commons, and the county's local parliamentary representation, about which he was less concerned. After the Dukedoms of Cornwall and Lancaster were joined with the Crown, "the Liberty of the Duke of Norfolk" was the only group of estates in England run by magnates as a private franchise. No royal office – even a sheriff, coroner, or representative of the royal court – had access there. Norfolk named his own officials; his bailiffs carried out (or returned) the ruler's orders, including those that were judicial in nature. The duke seized for himself all fines imposed anywhere in the kingdom on residents of his "liberty" and he "enjoyed the goods and chattels of all felons, fugitives and outlaws." His tenants "could not be summoned in the sheriff's court for debts under 40s" and the duke's court enjoyed the use of the duke's own gaol in Lopham.<sup>298</sup> The duke wrote to Lord Burghley:

I wold have bene sorye, that my cuntrye mene schuld have hade cause to have judged that enye matter concernyng the Queenes Majestyes sarvys in Norfolke or Suffolke shulde rather have bene committyd off first to others than to me.<sup>299</sup>

At the same time, Norfolk's court was always open for surrounding landowners, all of which demands that we ask – and this is a known problem regarding the *Rzeczpospolita* as well – the question: was this a magnatial (here one could call it "estate-oriented") or court-aristocratic ("court-oriented") style of behavior? In Norfolk it was rather the former. As Alfred Hassel Smith calculated, though the duke was a member of the Privy Council, he spent at least half of the year in the county, where he governed and sat in judgment at court. His power, Smith wrote: "was not the product of the office he held: his authority rested largely upon the influence he could exert and the patronage he could dispense on behalf of client gentry and borough corporations."<sup>300</sup> In this sense it was much like the Polish and Lithuanian magnates, though it must be pointed out that the magnates of those two countries were different in several ways.

One must remember that East Anglia was rather close to London, that port cities there were involved in sea trade, and that the Merchants Adventurers and

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298 Williams 1964, 65–79; 105.

299 Hassel Smith 1974, 27–28. The Duke of Buckingham would later write to Lord Chancellor Francis Bacon in a similar fashion, apologizing for having circumvented Bacon as an intermediary in royal patronage. See Mączak (1994) 2000, 204.

300 Hassel Smith 1974, 27.

Eastland Company was active in the region. Local tradespeople honored the duke (they flattered him with the title “prince”); they spared no cost in offering him gifts; elite burghers there accepted him into their St. George’s Company; and beyond that, they allowed more than forty of his high functionaries and clients into their ranks. When discussing the trading class in this region (as opposed to the *Rzeczpospolita*), the “merchant interest” was not very distant from the “landed interest,” and these interests were not antithetical. Both groups were busy with export, and many landowners owned real estate in the port cities of Lynn and Yarmouth; thus they were at least indirectly tied to trade there,<sup>301</sup> a fact that created an ambivalent center-periphery relationship. On the one hand, burghers did not limit themselves to a single patron; they eagerly reached out to William Cecil as well, especially in their effort to gain a license to export grain, and they bestowed gifts on any court official who might have had influence over such matters. On the other hand, they could count on the generous patronage of Norfolk himself when what was involved was the defense of local interests against decrees issued from Westminster. This situation created a complicated tangle of interests that was brutally settled by a court decision handed down against Norfolk, and with one blow – with an executioner’s axe – the political threat posed by the duke against the Court was ended, as was the autonomy of an important region. Such a victory of the *raison d’état* was typical of the time and for this type of statesman, and it represented a step in the direction of modernization of the state.

The second example takes me in the direction of the marches of Scotland.<sup>302</sup> I see in the sixteenth-century county of Durham certain features that I associate with Lithuania and Poland. The cities were insignificant and existed in the shadow of the landed gentry. Manorial society was shaped according to the size of estates. None of the magnates could compete with the House of Neville, though at least four families had possessions in several of the northern counties. Mervyn James identified six others as “gentry stocks” that are less known but were firmly rooted in Durham county society. These families played the role of clients to the Nevilles, to the bishop of Durham, and to two of the main noble families that had connections with London and Westminster. The great families, James writes, “inherited the prescriptive right to rule and command which went with ‘lordship.’”<sup>303</sup> Th

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301 Beyond trade in grain, which was the main export in this case, the region exported cloth in large quantities, which was produced outside of the cities. See B.E. Supple, *Commercial Crisis and Change in England, 1600–1643. A Study in the Instability of a Mercantile Economy* (Cambridge, 1959), 102 ff.; see also Hassel Smith 1974, 15.

302 James 1974, 29 ff.

303 *Ibid.*, 32.

opportunity to take part in the “traynes of horse” was an honor that attracted many who entered the world of the great lords especially by becoming one of the managers of estates. Relations between lord and servants were, in this region in the sixteenth century, still traditional and, indeed, very close. The tenant’s function on the great estates was not just to exist as a source of profit, but also as a rung on the ladder of promotion leading to the position of gentleman. Included among the Nevilles’ servants were many heads of important gentry families, though the earls of Westmorland had few of them in their wider circle of “friends.” For the latter, the magnatial manor was also, perhaps mainly, the path that led to access to the real source of favor, namely the court at Westminster, which was otherwise out of reach for those in the distant north. The earl’s position in the Court tied the interests of Durham society with royal issues as a whole. To this point, one could exchange Durham with just about any other peripheral country and the differences would be less important than the similarities.<sup>304</sup>

In England, even in the distant peripheries, such a social landscape had no chance to survive. The final judgment came with the pacification of the rebellions of 1569, but the monarchs had begun the struggle against these rebellions under Henry VIII. His father had preferred to “let sleeping dogs lie,”<sup>305</sup> but he re-created the Council of the North to help organize a borderland strategy, and he attempted to weaken the family that had long been the most powerful in the north, the House of Percy. Chaos at the center of English politics did not allow the monarchy to complete this work in the north, and Elizabeth had to start again from the beginning, but success was forthcoming. The queen – using (as we remember) another magnate, Thomas Howard the 3rd Duke of Norfolk – suppressed the rebellion; she broke the bonds of loyalty between the gentry and yeomanry and their patrons; she treated even the smallest rebellion harshly; and she stripped the lords of their official functions and, to a significant degree, of their estates. They survived as individuals but not as dominant regional powers. Soon even loyal wealthy and powerful lords lost their seats in the Council of the North. As Lawrence Stone put it, “by the time of the accession of James I [1603] the north was in the safe hands of carpetbaggers, bureaucrats, lawyers, and loyal local landowners of medium rank.”<sup>306</sup> The islands of magnatial traditionalism were disappearing, and though this development was partly the fault of the magnates themselves (and their spirit

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304 Here I would like to refer to a lecture delivered at the School of Slavonic and East European Studies at the University of London and entitled “Paradoxes of Democracy in the Commonwealth of Poland-Lithuania.”

305 Stone 1965, 250.

306 Ibid., 253.



of rebellion), it was mainly a result of evolutionary changes taking place in society and the state. Stone sees in this a crisis of the aristocracy that was taking shape in the period (less than a century) between Elizabeth's accession to the throne (1558) and the civil war of the middle of the seventeenth century.

The majority of remaining English counties were different than the regions discussed above, which were dominated by high aristocrats. The period in question was marked by an evolution in the way economic power and political influence among big landowners were arranged. While R.H. Tawney wrote about the rise of the gentry, Lawrence Stone wrote about a crisis in the aristocracy.<sup>307</sup> One way or the other, the aristocracy's authority by the middle of the seventeenth century had declined. The crisis among landowning elites under Elizabeth's rule, particularly near its end, was based on the fact that she was extremely reluctant to elevate her subjects to a higher rank. The House of Lords was reduced in size, and though the number of landowners in the counties grew, their position in society was not reflected in titles and offices which made it easier for Elizabeth's successor to gain their gratitude both before and after he reached Westminster.<sup>308</sup> The procedure by which honors were sold thus reached England as an almost mass phenomenon, though it involved rather the sale of titles than the sale of positions with decision-making power. But the fact is that the commodity involved here was the right to sell titles issued *in blanco*, and it was in this manner that the monarchy put its prerogative into the hands of uncontrolled courtiers. This process intensified the phenomenon of inventing the inherited title of baronet.

These new titles were a matter of pride for landed elites, who were experiencing in England profound change. Local government was strengthened, particularly in the person of the Justice of the Peace. His work could be difficult and costly, but it was a position that was coveted by local landowners, which is a sign of a matter that has been the object of discussion for sixty years and that remains controversial today, namely the "rise of the gentry."<sup>309</sup> Tied to this is the concept, as Morgan

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307 See R.H. Tawney, "The Rise of the Gentry, 1558–1640," *Economic History Review* XI (1940), which contributed to the discussion of the English landed gentry along with its genesis and transformation in 1640–1660. See also Geneza 1968, 5–25; Stone 1965.

308 Stone 1968, 267–269. According to Stone, between 24 March 1603 and December of the next year James ennobled 1159 people. For further information on the inflation of honors, see also Stone 1965 and Levy Peck 1991.

309 Victor Morgan has recently attacked Stone, accusing him (in my view, with little justification) of characterizing political processes, particularly patronage, in a "linear" fashion. "It should be emphasized," Morgan writes, "that Professor Stone's work has been taken as an exemplar of the inadequacies of current approaches to the study

put it, of “patrimonial patronage” – that is, a particular relationship between the Court and the broader country.

Another great conflict among historians of early modern England, one which is tied directly to our issue, was initiated by Hugh Trevor-Roper, who put forward a thesis on the conflict between Court and Country that applied to many countries in Europe, one that was caused (broadly speaking) by high costs tied to the Court and its parasitic nature.<sup>310</sup> Critics aggressively challenged Trevor-Roper’s radical thesis; they pointed out that, on a European scale, the problem was actually more complicated, above all in light of the wildly rising costs of armaments and war.<sup>311</sup> But this discussion opened up the issue of relations between the center of state power and the wider terrain on which it acted.<sup>312</sup> In this context one must draw a distinction between the so-called “country party” – that is, the faction that stood in opposition to the Court – and the question of the distance existing between the Court and the “country gentry,” the landed nobility. While the general population grew rapidly (from around 2.7 million in 1541 to 5.1 million a hundred years later), the number of gentry grew even more rapidly. Alongside the modest landowners, whose possibilities and ambitions did not reach beyond the borders of their parish (the “parochial gentry”), there were others “whose support the Crown needed and who brought pressure on court patronage relationships to gain access to local office and royal bounty.”<sup>313</sup>

There was little conflict involved here because the government – that is, the Privy Council – had at its disposal significant means in the form of licenses, tenancies (land, customs), office and symbolic titles, and as intervention in the economy grew and efforts to avoid social crisis expanded, it had to increase the number of its agents in the field, particularly the above-mentioned justices of the peace. However, royal favors under the first Stuarts flowed not just through the Privy Council but also through courtiers.

Courts grew in size and their maintenance became ever more costly. Court expenditures exploded under the frugal Elizabeth’s successors: While the Exchequer paid out 27,000 pounds in salaries to court officials in 1603, that number five years later had grown to 63,000. Other costs also grew, which explains why

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of patronage in early modern England.” Morgan’s concerns are tied to his belief that patron-client relationships are not suited to scholarship in the *longue durée*.

310 Trevor-Roper, “The General Crisis of the 17th Century,” *Past and Present* 16 (1959).

311 *General Crisis* 1965.

312 The arguments published in *Past and Present* were collected in *Crisis in Europe, 1560–1660. Essays from ‘Past and Present’*, ed. T. Aston (London: 1969).

313 Levy Peck 1991, 31.

efforts were made not only to avoid or limit expenditures but to find new sources of revenue, of which the most important for the future was the sale of baronetcies.<sup>314</sup> A place at the Court became a prerequisite for drawing from this source, and magnates from the counties made great efforts to place their people within reach of the royal bedroom. What is more, under James I, such efforts in England were marked by a strategy that was well known in other courts, namely to build one's position by developing relationships with the heir to the throne. In Poland the intrigues surrounding Prince Władysław Waza (involving the "Kazanowski clan") are particularly characteristic,<sup>315</sup> and in Florence Galileo valued greatly his position as the prince's teacher. But examples of this strategy emerged in England on an incomparably larger scale, and court intrigues of this kind were directed at the promising Prince Henry; those who could not find a suitable place for their ambitions in his father's court invested their hopes in him. When Henry died at a young age in 1612 he orphaned about 500 courtiers, who then had to search for new patrons. "Now I may cry out *Spes et Fortuna valete!* My hopes and fortune lie in the grave with him," wrote the court treasurer after the young prince's death, who then offered his services to the Duke of Lennox and the Archbishop of Canterbury. Sir Walter Raleigh also lost his chances at the court of King James and he made himself vulnerable to royal disfavor.<sup>316</sup>

The bond between Court and country was close also because of the fact that courtiers had at their disposal various resources within the counties. Mrs. Luch Hutchinson, the widow of the puritan-colonel, would write about a moment of weakness in her husband's life when, during Charles I's rule, he had thought about purchasing a lucrative office in the House of Commons, but fortunately God had stopped him from committing that sinful act.<sup>317</sup> Few other people in this era had such a sense of ethical restraint.

The figure – indeed the institution – of the royal favorite is inseparable from the Court, although many monarchs tried to get along without one.<sup>318</sup> In this

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314 For more on various court expenditures under the first Stuarts, see *ibid.*, 34; see also Aylmer 1961.

315 See Mączak 1999a.

316 Tennenhouse 1981, 253. Tennenhouse cites relevant allusions made by Raleigh in his *History of the World*.

317 Hutchinson 1973 (I quote, however, from the old edition, *Memoirs of the Life of Colonel Hutchinson [...] written by His Widow Lucy*, ed. J. Hutchinson [London: 1906]); see also Mączak (1994) 2000, 167–170.

318 A perceptive overview of variations on this phenomenon can be found in documents that came out of a Magdalen College (Oxford) conference: *World of the Favourite*, 1999.

regard the contrast between the last of the Tudors and her successors is clear.<sup>319</sup> There is a question under debate about whether one can distinguish between a favorite and a minister, and whether such a distinction is justified.<sup>320</sup> Many of those who participated in the 1996 Magdalen College (Oxford) conference on the “World of the Favourite” seem to have answered that question in the negative. But I would take a different position, one which might be the result of the negative connotation of the word *faworyt* in today’s Polish language; in the seventeenth century the word was viewed differently than today. A *fawor* referred simply to the favor of a wealthy and powerful person, and the monarch’s trust and favor that created a favorite were also necessary for a minister; in Spain the terms *privado* or *valido* did not have a negative connotation. If one limits oneself to Westminster, then a clear and irrefutable picture emerges of a contrast between – on the one hand – such favorites as Essex, Leicester<sup>321</sup> and (later) Walter Raleigh, and – on the other hand – ministers like William Cecil, 1st Baron Burghley, Sir Francis Walsingham and (in the next generation) Burghley’s son, Robert, 1st Earl of Salisbury.<sup>322</sup> Members of the first group were people from the Court, and those in the second group were from the Privy Council. The advice-maxim that Burghley gave the Queen about how to proceed regarding the nobility could easily apply to Burghley himself:

Gratify your nobility and principal persons of the realm, to bind them fast to you. Honour is the reward of virtue but it is gotten with labour and held with danger.<sup>323</sup>

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319 Here are beautiful words from the young queen to William Cecil: “I give you this charge that you shall be of my privy council, and content yourself to take pains for me and my realm. Th s judgment I have of you, that you will not be corrupted by any manner of gift, and that you will be faithful to the state; and that, without respect to my private will, you will give me that counsel which you think best, and if you shall know anything necessary to be declared to me of secrecy, you shall show it to myself only, and assure yourself I will not fail to keep taciturnity therein, and therefore herewith I charge you.” F. Chamberlin, *The Sayings of Queen Elizabeth* (London: 1923), 164 (from the year 1558).

320 See J.H. Elliot, Introduction to *World of the Favourite* 1999, 1–9.

321 Misztal 2002.

322 Beckinsale 1967; C. Read, *Mr. Secretary Cecil and Queen Elizabeth* (London: 1965); for more on Raleigh and the Elizabethan patronage system, see Tennenhouse 1981.

323 Beckinsale 1967, 272. Compare Shakespeare’s observation: “The world is a shop of instruments, whereof the wise man is master; and a kingdom but a frame of engines whereunto he is a wheel.” *Ibid.*, 262. Francis Bacon could have said something similar, though probably not Buckingham.

How different this is from the tactic recommended by Dr. Cramer! Burghley and Walsingham attained – and particularly maintained – their position through such labour, though it was because of Elizabeth that they were able to avoid the danger of her disfavor. Olivares found himself in a different situation. John H. Elliott introduced the term “minister-favourite” – without actually defining it – in reference to a person who – as the context shows – concentrated power in his hands thanks to the monarch’s trust and sympathy, though he remained, above all, an official.<sup>324</sup> One can see here, in the case of Count-Duke of Olivares, the influence of the Spanish *validos* or *privados*, but it can also be seen in the two French cardinals. One character who, in my opinion, does not belong here is George Villiers, who – in every meaning of the word – was a favorite of James I and who advanced rapidly through the Court until he had achieved the title Duke of Buckingham.<sup>325</sup>

Favorite or minister, whoever dwelled at the center of power had contact with, indeed wallowed in, patronal relationships. Anglo-Saxon scholars of England under Elizabeth and the first Stuarts take a very broad view of this issue. Sir John Neale, Wallace MacCaffrey and Linda Levy Peck addressed “Elizabethan patronage” and the fact that the queen played one court faction against the other in order to prevent abuse and to increase the “efficiency” of her rule. Levy Peck showed – contrary to common opinion at the time – that Court patronage under James I was not a “putrefying political system” and had a certain merit in that it put experts and appropriate advisors into positions of power,<sup>326</sup> which raises two broad issues. The first is formal and theoretical in nature (can one speak of a monarch’s political patronage and, if so, when?). And the second involves the effects of the patronal system on the functioning of the state.

If the appointment of officials and dignitaries belongs to a monarch’s prerogatives, then it is difficult to speak of patronage/clienteles in the meaning adopted here. It is obvious that a king or prince would appoint people to positions whom he regarded as suitable and who were close to him. In this sense, one could view every appointment as a sign of patronage, *ad absurdum*. Thus, it is better to talk about monarchical patronage only when we intend it as an expression of favoritism or when – as in the *Rzeczpospolita* under the Wazas – the king’s position approaches that of the leader of the magnatial faction. Philip IV’s letter on 24 January 1643 to the viceroy of Naples suggests a different situation: the recipient was

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324 Elliott 1999; see also Thompson 1999.

325 Lockyer 1981. Only in the *Rzeczpospolita* could a statesman remain minister without royal favor. I am thinking here of Jan Zamoyski under Zygmunt III.

326 Neale 1958, 84; MacCaffrey 1961; Levy Peck 1981, whose phrase I quote from page 27.

the *hechura*-creation of a count (Olivares), who was now subordinate directly to the king and could count on the king's support.<sup>327</sup> But in contrast to the situation that Western authors have at their disposal, Polish lingual intuition dictates that we draw a distinction between *faworyt* and minister, even if Elliott's term "minister-favourite" turns out to be occasionally useful.<sup>328</sup>

This leads us to the second issue: Can the process of making appointments through patronage be reconciled with an efficiently functioning state? In principle I see no barrier here, because the patron – whether he is a monarch, or his minister, or some other official (*vide* Olivares in the quoted example) – has a stake in whether or not the apparatus under him functions efficiently. A problem arises when other interests (factional, personal) come into play that encourage the appointment of an individual who lacks qualifications, though this does not have to be the result of patron obligations *sensu stricto*. It was easy for factions at the Bourbon court in France or the influence of the magnatial clans in Poland to set in motion mechanisms of negative selection. But such issues are difficult to estimate because there is no way to quantify talents.

I have expressed a certain doubt about whether we can consider the distribution of titles and office (i.e. the monarch's function as a "source of favor") as a kind of patronage/political patronage that is consistent with terminology used in the social and political sciences. There is one argument that speaks against my doubts, one that was provided by Elizabeth I. That great monarch of the sixteenth century showed how important the ruler's personal approach to her subjects can be. Regardless of the extent to which we agree with the revision of criticism of the first Stuarts, none of them had Elizabeth's talent in selecting her closest collaborators; they all built their own clientele, but these clients became merely agents of royal patronage. She realized the principle that all the English were her servants even if they were not dependent on the Court. Malcolm Smuts writes:

This kind of decentralization allowed for a maximum of flexibility and communication and encouraged constructive initiatives from men not directly connected to the royal household. [...] We can speak of a ceremonial and cultural dialogue taking place between the Court and the realm, a tradition of royalist culture growing out of the continual interplay between the royal entourage and communities throughout England.<sup>329</sup>

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327 Elliott 1986, 649; Professor Mączak cites this text in translation in Mączak 1995 (2000).

328 Mączak 1999a.

329 Smuts 1981, 185.

Elizabeth was able to play the role of patron like a master, in part by maintaining close and personal contact with her subjects. Her Court was relatively accessible, and the fact that she often visited the residences of the wealthy and powerful in the Home Counties was not just a sign of her reputed parsimony. Maintaining her aura of majesty, she was nonetheless able in the most significant moments to make close contact with her subjects. “Ye may have a greater prince, but ye shall never have a more loving prince” – spoken after the defeat of the Spanish Armada, these words spread throughout the population and helped build her image in society. Similarly, her statements on political-religious issues also helped cement her authority as a powerful monarch.<sup>330</sup>

James, and particularly Charles I, did not maintain this style. At the beginning of the new century English elites (and shortly thereafter Scottish elites) were becoming more cosmopolitan. They visited Italy and France on a large scale; they drew from those cultures examples of behavior, and they imitated their artistic tastes.<sup>331</sup> To the country squire – who was trying to eke out a proper living based on earnings from his humble but carefully managed estate, and who was immersed in such local matters as fairs, legal cases, and horse races – the king’s world must have seemed very distant.

As we will discover below, despite English complaints about an invasion of courtiers from the North, the Scottish nobility’s situation was even worse. As Keith Brown has written, even some Scottish peers were able to see the king only on coins.<sup>332</sup>

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330 *Sayings of Queen Elizabeth* 1923, 15. Other memorable words, spoken to French Ambassador de Noailles: “Though the sex to which I belong is considered weak [...] you will nevertheless find me a rock that bends to no wind” – To de Noailles, the French Ambassador (ibid., 130). To the speaker of the House of Commons regarding a bill for which she had not expressed her approval: “It is in my power to call parliaments, in my power to dissolve them, in my power to give assent or dissent to any determination which they should form.” And to Walsingham about papists, from whom she demanded only respect for the law: “For I make no windows into the hearts of men” (ibid., 143, 155).

331 J. Stoye, *English Travellers Abroad, 1604–1667* (London: 1952; New Haven: 1989).

332 Brown 1993, 546: “Before 1603 it was impossible for a Scottish king to be isolated from political opinion because his noblemen ensured he knew what was going on even when he did not want to be told. After 1603 communications were reduced to correspondence between the king and the privy council, and the informal channels operating through courtiers.”

#### 4. The Clientele Formalized: Scottish Bonds of Manrent

This case fascinates me, and I take it up here even though I feel that I am far from understanding it completely, which is the reason I will end this section not with firm conclusions but with several questions.

Scotland plays a particular role in the history of clientelistic relationships. First of all it is the only region in Europe that left us source material of mass character: bonds of manrent – that is, formal acts submitting oneself to a dependent relationship in exchange for a patron's protection. And second, this well developed patronal system – in the face of a weak central state authority – assured the northern kingdom a certain cohesion and (indirectly) significance on the European scene. Third and finally, it is precisely on the territory of Scotland where we can observe the transformation of clan-oriented clientelism into a significantly more flexible (and modern) system of political factions, which – in the final decades of the sixteenth century – was directed toward central institutions.

These clientelistic agreements are well-known, having been published long ago mainly by local *érudits*, but the way this system functioned, and its significance, have only recently become an object of interest for scholars of Scottish history at the threshold of the Middle Ages and modern times.<sup>333</sup> Jenny Wormald has examined this topic thoroughly and in so doing she refers to “bastard feudalism.” However, it must be noted that the original Scottish system differed significantly from both the feudal system and its “bastard” version; usually it did not call for land to be transferred into a feudal holding, and it very rarely called for the transfer of money. Even stranger is the fact that there is no known case – as Wormald writes – where a client's written obligation called for him to be given an office. Quite the opposite: the most desirable clients were people with a fixed status, who were already “in positions.” Given the small role that material benefit played in *manrent* relationships, its essence was the personal bond; care and protection on the one hand, assistance and a “following” on the other. The client had a close relationship with the patron. “Lordship” did not stand in conflict with “kinship”; rather, it was its extension. The lord joined his client with the group of people on which he conferred his protection; the client was thus given a status equal to that of a member of the lord's family, his clan. This very reasonable system was a powerful stabilizing factor in part because – unlike under the later feudal system – it was possible (indeed workable) for the

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333 Mitchison 1983; Wormald 1985; Brown 1986.



client to bond with only one patron.<sup>334</sup> That having been said, one must keep in mind that these relationships could be two-sided, three-sided or more, and they could involve an entire clan. And through them – viewing things even more broadly – the great magnates tied their clients to other relationships that were – so to speak – overriding. The complexities that came with various coalitions and vendettas could not be eliminated or even simplified.

The oldest preserved *manrent* document dates back to the year 1445 (a similar document has been preserved that was issued by James II King of Scots in 1453), and the last such relationship was established at the beginning of the seventeenth century. The very expression (*mannraedan*) corresponded to the Middle-Ages Latin term *homagium* and literally means “being a man” (*raedan = agium*) under conditions created by the act.<sup>335</sup> By the sixteenth century, the definition of bonds of manrent, which originally had been very narrow, was often (though not necessarily) spacious and emphatic. These bonds took the form of a declaration from a client who, with this document, committed himself to lifelong service, fidelity and loyalty (“lele; lelelie and treulie bundnis”) to his patron. In return, the patron was obligated to provide (“supple, maintaine”) for the client, to defend him, and to “take his side” (“tak my afald trew parte”) in every action, cause, and conflict (“in all my actionis causis and querelis lefull and honest”). Fidelity and service were often elaborated as a warning of forthcoming danger or advice when the lord asked for it (“the best counsale I can quhen I am requirit”), as the duty to participate in a cavalcade (“I shall ride and gang with my said lord and maister and for him”), and as the duty to support the patron in causes and conflicts like those described above. Qualifications touch upon “allegiance to our soverane lady the quenis,” though there is also occasional mention of obligations toward other persons or institutions (e.g. a monastery).<sup>336</sup> We find at the bottom of these

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334 Wormald 1988, 166. Wormald cites A.A.M. Duncan’s opinion that “the tenure of the land can be regarded as a part of these relationships, and not, as the lawyers would have it, a reason for them.” Duncan discusses further the highly diverse – and today rather elusive – forms of the “feudal” (Duncan’s quotation marks) relationship. See Duncan, *Scotland: The Making of the Kingdom* (Edinburgh: 1975), 408.

335 For a linguistic analysis of this term, see Wormald 1985, 15. The terms *mannraedan* and *manred* appear in Anglo-Saxon texts starting in the twelfth century. Jenny Wormald also points out other expressions that involve basic relations (friendship, hatred, kinship) that are shared by those in the “great area of northern England and southern Scotland artificially divided by the Anglo-Scottish border.”

336 Quotes come from a *manrent* issued in 1545 by James Kennedy of Blairquhan to James Hamilton Earl of Arran. See Wormald 1985, 52–54.

documents the date, signature of the person issuing the document, a seal, and often the names of witnesses, though we know of many such documents from copies or as entries in the register in which certain formalities were abandoned and which lack signatures. Service (“servand”) appears in such documents only as of the middle of the sixteenth century.

The actual contents of the acts varied, but they focused mainly on those under obligation; manrents could obligate relatives, the entire clan, “friends,” household members and servants, along with the issuer’s heirs and whoever would take his position upon his death. In some cases the bond was given a time frame shorter than life, for example the duration of the queen’s minority, or as long as the Earl of Arran was her guardian, etc. Such contracts were rarely concluded for only a year from the signing date, but there were instances that involved obligations for eternity (“at all timis”).<sup>337</sup> Sometimes the tone of the act indicates that it represents compensation for favors received – “sindry gratitudis proffitis and pleasouris.”

The documents that have been preserved make up only a part of the total number issued through the years; it is believed that, two hundred years ago, bonds of manrent existed in almost every Scottish noble manor. Today, the known acts (other than those published long ago by the erudites) are mainly found in the archives of the great families. They were thus preserved by a patron who appeared in the act’s text as a third person, not as one of the parties to the contract. After all, the fact is (as Scottish scholars have pointed out) that, as a rule, these documents were one-sided acts that included the client’s declaration. If they mention the patron’s obligations, such mention is made by the person issuing the document. The entire collection of acts published by Jenny Wormald contains not a single declaration of obligations issued by a person who is wealthier and more powerful than the client. Perhaps the patron’s obligations were broadly accepted, in a sense obvious. Most certainly the assumption was that the defense of the client was, in any case, in the patron’s interest. However, silence regarding the patron’s obligations highlights the unequal nature of the contract.

Issuing such obligations became part of the Scottish character; alongside the *manrent* there were “level contracts” (“bonds of friendship”) which, however, might well have simply marked the end of a quarrel or signifi d – between partners of unequal signifi ance – a bond that was simply “vertical.” The contract closed between William Thane of Cawdor and Huchon Rose of Kilravock and his son of the same name (1482) involved arbitration in a confl i t between the two parties that had developed since the previous act of friendship (1476) and the mar-

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337 For other examples and specific s tuations limiting obligations, see *ibid.*, 59–64.

riage between William's son and heir and Huchon's daughter; Huchon junior was not to tie himself to any lord who would be in conflict with William.<sup>338</sup> Another typical variant involved forgiveness for harm done or promises of appropriate action in the context of conflicts and feuds with a third person. Bonds of friendship, like bonds of manrent, could often be issued by one party on behalf of another, but sometimes it happened differently. For example, in 1526 in Dumbarton, four Campbells concluded a bond of friends according to the standard formula with the stipulation of loyalty and obedience to the Earl of Argyll (who was also of the Campbells). However, if a conflict arose with the earl they could conclude a contract with him only upon the advice of all four of them; on the other hand, if the earl attempted to deprive them of their inheritance (or assisted someone in doing so), they could withdraw from his service.<sup>339</sup>

The earls of Argyll appear in these sources as patrons-recipients of an act most often in cases where the issuer stipulates his loyalty toward the earl, though in bonds of friendship to which they were not a party they also appear as a threat, against which it was right and proper to join together in common defense. The contract concluded in 1544 between, among others, the four Campbells appears complicated; it calls on John to provide assistance to Archibald, James and Colin if Argyll threatens their inheritance. It was to end a disagreement between them and bring order to their estate for the benefit of the kingdom, the monarch and – unexpectedly – their chief, Argyll, who after all posed a danger to them.<sup>340</sup>

The wealthy and powerful also established bonds through contracts with friends, but as a rule only with those who were their equals: Archibald Earl of Argyll (who was present in the above-mentioned acts) and the Earl of Huntly (along with his entire family, his friends, and his servants), or Argyll with Farquhar bishop of the Islands (along with both of their entourages).

On the basis of these documents alone it is difficult to gain great insight into the nature of the powerful Archibald's political agreements.<sup>341</sup> Two weeks after the contract among the four Campbells (19 May 1544) had been concluded, another Campbell, John of Cawdor, established a bond of friendship with Archibald Earl of Angus and George Douglas of Pittendreich (along with "their kin, friends and servants"), in turbulent times, in support of the queen, in resistance to the English; arbitrators were set up to adjudicate all of their internal conflicts.<sup>342</sup>

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338 Ibid., App. B no. 9, 376–377.

339 Ibid., App. B no. 29, 381.

340 Ibid., App. B no. 43, 385.

341 For more see Cregeen 1968 (including the bibliography).

342 Wormald 1985, App. B no. 44, 385 (7 June 1544).

Two particular matters are worth pointing out here. The first is collective, referring to relationships with a character that reaches beyond family (relatives through blood and marriage). “Kin,” “friends,” and “servants”: these expressions could be purely conventional in nature, but they sometimes had content that was concrete and binding. For example, in 1570 Archibald Early of Argyll, through the mediation of George Earl of Huntly, signed with John Earl of Atholl a formal bond of friendship that was directed particularly at the Clan Gregor. At the same time, an associated compromise ended a conflict between them regarding Coupar Angus Abbey; Atholl would not take steps on behalf of *his friends* to fill a position in the diocese of Dunkeld, etc.; if any one of the parties violated the agreement, Huntly would support the other party.<sup>343</sup>

The second matter involves, on the one hand, the connection between agreements/transactions that were in principle private and, on the other hand, the state and its particular situation. In the political chaos that Scotland was experiencing in the second half of the sixteenth century, this connection had particular significance. I mentioned above the support for the queen and resistance put up against the English, but Queen Marie de Guise (the widow of James V, mother of Mary Queen of Scots, and regent as of 1554) herself established a bond of friendship with the governor James Earl of Arran, William Lord Ruthven, Patrick 3rd Earl of Bothwell, Patrick Lord Gray, and many others, including the burgher James MacGill of Edinburgh.<sup>344</sup>

A formal bond of friendship might well have also been necessary in cases in which local authority was lacking. For example, six Scots from Lochaber along with their friends, servants and “partakers” closed such a contract that was supposed to last until there no longer was in Lochaber a legitimate “chief, tutor or curator who has governance of Lochaber and whose governorship they are content to obey.”<sup>345</sup> The contract between Earl Archibald, whom I have mentioned several times, and Patrick Lord Gray was rather exceptional in character; it was essentially an act of forgiveness for a crime committed by the latter (and his “kin and followers”) who, as a guarantee for the agreement, was to “enter his son and heir or his brother Robert as pledges to Argyll.”<sup>346</sup>

Generally, the collection of preserved documents contains “friendships” that were both defensive and aggressive, lifelong and eternal, that were directed against foreign clans or a wealthy and powerful menace, but it also contains those that

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343 Ibid., no. 59, 389 (24 March 1570).

344 Ibid., no. 45, 385, no. 4–21, 24–29, 360–365 (1543–1557).

345 Ibid., no. 60, 389.

346 Ibid., no. 31, 183 (20 January 1548).

were concluded at the request of (or under pressure from) a powerful lord. In principle they were to have a stabilizing effect. This motif (“good government,” “order”) dominates the acts in terms of motivation, though everything depended on circumstances. If the parties to a contract were magnates<sup>347</sup>, such a bond of manrent took on a broader and nationwide significance.

Jenny Wormald suggests that the custom by which such alliances were formulated led to acts of “covenant,” and though political and religious slogans were extremely rare, they contain within themselves more of an intention or attempt to engage in political maneuver than real action. For example, Hugh Master of Eglinton (1545, no specific date) is mentioned in an act with a blank space (with no other names) designed to prevent Mary Stuart from marrying an English or other foreign prince (the firstborn son of the Earl of Arran was mentioned as the most proper candidate for her hand).

In one case the “bond” gives us a direct sign that there was drama afoot. On 1 January 1565 (1566) Henry Lord Darnley turned to unmentioned partners of various estates in order to join forces to remove from the country “ane straunger Italian callid David,” who could destroy Her Royal Majesty, Mary. Darnley (who called himself “Henry, by the grace of God King of Scotland and husband to the Queues Maieste”) promised them “protection and support for participation in a venture to ensue in the presence of Her Royal Majesty and in the palace of Holyrood.” He continues: “And bycaus we cannot accomplish the same without thassistence of others, Therefor have we drawn certain of our nobilite, erles, lords, barons, freholders, gent., marchaints, and crafts men, to assist vs in this our entreprise [...]” At the same time he promises them and their heirs all the protection in his powers, being a “freend to their freends and ennemy to their ennemys.”<sup>348</sup>

Another contract, prepared in Edinburgh (1567, no specific date) without naming specifically those who issued it (“earls, barons, and others”) and addressed to Sir James Balfour, the deputy-governor of Edinburgh castle, was directed against

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347 I use this term to refer to people ruling over expansive territories.

348 The person in question here is David Rizzio, an Italian, the private secretary – also considered the lover – of Mary, Queen of Scots. He was murdered in the queen’s presence by conspirators under Darnley’s direction on 9 March 1566; originally the date for the action was set at 7 March. Later, Mary was shown the “bond” signed by Darnley and others calling for the murder of the Italian schemer. In the end Darnley denied any role in the conspiracy, which was a denial (according to John Knox) that no one believed. See Fraser 1890, vol. 1, XXXIV. See also M. Bogucka, *Maria Stuart* (Warszawa: 1990), 89–96; on Bothwell, see pp. 101–118.

Mary's next husband, James Bothwell.<sup>349</sup> The anonymous earls and barons describe Mary's abduction by Bothwell to Dunbar; they describe the support that Balfour was giving him; and they promise to support him as deputy-governor and in other causes. Undoubtedly the document had been prepared by Balfour's secretary. In the same year a draft document emerged (with no names, dates, or place) recognizing Mary Stuart's voluntary abdication. I would say that it was George Gordon Earl of Huntly who initiated a draft document (from 1568, though it is without a date) calling on countless members of the Gordon family and its dependents to promise their loyalty to the queen (Mary), their assistance to Huntly as her deputy in the North, and their resistance against her opponents there.<sup>350</sup> At the same time, many of the preserved documents have serious holes and do not strictly conform to legal norms; such draft documents containing – shall we say – “postulatory” concepts are particularly common.

Reading these documents in light of bonds of manrent and bonds of friendship, which were common in Scotland in those years, one gets the sense that they were often used to mobilize political allies and their clients (“friends,” etc.) in conditions marked by political crisis and a breakdown in authority. A sense that the state was under threat in the second half of the sixteenth century was obvious, and one can interpret the kind of agreements discussed here as a means of tying up broken threads from the political peripheries to the magnates at the center of power. James VI organized his supporters in a similar fashion, based on the example of his grandmother, Mary of Guise: In 1592 he mobilized a group of aristocrats and 154 others to sign a contract in defense of the “true religion” and against “treasonable conspiracies,” Jesuits and papists, and in particular Earls Huntly, Erroll and Angus. It is interesting that one of the families connected to this contract was dependent in another way on Earl Huntly. Seven years later these same aristocrats – this time along with Earl Huntly – joined in support of King James's right to the throne of England.<sup>351</sup>

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349 Sir James Melville of Halhill noted in his journal that another act was also signed with the opposite intention: “Afterward the court came to Edinburgh; and there a number of noblemen were drawn together in a chamber within the palace, where they all subscribed a paper, declaring that they judged it was much the Queen's interest to marry Bothwell, *he having many friends in Lothian and upon the borders, which would cause good order to be kept*. And then the Queen could not but marry him, seeing he had ravished her and lain with her against her will” (author's emphasis – A.M.). Sir James was against Bothwell, who ordered him to be arrested. Melville [no publication date], 88.

350 Wormald 1985, App. C, 402–410.

351 *Ibid.*, App. C no. 32 and 33, 409–410.

One issue that these documents raise is the distance between the partners concluding a contract. Wormald puts forward the thesis that, in the sixteenth century, leading figures in society were not as distinguishable from others through their wealth as previously had been the case, a situation that was encouraged by the fact that the obligations of the tenants/subjects was fixed by a devaluating currency. What is most significant here in the context of my topic in general is the fact that the very system of written obligations (“bonds”) served the interests of the “lairds” (a counterpart to the English gentry), of course under favorable circumstances and as a result of great invested effort.

Take, for example, the Campbells from Glenorchy, who over the course of the sixteenth century (1510–1611) concluded 162 such agreements, of which 38 were concluded by Colin the 6th Laird of Glenorchy and 116 by his son, Duncan, which means that – taken together – they concluded more such agreements in this period than did the two most powerful earls (Argyll and Huntly) combined. These are the minimum numbers – after all, they included only those that have been preserved, either in original form or as a copy – but it is characteristic that those Campbells, who were really not aristocrats, preserved them in such an orderly way – they bound them together in volumes (“bukis of bandis of manrent”) – all of which indicates quite clearly that they devoted a great deal of focused and long-term attention to building their clientele.<sup>352</sup>

Bonds of manrent and friendship can be interpreted in two ways. On the one hand, they generally point to the existence of the constant anxiety and threat they were meant to avoid, and some were concluded in clear opposition to somebody. On the other hand, they indicate a consistent effort to establish or maintain stability. Against the weakness of the monarchy, which over the course of Scotland’s sixteenth century was consistently losing its sense of permanence, they became the means by which a stable system of authority, based on the magnatial families, was built. As the century came to an end, the custom of concluding such contracts suddenly disappeared. No one condemned them; clearly they were simply no longer necessary. And they would not return in the middle of the eighteenth century, when the Scots rose up in rebellion against English domination.

A custom that was as durable and important as the *manrent* must have had deep social roots. Where had such an early effort to record acts regulating friendship and hostility come from? Why had the Scots gone over on such a mass scale from agreements authenticated by witnesses to written contracts? How do we explain the fact that the recording of such acts was so quickly dropped?

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352 Ibid., 101, 205–249.

## 5. Bloody Revenge (the Feud), or Elements of a Historical Parallel<sup>353</sup>

A comparison emerges here with another country regarding the dominance of magnates and a well-developed clan structure within the nobility – that is, with the Polish *Rzeczpospolita*. Scottish aristocrats, much like Polish magnates, oscillated between the royal court and the country, where they attempted to dominate the nobility. The technique used for this domination was specific to each country: in Poland, opportunity was provided by the *sejmiki* and, more generally, by the noble *samorząd* (autonomous local council) with its complicated electoral system. Players in Scotland had at their disposal the clan structure mainly – though not only – in the far northern part of the kingdom and on the islands. The monarchical court in Scotland in the sixteenth century functioned poorly and was riven by dynastic intrigues, which culminated in the rule of Mary Stuart. After 1560 protestant ministers began to wield great power; they introduced a new factor in national unity, though at the same time they undermined the authority of the “heretical” monarchs – both Marys – and the court in Edinburgh. Local feuds were a common occurrence, and even if they were waged by lesser landowners (*lairds*), they were significantly more brutal than in Poland. They could involve hundreds of armed men of medium wealth. One laird, Sir James Fergusson, was able (one of his opponents complained) to call out “a thousand men on horseback and on foot” and then refuse his consent to a court decision, which unleashed a conflict that engulfed all of county Stirling and several clans there.<sup>354</sup> Bonds of *manrent* served both defensive and aggressive goals and sometimes – though not always – tied noblemen together at all levels and across clan relationships.

As mentioned above, this phenomenon quickly burned itself out in the first years of the seventeenth century, and I have not found a complete answer as to why this happened. Of course royal initiatives were important in this regard, but they do not provide a full explanation. James VI, who in England was James I, never became as popular as his predecessor, nor was he ever as effective, although in the country of his origin he enjoyed some significant success. He was aware of the absolute weakness of central authority and the scope of anarchy in the country.

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353 I was not able to get my hands on the book by J. Black-Michaud, *Cohesive Force* (Oxford: 1975), which presents a theory tying the feud and feudalism. See also Davis 1977, 161. The concept of the feud has also been discussed in Zmora 1997, 1–15.

354 Smout 1977, 94–99; Wormald 1980; Brown 1986; for more on the Fergusson issue, see Fergusson 1949, chapter II.



In his instructions to his son in the year 1599, in which he outlined his political program as monarch, he wrote:

And rest not, vntill yee roote out these barbarous feides; that their effects may bee as well smoared down, as their barbarous name is vnknownen to anie other nation: For if this Treatise were written either in French or Latine, I could not get them named vnto you but by circumlocution.<sup>355</sup>

This philological-legal commentary was not altogether apt, but the king was able, to a large extent and within a few years, to realize the program outlined in his *Basilikon Doron*. Little was left for his son and successor, Charles, to do,<sup>356</sup> though he did not live to see Scottish loyalty in civil conflicts taking place on English territory. Does this not mean that clan heads at that time were closely tied to rulers in Edinburgh? The king's move from Edinburgh to Westminster and the fact that he led from there a "government by pen" through office in Edinburgh seem to have been the main catalyst for change.<sup>357</sup> What was the mechanism for this? The northern kingdom had gone through almost constant conflict and civil war and had suffered humiliating defeat in wars with the English. The words from Ecclesiastes (10:16) – "Woe to thee, O land, when thy king is a child [...]" – were applicable to the Scottish context because that country had suffered such minority reigns. After the death of James V in 1542 the weakness of the Crown converged with the breakup of the Church. Keith M. Brown wrote:

The relationship between instability or crisis in the kingdom at large and feuding is not entirely a clear one. Fifteenth-century Scotland had also been a feuding society, but it was not disturbed to this extent by private violence, and the justice of the blood feud was able to maintain an equilibrium of war and peace within communities. The feud was not something very different from its sixteenth century version; what had changed were the conditions in which it found itself.<sup>358</sup>

Stability came to Scotland in the last decade of the sixteenth century, which was tied to King James' consistent policies and actions and the associated changes in

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355 *Basilikon Doron*, see James I 1969, 55. See also Smout 1977, 99.

356 James Stuart (the Scottish version of his name) wrote *Basilikon Doron* for his older son, Henry, who died before his father.

357 James I's words (1607): "Thus I must say for Scotland, here I sit and govern it with my pen, I write and it is done, and by a clerk of the council I govern Scotland now, which others could not do by the sword." Quote from D.H. Willson, *King James VI and I* (London: 1963), 313. For more on this subject, see M. Lee, *Government by Pen. Scotland under James VI and I* (Urbana, Ill.: 1980).

358 Brown 1986, 266–267.

the intentions of Scottish magnates.<sup>359</sup> To put it simply: those magnates were no longer interested in resolving conflicts locally and “by force” because that would damage their position at the “center” of power – that is, within the royal milieu and in the Privy Council, which even after 1603 would remain in Edinburgh. When the king was constantly gone, the situation was not clear. Only part of the Scottish aristocracy got a license to travel to Westminster, though the English grew dissatisfied over the fact that the royal household, and the “bedchamber” in particular, was – to a very high degree – populated by Scots.<sup>360</sup> The interests of those courtiers arriving from the north were still focused on the homeland, and under the first Stuarts the elites of the two nations did not integrate. But interest died down in signing “bonds” and making clientelistic declarations in general. Among the Scottish lairds it simply went out of fashion.

The above discussion raises several comparative comments. First it points to a deep difference between the Scottish clans of that time and the Corsican clans, which I mention in other parts of this work. In Corsica – practically regardless of where, and in what way, state authorities function – everyone born in the highlands is, even today, defined by his place of birth and name and is joined to a system of unending conflicts, indeed feuds, that are entangled currently with the system of local and parliamentary elections.<sup>361</sup> On the other hand, antagonism among Scottish highlanders toward “strangers” was not so deeply rooted; or rather, clan communities were powerfully dependent on their wealthy and powerful patrons. Stabilization of the state at the end of the sixteenth century means, in my view, the disappearance not so much of all feuds but rather of the great conflicts among aristocrats. But as they stopped lending their support for bloody local conflicts, those conflicts lost their significance as a path to legal arbitration, which after all had been managed by the magnates. The Scottish aristocracy reshaped itself and established mutual bonds, and over the course of 22 years of “government by pen,” King James increased the number of peers by half, mainly by rewarding people whom he could count on and who were already active in government or in the judiciary. Among them were the younger sons of barons and lairds who still had to wait for complete acceptance on the part of the older aristocracy and who did not have at their disposal such vast estates. As Rosalind Mitchison points out, this development signified the beginning of

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359 Ibid., 266–272.

360 On licenses to travel to Westminster, see Brown 1993, 544; in 1604 the Scottish Privy Council issued licenses to stay at the court in Westminster; for this, see p. 552, where information can also be found on the number of Scottish courtiers.

361 See the interlude below entitled “The Feud, or to be a Client from the Cradle.”

the transition from a society of family and clan bonds to a society governed by money, in which – at the same time – the king accentuated his arbitrary prerogatives through conferments.<sup>362</sup> A certain role was also played by an intellectual revolution. In this context all authors interested in this subject point to the activities of Calvinist ministers, who aggressively opposed feuds. At the same, one must remember that this reform came at a time when royal authority had fallen to its lowest point, to which Mary's governments (1560–1567) contributed, what with her ultimate abdication and flight to England. James acted discretely but decisively. In 1591 he limited the size of the processions that brought His Excellency's subjects to the court (both royal and legal) in Edinburgh; an earl could be accompanied by a dozen horsemen, a lord by sixteen, and a common baron by only ten.<sup>363</sup> If, on the one hand, this points to concern for the legal education of the sons of the nobility, this must have also meant the pacification of the "highlands" using rather brutal methods. In 1609 Lord Ochiltree (a member of the Royal Council), employing a variety of ruses, imprisoned several clan chiefs for so long that Bishop of the Isles Andrew Knox brought them to agreement under the Statutes of Iona, on which basis the clan chiefs were responsible for their fellow tribesmen and would have to send their heirs to the lowlands for education in, for example, rudimentary law. It was a blow aimed at not only the system of rule but also at the highland culture, which was not alone in its importance for state unity. Soon – also with the support of a local bishop, the "Scottish Kirk" – the monarchy and the Council managed to repeal distinct laws with which the islands in the north of the country had been governed.<sup>364</sup> In doing this James had the support of the aristocracy, which broadened its influence in the far north, though this was simultaneously, no doubt, a success of central authorities.

What is the basis for the historical parallel between Scotland and the *Rzeczpospolita*? I will return to this question after I present the Polish case. Here it is worth pointing out that it is equally difficult to explain the evolution of (and, eventually, the practical disappearance of) the Polish *zajazdy*<sup>365</sup> and acts of bloody revenge in the *Rzeczpospolita's* noble milieu over the course of the first half of the

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362 Mitchison 1983, 10.

363 Ibid., 4, 7–8.

364 Ibid., 16–19.

365 Translator's note: The Polish term *zajazd* (plural: *zajazdy*) is often translated as "foray," but it was special kind of foray in which Polish noblemen (in the absence of a strong executive authority) would join forces to execute the law or defend their rights.

seventeenth century.<sup>366</sup> But an entirely distinct issue involves the ways in which conflicts over power were resolved among the magnates (with a special role being played by the king), which is an issue that is waiting for (and deserves) separate analysis. On another occasion I put forward the argument that, in the middle of the seventeenth century, the *Rzeczpospolita's* king – which was once the keystone of the Polish system of government – became a party to political conflicts, more the leader of the regalist faction than a monarch in the full and – so to speak – European sense of the word. It is worth looking upon Scotland from this Polish perspective.

The Stewart kings were extremely able and often ruthless men, whose periods of personal rule left no doubt about their power, and the respect in which the monarchy was held. But that power was never exercised for long enough to allow the crown to build up anything approaching autocratic kingship; and although in each reign individuals might suffer at the hands of the king, there was never any collective onslaught on the power of local lords and patrons. On the contrary, the crown, by a policy of intelligent co-operation, gave its backing to local patronage as exercised by families whom it could trust. In the problematic outlying areas of the kingdom, the west and northern highlands, it used the greatest magnates, the earls of Argyll and Huntly, as its lieutenants, encouraging them to build up and extend their affluences as a means of imposing royal control in the localities; [...] The crown was a focal point rather than a ruler, presiding over rather than seeking to control directly the disparate areas of the kingdom.<sup>367</sup>

As a rule – Jenny Wormald argues – historians see in this matter the weakness of the Scottish monarchy. But even the most powerful rulers at that time were not in a position to extend their authority over the entire territory of the state. The Scottish crown was less exposed than other monarchs to the resistance of the governed.

Though this was no doubt true, such relative safety was only the result of the relative peace – as of 1513 – on the border. If we turn our attention to the *Rzeczpospolita*, an opposing image comes into view, namely constant threats on at least several borders, especially on those that were distant from the center of power (starting in 1626, another conflict with Sweden worsened the situation). On the other hand – and this will be a topic of discussion in the context of the Polish magnates – the size of the country prevented it from being devoured by more aggressive neighbors. That having been said, the Scottish paradox found its counterpart along the Vistula and Daugava Rivers; it was precisely the weakness of (indeed minute nature of) the power structures that hindered Carl Gustav's at-

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366 See the unpublished research of Dominik Golec 1982 (Kujawa, Golec: 1982) and Iwona Pugaćewicz (województwo rawskie).

367 Wormald 1988, 160–161.

tempt to defeat the *Rzeczpospolita*, and this at a time when his armies had achieved their greatest victories over. And yet patronage in the two countries developed very differently; even though the main source of patronage in both countries was the crown, there was in Scotland a “voracious” search for patronage not at the center (i.e. the Court and government) but in the country among the rich and powerful.<sup>368</sup> In Poland and Lithuania the function of the intermediary between the king (the source of favors) and noblemen/neighbors on the one hand, and clients on the other, was at that time one of the magnate’s fundamental attributes. And not just in Poland.

## 6. France: The Royal Court, the Aristocracy, and Officials

The Court was the monarch’s milieu, whose most perfect expression and symbol was Versailles; like all courts, it was the center of aristocratic prestige and authority. And then there was the official, whose position was suspended somewhere between his immediate superior, the king, and the applicable law.

In sharp contrast to the *Rzeczpospolita*, the courts of the rich and powerful in France experienced a serious decrease in size in the seventeenth century, though – as we shall see – this was not a linear process. Many factors were at work here; referring to a somewhat earlier period, Mark Greengrass indicated that financial issues played an important role. For example, the Duke of Montmorency removed six courtiers from his table because he had no money for them; fluctuations in the size of his court were dependent mainly on the size of the ducal coffers.<sup>369</sup> In the seventeenth century three dukes from this line held the position “First Prince of The Blood” and thus were the *crème de la crème* of the French aristocracy. Their patronage was particularly broad because they were able to offer military commissions not only in their own regiments, but also in *Maison du Roi*, of which they were grand masters as of the year 1643.<sup>370</sup> Their fortunes allowed them to maintain a *Maison domestique* on a high level.<sup>371</sup> Walking directly in the footsteps of Roland Mousnier, Lefebvre attempts to classify the makeup of the “house of the Princes of Condé” into categories established by the masters. *Officiers commensaux* – people who sat at the prince’s table (in Spain they talked of *criados*,

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368 Ibid., 161.

369 Greengrass 1986.

370 Lefebvre 1973. Going forward, I make use mainly of this work.

371 On the properties and income of the house of Condé, see D. Roche, “La fortune et les revenus des Princes de Condé à l’aube du XVIIIe siècle,” *Revue d’Histoire Moderne et Contemporaine* (1967): 216–243.

which – however – sounds significantly less honorable) – were numerous in the years 1644, 1649 and 1660. The number of 500 to 530 *commensaux* fell by half over the course of the 1660s and was, by the beginning of the next century, barely a hundred. As Lefebvre pointed out, one's affiliation with this group did not necessarily imply that he fulfilled an official function (though among those functions was the administration of the princely estates), but in a significant number of cases it meant semi-official recognition of princely patronage, which was an honor tied to an important privilege – exemption from the *taille*. Precisely for this reason it was the king who formally approved the makeup of this group, along with the list submitted to the *Cours des aides*. The dramatic reduction in the number of *commensaux* meant a withdrawal from great political ambitions, particularly after the death of Louis II de Bourbon-Condé (1686); the court at Chantilly was no longer the center of a party in French political affairs but remained the headquarters of wealthy and powerful aristocrats. There were – in Lefebvre's conception – *les agents de la clientèle* and alongside them *fidèles* – that is, people who, because of their status and position in the hierarchy of power, could be counted on absolutely in urgent circumstances.<sup>372</sup> But much to the dismay of the courtiers at Chantilly, Prince Louis II (the Grand Condé) also reached out to the *robins*, people *de peu de naissance*, whom he could shape according to his own will. At around the age of 25 they became *créatures*, not so much of the prince but of the Condé family, and on average they remained in this role for around 32 years. This group was united not just by its relationship with the prince but also by family bonds, which increased the importance of one's origins. Surrounding the prince were countless brothers, fathers and sons-in-law, uncles and nephews, not to mention cousins. Twelve families from Burgundy formed a plexus in which three were joined by marriage (involving legal – if not always legitimate – children) with at least two others; the Girard family, which had been tied to the Condés for generations, tied itself further to as many as five of his other *fidèles*.<sup>373</sup>

Does this term accurately reflected the *maître-créature* relationship? Of course *la fidélité* involves “reciprocal obligations”<sup>374</sup> and the lord's obligations included promoting his people, particularly by ensuring them a career in public service. And the Condé family's people indeed enjoyed such careers. Of thirty-two sec-

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372 “Les Princes faisaient appel, selon les circonstances, a des hommes capables de leur rendre des services immédiats par leur statut social ou leur situation dans la hiérarchie des pouvoirs.” Lefebvre 1973, 66.

373 An abundance of prosopographical material on the Condé court is also presented in Béguin 1999.

374 Lefebvre 1973, 75.

retaries, twenty-two advanced in the king's service to the position of intendant, treasurer general, council secretary, etc., though this does not prove that, within Condé court circles, there existed a clear division between *clients* and *fidèles*. Some of the latter had been (or were) the "people" of other wealthy and powerful houses. If one is to treat seriously the effect of "fid lity," one must consistently keep in mind that among the *fidèles* there were those who had betrayed their older lords.

When fid lity is tied with something more than hope – that is, with the expectation that benefits will fl w from the person of the beloved lord – then doubts must arise as to the motives behind feelings expressed (and, signifi ntly, to how they were received). "Fidelity," Lefebvre writes, "is inseparable from feelings of gratitude toward the patron, who is a 'benefactor'"<sup>375</sup> Evidence of this seems to come, for example, from a desire expressed in a testament in which the testator stated that his heart should be placed at the grave of Louis II, and from a number of legacies devoting a sum of 40 thousand livres for Parisian Jesuits so that a mass would be held every year for his lord's spirit. The testator's grave with sculpted ivy and the inscription *Etiam post mortem fidelis* documented the dead man's attachment to his lord and emphasized what an honor it had been to have such a powerful bond. The testator thus took pride in the fact that he had been able to match his lord's faith and confidence and to declare his feelings and loyalty above and beyond the typical. This man, the president of the Paris Parlement, Jean Perrault, wrote honestly and according to the truth.<sup>376</sup> We fi d evidence of this in the fact that he was imprisoned in 1650 in Vincennes and in the Bastille along with other noblemen participating in the Fronde, and that two years later he was a banker for the Fronde, personally investing 300 thousand livres into the cause.

The material benefits of the "most visible signs that fid lity leaves behind [...] can blind us to the real bonds that a human has with another human. Emotional relations, even sentimental relations, no doubt played a great role in this regard."<sup>377</sup> This is certainly true, but there is no solid argument on which to classify the lord's dependents into two groups, as Mousnier did: the loyal ones and the clients. In any case, Lefebvre is more reasonable than consistent. A *domestique* could also be a *fidèle*, who had a "patron," and *fidèles* could also be counted among the lord's boarders.

Are we able to apply the above to the entire Bourbon era? Yves Castan, writing about the connections between the *privatum* and *publicum*, highlights a general

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375 Ibid., 103.

376 "Il est vrai Perrault confondait, en parfaite créature, ses intérêts et ceux de son maître." Ibid., 101.

377 Ibid., 102–103.

phenomenon in everyday life from the Renaissance to the Revolution, namely the dominance of the bond between subaltern and *supérieur*. The case of the Condés is important because of their significance as a family but also in light of their dramatic fate in France under the governments of the two cardinals. Henry II de Bourbon, whom we discussed above, who was an ultra-Catholic without support from the protestant branch of the family, and whom Richelieu sent to the provinces (Berry) in 1620, adopted the tactic used by the *créatures* around him whom he had created out of nothing. Now he had a new court, one comprised of young people who had no connection with the Court. As his secretary put it: “Maison nouvelle de jeunes gens sans correspondance et sans appui à la Cour [...] et desquels il n’auroit à appréhender aucun mauvais officier.”<sup>378</sup> The factor that bound these men together, and especially the condition for recruitment to the Condé court, was Catholic zeal, though it was a symbol in seventeenth century France of loyalty to the lord that lacked the fanaticism that had so clearly marked the factions of the previous century’s religious wars.

This magnatial court machine was governed by its own laws, which were determined mainly by its size and territorial expanse. Such a great collective of people, by its very nature, could not be egalitarian, but it is interesting that this group was not a *circle* of families but an entire pyramid of clientelistic agreements mutually subordinate to one another.<sup>379</sup> If someone in this group obtained a better position, others who were connected to him used his *crédit* (so to speak) for their own ends. One can view this as a convergence of bilateral and mutually supportive aspirations in which clients, in broadening their network of connections, increased their value in the eyes of the patron and could thereby feel increasingly connected with him.<sup>380</sup> Only through the possession of serious clients in key places could the kingdom’s first magnate oversee and control positions over a vast terrain.<sup>381</sup>

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378 This is a reference to Pierre Lenét, who helped organize the revolt of the nobles in 1650–1651.

379 “Ce n’est pas un réseau d’amitié et de parenté relativement égalitaire.” Béguin 1999, 77.

380 Le comte d’Alais (Louis-Emmanuel de Valois), the governor of Provence about whom Sharon Kettering (Kettering 1986) has written a great deal, defined the unity of interests between Louis, Grand Condé and his community of clients: “je mette tous mes soins à vous acquérir des serviteurs et à conserver mes amis,” or he proposes “me donner 50 gentilshommes dans cette province qui est les acquérir à vous même.” Béguin 1999, 79.

381 According to Marc-Antoine Millotet, the *avocat général* at the parlement in Dijon and a harsh critic of Condé: “personne n’etoit entré en charge, soit au Parlement, ou autres juridictions, que par sa médiation ou celle du Monsieur son père. Personne



A particularly unusual event in this period was the Grand Condé's negotiated return from voluntary exile in Spain (1660). The return of his patrimony (agreed to in 1659 as a preliminary condition for diplomatic talks between the two countries) did not solve the problem faced by Condé's people; the prince attempted to fully reproduce the network of *fidèles* who had accompanied him in his Spanish service. But this was impossible because their function had been taken over by people tied to Mazarin. At the same time, it would have been too expensive to repurchase the status quo ante. In the end Condé's people were recognized as capable of fulfilling these functions, which – however – were not opened up to them. The prince thus worked persistently to build a new network, in part by utilizing its former elements. Because *commensaux* exploited various tax breaks, the courts registered them; thus we know that while there were 546 *commensaux* in 1660, there had been 522 in 1644. Soon, however, that number would drop by a half and over time even lower.<sup>382</sup> As Sharon Kettering has shown, Louis XIV brought about a serious reduction in the number of magnatial clientele and their significance<sup>383</sup>, but it turned out that the weakening or disappearing networks were able to revive themselves. For those who had left the network and begun a search for other relationships, the prince's return remained a vital and interesting option.

In this context Katia Béguin's innovative thesis is significant. In her view, the Condé's "paradoxical" *fronde* was not a revolt of traditionalist oppositionists against the "raison d'état" (Béguin puts this term in quotes), but rather a conflict with the cardinal, who was expanding his clan and creating a situation that was intolerable for the aristocracy. This was an "objective situation" because the rivalry was limited to the number of positions and the goods to be distributed on the one

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n'avoit été pourvu de bénéfice que par leurs nominations. Tous les emplois de la noblesse n'estoient que dans leurs regimens, et tous les officiers des villes, soient maires, eschevins, capitaines, lieutenants et enseignes, n'estoient entrés dans ces honneurs populaires que par son moyen." M.A. Millotet, *Mémoires de choses qui sont passées en Bourgogne depuis 1650 jusques à 1668* (Dijon: 1866), 4; quote from Béguin 1999, 118–119. According to Béguin, three-quarters of the petitions submitted to Louis II arrived through his *commensaux*. The Grand Condé was fully qualified to become – according to plans drawn up by Marie Louise and Jan Kazimierz – king of the magnatial *Rzeczpospolita*.

382 The numbers provided above are ten times greater than the minimum number of *serviteurs* necessary for the house of a "grand lord" at the end of the seventeenth century. See Audiger, *La Maison réglée et l'art de diriger la maison d'un grand seigneur* ... (1692); see also Béguin 1999, 161.

383 Kettering 1986a, 1989a.

hand, and the general number of great families on the other.<sup>384</sup> The entrance of the great ministers into the game upset the aristocracy's balance-oligopoly in creating the great clienteles, which wound through the apparatus of state power both at the center and in the provinces. The Grand Condé's failure in the confrontation with the cardinal led to the disintegration of his clientelistic system; he found himself isolated because his clients in the royal council were not able to overpower the authority of the opponent. But what is particularly interesting is the process by which the Grand Condé was able to recreate his clientele under conditions determined by the new royal policies after the cardinal's death. The new makeup of the prince's *maison domestique* was – in light of the new situation – unduly large, but the prince – at least at the beginning – needed the excessive number of officials in his court in order to regain significance.

These two theses – put forward by Sharon Kettering and Katia Béguin – are not in such conflict with one another as it might seem at first glance. First, the size of a court as a measure of a patron's influence informs us only about part of his clientele, mainly about his *commensaux* and servants. Second, the expansion of the Court at Versailles attracted only part of the titled aristocracy and of the *noblesse d'épée*, namely those who had been allowed into the Court. Third and finally, beyond the number of members in the *Hofstaat*, the circle of clients of an aristocratic patron also included officials, dignitaries and officers in the military who were dispersed throughout the local administration. The care and attention of a high-placed aristocrat ensured, or at least made possible, that they could benefit from fiscal exemptions and concessions, and it could facilitate the acquisition of a post. "Fiscal absolutism," however one defines it, was profitable for aristocrats as patrons. One may define their role as protective, but at the same time – as Béguin writes – *prédatrice* (predatory).<sup>385</sup> Protection of the client is an obvious matter, and the object of exploitation was (directly) state revenues and (indirectly) those who were subject to the state's drive to gain revenue. In societies under the ancien régime it was impossible for the great patrons to function without exploiting the

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384 Béguin 1999, 387–392. A distant analogy emerges here regarding the concept of "limited good," to which I refer in the section below entitled "Amoral Familism and Limited Good."

385 Béguin 1999, 391. "Leur dispositif clientélaire apparaît là dans sa double finalité, protectrice et prédatrice, puisqu'il organise le détournement effectif d'une partie du produit des impositions au profit des princes, de leurs agents et des représentants influents de l'État. Ainsi, l'emprise croissante et le durcissement autoritaire des institutions monarchiques redonnaient une raison d'être à l'ensemble du patronage princier."

public sector, and their activity was an element of the Bourbon state model both before and during the Sun King's rule.<sup>386</sup> "Th s parastatal [*para-étatique*] structure – the prince's clientele – was an effective instrument of social and political domination, though it was not some sort of conspiracy against royal authority, which gave it legitimacy."<sup>387</sup> The seventeenth century state had not yet managed to eliminate personal bonds from the broader system of rule.<sup>388</sup>

But the co-existence of Louis's personal power and the patronage of aristocrats had clear borders as drawn by the king, which is an issue that Béguin passes over. Similarly she devotes little attention to the place occupied by the *robins* in these relationships. Meanwhile, analysis of society and the state from the perspective of clientelistic bonds leads us to the following conclusions: the king had a clearly defi ed hierarchy of goals in which the main role was played by great power politics; he needed the aristocracy (he strapped them – so to speak – to his chariot); and he did not disempower them altogether, but he distanced them from the most important decisions. It was under these conditions that he allowed aristocratic patronage to develop and to supplement the functioning of the administration. One could argue that the Sun King understood that it would be unproductive and costly to uproot clientelistic relationships. At the same time, such a move would threaten to raise unnecessary tensions. He needed only to keep an eye on them.

In this context it is appropriate to also mention the *noblesse de robe*. Historians traditionally juxtapose this group with the *noblesse d'épée*, but – from the perspective of the arguments I am making here – the two groups are hardly distinguishable. George Hupper has pointed to separate attitudes and behavior (while an insulted *noble* would demand a duel, a *robin* would take the issue to court)<sup>389</sup>, but did this not apply to the fi st generation of members of the *noblesse de robe*? Was it not tied to their work as lawyers? It is easy to forget that the mortality rate of these families in the male line was not great, and that the armorial past of the *noblesse* was often shorter than they themselves wanted to believe. What we see in clientelistic networks – which were richly portrayed in the works of Sharon Kettering, Katia Béguin and others – is not confl i t between robes and swords but cooperation under a common patron, a kind of division of labor based on skills and abilities. No doubt there existed problems associated with differences in pres-

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386 See Mączak 1989.

387 Béguin 1999, 392.

388 Katia Béguin ends her work with an opinion that would have to be too literal in translation: "Plus que l'envers, ce sont les *dessous* du règne et de la société d'Ancien Régime" (author's emphasis – A.M.).

389 Huppert 1977.

tige, which manifested themselves in complexes both individual and collective, but the coexistence of one with the other in clientelistic networks helped – on an everyday basis – alleviate those problems. The conclusions in Franklin L. Ford's study of the eighteenth century, *Robe and Sword*, written over a half-century ago, remain valid today<sup>390</sup>; the rivalry over prestige encouraged, as always, people to join together in factions or interest groups. In addition, the state's growing agenda and fiscal difficulties increased the pressure on candidates to seek out privileges and posts. That having been said, I see a difference of interests and tactics among the various layers within each of the two types of *noblesse*. The provincial nobleman perceived the rivalry with the *robins* differently, and the aristocrat showed interest in a different kind of official. Such was the case during the Fronde, when the rivalry was not so much between two kinds of noblemen but between competing interest groups, for example the judges of the Paris parlement or the *haute noblesse* with Condé in the lead.<sup>391</sup>

The coexistence of the two *noblesses*, particularly in the seventeenth century, is an interesting and important subject, but it appears that historiography has fallen victim to biased literature, which reflects the point of view of the noble losers in search of the reasons behind their failure.<sup>392</sup> In any case, the networks-pyramids in which clients of great patrons (from both kinds of nobility) found their place must have, to some extent, overcome divisions.

## 7. Sweden as a Power: The Court and Nobility in Service to the State

As in Spain, historians detected clientelistic relationships in the Scandinavian kingdoms and began taking an interest in them only in the 1980s, with no doubt that their research would bear fruit.<sup>393</sup> I would like to present the results of their work here in a most abbreviated form.

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390 Ford 1953.

391 Mettam 1988, mainly pp. 128–153.

392 I looked for references to clientele in Richelieu's "political testament," but without success. With comments about the *noblesse* and the *tiers état* (third estate) comes naked contempt toward the former. When it came to the mania for dueling, this is an understandable point of view for a clergyman and minister to take, but one can also understand why (in the spirit of Dumas and the musketeers) it was difficult for him to empathize with the nobility's sense of honor. For Richelieu *la noblesse* had a right to exist only to the extent that it served the *raison d'état* as he understood it. *Richelieu* 1947, chapters III and IV.

393 *Klient och Patron* 1988; Persson 1992; Samuelson 1993; Norrhem 1993.

The period of intensive modernization, or “Europeanization,” in Swedish society and the Swedish state in the decade after the death of Gustav Vasa (1560) was marked by the creation of clientelistic networks that gained significance particularly during the political conflicts of the end of the sixteenth century. The battles over power and the Swedish throne were accompanied by the continued development of an elite, a nobility (*adel, frälse*, which meant those freed from the burden of taxes).<sup>394</sup> Eric XIV hand out in 1561 the first titles of count (*greve*) and baron, though as yet without a corresponding salary for the beneficiaries because the king’s main motive was not to create an elite among the nobles but rather to raise the rank and dignity of his envoys to Queen Elizabeth (whose hand he wanted in marriage) and to other courts. This step was one that was consistent with the social tendency of the era. Soon, state debt, built up as a result of a series of wars, raised the need for the massive distribution of income from rent and taxes paid by peasants, the counterpart to the distribution in Poland of royal properties in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.<sup>395</sup> The number of count and baron titles multiplied and – much like in the *Rzeczpospolita* – gros revenues accumulated in the hands of elite families who were firmly placed in the *Riksråd* (Council of the State) and the military command.<sup>396</sup> Foreigners – including Frenchmen, Scots, and Germans from Sweden’s continental possessions – also participated; they functioned as officials, even high officials, and often quickly entered the ranks of governing elites.<sup>397</sup> The baronial estates were administered mainly through the collection of rents from free peasants – *bönder* – and they did not make up distant estates requiring a complex and multilayered administration (the Swedes gained experience with, and maintained, farms and serfdom in Livonia). Such a situation laid the foundation for the mechanisms of clientelistic relationships that were quite different than those in the *Rzeczpospolita*.

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394 For more on this by Polish scholars, see Michał Kopczyński and Igor Kąkolewski: Kąkolewski and Kopczyński 1999, 2000; Kopczyński 1999.

395 K. Ågren, “The Reduktion” in *Sweden’s Age of Greatness, 1632–1718*, ed. M. Roberts (London: 1973), 237–264; on the subject of a comparison of Swedish reductions and executions of properties, see A. Mączak, “‘Execution Bonorum’ and ‘Reduktion’: Two Essays in Solutions of the Domain-State Dilemma,” in *The Swedish Riksdag in an International Perspective*, N. Stjernquist (Stockholm: 1989), 96–111; see also the reprint in Mączak 1995.

396 Ågren 1976.

397 The greatest examples of success were the families de la Gardie and Wrangel, but also the Walloon industrialist Louis de Geer. See Kąkolewski and Kopczyński 1999.

One of them – an earlier variant, from the end of the sixteenth century – involved high aristocrats and magnates grouping themselves into factions and military and administrative posts being filled by supporters, all of which was encouraged by internal conflict that broke out shortly after the election of Zygmunt Waza as king of Poland and during the resulting political destabilization of that country. Charles, Duke of Södermanland, continuing the Waza tradition, visited the “country” and organized support for himself at all levels of society.<sup>398</sup> The princely and royal courts were poorly developed and did not function as a constant market for the employment and clientelistic relationships about which we will continue to talk.

Another form of patronage, one that characterized centralized monarchies and absolutism, were relationships established within the framework of a kind of state service known as *Seilschaften*, which were a highly important tool in one’s advancement through the system and in battles against rivals.<sup>399</sup> The Swedish military successes of the second quarter of the seventeenth century broadened the reach of this type of relationship. Swedish commanders ruled over large areas of the Empire and – no doubt, though this subject requires further research – had at their disposal not so much resources but broad prerogatives to decide on issues of great significance for residents under their control, including local elites. Entire cities established ties with these commanders, such as Elbing during the Prussian campaign in 1626–1629, which attempted to extract some benefit from the Polish-Swedish War through its rivalry with Danzig (the effect, however, turned out to be the opposite). I mention this detail because letters written by the burgher Johannes Pfennig – which have been preserved in the Riksarkivet in Stockholm and were addressed to Axel Oxenstierna, the governor-general of occupied Prussia, who resided in Elbing – point to an example of precisely such a dyad, with the Prussian seeming to play the role of factotum. Swedish governors, both civilian and military, needed such people. Pfennig, a well-read humanist,

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398 A suggestive description of the prince’s behavior among peasants and burghers at the fair in Strängnäs was provided by the merchant and amateur European traveler Samuel Kiechel. *Die Reisen des Samuel Kiechel, 1585–1589*, trans. and ed. by von H. Prottung (München: 1987), 80. King Zygmunt, whom Kiechel saw in Kalmar surrounded by six Jesuits (!), was in no way imitating Charles. For more on Charles, see my text below.

399 Gyula Józsa, a political scientist working in Germany, introduced into academic circulation the term *Seilschaft*, which refers to a pair of Alpinists tied by a rope and protecting each other from a fall. In German this expression can be understood negatively as meaning “one hand washes the other.” Józsa 1984.

was able to serve with his polemical pen, and while informing the governor on the nature of Polish-Prussian relations, he was at the same time – on behalf of Swedish authorities – providing huge loans to *gburzy* in Żuławy Malborskie. Such work appears to have been highly effective (though this precise subject has not yet been carefully studied); it was important to the Swedes to maintain the economy on this wartorn territory, which was crucial in efforts to feed their army. Pfennig deserves to have a biography written about his life.

### a. A Polish Noblewoman in the Swedish Network

Two Swedish noblemen, Erik and Johan Sparre, were connected with the powerful Count Per Brahe; Eric was his son-in-law, and another of the count's daughters was promised to Eric's brother. It turned out, however, that the latter left a certain "Polish noblewoman" with child, which threatened his marriage.<sup>400</sup> The woman's relatives were not willing to compromise and demanded marriage, and the intense (and preserved for posterity) correspondence between the brothers in this crisis situation provides insight into the mechanisms that they set in motion. The brothers were in search of a candidate to stand alongside the young mother in the place of the one who had impregnated her. The threatened brother allocated 3–4 gårdar (i.e. the rent from as many peasant farms) and 500–600 riksdaler in cash. He did not think it would be "difficult to find some poor nobleman, of which there are so many here." They thought through various solutions (using in their correspondence a mixture of Swedish and Italian) in their search for a willing client within the Sparre clan.<sup>401</sup> At the very same time, Charles Sudermański, the future Charles IX, was searching for a suitable nobleman.

Their efforts ended successfully. To stand next to the mother, "Poletta," a father was found – Erik Bagge, a petty nobleman from Berg, in the municipality of Högsby in Småland – who was glad to accept the offer because he needed the Sparres' favor. Eight years earlier his father had been accused of treason and all his property was confiscated. Now, the son would be able to retrieve his own share of that property and, a bit later, most of the rest. There is no doubt that the "certain

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400 "En polsk adelsflicka" was Poletta von Zijlen, no doubt a Prussian noblewoman. I have avoided here genealogical research that is of little significance in this context. See Samuelson 1993, 244–246.

401 I base my text here not on the original source but on Samuelson's opinion: "Uppenbarligen ansåg Erik Sparre att dessa två adelsmän skulle kunna utnyttjas som Sparreättens klienter." Ibid., 245.

high positioned people” who arranged these solutions were the Sparres: Erik was at this time a member of the Council of the State and a deputy chancellor.<sup>402</sup>

This is not a classic example of the clientelistic dyad; rather, it was the kind of common transaction to cover up a scandal that one might imagine taking place in any noble milieu, somewhere in the Polish countryside or among the Victorian middle class. It might have been a promising beginning for a lasting bond, but the Sparre family soon lost all their possibilities for action, not just as patrons. After the defeat at Stångebro, King Zygmunt – in order to save himself – handed his own loyal supporters over to Charles for execution for treason.

Duke Charles has been mentioned already on two occasions, as he helped Johan Sparre look for a substitute for marriage and at the fair in Strängnäs (mentioned in a footnote just above), where he bargained for a goose and jokingly invited the butcher to visit his court. The court: what changes would take place there over the course of the long Swedish seventeenth century! Samuel Kiechel in Kalmar, on the basis of *Recomendations-brüeflein* from a nobleman-acquaintance, had an opportunity to observe King Zygmunt feasting with his sisters.<sup>403</sup> One generation earlier Zygmunt’s father, Jan III, had amazed people with the fact that he obsessively surrounded himself with armed guards.<sup>404</sup> Over the course of the seventeenth century, in the growing Swedish empire, *rex ambulans* became an anachronism; the court in Stockholm grew increasingly closed, rigorous, and formalized.<sup>405</sup>

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402 Two years later Johan married Margareta Brahe; it was not easy to placate the injured girl’s family, but the culprit in 1586 arranged for a letter from King Zygmunt assuring him protection.

403 *Die Reisen des Samuel Kiechel aus drei Handschriften*, vol. 36, ed. K.D. Haszler (Bibliothek des Litterarischen Vereins in Stuttgart, 1866), 96.

404 *Jean III* 1913, 27.

405 It is true, however, that Gustav II Adolf, Charles X Gustav and Charles II led their armies into distant lands, and Charles XI spent long periods in conquered Skania.



## Chapter 6: The Old-Poland Clientele

*Patronage explains how in the context of laws of equality, the great families always kept their power [...] The clientele was not in the laws [...] but it reigned in society.*

N.D. Fustel de Coulanges<sup>406</sup>

Pre-partition Poland (the next focus of my book) deserves a special place in any general study of clientelism. I have devoted several small articles to the topic of the informal aspects of the system of rule in the *Rzeczpospolita*.<sup>407</sup> Since I also wrote a great deal on this topic in *Klienteli*, it is difficult for me to avoid repeating my own arguments or to omit citing the original sources, which most compellingly represent the style, climate, or – as Karol Górski put it – the “emotionality” of the era. Voices critical of *Klienteli* and associated articles were not put into print or spoken during discussions carried out in my presence, but I feel them nonetheless when a given author omits or is silent about my theses and conclusions. It would be difficult for me to argue that this is a correct way to proceed; indeed I believe that it is a losing proposition for both sides.

That having been said, I do not hide the fact that I have sometimes changed my opinions in certain regards, and that in other regards I have kept my conclusions at the level of hypotheses. Indeed my latest reading of *A Relation of the State of Polonia*<sup>408</sup> inspired new associations and observations that should have occurred to me earlier. But I am strengthened in my belief that the vastness of the territory under the *Rzeczpospolita* (alongside other factors, of course) hindered the consolidation of the system that the leaders of the *izba poselska* (chamber of envoys) wanted to create during the Executionist Sejms; a system emerged that was essentially without an executive, practically a province without a center.

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406 Fustel de Coulanges 1864; Wallace-Hadrill 1990 (the Fustel de Coulanges quote comes from p. 68).

407 Translator’s reminder: The term *Rzeczpospolita* refers to what is also called the Polish First Republic, or Commonwealth, 1569–1795. I use the term *Rzeczpospolita* throughout this English translation.

408 Translator’s note: Professor Mączak discusses the content of this work – the full title of which is *A Relation of the State of Polonia and the United Provinces of that Crowne Anno 1598*, and which was written by an anonymous author (“Anonym”) – at various points in this book, most notably in the section below entitled “Liberty and the Raison d’état: ‘Anonym’ on the *Rzeczpospolita*.”

## 1. The *Rzeczpospolita Samorządowa*<sup>409</sup>

To summarize my above comments: In the Polish system of rule created over the course of two centuries I see a particular and extreme example of the “estate state” in the sense of the German *Ständestaat* (and thus not of “estate monarchy”), which – in terminology adopted in Poland since around the end of World War II – refers to a system based on privileged orders that developed before the rise of the Sejm. The peculiarity of this system is tied to the fact that the broad entitlements enjoyed by the orders were practically monopolized by the knightly order.

In the middle of the fifteenth century the nobility/knightage gained certain privileges after having forced them upon the king. Royal cities no longer had the power to coerce or purchase (even if they wanted to) a position in the orders and thus were hardly a counterweight to the nobility. By contrast, the cities of Teutonic Prussia along the Vistula were actively interested in financing war with the Order; those cities that joined the ranks of incorporated estates (Royal Prussia) obtained – in suitable proportions – a powerful position for themselves in the country’s structure of orders. This position was consolidated after the Peace of Thorn (1466) and lasted until the Union of Lublin (1569), with some elements persisting until the first partition (1772). In the eighteenth century Gottfried Lengnich erected a wonderful monument to this royal Prussian *politei*.<sup>410</sup> This system’s first hundred years brought landed noblemen along the lower Vistula in the *Rzeczpospolita* a kind of systemic equilibrium that was unheard of in other parts of Central and Eastern Europe, and in which four forces coexisted: three great cities; smaller cities cooperating with one another; dignitaries from the three voivodeships: bishops, voivodes, castellans and *podkomorze* (or chamberlains); and finally the nobility in general.

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409 Translator’s note: Such Polish terms as *samorząd* (noun) and *samorządowa* (adjective) are difficult to translate into English. They refer to a long tradition in Poland of “self-government,” “local government,” local “council rule,” and noble “autonomous rule.”

410 G. Lengnich, *Geschichte der preußischen Lande Königlichen-Polnischen Antheils*, vols. 1–9 (Danzig: 1722–1755). However, one must remember that Lengnich provided a one-sided image, and the broad array of source documents that he gathered into appendices does not faithfully reflect the discussions and debates that were at the heart of the Prussian orders. The list of protocols of the sessions of the Preußischer Landtag saved and collected in the Wojewódzkie Archiwum Państwowe in Gdańsk indicate that the author failed to include many and various documents written in Latin and, in particular, Polish.

Let me return to the formation of the royal orders and their representation in the fifteenth century. Unlike inhabitants of the great cities of the Prussian river basin of the Vistula, the Crown bourgeoisie apparently did not view support for the king – which meant extending to him significant loans – as good business; Polish cities had relatively few means at their disposal and remained for the most part on the margins. The clergy of incorporated Prussia maintained its representation in the royal orders, though in the end only two bishops remained in the Senate, from the Warmia and Chełmiński regions. Scholars have rarely taken notice of the fact that, in other Catholic countries, the clerical estate sent its representatives (in large part virilists) in greater numbers. Thus Poland did not witness the kind of unstable power equilibrium between the nobility, the bourgeoisie, and the clergy that marked the French “Renaissance State” (as interpreted by James Russell Major) and that is said to have led, over time, to a centralized monarchy and absolutism<sup>411</sup>; under such conditions a capable monarch could set up intermittent or lasting alliances with members of particular estates. The cases of France and more than one German state (not to mention the Netherlands) indicate that, as members of the bourgeoisie entered the body politic, it is precisely from their ranks that educated and professional officials (often with a background in law) were recruited, in direct service to the Crown but also carrying out the will of the orders. On a European scale, it was a rule that the most outstanding among them would be ennobled and would attempt to erase traces of their origins. But in Poland (with the exception of Royal Prussia) the noble oligopoly closed itself off from the outside right after the rise of the Boners and Morsztyns. In the sixteenth century the nobility could be penetrated only in ways described so well by the early-modern Polish writer Walerian Nekanda Trepka. Even though – as this famous pamphleteer claimed – bourgeois penetration of the nobility was a mass phenomenon (a claim that is not difficult to believe), this process did not provide the kind of results that George Huppert researched in the context of France.<sup>412</sup> From the thicket of rumors that makes up the *Liber chamorum* (or *Liber generationis plebeanorum*, by Nekanda Trepka) comes the fact that it was the petty functionary (steward, village administrator, manager of salt mines) who benefitted most from accumulated or acquired

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411 Major 1988. On the other hand, the *Rzeczpospolita* in the sixteenth century satisfied the basic conditions for a “Renaissance state,” as Major understands that term. For more on this subject, see Chabod 1981 (this article is often read as a lecture delivered in French; a reprint of the original Italian version contains variants from the years 1957–1958). Major has expressed himself many times on these subjects; for a particularly clear synthesis of his views, see Major 1988.

412 Huppert 1977.

funds and established connections, and who – having covered the tracks of his origins in the military – then became a *hreczkosiej*<sup>413</sup>.

It is difficult to over-estimate the consequences of the Statutes (Privileges) of Nieszawa from the year 1454 (for more on this, see the next section of this book). Since Kazimierz Jagiellończyk's successors did not want (or were not able) to broaden their powers at the cost of the orders, implementation of the 1454 statutes turned the nobility over time into a sovereign arm of the state. The tasks surrounding the *nagana szlachectwa* (or “test of nobility”) – a right of immeasurable importance – was in the hands of the *samorządowe* (in practice) noble courts, and over time – around the time of Stefan Batory's rule – the king's room for maneuver was reduced, including in the area of ennoblement.

In light of the concepts of “center” and “periphery” – which have been a bit too intensively exploited by certain historians practicing sociology – one may make the following statement: in the *Rzeczpospolita* the “center” took shape along lines that were less clear than in other countries of Europe. At the same time, it is an interesting paradox that feudal fragmentation under the Crown manifested itself more weakly compared not only to the Empire but also to France and Spain. In various regions of Europe in the middle of the fifteenth century, including in Poland, the rights of the orders were defined by various traditional privileges, though in Poland the Statutes of Piotrków (1496) encompassed the nobility throughout the entire country. But the rights that that order obtained within the voivodeships (the *ziemie* and the *powiaty*) laid the foundation for deep decentralization, which would – over time – constrain the central state. Since the bourgeoisie (not to mention the peasantry) had no political rights, a state was created in Poland unlike any other in Europe.

I might add that none of the above means that we can research this topic without the comparative perspective. Though the result of Poland's long evolution was a system that was, in a sense, one-of-kind, the fact is that we can find in other “societies of orders” groups with conflicting aspirations wanting to participate in the political system. I would argue – though I frame this as a hypothesis that requires extensive research and oversteps the boundaries of this book – that what determined the constellation of powers and the form a regime would take going forward was whether early on (even in the Middle Ages) a clerical/bureaucratic apparatus emerged around a ruler that was devoted to him. Such a phenomenon

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413 Translator's note: The Polish word *hreczkosiej* is very difficult to translate into English. Perhaps the best translation would be “country squire.” But this is inadequate because the use of *hreczkosiej* is usually colored by sarcasm and humor, like that which accompanies the terms “country bumpkin” or country “yokel.”

was not clearly defined. As a rule, prince/estates negotiations were carried out in the midst of crisis, when the treasury was short of money or there was a threat of war, or when the prince's (state's) debt had risen to disturbing levels. Persistent regional antagonisms, *ad hoc* factional agreements, individual qualities (talents as a speaker, negotiating skills, personal authority, even the ruler's good looks) were all factors that could create legal precedence of unpredictable but lasting significance. And after all, such issues, more clearly than any others, are marked by the great significance of precedence.

The above introduction was necessary in order to show – first of all – that the nature of the state structure in Poland was determined strictly from within the boundaries of the noble order, and that – as a result – clientelistic relationships in Poland were defined in a peculiar way.

We know of such relationships in other countries where, however, they played a role that was secondary in the broader context of official structures, which is why, for example, Roland Mousnier was able to distinguish in France (in an exaggerated way, as we recall) two types of clientelistic relationships existing in parallel. He used the following terminology to describe them:

*maître – client*

*protecteur – créature.*<sup>414</sup>

Such a division (along with its own terminology and phraseology) did not exist in Poland. Only officials at lower levels were truly “professional” or quasi-professional. To a greater extent than anywhere else, senators and Crown and Lithuanian dignitaries, both secular and clerical, were active both in the Court and in the Country, on their own estates and in the surrounding region.<sup>415</sup>

Why is it that the noble elite in Poland was able to consolidate and excessively expand this magnatial ruling style? This question is key to interpreting not just the political history of the *Rzeczpospolita*, but also its culture, and it is a question that cannot be answered concisely or simply, above all because Polish historians have not yet been attracted to this subject. As I see it, one would have to thoroughly analyze at least 3 factors: the estate structure of the nobility and state; the spatial structure of the country (its significant size and its underdeveloped transportation and communication network); and the particular economic trends and de-

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414 Mousnier 1974, chapter III entitled “La Société des fidélités,” particularly pp. 89–93.

415 Chłapowski 1996, 16, which contains a list of 20 Crown dignitaries, 3 of which had been created by Władisław IV. For a comparative analysis of the Polish and Swedish styles of rule in the seventeenth century, see Kopczyński 1994 and 1999.

velopments in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, along with the resulting concentration of land ownership.

Why did a *Herrenstand* as an order not emerge in the *Rzeczpospolita* as it did other countries of Central and Eastern Europe (in Bohemia and Moravia, in Hungary, Austria, and Brandenburg-Prussia) and of Northern Europe (Sweden) to a point where one must regard it as a rule and without doubt a dominant element of the modern era? Why did elites in the Polish noble order – that is, among the senatorial families – choose what we might call the “magnatial variant”?

It is too easy to adopt reality as the only possible variant. At least to do so is not sufficiently justified, for no such justification has been produced. Counterfactual reasoning could help us understand the mechanisms of phenomena that were stitched into the system, to adequately consider events that had a decisive influence on the direction this evolution took.

I regard the *Rzeczpospolita* as a distinct example of how clientelistic relationships functioned.<sup>416</sup> Distinct and important, not only because it was one of the largest states in Europe, but also because – as would turn out to be the case in the nineteenth century – it was situated in a key position between Germany and Russia. In this most important of the Jagiellonian states, the constellation of powers was changing, even as early as the fifteenth century, to the disadvantage of the country’s leaders; the clerical/bureaucratic apparatus in service to the monarch that took shape here was much less powerful than the kind that typically developed in Western countries. This matter is of great significance, though the fact is that, generally speaking, the central authorities’ oversight of regional (local) issues in those days was everywhere limited.

In the latest synthesis of the evolution of state power “from its beginnings to the present,” Wolfgang Reinhard argues that, at one time, “the administrative unification of a country was not possible,” and rulers had no long-term plans for centralization along the lines of those, say, in France under the Revolution and Napoleon.<sup>417</sup> The dominant type of local power structure – Reinhard continues – involved the connection, in various systems, between the *Adelsherrschaft* (government by nobility) and *Gemeindeautonomie* (local/municipal autonomy). One should position the *Rzeczpospolita* as a whole on the noble extreme of the European scale, though – in light of the exceptional (and above-mentioned) power structure of Royal Prussia in this era (1454/1466–1569), a place closer to the center

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416 For more on this subject, see Mączak 1999a and (1994) 2000.

417 Reinhard 1999, 197. Other quotes come from pp. 196–197. Generally juxtaposing monarchy with democracy, the author makes reference here to the period from the Middle Ages to the nineteenth century.

should be reserved for the Polish Republic. “The king was satisfied if order was maintained and tax revenues necessary for his great policies continued to flow” – this is the way Reinhard characterizes the issue of territorial authority, and such a statement points to that which is distinctive about relations in the *Rzeczpospolita*: this system, at whose basis were the privileges enjoyed by the noble estate, led to significant noble autonomy both as tax laws were passed and as these taxes were collected.<sup>418</sup> The monarch’s “great policies” – an expression used by Reinhard without exaggeration – would sound ironic if applied to the reigns of Batory or the three Wazas. The course of this system’s evolution – the argument goes – was decided in Poland by the difficult-to-define noble sense of estate identity – as if split by conflict between powerful local bonds and a republican *raison d’état*.

When analyzing the *Rzeczpospolita*’s legislative initiatives and institutions, scholars of political systems too often ignore internal relationships within the noble estate. Consideration of the number of noblemen, the structure of noble assets, the number of villages, or the amount paid in taxes from peasant holdings, represent only an introduction to the problem. These issues involve the anatomy of the phenomenon and not its physiology; they depict only the foundation of relationship structures that were at the heart of a formally united noble order. The internal (and actual) inequality within the order was determined by several factors – economic, social, and political,<sup>419</sup> and the three centuries that preceded the partitions are full of paradox that make the *Rzeczpospolita* peculiar as viewed against the backdrop of wider Europe. In explaining its distinct nature we can point to several phenomena that existed separately in individual countries outside of Poland but which, inside the country, coexisted.

For example one could draw a close analogy between the privileged economic and political situation of the noblemen in the *Rzeczpospolita* with the noblemen in Denmark (before 1660), even though the extent of their two territories and the size of their nobilities were different.<sup>420</sup> Another example: In Scotland ties of estate dependency and the influence of the great lords emerged clearly, though the personal union with England brought with it – as James VI and I put it –

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418 I will pass over a discussion of the issue of public order (peace). The noble community was able to maintain such order, though it had its own peculiar views on the subject. Regarding the *kresy* (eastern borderlands) Władisław Łoziński’s classic monograph (Łoziński 1903) remains useful. Entirely new material on the Crown’s central territories can be found in Iwona Pugacewicz’s unpublished dissertation (Pugacewicz 1996); see also Golec 1982.

419 Going forward I will develop thoughts presented in Mączak 1999.

420 Mączak 1989.

“government by pen,” and thus a situation that was quite the opposite of what was dominant in Poland. Finally *la Serenissima*: the system in Venice can be compared to the Polish system in terms of its republicanism – that is, its parliamentarianism and the head of state’s limited authority. And yet, in light of obvious realities, these two systems could hardly be more different: the rigorous rules by which the Great Council conducted its business; the intricate voting systems used in various collegial bodies; and the principles by which officials were chosen, all of which contrast sharply with the lackadaisical chaos of the Polish Sejm and *sejmiki*.<sup>421</sup>

## 2. The Consequences of the Statutes (Privileges) of Nieszawa (1454)

Though one cannot help but regard the chain of historical causes and effects as being without end, the middle of the fifteenth century, and especially events at the military camp in Kujawy at the threshold of the Prussian campaign of 1454, are of particular significance to our discussion here.<sup>422</sup>

Throughout my career as a scholar, I have addressed the significance of the Statutes of Nieszawa repeatedly and unambiguously. I am convinced that – from the perspective of subsequent political-systemic developments in the *Rzeczpospolita* – it is difficult to overestimate the importance of this legislation passed in the middle of the fifteenth century, even if it only reconfirmed the status quo.<sup>423</sup> It is difficult in my case to avoid repetition, although – while authors today employ the term “clientele” and its derivatives more often than they did years ago – very few have drawn the above conclusion, and my theses – ultimately rather extreme – have provoked neither discussion nor open opposition. Thus I return to them, rather reluctantly, once again.

Regardless of the intention of various political actors – the king, the ruling nobles of both Poland and Lithuania, and the *populi nobilium* within the framework of the *levée en masse* – the long-term effect of the privileges granted by

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421 See Lane 1977; Finlay 1980; Rösch 1990. The prohibition on deputies talking to one another or negotiating agreements during Council sessions and in front of the Palazzo Ducale symbolizes the contrast between the Venetian and Polish systems. For Swedish opinion of the Polish Sejm, see Roberts 1967, 48, 50.

422 Roman 1957. Here I omit an issue that Roman discussed thoroughly and carefully but which from my point of view is inconsequential, namely the issue of the gradual creation of a group of noble political privileges in both parts of the country. See also Kurtyka 1999, including its exhaustive bibliography.

423 Roman 1957, 32–60.



King Kazimierz was the reinforcement of the already well-developed system of *sejmiki*, which over time would begin to address issues of primary importance. The constellation of social powers within the *sejmiki* was not foreseeable. In various parts of the country around the middle of the sixteenth century, particularly in Rus and Małopolska, the wealthy and powerful who, from the beginning, had a formally dominant position in the *sejmiki* remained predominant there. At the same time, in a period of rather intense conflict with the noble estate, noblemen resented the privileged role played by the *urzędnik ziemskie*<sup>424</sup> during *sejmik* deliberations, as evidence – for example – by accusations made by deputies during the Execution Sejms.<sup>425</sup>

Let us return to the fifteenth century. The systems of rule in Western Europe at this time were identifiable mainly by the structure and roles played by estate assemblies (e.g. *États provinciaux* and *États Généraux* in France) and their relations with the ruler. In this regard Poland is distinguishable by two phenomena: first, the Polish version of the estate assembly did not include the bourgeoisie. And second, an administrative apparatus subordinate to the king did not emerge in the fifteenth century in parts distant from the center.

The first issue. Since the statutes that shaped the state system took the form of estate privileges for the nobility, that system developed into what amounted to a noble *samorząd*, which consolidated itself over time. In the fifteenth century what was most significant was the estate's continued formation, which – when contentious issues were debated – manifested itself in the above-mentioned “test of nobility.” From the beginning, legal decisions in this regard were the responsibility of estate courts. It would eventually turn out that the courts' real sovereignty could also be an economic and political asset for the nobility, and the *Rzeczpospolita's* administrative system began to take on the character of a noble-estate *samorząd* (in this context, practically speaking, noble “self-government”).

The second issue. Such local “self-government” hindered the construction of a royal power apparatus and the care-free distribution of noble titles; thus, a *noblesse de robe* did not emerge in Poland. Tied to this was the fact that there was too little capital in the hands of the bourgeoisie, which did not take advantage of the huge demand for financial resources in the Thirteen Years' War

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424 Translator's note: *urzędnik ziemski* is another Polish term that is difficult to translate into English. It refers to those who held *urzędy ziemskie*, which in turn refers to a wide range of office in the *Rzeczpospolita*, including some already mentioned above (*podkomorzy*, *starosta grodowy*) but many others as well, including *sędzia ziemski* (a judge in noble courts) and *skarbnik* (treasurer).

425 See Dembińska 1935. Kriegseisen 1991, 102–136.

(1454–66) against the State of the Teutonic Order in Prussia (Kraków – I might add – had conflicting interests with regard to the Prussian cities, which had rebelled against the Order). In any case, one might reasonably doubt that the king and his treasury were regarded at the time as trustworthy debtors. As a result, only a few Kraków merchants-bankers tied their interests with Wawel, for example the Boners and Morsztyns, and they did not build the kind of lasting court-finance bonds that were so important to the Western monarchies of the fourteen through the sixteenth centuries. Zygmunt August would have to search for creditors abroad.

Here Europe's contrasting situations are conspicuous. The Spanish (strictly speaking, Catalan) historian Jaume Vicens i Vives, a preeminent scholar of early modern European states, used the term *monarquia preeminencial* to define the period 1450–1550, by which he emphasized the fact that Western European rulers at that time tried above all to defend their prerogatives.<sup>426</sup> Walking in the footsteps of Federico Chabod, Vives spoke of the Western monarchies' passage from doctrinal absolutism (in the Middle Ages) to real absolutism (in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries). But the Jagiellonians achieved success in Poland neither in defending their prerogatives nor in building an apparatus that was dependent on (and loyal to) the monarchy, one which might have served as a counterbalance to noble self-government. Nor did they manage to establish this in Bohemia and Hungary. Absorbed as he was in assuring that his son would succeed him, Jagiełło was not able to force through a doctrine of royal authority, which had been most closely approached probably by Casimir the Great. In Western Europe, the kind of local self-government that Reinhard wrote about meant the participation of bourgeois elites in the financial and judicial administration and their infiltration of the nobility. As mentioned above, there was practically no such development in the *Rzeczpospolita*; in fact it was not even a matter of discussion, and only in the age of the Four-Year Sejm (1788–1792) did the bourgeoisie begin to carve out for themselves certain rights.<sup>427</sup>

In any case, in social systems in which *urzędy ziemskie* are held by individuals for life, such systems in practice limit the king's ability to maneuver more

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426 Vives (1960) 1971, 228. Vives was a professor at the University of Barcelona. He published in Spanish, but wrote privately in Catalan. In my text, I use the Catalan version of his name and surname, as do those who have continued his tradition.

427 "Anonym's" point of view against this backdrop is conspicuous. See *A Relation of the State of Polonia*. For more on "Anonym" and his work from the year 1598, see the section below entitled "Liberty and the Raison d'état: 'Anonym' on the *Rzeczpospolita*."

than, say, *la paulette* limited the Bourbons.<sup>428</sup> In the case of Poland, the structural problems associated with the monarchy were deepened by the unclear king-*Rzeczpospolita* relationship, the issue being that while the dominant principal of *raison d'état* in Europe called for the identification of the state (*res publica*) with the person of the monarch, in Poland it was identified not with the king, but with the *Rzeczpospolita* (the “Commonwealth”).

As Vicens i Vives wrote: “[...] nowhere did absolute monarchy embody a national tradition. It represented an association – imposed by force, freely accepted, or arising from diplomatic necessity – of differentiated, sometimes totally disparate, communities which only a slow process of coexistence would forge, in the most favorable cases, into a common sentiment.”<sup>429</sup> But in the *Rzeczpospolita* it was different. The Polish state became effectively a “nation state” significantly earlier, and it did so precisely because of its noble “*samorządowy*” structure. It began with a symbolic act of fraternity among families and clans in the Union of Horodło (1413). Next, in a period of peaceful territorial expansion, the nobility of each subsequently incorporated territory obtained rights similar to those enjoyed in the Crown, and there followed a diffusion of legal rights and customs between the *ziemie* (lands, regions) and provinces. One could argue that it is a paradox that such a system, marked by a weak central authority, produced an early example of a “national” territorial state, one formed as a unitary *pays* and not based on the principle of differentiated dynastic rights and distinct estate-based privileges. The broad privileges enjoyed by the noble estate and the *samorządowy* character of the administrative authority facilitated the assimilation of elites from the incorporated territories; they allowed for the diffusion, from one *ziemia* to another, of legal norms and customs that were beneficial for the nobility. And yet it allowed for neither the creation of a working parliamentary monarchy nor the resolution of a burning problem at the beginning of the seventeenth century, namely the problem of the political assimilation of the Cossacks. The dilemma involving the noble republic’s cohesion and its ability to resist external threats

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428 On *la paulette*, see Mousnier 1974. On Mousnier, see Reinhard 1974, 289. The peculiar nature of the system of governance in the *Rzeczpospolita* is represented by the fact that it was not obligatory for someone receiving an office from the king to be loyal to the king. The Polish regalists alone were different in this regard. None of this means that the Wazas gave up the idea of building a party for themselves along these lines.

429 J. Vicens i Vives, “The Administrative Structure of the State in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries,” ed. Henry J. Cohn, *Government in Reformation Europe, 1520–1560* (MacMillan: 1971), 64.

requires further attention, but before the crisis in the system became intense, the social order – which was determined by the great spaces of this central European state – had consolidated itself. One of the main theses of this book is that the system best described as “magnatial clientelism” developed at the confluence of two phenomena that were, by their very nature, different: the estate privileges from the fifteenth century and the *Rzeczpospolita*’s spatial structure.

### 3. Clientelism and Oligarchy

I avoid the term “magnatial oligarchy” because it is misleading through its association with systems in which a closed (or perhaps just limited) group of governing individuals act in accordance with mutual understanding and common interests. A good example that originates close to Poland is the Riksråd in Sweden during the regency after the death of Gustavus Adolphus and during the reign of Charles Gustav. A second example is the above-mentioned Great Council in Venice. One can detect certain elements of oligarchy *sensu stricto* in the fifteenth century activities of the magnates of Małopolska and in the Privilege of Mielnik, but over the long term the magnates’ domination took on a different character in which clientelism would play no small role.

This issue, which is key to understanding the history of the *Rzeczpospolita*, has so far not received the attention it deserves because, as historians, we are too sharply divided by specializations, not only chronologically but also methodologically and thematically. In any case, magnates as a group functioned simultaneously on several levels. A “magnate” (this term was not yet used in the era under discussion here, though it has been repeatedly defined by historians<sup>430</sup>):

- held the office of Senator (or one of similar significance) and/or was at least a member of a senatorial family;
- had extensive properties of his own and leased Crown lands;
- had an administrative apparatus over his properties and the “lord’s court,” in which noblemen found their place and had tasks to be carried out – noblemen from both near and far, depending on the lord’s importance and his overall “authority.”

The author (panegyrist) of a description of the court of Stanisław Lubomirski put it nicely, though not without exaggeration:

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430 *Magnateria polska* 1974; H. Litwin, “Magnateria polska, 1454–1648. Kształtowanie się stanu,” *Przegląd Historyczny* 3 (1983).

There were always very many friends around His Highness, senators, regional officials, and dignitaries, among others, including several dukes who were given *ex humanitate honoraria* of several thousand zloties every quarter.<sup>431</sup>

The above passage represents an extreme example, one of many truly great success stories of a magnate family, comparable to the Zamoyskis and Wiśniowieckis.<sup>432</sup>

Attempts to define the magnates according to the first two criteria do not reflect the true essence of the matter, which was not exclusively economic; as a basis, Henryk Litwin's proposition argued that two factors were both important and quite obvious in this regard: durability and scope (3 senators within a family and/or in consecutive senatorial generations); we can overlook aspects that are derivative or secondary, namely education, tours of Europe undertaken in one's youth, etc.<sup>433</sup> In this context, I consider the use of patronage over the nobility to be the most important and decisive (though difficult to describe statistically) criterion; I was convinced in this regard by Urszula Augustyniak's recent analysis of Krzysztof II Radziwiłł and his milieu.<sup>434</sup> Without a doubt, the topographical location of the court (the Crown, Rus-Ukraine, the Grand Duchy), the office that this magnate held, and – finally – the power of his personality, all shaped the style and manner by which he dominated his clientele. Based on the example of chancellor and hetman Jan Zamoyski, Wojciech Tygielski showed how much the style of patronage depended on the patron's possibilities for maneuver, which were determined in turn by royal favor.<sup>435</sup>

Examination of records documenting the *połtówne generalne* (general head tax) in Crown territories give us indications of just how durable relations of subordination and dependence were, and such indications come to us in the person of the nobleman paying taxes at the lord's court. But they are barely a signal, because patronage manifested itself most clearly in the forum provided by the *sejmik*, in tribunals, and in everyday "neighborly" life. In another work of mine I discussed this topic of "neighborly" patronage specifically on the basis of old-Polish memoirs and diaries from the eighteenth century.<sup>436</sup> This type of patronage – "neighborly" – provides important background to Sarmatian custom and served as the organiza-

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431 Czerniecki 1956, 48

432 Tygielski 1990; Wisner 1997; Augustyniak 2002.

433 See *Magnateria polska* 1974.

434 Augustyniak 2002. I thank the author for access to this manuscript. For an introductory version of this work, see "Dwór i klientela Krzysztofa II Radziwiłła," *Odrodzenie i Reformacja w Polsce* 38: 63–77.

435 Tygielski 1990.

436 Mączak (1994) 2000, mainly the chapter entitled "Klienteli jako styl życia."

tional foundation of land-owning, noble society. The lord's court, much like the royal court, was both a *household* and a *court* (all of those in service to the court as a collective), a *curia* full of spongers that cultivated what is a typical example of Veblen's "leisure class,"<sup>437</sup> where noble sons got an education and earned their merits, and where – watched over by the lord and his lady – they married and entangled themselves in political activities and intrigues. Such a court complemented the *sejmik*, where practically the entire court participated in its deliberations.

Leszek Kieniewicz has researched the strategies employed by senators within the Senate from the first interregnum through the end of Batory's rule.<sup>438</sup> He detected differences in attitude that he defined as aristocratic and magnatial. The "aristocratic" senators tried to keep their activities close to the court, where they built their careers. The "magnatial" senators focused their activities rather away from the center and, having established their significance among the nobility there, pushed their own interests and the interests of their people with the king. In Kieniewicz's opinion, the second attitude – that of the magnates – came out victorious at the end of the sixteenth century; indeed, it had a promising future.

Two generations later the young son of a voivode, Jerzy Ossoliński, aspired to make a career for himself by taking both paths. He began at Prince Władysław's court but, having lost in a bitter rivalry with the Kazanowski family, he turned his attentions to activities in the *sejmiki* and the Sejm. He rose quickly to the position of senator and then he took up the preeminent position of Great Crown Chancellor. Ossoliński did not become a noble tribune, but as a deputy he performed that role in the *izba*.<sup>439</sup>

To recapitulate: vertical bonds – among noblemen on various levels – gained significance at the expense of horizontal bonds among elite families alone, who were not able to find within their own circles a suitable form of action. Above all they lacked political will; it was impossible for them at the end of the fifteenth and beginning of the sixteenth centuries to formally close themselves off into a *Herrenstand*, as proven by the posture taken by the *izba poselska* in 1505, but what seems most essential is the lack of institutions – or, more generally, the form – for common actions among noble elites. The Senator-residence did not become an institution that could serve as a platform for common action by noble elites – and this was the last opportunity. The institution of the Senate satisfied the basic ambi-

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437 Thorstein Veblen, *The Theory of the Leisure Class: An Economic Study of Institutions* (1899). For "leisure" in the magnatial courts, see Mączak (1994) 2000, chapter "Dwory pańskie: scena dla klientów."

438 Kieniewicz 2000.

439 Mączak 1999a.

tions of the noble elite, while the rivalries and conflicts between the main families prevented common action and weakened oligarchic (*sensu stricto*) tendencies. Anti-magnate utterances of the *populi nobilium*, which were so powerful in the era of the Executionist Sejms, became conspicuous once again during the Sandomierz Rebellion (1606–1608), but their echo in the literature of Lubomirski’s Rebellion (mid-1660s) was already very weak, signaling the lack of constitutional bases, monarchic initiative, and motivation to organize the magnatial stratum internally. Instead, the patronage built up by every magnate (or each magnatial family) individually was increasingly important. It is amazing that the anonymous author (henceforth I will call him “Anonym”) of *A Relation of the State of Polonia* (1598) – an astute and well-informed observer of Poland – noticed so early the dominant nature of magnatial patronage, and that he emphasized it more strongly than has Polish historiography. But such was the perspective of the court at Zamość, from which Anonym no doubt derived his knowledge of Poland.<sup>440</sup>

#### 4. Liberty and the Raison d’état: “Anonym” on the *Rzeczpospolita*

*This impunity is one parte of the Polish liberty [...] that State which is obnoxious to the violence of another is not free [...] no civill Commonwealthe is so slavish [...] The Poles deceived by a false libertie.*

*A Relation of the State of Polonia* (p. 106)<sup>441</sup>

I often turn my attention to *A Relation of the State of Polonia* because it stands alone against the works of both authors from the distant past and today’s historians. No one writing about Zygmunt III and his times has ever comprehended

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440 Though the authorship of *A Relation of the State of Polonia* is a matter of debate (the Scottish scholar William Bruce, as Stanisław Kot would have it, or Sir George Carew, as the English publisher believes), the text itself leaves no doubt that the source of inspiration was the circle of people around Jan Zamoyski. During his short stay in Poland, Queen Elizabeth’s ambassador would not have been able to gather such precise and thorough information about the country and its people. He also would not have had such personal and critical opinions on many issues, including “geometrical justice” handed down by courts or legislation on the question of manslaughter. So it is most probable that the English diplomat made use of Bruce’s report, having made serious corrections to his Scottish English (or translated the text into Latin).

441 Translator’s Note: I want to thank Dr. Anna Kalinowska of the Institute of History at the Polish Academy of Sciences for her indispensable assistance with this rare and complicated text.

issues related to power in Poland as he did, which seems to be more interesting than any investigation into whoever it was who authored the work. In this regard, I have adopted the working hypothesis that William Bruce, a Scot who also spent time in Turkey and who spent several years in the milieu of Jan Zamoyski, put the original report together, but that someone else, perhaps the diplomat George Carew, edited the text, at least for style. There is no absolute proof of this theory, but certain facts provide circumstantial evidence: “Anonym’s” familiarity with Turkish issues (he compares the Polish *pospolite ruszenie* – the *levée en masse* – with the Ottoman *timar*) would lead us in this direction, as would the facts that he was extremely familiar with the Polish political scene and that he was very close to Chancellor Zamoyski. The possibility that an editor was brought in to participate would explain the text’s proper use of language and English orthography, which – as Edward Mierzwa noticed – Bruce (who was, after all, a Scot) lacked, at least by London standards.<sup>442</sup>

Either way, in *A Relation of the State of Polonia* we have a testament that cannot be avoided, though some historians apparently think otherwise, even if they are interested in the structure of the noble estate and its political culture; the text is rarely cited or analyzed. In any case, our Anonym clearly emphasizes in his work – and calls by name – the clientelistic relations that existed between the two layers of the noble estate. Can we believe him?

Let us first examine the terminology he uses. To him the entire noble estate in Poland is *Nobilitie* or (less often) “gentry,” with the first term being capitalized and the second not. Why he made this choice is not entirely clear because the first of the two expressions meant (and means) in England “aristocracy” (titled nobility) and, most strictly, also “knights” – that is, ennobled people. The British have a problem in describing, in the English language, the continental nobility,

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442 William Bruce to the Margrave [Georg Friedrich], from Lublin 6 May 1597: “precibus Illmi Domini Cancellarii Poloniae qui me sibi totum astringere cupiebat.” Geheimes Staatsarchiv Berlin-Dahlem, Rep. 9. (Polen) 9 l. However, one must remember that it was important to the Scot that Georg Friedrich appreciated how useful he could be to the Margrave. In an unpublished master’s thesis (“*A Relation of the State of Polonia...*” – *stereotypowa czy analityczna wizja szesnastowiecznej Rzeczypospolitej* [Instytut Historyczny UW, 1983]), Jerzy Dybowski pointed out that Anonym was well acquainted with Senators and their characters. On Bruce’s manuscript, see E.A. Mierzwa, *Angielska relacja o Polsce z roku 1598, Annales UMCS, Sectio F, t. 17* (Lublin, 1962), z. 4. According to the author of *A Relation of the State of Polonia*, Jan Zamoyski was “the most absolute gentleman for Civill and military vertues, that ever that contrey bredd” (p. 117), “the chiefe patron of thys liberty” (p. 130).



particularly when it comes to the Polish nobility.<sup>443</sup> As a rule, both terms refer to the group; an individual *szlachic* is not a “nobleman,” but a “gentleman.”<sup>444</sup> And not all of them are equal to one another, though we read in Anonym’s text that the “gentry” in Poland are “full of ceremonies, civill and curteous in enterteinment,” that they are “bountifull at table, costly in dyett, greate gourmands” (p. 3). No doubt what the author is talking about here is the two upper layers of the nobility, defi ed as “great Lordes and private riche gentlemen” (p. 83) – that is, those who maintain a great number of attendants and make costly trips abroad. With regard to differences with the British Isles, the author – whoever he was – must have taken an interest in hereditary titles and associated offices and – in this regard as well – he was well-informed (p. 88). On the ways in which dignitaries addressed themselves, Anonym writes that senators of the clergy were *Reverendissimi*, ministers were *Magnifici*, other offi als were *Generosi*, and “private gentlemen being knightes” were *Strenui*. They all remained *Nobiles*. The “private gentleman” was a nobleman without a high offi . “Bothe the greate Lordes, and private riche gentleman” are followed by great entourages that are sometimes beyond their fi nancial means to maintain. The author also perceives another division, namely between the private and public nobility, the latter referring to those who hold an offic (p. 63).<sup>445</sup> He has a British perspective, certainly an English one, perhaps also a Scottish one. He emphasizes the danger of state destabilization (a topic to which I will soon return); indeed, the possibility of rebellion concerns him, though this concern refl cts the contemporaneous obsessions of the English. Poland has aristocratic governments. The highest power in Poland had belonged to

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443 James Philip Cooper put it this way: “Though the word ‘noble’ was usually reserved for the peerage in England, [...] in France, Poland and other countries it included those without titles who in England were called gentry.” Cooper 1971, 16.

444 In those days in England, the concept of “gentleman” was not unambiguous and not easy to defi e. The English scholar John Selden (1584–1654) expressed it this way: “What a gentleman is, ‘tis hard with us to defi e. In other countries he is known by his privileges; in Westminster-hall he is one that is reputed one; in the court of honour, he that hath arms. The king cannot make a gentleman of blood; [what have you said?] nor God Almighty; but he can make a gentleman by creation. If you ask which is the better of these two; civilly, the gentleman of blood; morally the gentleman by creation may be better; for the other may be a debauched man, this a person of worth.” *The Table Talk of John Seldon*, S.H. Reynolds ed. (Oxford: 1892), 72, chapter XLVIII entitled “Gentlemen.” See also Stone 1968, 364.

445 “Th s Nobility is devided into publike and private persons. The publike are suche as have parte of the publike charge, whether it be in commande or onely in administration. These are eyther Senators, or other inferior magistrates and offic s.”

the king before it was transferred to the Senate and then “recently to the nobility,” and it is therefore “likely that the state shortly, yf they continewe thys course, will prove an Oxlocharty” (this is exactly how the word is written, p. 92). The factor that counters that trend, that serves to stabilize the social-political system, is patronage in the hands of the powerful and wealthy, a matter that the author discusses using quotes from Tacitus’s *Germania* for explanation.

It is interesting (and does credit to the author of *A Relation of the State of Polonia*) that we read in this work about several themes that were developed in Poland separately by Jan Kochanowski, Andrzej Frycz Modrzewski, and Piotr Grabowski. We do not know if the author was familiar with their thinking, although Frycz Modrzewski’s sensitivity, as shown in *Łaski, czyli O karze za mężobójstwo* (1543), would seem important to him. But it is characteristic that – interested as he was mainly in political life – he notices a connection between political structures and economic phenomena, while noble clientelism cannot be easily categorized as being either “political” or “economic.” When one reads Anonym’s arguments it is difficult to resist the thought that he is not just singing Chancellor Zamoyski’s praises, but is also representing the Polish political scene as viewed from the perspective of an aging statesman who had already been stripped of his influence. Here is how he views informal systems in the *Rzeczpospolita*:

Bothe the greate Lordes, and private riche gentlemen keepe greate traynes, commonly to the uttermost of their hability, and somme farre beyonde, maynteyning them in that case by badd meanes, suffering, and protecting them in outrages and insolencies. [...] Of the poore Nobility having Nec rem nec larem, there is an huge multitude, Which common poverty commes by these meanes. Fyrst, for that the land possessed by the Nobility is certayne, viz. 140000 villages or Mannours,<sup>446</sup> but that State is dayly wonderfully increased. Secondly, for that Patrimonies oft subdevided comme at last to nothing. Thi dly, the common prodigality of the gentlemen which consume their inheritance. Fowrthly and lastly, For that they may not helpe themselves by trade, or any plebeian gayne, that being by statute the losse of their gentrye. For the relieving of themselves the Nobility hath taken good order by drawing the advauncements and proffitts almost of the whole lande to themselves. [...] But thys little helpes the poorer, whoe by poverty are excluded from secular, and by it kept backe from the spirituall, as not able to followe the chargeable course of study for want of mainetenance, nor though well studied able to make their sufficiency knowne, especially to the kinge, whoe should prefer them. So that bothe spirituall and secular prefermentes almost onely serve for the mainteyning of greate howses in their greatnes. [...] So that these weakeinges can hardly tугge out having but two meanes. The first is study which fewe can follow [...] (p. 83–84)

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446 For more on related statistical analysis, see Mączak 2000a.

The second and ordinary means that poore gentlemen are compelled to use, is service, which serves them onely to lyve, and not rise, excepting some fewe which get speciall favour with their lordes, and are placed by them in Leivetennancy of a Castle, or somme bayleywicke, or peradventure are rewarded by them with some piece of lande. Thys course is held for no disparagement, the rather because they are not putt to servile drudgery, but onely defend their maisters and wayte on them, though they doe it most submissely, and deiecte themselves by too base adulation. For so must they doe that seeke credit with the Poles, whoe by nature being high mynded, love to see their owne greatness in anothers humility, and hearing their owne recommendations from a professory tonge, displaye their plumes, and in a vayne glory seeke by liberall rewarding of suche panegyricall parasites, to manifest those vertues which are most harped on. It is most necessary for that state that suche kinde of service should be held in reputation (howsoever indeed it is base) seing that libertie in the most abiect condition is in true iudgement more honourable then any private service. But for that by the nature of the people and statutes, favouring of military disposition, all Civill courses by trade staynes Nobility, the common wealthe could not stande but by thys service. For wante would make the multitude of poore gentlemen seeke the ruine of that State, wherein they are but beggars, and the establishing of a newe which should bringe them a better condition, there being not any more forcible cause of rebellions, tumultes, secessions etc. then multitudinis inopia, et niniae paucorum opes, especially yf the multitude be interested in the soveraignty, as it is in Polonia, where the voyce of every poore servingman being a gentleman weighes as muche in all Conventes and elections as the greatest princes, onely they are not capable of honors nor magistracies. (p. 85)

The conclusion of *A Relation of the State of Polonia* is clear: Privileges that kings granted to the nobility and the customs by which kings were elected to offic weakened the monarch's authority and rendered the monarchy an aristocratic state. Its democratic element was the "huge multitude" of gentry that constituted the *Vulgus Nobilium*, to which at least 300,000 people belonged in the wake of the Union of Lublin (p. 40). The author returns to this subject in various contexts, formulating his views very clearly:

The kinge, whoe in regarde of his small authoritie, is property but as a prince of the Senate, is chosen by the Poles, that in hym as in a Center, the Maiestie otherwise diffused, might be united, which in all daungerous tymes and greate actions is donn evenly by all Polycratyes, which could not otherwise stand then by imitating. (p. 53)

And a bit later:

And for thys cause the Poles though they have broughte the Maiesty upon themselves, yet retayne the shadowe of a Monarchy, not caryng how weake and symple the kinge be, so that they have one which beareth that bare title. Under whome (the weaker the better) they may enjoye the benefits, dignities, and liberties of the lande. (p. 53)

And in another context:

The manner and order of the kinges election is not established by any lawe or statute, which makes that every change synce the fayling of the Jagelloes stocke hath ben daungerous for the kindome, and might have ben fatal to it. (p. 42)

This claim seems to be an exaggeration in the year 1598, even if we take into consideration the fact the author or the editor of the text made certain additions several years later (though before the rebellion). On the other hand, the author also knows how many office and posts the king has at his disposal – as many as 20,000 and perhaps even 40,000 – which is no small number given that there were around 140,000 nobles in the Crown (that number appears in the text at least three times).<sup>447</sup> These observations make sense when one considers the fact that Anonym conceives the subject dynamically and – so to speak – evolutionarily. It is his belief that free elections elevated the role of the Senate (p. 54), or rather the role played by those in the milieu of senatorial families, and that they weakened the king. At the same time, he was deeply disturbed by the excessive growth of noble liberties. For him, this question was the most important.

*Initium Calamitatis Regni* is a title that would aptly describe the author's arguments about Poland at this time. "The Poles incroche too much upon the Prince." This fact runs contrary to any kind of *raison d'état* and will end badly: maybe it will lead to "a conversion" – no doubt a reference to systemic change – "from which it is not far off," a collapse of the state or – what would be even worse – complete ruin and "servitude."<sup>448</sup> We read that other electoral countries – including Bohemia, Hungary, Denmark, Sweden, and the Empire, "where notwithstanding the Eagle is sore pulled," yielded to their rulers and succession went forward within the framework of the royal family. "So that their libertie in that poynte is almost lost, though certainly to the good of the contreys, which otherwise would be obnoxious to all the mischiefes, which followe elections and vacancies" (p. 54). The term "libertie" appears also in reference to the king as one who distributes "promotions" and "advancement." Whoever manages to attain one of them attempts to adapt himself to the royal attitude and the king's religion, though the

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447 See pp. 55, 68, 108; see also Maćzak 2000a.

448 In Poland "the Nobility is so farr from the loosening of any parte of it [liberty] that they incroche too much, and against any reason of State, which will in the ende eyther bringe a conversion, from which it is not far off, or a dissolution into severallities, or (which is worst of all) an utter ruine and servitude" (p. 54). "Conversions" are mentioned in another place as an internal danger to the state, alongside "troubles," "disunions," "alterations" and "subversions" (p. 129).

monarch does not always “dare use hys libertie” because he is afraid to anger “the mighty.” There follows a discussion of The Statute of King Alexander from the year 1504 (which, under Zygmunt August, was the legal basis on which laws regarding royal property were executed), of royal revenues, and of pressures applied by “mighty Noblemen” (p. 55–57). Finally our Anglophone and friend of Zamoyski offers his *éloge* to King Stefan, his Crown Chancellor, and the Radziwiłłs allied with the king. But the nobility has ways and means to prevent the king from accruing power (p. 60–61). Anonym becomes deeply angry: no “private gentleman” would agree to kind of “absurd articles” that “fantasticke statewrightes” and censors, who lack any political judgment but who are numerous in Poland, impose on the father of the kingdom. At the same time – the authors adds a bit later – no ruler in Europe enjoys such absolute authority over his subjects as the Polish nobleman enjoys over his, both in terms of life and property; peasants are the lord’s “chattels,” a fact that renders the nobility as intolerable to the plebeians as the Mamluks were to the Egyptians (p. 63).

The author’s most interesting point regarding the Polish nobility sets up a paradox: “The Poles deceived by a false libertie” is what we read in the margins (p. 106), and in closing his arguments on the dysfunctional nature of the Polish judiciary in criminal matters, Anonym writes:

The impunity is one parte of the Polish liberty, which they thincke, that they onely of all people in Europe enioye, whereas yf we measure the liberty of the greatest parte of the State, we shall fynde that no civill Commonwealthe is so slavish, the commons not being in equall protection of the lawe. For questionles that State which is obnoxious to the violence of another is not free, as it is in Polonia, where iustice is not administred arithmetically to all. So that onely the Nobility seemes to be free, which not onely in Geometricall iustice enioyeth all exemptions, and hath the honors, and preferments, but also tyrانىse over the other, not aunswerable in lawe, for any outrage against their owne bawres, and for the lyfe or others [...] For seeing that true liberty consisteth specially in the security of oure lyves, goodes, and honors, they cannot be counted free which in them lye open to daunger and violence. (p. 106)

Examining further “their” (that is, the Polish nobility’s) liberty, our author discusses freedom of speech, which he does not support because it can result in disturbances, jealousy, and other problems. The truth is – he adds – that Tacitus praised Trajan for this (p. 107). What also shocked him was the freedom to criticize the king in the *izba poselska*. He finishes by claiming that many errors in law, custom and politics are committed in the name of liberty, as if to fix those errors would mean the loss of liberty.

What does all of this have to do with clientele? Have I not jumped above and beyond the subject of the lop-sided friendship?

The work under discussion here is rather chaotic (indeed, we do not really know how it ends), but the structural inequality of the noble estate becomes evident on many of its pages not so much because of this inconsistent system but because of the significance that the author attributes to it. For example, as the seventh (and probably the main) noble liberty, the author points out – as mentioned above – the fact that, under the name of liberty, errors in law, custom and politics are continually committed in Poland, as if to correct them would bring in its wake the loss of those very noble liberties. In the next sentence we read that “exercise of armes, wholly belongeth to the Nobility, and *their followers*” (author’s emphasis – A.M.). And that statement is followed by a quote from Tacitus: “Qui nec tributis contemnuntur, nec publicanus atterit, exempti oneribus,” etc.

Renaissance political science eagerly addressed the goals and character of threats posed against states, and our author wrote a great deal about the *Rzeczpospolita*’s armed forces. He mentions the dominant opinion in the country that mobilization (*Militia terrestris*) could muster as many as 200,000 horsemen; he does not believe (and he justifies his view at length) that the king could gather up to 300,000 mercenary riders.<sup>449</sup> He places the Polish style of waging battle alongside that of the Northern and Eastern powers “and generally all barbarous nations”; the Poles fight without following the rules of “fyre or ancke, which disorder is an order to them.” However – he adds unexpectedly – who knows if the end result is not better than with our greate battalions.<sup>450</sup>

I have devoted a certain amount of space to these issues (which the author of *A Relation of the State of Polonia* develops more fully), and even though they do not impact my subject directly, I want to point out that Anonym was not blinded against sharp criticism of the *Rzeczpospolita* and its system.

Internal threats – Anonym writes – could result from the coexistence of various confessions (the author considers it best to have only two, as in France!), but one need not be afraid of this. More dangerous are conflicts among “particular potent men”; their private conflicts are liable to become public, to which the state is vulnerable because of the weakness of its laws, the strength of its “potent men” and the “wante of authority in the kinge,” along with the excitability of Polish society, etc., highlighted by “quarrels of followers.”

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449 “The Poles holde that the kinge may leavy of stipendiary force 300 000 horse besydes the former upon duety” (p. 112).

450 In *The Northern Wars, 1558–1721* (London: 2000) Robert I. Frost recently offered a generally positive assessment of the *Rzeczpospolita*’s military organization and discussed both the reasons why it departed from the Western model and the advantages that came with those differences.

The times that are most dangerous for the state come during interregna and elections, which are marked by crowds of armed men prepared for battle, whose single goal is to pursue the interests of one faction (this term was particularly frightening in this era's political language). Most of them had no right of their own to adjudicate; instead, they were dependent on a very few, to whom they were devoted either through "respecte" or service.

In the Senate – Anonym continues – it is right to fear the too-great power of certain people, especially when they conspire with one another and are able to ensure for themselves the support of the "plebeians" (that is – the nobility in general), which is precisely what certain noble factions suspected of Zamoyski when King Stefan named him military commander and Deputy Chancellor; it was mistakenly thought that he was in search of greatness and popularity among the people through his munificence toward soldiers and demonstrations of justice (p. 133).

In Anonym's text, the nobility seems (though only in places) to be an estate that is almost criminal and – in any case – "ochlocratic." Anonym mentions the nobility's perversion, its impotence, secessionist tendencies, and other political sins; hence the ineffective laws, the nobility's impunity, the plundering of the "domayne [...] and publike state," and the great "authority" of "insolent" factional leaders. Hence the collision leading to "tyranny of the Nobility," which forces the king and Senate to defend their rights.<sup>451</sup> The king is not able to stop this tyranny ("The kinge hardly can content the Nob. [sic!]" – this is what we read in the margins), though he could (like the German Emperor) strengthen the bourgeoisie – Anonym continues – to protect them and remove them from the nobility's jurisdiction, so they could enrich themselves and join forces in defense of their rights against the nobility. Along with inhabitants of the cities of Prussia and Livonia, they could establish for the king a counterweight against the nobility. Such a postulate is both revelatory and bold<sup>452</sup>, and it is one that the reader should remember when I turn to a discussion of the rebellion governments.<sup>453</sup>

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451 At this point Anonym falls prey to fantasy, as he talks himself into believing that noblemen meet every year at a certain place in the kingdom, where every "gentleman," under oath, points out the errors of the "Common Wealthe"; if someone is accused by enough of the others, he is immediately punished. The author calls it "Ostracisme," which appeared to be necessary, but "most hartfull to a state accounted Monarchicall" (p. 133). Who gave him this idea?

452 The author also wonders why it is not possible to use the peasants of the royal domain for this purpose.

453 See the section below entitled "Political Clientelism *Alla Polacca*."

The Senate under threat – Anonym argues, still full of political imagination – could strengthen its position in relation to the “popular state of the Nobility” by acting as the Roman patricians did against the people, because it was the people’s methods that the noblemen were using in Poland.

Can we find any cohesion or consistency in the image of old Poland that Anonym has painted? At first glance it seems that the answer is *no*; in his opinion, on the one hand, the magnates were growing in strength in part by rendering the servile *vulgus nobilium* dependent on them. On the other hand, a ochlocracy (noble tyranny) was taking root, pushing the Senate (and the king) into a defensive position. And yet we must point out that Anonym speaks here – for a change – about the nobility as a mass (about “people,” even about *plebeians*) and about the *izba poselska*, about magnates and the Senate. Clearly, though indirectly, such commentary stems from the fact that, while institutions (the Senate and the defective judicial system) were losing meaning, individual magnates were gaining significance, in part through the expansion of their clienteles. But at the same time a phenomenon was growing that was, in Anonym’s view, the most dangerous: the noble mob, led by demagogues (the author does not use this term, but this is how I understand the reference to “factious insolent men”; see p. 133) and prone to spontaneous, unpredictable actions. And such an understanding does not conflict with our image of the approaching century of rebellion and military alliances.

Anonym – a foreigner – was fascinated by the person of Zamoyski, and to some degree he views developments from the chancellor’s perspective. If the hypothesis is true that we are reading words written by Bruce, then the author was one of Zamoyski’s clients and he was carrying out his duties to his patron perfectly. Zamoyski appears repeatedly in the pages of this work as a true statesman, as a positive hero on the Polish political scene, and the dead King Stefan was the exemplary monarch. It would be worth analyzing *A Relation of the State of Polonia* from the political aspect of the chancellor-hetman’s life at the end of his active period, during his years in royal disfavor. Was perhaps it really he who expressed such criticism of the system to whose rise he himself had contributed? The greatest patron in the Crown with such criticism of magnatial clientelism? The great speaker of the *izba poselska* with such criticism of the *vulgus nobilium*? All that remains for me to say in this chapter is that what we have gotten from Anonym’s work is a dim and pessimistic image; but can a political prophet ever be an optimist?

One other issue regarding the author – whoever he was – involves his British (English or Scottish) background. From today’s perspective one can see in this work analogies to Scottish issues. Let us thus recall ...



In Scotland at this time we have many great ducal families who were dominant particularly in the highlands; only during Elizabeth's reign did the earls of Westmorland lose control of the northern counties of England; Norfolk county was dominated by Thomas Howard, 4th Duke of Norfolk.<sup>454</sup> Magnatial patronage over the region, supported through titles and office at the court, was important, particularly in certain areas. However, I would argue that it was precisely *government by pen* under James, along with the fate of Elizabethan magnates in northern and eastern England (who had been dominant in areas under their control but were, in the end, destroyed in the clash with central authorities) that provide a contrast with the impotent electoral monarchy of the *Rzeczpospolita*.

Another association with the North leads directly to Scotland of those days. The year after the date attached to Anonym's work on Poland, King James VI of Scotland issued his instructions to his son. Though it would be senseless to search for direct ties between these two texts, what strikes me is the fact that both works share similar tendencies. The Scottish ruler expressed his thoughts in fear of his impending death but with the hope that at least his son would sit on the throne of England. Thus, we find in the *Basilikon Doron* a similar tone toward the Scottish magnates and toward anarchy in the country.<sup>455</sup> Certain of the Stuart's particular thoughts allow us to draw direct associations with problems being experienced by the *Rzeczpospolita*.

## 5. The *Magnateria*: Magnatial Rule over Space<sup>456</sup>

James VI wrote down his advice to his son in order to – among other reasons – eliminate anarchy (“these barbarous feides”) step by step, beginning where it was easiest (he suggests that his son “beginne at your Elbowe”) and continuing until the country's “extremities.” But Scotland was a small country, and though the hills and mountains complicated contact with Edinburgh, the situation there was not comparable to the distances faced by those in Poland, Lithuania and Rus; a monarch and any minister wanting to strengthen central influence would, in such an expansive terrain, face proportionally more difficult problems.<sup>457</sup>

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454 Hassel Smith 1974.

455 James VI 1969, 55.

456 For an earlier examination of this subject, see Mączak 1999.

457 Here I use the term “terrain” in part because “periphery,” used by historians walking in the footsteps of F. Braudel and particularly I. Wallerstein, does not fit the Polish political reality of the sixteenth-eighteenth centuries, even though it has been adopted in economic contexts.

Here I would like to put forward the thesis that the magnates' clientelism in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth developed in close connection with the *Rzeczpospolita's* huge space and its peculiar economic structure. This magnatial clientelism, which flourished within a single estate (I am sidestepping the clergy here) under the idea of formal equality but under real distinctions (involving both property and prestige) connected matters between which social scientists like to draw a distinction: clientelism stemming from poverty and political clientelism.<sup>458</sup>

The phenomenon of the political clientele was directly connected with the organization of goods (broadly defined). The *Rzeczpospolita's* huge expanse – almost a million square kilometers – was extremely diverse, despite the fact that the nations were largely united in a market-economy that was overwhelmingly agricultural, and out of this circumstance emerged the characteristic paradox of equality-inequality within the noble estate, the one that “Anonym” emphasized so strongly. Wealth inequalities were most sharp in the *kresy* (eastern borderlands), far from the center of demand for agricultural products (both plant and animal). While almost every nobleman who lived near the main rivers had access to the grain river trade, the fact is that the upper regions of the Vistula, San, and Bug rivers were ruled by an oligopoly of great land owners. Only in the lower Vistula River basin could anyone (who wanted to) buy grain relatively cheaply or travel by river to sell their surplus harvest. After all, while in Royal Prussia, Mazovia, and the area around Podlasie there were no truly huge estates (except for Church estates and in certain *starostwa*, which were essentially Crown lands), in the East and Southeast the disproportions among land owners was great, and the costs of grain transport proportionally greater. Differences in land ownership structures were also conspicuous along the Vistula between Małopolska and Mazovia.<sup>459</sup> The effect was accumulative, whereby smaller neighbors of great landowners (who

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458 Sławomir Baczewski (*Elementy ideologii szlacheckiej i ich funkcje w XVII-wiecznych polskojęzycznych drukowanych kazaniach pogrzebowych* [Lublin: KUL, 2001], 57) cites an interesting and probably characteristic interpretation of estate equality from A. Radawiecki (*Prawy ojców w kazaniu na pogrzebie ... Mikołaja ze Żmigroda Stadnickiego ...* [Kraków: 1630], 22). About poor nobility Radawiecki writes: “Those in the *Publika* have to stand while the Senators sit; but all of them as sons of the Crown are equal in *libertate, foro et capacitate bonorum, honorum, dignitatum*; equal in liberty, equal in the law [...] also equal in the fact that a king can give a voivode a lease or a *starostwo*, and he can also give the poorest nobleman (such noblemen are plentiful here) that which turns him into a lord. Every nobleman is capable of being the head of a *starostwo* or voivode.”

459 Mączak, 1967.

had at their disposal marinas, or “*pale*”) were dependent on them while product was being sent to market. The capacity of local markets was extremely limited, and prices in the distant hinterland (the “*loco* of the loading marinas”) were significantly lower than in Gdańsk. Specifically, as indicated by a comparison of data on prices and grain measurements contained in royal invoices and surveys in the years 1564 and 1565 (the only years for which we can make trustworthy estimates), attempts were made to maintain a uniform price for a bushel of rye, though differences in value were expressed by the relationship involving the size of the *miary nasypne* (measures of dry goods).<sup>460</sup> In this regard one must remember that the *Rzeczpospolita* was not urban, and that Crown legislation, at least since the times of the Statutes of Piotrków (1496) assured for the nobility a market advantage over cities (with the important exception of Gdańsk).

There thus emerged a system that was highly favorable for great property holders; if a poorer nobleman (in the terminology of the tax registers, *generosus* applied only when the *pan*, or lord, was an *illustrissimus dominus*<sup>461</sup>) wanted to take advantage of Gdańsk prices, then he had to first turn to a wealthier neighbor, who – for a price – would assist in the product transport. The situation was similar in Lithuania, as indicated by analysis of invoices tied to the Radziwiłł estates.<sup>462</sup> Economic relations of this type might well have led – and it seems to me that this hypothesis is most probably true – to the development of patronage by the wealthier and more powerful neighbor, because no bond in the noble environment was exclusively economic in nature. In any case, the lord’s disfavor, which might cut the *folwarczny* nobleman off from distant markets, could turn out for him simply suicidal. The effect of great spaces accumulated with fluctuations in crop yields. According to Vistula duty records from Włocławek in the sixteenth century, only the grain of the great landowners was transported in lean years. Which means that, in more than one voivodeship, only they had access to sufficient cash to dispense credit to neighbors.<sup>463</sup>

In this context of market relations I detect an evolution in land ownership between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries. There is a shortage of detailed

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460 The first to address this subject was Witold Kula, *Miary i ludzie* (Warszawa: 1970).

461 See tables 1 and 2 below.

462 For more on this subject, see Wasyl Mieleszko, “Handel i stosunki handlowe Białorusi Wschodniej z miastami nadbałtyckimi w końcu XVII i XVIII w.,” *Zapiski Historyczne* 33 (1968): 5–91; on the subject of the first decades of the seventeenth century, see the unpublished master’s thesis by Maria Brzozowska, *Splaw na Niemnie z dóbr radziwiłłowskich w pierwszej połowie XVII wieku* (Instytut Historyczny UW).

463 Mączak 1968.

studies on the *Rzeczpospolita's* broad territories, but historians generally agree that the concentration of landed property was particularly intense in areas where great estates already existed in the sixteenth century.<sup>464</sup> A half century ago Witold Kula pointed to the fact that, in the era of Stanisław August (who reigned over the *Rzeczpospolita* from 1764 to 1795), nobles were leasing land from others on a scale far greater than had been the case in the Crown 200 years earlier. Research into the *kontrakty lwowskie* in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries indicates that the nobility of Rus invested their resources with the magnates, who in turn bought up – using this very money – the land of their smaller neighbors. What is essential is the fact that the trade balance in property always favored the highest group – from those *urodzone* (well-born) to those *najjaśniejsze* (brightest or most serene, effectively highest born); the latter were not interested in buying up the estates of the petty nobility, which is represented in the tables below.<sup>465</sup>

Table 1. The value of loans and certain properties (real estate) sold based on *kontrakty lwowskie* in the years 1676–1686

Sellers, creditors	Magnates ( <i>illustrissimi</i> )	Middle nobles ( <i>generosi</i> )	Petty nobles ( <i>nobiles</i> )
Buyers, debtors			
Magnates	6359	6070	2
Middle nobles	616	6336	21
Petty nobles	200	8	34

In thousands of *złp.* (*złoty polski*, Polish zloties)

Table 2. The balance of turnover in real estate based on *kontrakty lwowskie* in the years 1676–1686

Sellers	Magnates	Middle nobles	Petty nobles
Buyers			
Magnates	2/97	-/79	1/-
Middle nobles	2/38	36/161	29/4
Petty nobles	-/-	6/1	70/3

464 Mączak 1967.

465 These tables were put together based on M. Wąsowicz, *Kontrakty lwowskie w latach 1676–1686* (Lwów: 1935).

The number before the slash (/) indicates small properties; the number after the slash means larger properties (parts of a village, an entire village, or a *klucz* – that is, a large group of neighboring estates)

Analysis of fi ld (*lanowy*) and roof (*podymny*) registries from 1580 and 1629 respectively in the Kraków voivodeship shows that, over the course of that half century, several dozen villages passed into the hands of the Lubomirskis,<sup>466</sup> and our subject demands that we ask what happened to the old owners of those estates. How many of them lost their status as nobleman? How many of them populated the homes and courts of cities both large and small? How many of them moved to Rus? How many of them were employed by magnates to administer their estates or remained as tenant farmers? We can have no real answers to these questions until detailed research is carried out in court documents. Such documents in Małopolska have been preserved only in fragments, but in Wielkopolska – about which we have more information – research into the turnover of estate lands indicates that the concentration of estates in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries progressed more slowly.<sup>467</sup> No doubt this process of concentration favored the intensification of magnatial patronage, though precisely how this intensification took place represents a great unknown: how did it develop over time, and what were its regional differences?

One can view this topic from a different perspective. In 1598 Anonym wrote: “the land possessed by the Nobility is certayne, viz. 140000 villages or Mannours, but that State is dayly wonderfully increased.”<sup>468</sup> Despite all doubts regarding that number, Anonym’s general observation deserves attention. When taken together with the concentration of landed wealth taking place in many parts of the *Rzeczpospolita*, it would indicate that (on average) the amount of wealth falling into the hands of a single owner was shrinking. A crisis situation developed because sources other than land that could serve as a source of income were, in the *Rzeczpospolita*, greatly limited.

Poland-Lithuania did not have the problem of “younger sons” on a great scale, since the noble system of inheritance called for estates to be divided up. The military, along with the state administration in general, created the possibility for social advancement and personal enrichment only to a limited degree, incomparably smaller than in most of the states in the Empire, in Prussia, and in

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466 Mączak 1967.

467 Pośpiech 1989, 224–234.

468 See section above entitled “Liberty and the Raison d’état: ‘Anonym’ on the *Rzeczpospolita*.”

the Scandinavian states.<sup>469</sup> Admittedly this subject requires more detailed prosopographic research, but there is no doubt that we see a sharp contrast here with the English gentry, many of whose sons took to the sea, moved on to urban occupations, or entered the “Inns of Court” with thoughts of joining the bar.<sup>470</sup> It is unnecessary to highlight the full contrast between Poland and England in terms of their social-legal structures, but it is worth recalling Anonym’s thought that, in the “aristocratic *Rzeczpospolita*,” the king should have turned to the bourgeoisie for support.

Why not to the middle nobility? I would argue that – alongside other barriers – the nobility lacked the kind of education that the *robins* and *letrados* had. Such an education was simply not required of the middle noblemen in Poland, and over the course of time the rustic course of life created no stimulus to search it out. What remained was the possibility of a career in the Church, and it is significant that in the seventeenth century the nobility dominated the clergy, which created opportunities – albeit at the parish level – for poor young noblemen.<sup>471</sup>

There were few if any possibilities in agriculture for social advancement and personal enrichment. The problem of the “one hundred and forty thousand strong and multiplying nobility” was exacerbated by the dominant agricultural economy. The thorough and detailed research conducted by Andrzej Pośpiech on the turnover of land mainly in the middle-noble milieu of Wielkopolska points to the fact that land transactions were stimulated by the way wealth was divided within families, by the need for credit, and (to be sure) by problems faced by individual owners, but they were *not* stimulated by the possibility of enriching oneself on the noble farm itself or through feudal rents.<sup>472</sup> Research on the farming economy of Wielkopolska indicates that noble farming expanded mainly within the estate, with the nobility increasing the acreage being farmed at the expense of

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469 Kopczyński 1999.

470 That having been said, Joan Thies argues that the problem of the “younger sons,” about which much has been written (and with the sons themselves leading with accusations), has been exaggerated when the particular subject is their personal fates. Still, primogeniture had a decisive influence on the structure of ownership and power. See Thies 1969 and Goody 1978.

471 What seems characteristic to me is the expansion of *Masovitae* into Kujavian territory, which was visible in visits made by the archdeacon of Włocławek at the end of the sixteenth century. Was this an early effect of the Jesuit kolegium in Pułtusk? See Mączak 1972, 151–165. Among these *Masovitae* (who did not impress their visitors with their education) there might well have been sons of the bourgeoisie.

472 Mączak 1968; Pośpiech 1989.

the peasant, whose labor was used to bring down trees in adjacent woods.<sup>473</sup> But opportunities in this regard were limited, and Anonym was right to be thinking in categories set out centuries later by George M. Foster.<sup>474</sup> My belief (though it belongs in the sphere of reflection) is that in a certain sense not only the peasantry, but also the nobility, lived in a state of “limited good,” both materially and in terms of the number of office and posts available to them. If possibilities to advance “from rags to riches” existed only outside of one’s own farm, then where did the ambitious nobleman cast his eyes?<sup>475</sup> Military service was an option, as were opportunities in the south-eastern *kresy* and – no doubt – service to the local lord. Quite apart from particular situations, exceptional individual abilities, or simple luck, all paths to advancement seemed to pass through the lord’s home, even when they led to the *sejmik*, where a noble activist (or a candidate for the position) could count on powerful competition. Such is the foundation of the relationships that I define with the phrase “clientelism of a mighty neighbor.” This was not an exceptional phenomenon<sup>476</sup>, but – in light of the weakness at the *Rzeczpospolita*’s political center – we can speak about it as a system in the meaning that I adopted above from Johnson and Dandeker.<sup>477</sup>

## 6. Political Clientelism *Alla Polacca*

I claimed above that the division of clientelistic relationships into two groups (political and non-political) – a division that anthropologists and sociologists have adopted – is usually of doubtful use. The motivations behind human activity are ambiguous, and the benefits gained by clients are complex. These issues are simple when viewed from the lower rungs of the social ladder, but the question is: were clients/property owners standing on those lower rungs?

Zofia Zielińska, who put forward a pioneering interpretation of these issues based on the diaries of Marcin Matuszewicz, sees magnatial clients in leaders – that is (using the political vocabulary of the eighteenth century) in the *sejmik* “directors.”<sup>478</sup> The wealthy and powerful patron selected them from among the af-

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473 M. Kamler, *Folwark szlachecki w Wielkopolsce w latach 1580–1655* (Warszawa: 1976).

474 See the section below entitled “Amoral Familism and Limited Good.”

475 Foster 1961;

476 See the slightly awkward proposition put forward in a monograph written with valuable understanding of the historical background by James Walston (1988, p. 2), namely “notable clientelism.”

477 Johnson and Dandeker 1990; see also chapter above entitled “Proposed Definitions.”

478 Zielińska, Z. 1971.

fluent nobility because the success of their activities on behalf of the lord required a commitment of their own authority, and often the commitment of considerable resources, which – only with time and if the lord was pleased – would pay off. Matuszewicz regretted that his family was new: its members had lived in the region barely three generations, though he declared in his diaries that he had been able over time to establish his authority among his colleagues and was a success as a *sejmik* director. He thus achieved what was the prize for people of his kind: a seat (*drążkowy*) in the Senate, which meant that his family were assured an important role in the country's politics.<sup>479</sup>

*Sejmik* politics was based mainly on incessant elections which (if the district was not dominated by a single magnate) were, as a rule, fi ed during behind-the-scenes negotiations between directors representing particular factions. *Sejmik* members were elected along with tribunal deputies and district offi als and dignitaries. At the same time, candidates were nominated for the *urzędy ziemskie*. As Matuszewicz's descriptions indicate, members of the *sejmik* were not interested in great issues of state, and sessions of the typical eighteenth-century *sejmik* hardly resembled those conducted 200 or 150 years before, which had passed *lauda* (resolutions) that gave surprising signs of civic commitment and political acumen. This contrast came as a result of a crisis in the republican system, but it was also the result of the different sources that we have at our disposal. We know very little about the internal dynamics of the *sejmiki*, where patronage by magnates was not conspicuous or had not become a phenomenon that was permanent or dominant. And as Włodzimierz Dworzaczek pointed out, the Wielkopolska general *sejmik* managed in the seventeenth century to elect members based on an individual's merits and according to his faith<sup>480</sup> – a shocking observation. However, we have at the same time other evidence showing that the nobility-property owners were characterized by a sense of common identity, and that whoever might want to maneuver them would have to confront this identity. In the end local confi ts of interest, instances of local (and especially family) confi ts and loyalties, complicated political mechanisms in practice, which is all too easy to oversimplify when one views the matter from a distant perspective.

Earlier I talked about the insignifi ance of the Polish *noblesse de robe*. In this area – as in other areas – the *magnateria* replaced the monarchy. Increasingly, members of the nobility found ways of making “a living” in estate administrations, in court armies, and in political service to the magnates (the division here was not

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479 See PSB *sub vocibus* Matuszewicz[owie].

480 Dworzaczek 1957.



always clear). Such a phenomenon was not foreign to other European states (for instance eighteenth-century France), but the proportions in the *Rzeczpospolita* were different. The rules of service among magnates dictated that requirements in the administration of properties were high and that discipline could be harsh.<sup>481</sup> Beyond the courtiers (*dworzenie*) as, for example, Jędrzej Kitowicz portrayed them, or the courtiers (*dworacy*) in the full sense of the word, there existed a group of experts in management who made economic and technical decisions, and who carried out their accounting duties with scrupulous attention – true professionals. This phenomenon seems to have gained strength and significance in the eighteenth century.

### a. To Like as Much as One's Interests Command

Jędrzej Kitowicz remembers:

Jerzy Fleming, *podskarbi* (grand treasurer) of Lithuania, [...] had the entire court behind him and when he traveled to Warsaw he did so with his court, either as a whole or part of it one day and another part on another day. But the fact is that he was a born German, an *indygena*<sup>482</sup> of Poland, who liked Poles only in so far as business interests commanded him. To the extent that he ought to have friends among the nobility, he maintained within the noble courts citizen sons as noble courtiers, thus endearing himself – and gaining popularity – among the nobles. His list of courtiers was long; it counted a hundred or more. But he did not keep any of them at his side; having given [a nobleman] a position, he noted – for his own memory – that man's salary, meals, and feed for the horses, and then he sent him to the *klucz dóbr* [a large group of estates located close to one another and under the same administration]. The courtier had no more to do there than care for himself and his horses and trade in horses. He [Fleming] sometimes used his clients to help his intendants, stewards and estate managers in border and marketplace issues. When he had some kind of interest at the *sejmik* or the tribunal, or even at the Sejm, and he was in need of support, then he wrote letters to his courtiers asking them to come to him. As a particular courtier (whom Fleming barely remembered) stood in front of him, Fleming asked “who are you?” When the courtier responded that he was his servant from this or that estate, he then sent this person to the marshal, who would give him a room and take care of

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481 For the voivode of Rawa, Anzelm Gostomski, the *włodarz-zarządca* (steward-manager) taking care of his interests was a suspicious character. However, in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries instruction booklets and literature on the subject of the steward-manager highlighted the competence of these administrations. See A. Gostomski, *Gospodarstwo*, ed. R. Inglot (Wrocław: 1950).

482 Translator's note: an *indygena* is a foreigner who attained the rights and privileges a Polish nobleman.

all necessary comforts; and then after the courtier was no longer useful, he would be sent back where he came.<sup>483</sup>

An opposition, or at least a distinction, emerges again: client-servant. Kitowicz disapproves of Grand Treasurer Fleming's behavior because it pushes the client into the position of a servant in terms of not just vocabulary (he "responded that he was his servant") but also actual position. If we want to set the range between these two categories very broad, we can adopt the following criteria: the servant and only the servant was a nobleman at the court who owned no property (a *nieposesjonat*), a person who was entirely dependent on the lord, regardless of what kind of service role he played. The client, on the other hand, was served by the lord's protection mainly by way of "promotion," as a way of raising his position or releasing him (if he was young) into the world, but also by defending him against an angry neighbor, by assisting him in a court of law, by supporting him in the search for a wife, etc.

The magnate's position had two pillars: (1) his influence over the king and the king's court and (2) the political backing he got from those noblemen who were dependent on him. A great landowner who lacked such backing was not a magnate in the full sense of the word. A magnate's "friends" were his "party" in the *sejmiki*, and in specific situations they could demonstrate *en masse* their patron's significance, for instance when he was making his way to the Sejm and wanted to impress others with the size of his entourage, or when an armed *cavalcata* was intended to pose a threat to a rival or opponent. It was never irrelevant how such an entourage presented itself; if it was poorly armed, poorly dressed, or mounted on skinny nags, the patron's companions would not inspire admiration or fear, but attract ridicule. Hence, the significance among clients of the wealthy, "immaculate" nobility; hence, efforts by magnates (and by advocates of reform in the years of the Great Sejm) to deny petty nobles the right to actively participate in *sejmiki*: their votes did not add to the splendor, and could lead to various disturbances.<sup>484</sup> The description of Fleming's "court" cited above – along with Kitowicz's words: "to the extent that he ought to have friends among the nobility" – perfectly describes the instrumental nature of the relationship between the nobility and the magnate. To be sure, Fleming ("a born German") had a certain position at the royal court, but when he had to implement his own political or financial goals, he was able to mobilize his own "courtiers"-clients. That having been said, Father Jędrzej did not

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483 Kitowicz 1970, 417. Author's emphases – A.M.

484 For paintings on this subject, see Koźmian 1972, 140–142.

take into consideration any examples of independence on their part or independent initiatives undertaken by them.

Having paused for a moment at the work of Kitowicz, that great “behaviorist,” it is worth taking note of two other matters highlighted by him. The first involves the ubiquity of the *stan dworski* (order of courtiers) in Poland under the Saxons. There were “nobles and poor burghers, serving various lords and ladies [...] there was no nobleman with a single village that was not hiding at least one courtier.”<sup>485</sup> The second involves the division between officials and “simple courtiers,” who had no particular function. The latter fulfilled “general services,” whose duties resemble those of the clientele of the late Roman Republic or principate. Their tasks included:

going in the morning to the lord’s rooms, to wait with others at the entrance to his room, and to present themselves, in decent attire and with a facial expression showing a readiness to serve. If the lord had an order for someone, then he [that courtier] was sent immediately to carry it out.

As belated consolation for the “simple courtiers,” one could draw an analogy between them and the crowd of courtiers at Versailles and the laziness that is widely described by Kitowicz and other witnesses from those days, which represents one aspect of the petty nobleman’s clientelistic position (and not just his). There was also another aspect of his position, one which played itself out on the *sejmik* stage.

In the introduction to his popular but valuable synthesis of the *sejmik* phenomenon, Wojciech Kriegseisen highlighted his intention to confront the continued circulation of this institution’s “black legend.”<sup>486</sup> I would argue that, as is often the case in such situations, there is no way to find the truth by distributing, according to the best possible knowledge, balanced doses of “for” and “against” (which Kriegseisen does not do). The *sejmiki* reflected the political nature and culture of the noble estate, the constellation of power within that estate, and – along with all that – the nobility’s idea of political liberty.

A crisis in “*sejmik* governments”? This is a complicated issue. The usage, and later the constitutional principle, of the *liberum veto* first emerged not in *sejmik* practices, but in the *izba poselska*. And it was the Sejm that entrusted the *sejmiki*

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485 Kitowicz 1970, 397; Kitowicz explains that the “name ‘dworski,’ broadly understood, meant every servant,” and “in a real sense – that is, *in substantivo* – it meant only a born or supposed servant-nobleman”; it was also “courtiers *in adiectivo*” – that is, servants of the “great lord or lordling,” including the boy servants, hajduks, hussars, marksmen, cooks, etc.

486 Kriegseisen 1991, 7–11.

with fiscal resolutions, the collection of taxes, and even the payment (using these revenues) of soldiers. Clearly, the responsibilities of this or that institution are not important to me here, but rather the very essence and structure of power in the *Rzeczpospolita*. Did the nobility trust the *izba poselska*? It invested the greatest hope in the *izba* during the reign of Zygmunt August, when an understanding was reached between the *izba* and the king, though the spread of the *sejmiki relacyjne*, and the deputies' transfer of decisions "to our brothers," suggest that trust in the Sejm was decreasing and that the very concept of citizenship was changing: the nobleman-citizen of the *Rzeczpospolita* became – in actual practice – a citizen of the land from which he came.<sup>487</sup> This development harkened back to a principle that was broadly present in the estate systems, namely that of the *indigenat*, which reserved certain rights (to hold offices to acquire land) to local *incolae, terrigenae*, etc. But the nobility's political rights in the *Rzeczpospolita* were extensive. One might suppose that this was precisely the intention of the magnates; it was easier for them to influence the resolutions of individual *sejmiki* than to shape the decisions of the *izba*, direct evidence of which was the tactic of breaking off sessions of the Sejm. With too few office (and offices) to mediate between king and "country" (read: the *sejmiki*), the monarch could only agitate during the *sejmiki elekcyjne* and make his argument to them through letters, votes cast by his legates, and the activities of the regalists (the people in his faction).

Better than the letter of the law, what illustrates the state's internal situation and how it functioned as a regime is the behavior of various public activists, politicians, and officials (at that time in Poland, these categories were practically inseparable). How office functioned in these conditions has not yet been thoroughly researched.<sup>488</sup> Thus, only on a hypothetical basis can one suggest that a special role in the activities of both the politician and the *urzędnik* was played by negotiating skills. Collegial office that functioned by strict rules – privy councils on the continent and in England, and the *kollegier* in Sweden – were unknown in Poland, although by the end of the sixteenth century the royal chancellery was being provided transparent instructions. A significant portion of the time, effort and attention of *urzędnicy* and dignitaries was spent in negotiations among factions and especially – and this is characteristic – with numerous pressure groups, whose role grew particularly in the seventeenth century.

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487 Andrzej Sulima Kamiński placed particular emphasis on the civic character of the *Rzeczpospolita* in his *Historia Rzeczypospolitej wielu narodów, 1505–1795* (Lublin: 2000).

488 An exception is the pioneering article by Michał Kopczyński (Kopczyński 1999).

There were also opportunities in the *sejmiki* for a person who was skilled in carrying out negotiations, an expert in the psychology of the noble crowd, someone who resembled today's public relations officer, a specialist in persuasion. For example, Marcin Matuszewicz, the valued *sejmik* activist and later castellan. Another man living in the era under discussion here who had similar talents was Jan Pasek, though fate and personal temperament led him in a different direction. A character of an opposite type was Jan Antoni Chrapowicki.<sup>489</sup> His expansive diary, though it is not particularly rich in significant facts or judgments, demonstrates the author's meticulous nature and his pedantry, and it highlights the great activity of those in the Sejm and the *sejmiki*. Chrapowicki's participation in countless commissions within the *izba poselska* carrying out negotiations with an unpaid mercenary soldier testifies to his skills: he was rather Fredro's "Rejent" than "Cześnik".<sup>490</sup> In any case, as we know from Władysław Łoziński's *Prawem i lewem*, even a *starosta grodowy* (local government officer in Rus, in his pursuit of expellees, had to convince noble colleagues to provide him assistance.<sup>491</sup> The French *intendant*, the Prussian *Comissarius*, or even the English "courts of assize" guided throughout the country by the Privy Council, were unimaginable in Poland. When we recall Wolfgang Reinhard's above-quoted comments on the limited influence that Western monarchs had on the situation in the regions, we gain perspective on the extreme weakness of the central authorities in the *Rzeczpospolita*.

Viewed most generally, the seventeenth-century political trend that we might call "Sarmatian" was characterized by mistrust of representation, which was paradoxical given that no other country at that time elected as many representatives and local officials to whom the nobility delegated authority: deputies to the Sejm, deputies to the tribunal, judges, tax collectors (all which reminds us of the *sejmik* scenes from the Mickiewiczian Soplicowo service set<sup>492</sup>). Nonetheless, there lurked within the nobility a distrust of any kind of representation, a faith in the superiority – and the political necessity – of direct democracy, whose very foundation was the *sejmik*. The *sejmik* monitored its envoys through instructions issued to its deputies and the obligation that, upon their return from a session, they submit a report on their activities.

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489 See Tadeusz Wasilewski's introduction to the published diary: Chrapowicki 1978, 7.

490 Translator's note: This is a reference to characters in Aleksander Fredro's comedy *Zemsta* (The Revenge, 1833).

491 Łoziński, 1903.

492 This service set was briefly discussed above. See section entitled "The Clientele in Graphics: Jean-Pierre Norblin."

One may doubt whether there was some sort of social-political theory hidden behind this trend, but at the same time what is apparent here are the consequences of the very birth of this system of noble democracy. After all it emerged out of what became known as the *sejm konny* held in 1454 in the fi ld camps at Cerekwica and Nieszawa. Growing faith toward representative systems around the middle of the next century – at the height of the executionist movement – was tied to efforts by noblemen in many Crown voivodeships to rid themselves of the local advantage that magnates enjoyed. As statements that came out of the *izba poselska* in the years 1562–1564 indicate, it was there, in the *izba*, that envoys from various *sejmiki* felt sure of themselves and free from the pressure usually applied on them by wealthy and powerful senators. The end result was the enactment of a constitution that was intended to strengthen the treasury and assure the dominance of the *izba poselska*, though – as was discussed earlier – nothing was done at this time to improve the central authority or organize the administration of the country.

Gaps in the power structure were filled by the *samorząd semikowy* (roughly, *sejmik*-centered autonomous government), although contacts with the broader political landscape were maintained mainly by the magnates. With his comments, Chrapowicki suggests that we ought to be amazed by the potential for *sejmik*/Sejm activity, but in this regard he was no doubt an exception. Naturally, contacts maintained by the rich and powerful, above all by ministers and dignitaries, were more broad and intense than those of local noblemen. In a certain sense it was precisely they who – alongside those in the administrative structure of the Catholic Church – acted as a substitute for the state administration network.<sup>493</sup> Political events in the fi st interregna did not bode well: the *zjazdy* (conventions) of senators failed as a forum to unite the *Rzeczpospolita* against uncertainty and threats. As Ewa Dubas-Urwanowicz wrote: “The proverbial ‘five minutes’ that senators had in the fi st interregnum to gain some advantage in the state, which would be lost in the era of the executionist movement, were squandered by them.”<sup>494</sup> I would argue that what was lost above all was probably the last chance to create, on a transregional scale, functional republican institutions.

The political phraseology and constitutional practices tied to the interregnum turned out to be, in this regard, pernicious, especially given that the Sandomierz Rebellion was quickly approaching. The magnatial stratum at that time was in a phase of rapid growth – as evidenced by the pace of concentration of landed

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493 I discuss territorial and political ties more broadly in Mączak 1999a.

494 Dubas-Urwanowicz 1998, 345.

wealth – but leaflets from that era point to a vitality among the nobility in the executionist milieu that would be imperceptible later in the day of Lubomirski's Rebellion.

The growing preference for direct democracy came into its own among the nobility in the seventeenth century, which was marked by critical situations on both the local and national levels. Noble confederate institutions were well known in other countries, but it was in the seventeenth-century *Rzeczpospolita* where they emerged increasingly often. Edward Opaliński's thesis that rebellion – alongside *regnum* and *interregnum* – was at this time the third political order is convincing when the topic of discussion is political reality, though it is less convincing when we are talking about legal conditions.

The rebel leader Mikołaj Zebrzydowski put it clearly: "Whatever becomes *de summa rerum* in this rebellion, everything is *legitime*."<sup>495</sup> The rebellion gave itself the authority to levy taxes, called forth its own courts, suspended the activities of the previous regime's courts (the *sądy grodzkie* and *sądy ziemskie*), and felt empowered to sit in judgment of both the Senate and the king. Of course opinions on this subject were divided; the regalists opposed the rebellion, and both sides battled with merciless ferocity to the point of civil war. But the right to initiate a confederation became fixed in the list of noble "liberties." The confederations were to replace state authorities when they were no longer able to carry out their functions, the problem being that it was never established who would decide if (and when) that situation actually existed. A sort of state of emergency emerged that the nobility regarded as something normal, as a manifestation of the direct participation in government, as an expression of direct democracy (as we would call it today), though one that was implemented – we should remember – over a vast area by "a hundred thousand" (or more) noblemen-citizens.<sup>496</sup> Confederations during an interregnum were to assure the maintenance of order, and to organize security on both a local and national scale. But a lack of precision in the statutory foundation of the confederations led even local groups of nobility to regard themselves as representatives of the broader society, and the *levée en masse* dictated, voivodship by voivodship, whether they would remain in the camp or return home directly from the battlefield. Such a situation was quite common during the Swedish invasions in the middle of the century.

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495 Opaliński 1995.

496 This was, as Dubas-Urwanowicz accurately wrote, the "most complete expression of the implementation of the idea of direct democracy" (1998, 344). For more on the imagined number of noblemen, see Mączak, 2000a.

## 7. The Revival of Political Sarmatism<sup>497</sup>

It is a paradox that a political/constitutional crisis that arguably led to the situation in which the *Rzeczpospolita* found itself in the eighteenth century<sup>498</sup> is not as strange to us today as it might seem. Hence, the diachrony I set forth here with a discussion of the twentieth/twenty-first century right after my discussion of the seventeenth century. What follows are the reflections of a historian which might in fact be proper material for a political scientist.

In the “real socialist” system of the year 1980, leaders of the Polska Rzeczpospolita Ludowa (The Polish People’s Republic, PRL) were forced to negotiate with, and offer concessions to, what amounted to a pretender to power (after all, how could it be anything else!), a spontaneously organized *quasi* social-group (Solidarity) – if I may borrow a term from academic jargon – whose power was derived from the fact that it expressed the wishes and desires of broad swaths of Polish society. A document was signed in Gdańsk that was intended to mitigate the conflict between the momentarily helpless ruling class (heads of state) and broader society, whose desires were in fact not precisely defined.

Generally speaking, such documents, written and signed in a fit of passion and under pressure from diverse groups, amaze subsequent generations through their confusion of great issues with immediate issues, the latter of which are soon forgotten. Involved here (just to mention two extremes) are such acts as the one agreed to at Runnymede in 1215 – the Magna Carta – and the 21 demands of the agreement signed at the Lenin shipyard in Gdańsk. As sociologist Edmund Mokrzycki has shown, the fall (or rather decay) of the PRL was followed by a “negotiative democracy” in Poland characterized by particularly great differentiation in society in terms of access to power (understood as the possibility to exert influence on political decisions) and of the benefits that derive from this access.<sup>499</sup> Many of the author’s other comments do not fit the situation 300 years ago, but the following analysis does fit:

Our current political scene emerges as one that is composed of 3 elements:

1. a powerful but corrupt political class;

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497 I discuss here only a certain specific aspect of Sarmatism, stepping beyond the cultural matters broadly discussed in Janusz Tazbira, *Kultury szlacheckiej w Polsce. Rozkwit – upadek – relikty* (Warszawa: 1978), 206–231.

498 Translator’s note: The “situation” that Professor Mączak refers to here led to the partitions of Poland by Prussia, Russia and Austria in the second half of the eighteenth century.

499 E. Mokrzycki, “Żłudna władza ludu,” *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 11–12 December 1999.



2. a politically weak and helpless society as a whole (a civic society?);
3. powerful, aggressive, and well-organized political pressure groups;  
The game of politics in Poland takes place *de facto* between two partners: the first and the third.<sup>500</sup>

In Mokrzycki's opinion, the rise of a negotiative system in the late PRL, and its persistence in the Polish Third Republic (1989-present), prevented our democracy from going in the direction of the post-Soviet Russian model of oligarchic democracy, though – as we read – “this balance of power is really a balance in the game of particular interests in which the general interest loses in dramatic fashion [...] the state neglects outrageously its most basic function.” One could argue here that, before the partitions, noble resistance made it impossible for Poland to drift toward absolutism, which – of course – does not mean that there are no similarities between the post-Soviet “oligarchic democracy” (whatever that means) and absolutism.

Of course, such analogies – drawn over great distances in time – have their limitations; the state's obligations were different then than they are now. That having been said, Mokrzycki points to, on the one hand, the chronic inefficiencies of the *Rzeczpospolita's* treasury and army in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and, on the other hand, some of the accusations tossed from various angles at the governments of the post-communist Polish Republic. Here, it is worth refraining from the contemptuous reaction that the historian tends to display when he comes across what is – in his opinion – a comparison over a broad stretch of time that is too bold. On occasion I myself have indicated the feudal traits of the PRL's power structure and indeed its economy, and I have pointed in particular to comparisons between the broader systems that characterized the first *Rzeczpospolita* and the twentieth-century “people's” republic. But as the cited article by Mokrzycki (at least) suggests, the issue has not been entirely closed; one must add the issues construed today as the “enfranchisement of the nomenklatura,” “political capitalism,” and the “crony republic,” all of which find their analogy (in a material sense, if not a moral sense) in the particular position that the old magnates enjoyed as royal lessees and thus – basically – holders of privileged shares in that enterprise that was (and is) the state.<sup>501</sup> It is widely regarded as obvious in modern European

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500 Parenthetically: The historian does not consider the following sentence without concern: “The question is, who is the people? In Athenian democracy and the Polish noble democracy this issue was simple.” If we list what is “obvious” in depictions put forth by the different disciplines, then what we see best in this regard are the differences between those two systems.

501 Mączak 1989

states that ministers make a fortune from their official positions<sup>502</sup>, but in the first *Rzeczpospolita* the *Domänenstaat* (that is – as Joseph Schumpeter argued – the opposite of the more modern *Steuerstaat*<sup>503</sup>) took on different content than it did in Prussia or Denmark, precisely because, after the fiscal failure of the executionist movement and the last decade of Zygmunt August's rule, state control over Crown land (which made up a significant portion of the national territory) was seriously weakened and practically disappeared. The officially declared *kwarta* tax did not correspond to real revenues – at the beginning of the seventeenth century the *starostowie* preferred to pay certain multiples of this tax rather than submit to oversight by the state treasurer – and the system of *cesja* (by which practical ownership was transferred to a third person) ensured continuity of ownership and introduced Crown lands onto the real estate market.<sup>504</sup>

As Edmund Mokrzycki wrote about the present day: “the general interest loses in dramatic fashion.” This motif is nothing new in Poland, though it is important to remember that the general interest – along with the *raison d'état* – means something quite different today than it did in the old society of orders.

Let us return to the negotiative society, to the Sejm and *sejmiki*, and to magnatial clientelism. Widespread mistrust of both representation and the king<sup>505</sup> – an obsession with *absolutum dominium* – over the course of the seventeenth century returned the nobility into the hands of the senatorial families, who not only had the deciding voice in an increasing number of regions in the country, but who also played their role as natural intermediaries between the nobility and the king and who acted as a source of favors and profits derived from public resources. After all, whom could the intensification of royal authority threaten: the nobleman on his farm or the magnate with his power as a patron? I transgress the historian's decorum, but I refer to the Sarmatian spirit when I compare this anti-regalist (or hyper-republican) propaganda to accusations of monarchical aspirations once directed against the Gracchi.<sup>506</sup>

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502 For the latest research (and a bibliography) on this topic, see *Favourite* 1999.

503 Ladewig Peterson 1975.

504 A. Sucheni-Grabowska, “Losy egzekucji dóbr w Koronie w latach 1574–1650,” *Kwartalnik Historyczny* (1973), z. 1; Ciara 1990.

505 Opaliński 1983.

506 On the Gracchi and patronage, see Wallace-Hadrill 1990, 70; see also the chapter above entitled “Antiquity: The Forgotten Clientele.” Wallace-Hadrill, a British historian of the ancient world, feels none of the hesitation toward, or fear of, diachrony that characterizes Polish scholars. We read, for example, about Rome after the Punic Wars: “Roman society underwent something of the transformation which Samuel Johnson observed in eighteenth-century Scotland,” etc.

To a large extent the nobleman achieved his privileged position in society and the state with the help of the magnate, though not directly. As we saw earlier, land-owners of distant estates needed wealthier nobleman as intermediaries to assist them in the transport, storage, and sale of grain. But it was not possible to enrich oneself and one's family or to build a career by sowing and harvesting crops and driving peasants. The nobleman needed the lord's protection in courts of law, in the attainment of office and posts, at the mills, with village administrators, with leases on royal lands, and at patent offices. And he depended on his wealthier and more powerful neighbor when he wanted to assure a good start in life for his children, etc. Were we to apply the fashionable "small world" theory<sup>507</sup>, we could say that magnatial patronage brought the farming nobleman much closer to both king and Court. Even if we add the *sejmik* director as a link, who organized on a daily basis the lord's clientele, we can count barely two characters separating the nobleman from the king himself. There was no real alternative in the form of, say, the royal intendent-commissioner.

Earlier I made use of the term "negotiative democracy." The American historian James Russell Major, whom I have mentioned several times already, viewed the style of Renaissance statehood north of the Alps in a similar way, emphasizing its "consensual" nature, based – that is – on a constant attempt to resolve issues between the monarch and the estates, whether they be activists in the form of assemblies (estates-general or provincial parliaments) or interest groups organized in some other way.<sup>508</sup> The next level in the development of the modern state in the west of Europe (as well as in the Prussian-Brandenburg regions) was characterized by the development of the monarch's (or duke's) apparatus of power and various conflicts-agreements with the estates, which in the end led to absolutism throughout most of continental Europe, but not in the *Rzeczpospolita*. Which is why we may regard the *Rzeczpospolita* as a peculiar, and highly distinctive, example of a Renaissance state.

At this point a subject for political scientists emerges, maybe even for philosophers of history. In "real socialism's" decadent phase, as the zero-sum game for power was playing itself out, the Polish communist party and the government of the PRL had as a partner a social opposition force that was loosely organized as a trade union. At the margins of political scientists' analysis of the genesis of the Third Republic one notices that, once again, conditions were ripe for political tendencies and a style of politics that one might call *quasi* "Sarmatian." I see

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507 See *Polityka*, 18 March 2000, 98.

508 Major 1957 and 1988.

no reason here to connect this topic to some sort of Polish “national character” or to view it as a reference to some distant noble past. It was the trade unionist origins of the new system, along with (no doubt) the old regime’s need to save face, that contributed to the current Polish political customs of “negotiation” and “consultation,” which were written into new statutes as obligatory in both the legislative process and administrative decision making. Countless professional and *ad hoc* interest groups are being organized today that are often noisily and only pretending legality; they are most often *against* something or *revendicatif* in their goals, and less often they are *for* a solution to some sort of social problem. These spontaneous efforts are often easily exploited by political parties or factions, or by groups of political activists. That having been said, as a rule, these political parties, factions or groups put their own immediate “political” interests ahead of the interests of society, which – in our times – are identified as the *raison d’état*. These thoughts make me wonder about the helplessness of legislators in the face of growing unemployment and the crisis in public finances in the year 2001, about the Sejm deputies’ reluctance to set aside their own particular interests and take up these issues seriously. Have certain political parties in Poland really begun to play a role that resembles the one played by the old magnates? Collectively, have they become magnates in the broad sense of that term that I presented above?

The Third Republic is not threatened by a return to slavery or the kind of one-man rule that is taking shape in the Asiatic regions of the Commonwealth of Independent States, but a certain matter that appears to refer back to the noble governments of the seventeenth century is troubling. Sejm deputy Aleksander Hall wrote the following in April 2000:

The cast of voivodes was defective from the beginning. Instead of being representatives of the government, named by the premier to represent the interests of the state on their territory, voivodes were appropriated by the local political establishment. That is the opposite of what should be the case. And this is by no means the only such issue.<sup>509</sup>

One can recognize in Hall’s statement a striking analogy to the way in which the office of the *starosta grodowy* evolved (originally the foundation of the system of royal administration, it became an office of the landed estates) and, more generally, to that characteristic feature of the First Republic (the *Rzeczpospolita*) discussed above, namely the government’s weak control over the broader country. It is difficult to express an opinion about the functioning of today’s judicial authority because its organization in no way resembles pre-partition institutions,

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509 “Stoimy na głowie.” Aleksander Hall talks with Jarosław Kurski, *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 20 April 2000.

but what is nonetheless conspicuous is the prolixity of trials and the inefficiencies in the administration of justice, especially – though not only – when the issue at hand is political.<sup>510</sup> Not without significance in terms of the political consciousness of Polish society is the falling trust in judicial impartiality. In this context, it is worth remembering what Anonym wrote in 1598 about the ties between the judiciary and liberty.

Another phenomenon is taking shape that is hardly noticeable but highly significant, namely the equivalent of a sort of third political order that in the seventeenth century was the *via facti* rebellion.<sup>511</sup> Particular interest groups not only formulate their demands, they also suppose, when it comes to issues involving them, that they – and not state institutions – are the ones with the deciding voice. A “search for opinions” and “negotiations,” which can be found in Polish legislation as a result of the fact that a trade union was at the genesis of the new order, are not understood in this context as a way to achieve a compromise between various social interests, but as a dictate to which the government and Sejm are supposed to submit. We are approaching something that resembles the rebels centuries ago who – according to Mikołaj Zebrzydowski – regarded themselves as the highest authority and not the Senate, the *izba poselska*, or the king. Discussing rebellion, Edward Opaliński wrote that, during the reign of Zygmunt III, this “third legal order [...] emerged as a path of *faits accomplis*.” Today – in conditions that are far different technologically, civilizationally, and legally – I detect signs of a situation that is amazingly similar. When interest groups like “Samoobrona”<sup>512</sup> perceive the government as weak and indecisive, then they tend to apply anarchic methods and cover their activities with phraseology that refers to direct democracy and that reaches for their own, entirely arbitrary interpretation of the Polish Constitution.

Here’s the issue: indecision by the courts and hesitant prosecutors or police, who are uncertain about how to interpret orders handed down from the *brachium*

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510 On the significance of the term “political” in the Third Republic see the highly relevant comments by R.A. Ziemkiewicz in “Partia z partią,” *Wprost*, 18 March 2001. “In contemporary Poland,” Ziemkiewicz writes, “political’ means non-substantive, unjustified, something that results from the battle over influence in the state or its manifestation. After ten years of democracy Polish society perceives politics as simply a war that gangs – which are generously known as parties – carry out for political posts and money.”

511 Opaliński 1995, 66.

512 Translator’s note: Samoobrona (Self-defense), led by the populist Andrzej Lepper, was a Polish agrarian political movement in the 1990s that, by the early 2000s, had turned into a political party.

*saeculare*, create for such activities as those taken by Samoobrona the appearance of legality or – and this is equally surprising in justification of decisions and verdicts – the appearance of the “minimal harm” of actions. In practice they give sanction to the entire supposedly “legal order.”

I do not see tight “genetic” connections between the “rebellious order” of the First Republic and the political Sarmatism of the Third Republic, and I do not think that one can claim such an affiliation with any reasonable probability. But for me that is not the point here. I simply want to remind readers of the words of Jerzy Jedlicki:

The principle of an efficient democracy is the periodic delegation of power and rights associated with it. The inoculation of the movement with a taste for direct democracy undermines this principle in favor of a *sejmik*-ocracy, which clears the path to a verbal and symbolic bidding war which, more than any other virtue, determines the popularity of an activist and the selection of a managerial elite.<sup>513</sup>

To a certain degree, such a reality influences the proliferation of our leaders’ clientele.

I have just presented old-time “Sarmatian” clientelism as an example of the dominance of clientele among those who wield power in society today; to me, our contemporary style of politics is developing like a caricature. The focus of the next chapter is a different civilizational zone, where various clientelistic relationships have adapted perfectly well to changing historical conditions and have thus given rise to particular forms of culture, including political culture.

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513 Jedlicki 1993, 89.

## Chapter 7: The Mediterranean Lands

And now I want to turn my attention to a region that is both traditional and classical, the fatherland of many of the issues discussed in this book and the source of practically our entire vocabulary on the topic.<sup>514</sup> It is also a region that is aware of its past. In the tradition of Sicily – its folk tradition and its scholarly tradition – peculiar kinds of social bonds are connected with thousands of years of turbulent history, with the defense of the island’s identity in the face of constant invasions from all sides. In Italy, academic interest in these issues dates back to the last third of the nineteenth century. The first works in the field of informal social relationships in small communities (including a doctoral dissertation), some of which are now regarded as classics, involved Epirus, Andalusia, and of course Sicily.<sup>515</sup>

When viewed from a distant perspective – whether from the Polish perspective or from that of the most developed nations of Europe – the Mediterranean appears relatively uniform. But in fact every country there is distinct and divided into smaller regions that are diverse both economically and culturally.<sup>516</sup> Not only the Islamic countries but also Greece, Italy and Spain have long included lands with various levels of development and distinctive culture features. Significantly, “development” and “backwardness” (both terms are very imprecisely defined) both moved freely from one region to another. While Andalusia during its Arab times was regarded as heaven on earth, Catalonia did not blossom until modern times. These shifts on the economic map had many causes, including those that were political.<sup>517</sup>

These issues also apply to Italy. When Charles VIII and his armies conquered the peninsula, what most impressed the French king were the wonderful gardens around Naples.<sup>518</sup> But for centuries *Mezzogiorno* (that is, southern Italy), which is known in part for its touristic beauty and the richness of its art, has been associated with poverty and backwardness, and for the rest of the country it has been an economic, political, and moral “problem.” As the title of Carlo Levi’s book suggests, “Christ

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514 See Hansen, Schneider, and Schneider (1972) 1977; for an excellent and critical overview of the scholarship, see John Davis 1977.

515 In particular, see Pitt-Rivers 1972; Campbell 1964; Boissevain 1966 and 1974; Blok 1975.

516 See F. Braudel, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II* (the French original appeared in 1949).

517 See the cartogram in J. Gentil da Silva, *En Espagne, Économie – Subsistance – Déclin* (Paris-La Haye: 1965).

518 T. Comito, *The Idea of the Garden in the Renaissance* (London: 1978), 1.

stopped at Eboli” – that is, at the border of poverty. And not long ago the powerful slogan of right-wing political groups in northern Italy called for the nation of “Padania” – that is, the prosperous North that includes the Po Valley and Tuscany – to break away from the poorer, “parasitic” rest of the country. But the North-South split in the country is a topic of discussion not just in economic and political terms; one can also see in this problem a psychological aspect. Many journalists and commentators, along with sociologists and political scientists in the field of socio-psychology, have been in search of an explanation for the “southern problem.”

## 1. South and North

The European south also has its north. The Italian essayist Luigi Barzini, who as an adult moved to the United States, wrote from there an audacious piece that contrasted sharply the social psychology of these two ends of his native land. Barzini wrote that “the private aims of southerners and northerners are, of course, more or less the same.” But the northerner:

[...] thinks that there is one practically sure way to achieve them: the acquisition of wealth, *la ricchezza*. [...] He is similar to the French bourgeois, almost a pure *homo economicus*.

The southerner, on the other hand, wants above all to be obeyed, admired, *respected*, feared and envied. He wants wealth too, of course, but as an instrument to influence people, and, for that, the appearance of wealth is as useful as wealth itself. [...] The northerner might make a lot of money], in good years one hundred or one thousand times more than his Neapolitan colleagues. But the Neapolitan does not mind. [...] He wants to be well known (his sinister nickname must be recognized in the whole province); to be feared (policemen, at times, must forget they saw him go by); to be powerful (politicians must beg for his help at election time). He also wants to be loved (he will redress wrongs and protect unimportant people asking for his aid).

And then Barzini cautions his readers: “This, of course, is a didactic simplification, an example chosen to prove a point. Nothing is quite so simple in real life.”<sup>519</sup>

### a. Selling Vegetables in the South

Barzini explains his thinking with an example:

The Neapolitan usually tours the countryside with his henchmen, bullying and protecting peasants in his well-defined sector, and forcing them to sell their products only to him at the prices he fixes. He defends his territory and his vassal farmers from the

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519 Barzini 1964, 236–238. Author’s emphasis (“*respected*”) – A.M.



encroachment of competitors. He carries a gun. He shoots straight. He can kill a man if necessary. He can command killers. As everybody knows that he can enforce his will and defend his power by killing his opponents, he never, or almost never, has the need to shoot. If the farmers were to refuse to sell at his price, he can leave their produce to rot in the field. The farmers never refuse because nobody else would dare buy their products in competition with him. A superficial observer, of course, would not know what exactly is going on, what were his real relations with the farmers and retailers, and would notice none of the invisible threats and fears. Farmers, dealers, henchmen, retailers, competitors, all smile, joke, exchange pleasantries, drink wine, shake hands. They appear to be the best of friends. Only rarely something goes wrong, and the police find an unexplained corpse in a country lane. The culprits are seldom identified. Nobody usually gets killed, however, in Naples, if he is careful and plays the game.<sup>520</sup>

This text brings to mind the character Arturo Ui in Bertolt Brecht's play, and Barzini's impressions are confirmed by research conducted by the British political scientist Percy Allum.<sup>521</sup> In the North, on the other hand, in Milan, the dealer works in an office, with a telephone, and tries to maximize his profits in part by employing the fewest possible workers.

I cited this juxtaposition of these two parts of Italy because of its clarity.<sup>522</sup> However, it does not point to the causes of this phenomenon. Luigi Graziano, an Italian scholar broadly trained in the United States, put it succinctly, writing that:

clientelism is better understood as the product of the incomplete capitalistic rationalization of the Southern economy. Throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century in Sicily, the *feudo* remained the basis of the economic and social structure, while in the continental South the feudal system disintegrated more quickly and widely. The resulting different models of social relationships within the *Mezzogiorno*, make it meaningful for our purposes to distinguish between two types of clientele, which may be termed *mafiosa* and *Neapolitan clientele*.<sup>523</sup>

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520 Ibid., 237.

521 Allum 1973, 39: "The personal character of Neapolitan trade also pervades the wholesale business. A number of groups use their control of personal networks of suppliers and distributors to dominate certain sectors, like the fruit, vegetable and meat markets. They operate by buying small quantities of the product at a relatively high price and then use it to flood the market to force down the price so that they can buy up the remainder of the crop from defenseless peasants at absurdly low prices. Moreover, some have relations with the *camorra* and resort to gangsterism to impose their will. [...] Finally even a shipowner of Lauro's standing, who had managed to break out of the restricting bonds of size, was quite content to exploit that of kinship and personal relations." See also p. 172 on the mechanisms to build an individual political career on a clientelistic foundation.

522 The existence of cell phones today must be re-shaping the way both of these kinds of businessmen do their work.

523 Graziano 1973, 3.

I will return later to this distinction and to subject of the mafia. Here I only want to suggest that the incomplete transition from feudalism to capitalism does not explain everything, because in each of the backward areas of Europe, variously defined as peripheries or (as Immanuel Wallerstein put it) “semi-peripheries”,<sup>524</sup> clientelistic relations took (are taking) shape differently (or emerged hardly at all) and they did not absolutely determine the social structure. The cultural context of the South (including the islands) is clear.

Since the Middle Ages, *Il Mezzogiorno* – that is, southern Italy – has been different from the North, what with the latter’s political fragmentation and its highly developed cities.<sup>525</sup> There were two great cities in the South, Palermo and Naples, the latter of which was – until the eighteenth century – one of the great urban centers of Europe, though one cannot compare their economic potential with Florence, Milan, or Venice. Indeed, the South is a historical – that is, a continuous (though variable) – phenomenon.

*Mezzogiorno* was backward also in terms of its rural economy. The region, which in ancient times (alongside Egypt) was the breadbasket of Rome, lost much of its economic power as a result of over-logging and over-use of water. The “crisis” in the South (I put that word in quotes because of its lack of precision) has long been a topic of discussion and is the subject of a wide body of literature. Sicily and the Kingdom of Naples were dominated by the great estate (*latifundium* – *latifondo*), though both countries, under the rule of the Habsburgs and the Bourbons, were marked by significant differences in terms of administrative and governmental systems.

The Kingdom of Naples under Norman rule was a state with a well-developed bureaucracy run by trained experts. But as a result of political fates (governments under the French, Aragonians, Spanish Habsburgs, Bourbons, etc.) of both Naples and Sicily, the rule of the Spanish viceroys – subordinating the country’s interest to Madrid’s fiscal needs – handed power over the territory back to the “barons” – that is, the aristocratic owners of the *latifundia*. These barons were vassals of the Crown with limited inheritance rights, and their conflicts with Madrid or the viceroys representing the monarch in Naples and Palermo involved mainly strengthening their family/clan rights. The number of barons grew because the insatiable fiscal-

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524 Wallerstein 1974.

525 Even though, strictly speaking, *Mezzogiorno* means the southern part of continental Italy, here I will take this term to mean both the territory of the old Kingdom of Naples (to the south of Eboli, where “Christ stopped”) and the island of Sicily. After all, this is the tendency within Italian scholarship. See Gribaudo 1991. On Eboli, see Gribaudo 1990 and 1995.

ism of the Spanish Habsburgs and then of the Bourbons envisioned, in the sale of aristocratic titles, an abundant source of revenue, all of which was tied to a kind of privatization of the royal domain: entire municipalities were handed over to the barons, which had enjoyed significant autonomy under the direct rule of the crown.

The tremors of the late eighteenth century and early nineteenth century gave rise to significant differences between Naples and Sicily. The peninsular kingdom had undergone the Napoleonic reforms (French rule of one kind or another lasted from 1805 to 1815). In 1806 the latifundia were split up; while some of them remained in the hands of the barons, the rest were taken over by municipalities as *demanio comunale* to be divided among lacklands as compensation for their loss of usage rights (*usi civici*), from which they had benefitted on the lord's lands. The division of land into *demanio comunale* led to long and vicious battles over land, the consequences of which are visible still today. The process was sluggish, with local elites taking for themselves the most and the best land, and with desperate peasants joining the ranks of the *briganti* in the mountainous wilderness (even on the slopes of Vesuvius, which apparently intrigued those English tourists who, after the Congress of Vienna, were so eager to visit Italy). After the end of Bourbon rule in 1860 and the creation of the Kingdom of Italy, an uprising broke out, which would not be the last violent mass peasant movement in the South. Even when peasants received a small lot of land, they quickly lost it; when they were in need of capital, they then fell victim to what amounted to loan sharks. As a result of the modernization program forced through by the Kingdom of Italy, of efforts undertaken by local notables, and of pressure exerted by the peasantry, plans to broadly parcel land, in reality, strengthened the monopoly enjoyed by medium and large landowners, which in turn consolidated the landowners' parasitic tactics that led them to expand their estates by force rather than by cultivating them more intensively. Landed wealth held by burghers came about as a result of the privatization of church, state and municipal properties. But still, a peasant-farmer class did not develop. All of these developments had long-term social and cultural consequences given that the end of mutual feudal obligations brought about a lack of clarity in property law, particularly in the eyes of the poor.

As mentioned above, the issue of the South's backwardness was a matter of political debate in Italy under the Republic after the Second World War. Huge sums of money flowed into the South from the Italian treasury and, over time, from the European Economic Community. Connections with the countries of Western Europe, along with the economic upswing in general, allowed for emigration from Italy, particularly from the South; in the years 1950–1975, as many as 4 million people left the region. Over the course of the 1950s and 1960s the

rural population fell from 55% to 30% and the industrial and service sectors grew from 22% to 34–35%. But the problem of unemployment remained, including in Palermo and Naples. In 1951 per capita income in the South was 67.9% the national average (the Center and North of the country together – 119.0%); twenty years later those numbers were 64.3% and 119.6% respectively, despite two-and-a-half-fold absolute growth. Clearly, the loudly proclaimed development plan for *Mezzogiorno* did not produce the expected results.<sup>526</sup>

The effects were the following: *Cassa per il Mezzogiorno*, the government agency created to organize economic growth in the South, was not able to initiate a process of independent and self-sufficient industrialization; the region's economy remained (as it would for a long time) dependent on the flow of financial resources from the Center. Tax breaks were set up to encourage investment capital to move South; powerful state concerns were obligated to play a central role in this program. But these measures served more to simply upset the balance than to bring about economic growth; it pitted giant concerns financed by the state against thousands of traditional enterprises and small craft workshops.<sup>527</sup> In turn, the South developed with a marked internal imbalance, which was deepened by simultaneous and rapid urbanization. Problems tied to overpopulation mostly affected the cities, which led to the decay of the urban infrastructure and of the environment in general.<sup>528</sup>

Many of these developments, particular the transfer of financial resources, had an enormous influence on the balance of power and the informal power structures of the southern regions of the peninsula and the islands. Most Italians are of the belief that the preponderance of resources invested in *Mezzogiorno's* development program fell into the hands of the mafia.

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526 Data according to Chubb, 28–30. This is my main source on the South's economy.

527 It is worth pointing out that Italy's postwar economic success involved not only Fiat, Olivetti, Pirelli and huge industrial giants in state hands (which have since been largely privatized), but also countless small and highly specialized family-run (or partially family-run) factories and workshops that often functioned on the margins of industrial law by cutting corners on such things as insurance and taxes in order to ensure employment. Such tactics were the specialty of such northern cities as Prato in Tuscany.

528 The Encyclopedia *Tuttitalia* (*Sicilia*, t. 1, p. 155) indicates that, according to the 1951 census, 35,552 heads of family in Palermo were not qualified to fit into any professional category. The percentage of people in that city that was active economically was 35.4%. In the last quarter of the twentieth century, according to Pitrè, 200,000 residents of the *quartieri popolari* lived in a manner that was *tutto estraneo alla vita cittadina*. Falcone (1975, p. 128) cites similar results from research on the third quarter of the nineteenth century.

## 2. The Conflict over *Mezzogiorno*

To this point I have highlighted the contrasts between the North and South. But not all scholars have travelled in this direction. The Italian political scientist Alfio Mastropaolo, in his broad consideration of clientelistic systems and their place in the modern (Western) European state, tends to draw a different conclusion.

Certainly clientelism has the greatest chance of survival in places where the state and market are the products of import. In such an example clientelistic bonds have been tied to even the penetration of the territorial market, the state, and modern forms of political representation. There is no doubt that, among all the traditional institutions, clientelism is the one that best adapts itself to modern society, that integrates itself with that society without great difficulty and – to that extent and in certain circumstances – facilitates the functioning of that society. It is enough that trade is weakened<sup>529</sup>, along with impersonal bureaucratic relations (which are theoretically a stiff structure of modernity), for clientelistic individualism to re-emerge and develop. In any case, if we consider modernity from the perspective of social practice and not the ideal, then it is nothing more than a patchwork mixed with tradition, which does not want to disappear and is in fact essential to its existence.<sup>530</sup>

The Italian political scientist's general thesis can be accepted in so far as practice in this regard is not in agreement with theory. One might add: all the worse for theory. However, Karl Polanyi and Jürgen Habermas – to whom Mastropaolo refers in support of his thesis – talk about something quite different and, in my opinion, there is nothing to suggest that their theories fit the concept put forward by Mastropaola, namely that clientelistic solidarity and “*les techniques d'attribution particulariste des ressources en contrepartie du soutien politique*” belong among the instruments used by society to defend itself against the state (much like the family, religion, ideology, associations).<sup>531</sup> It seems to me that this thesis is more “extreme and provocative” – or simply questionable – than the next one described by Mastropaola using precisely those terms, namely that clientelistic relationships and that which the author calls “mechanisms of private appropriation of public goods (neo-patrimonialism),” exist even in societies that are most developed; that they co-exist with modern forms of *médiation* and representation; and that they in no way hinder economic and political development.<sup>532</sup> The author cites Japan as an example.

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529 This is not exactly clear to me: “*se défassent les échanges marchands.*”

530 Mastropaolo 1998, 188.

531 Ibid., 188–199. The following quotes come from p. 189.

532 For more on patrimonialism and neo-patrimonialism and their different aspects, see Médard 1996. I will return to this subject in my chapter below on Africa.

One might respond that Japan does not provide the strongest argument in support of these involving Western civilization, and that it is at best an extreme example. But for me the issue here is something else: the understanding of society as the opposite of – indeed an opponent of – the state (by the way, Mastropaola is not a Marxist, not in the terminology he uses and not in the arguments he makes). My question is: have clientelistic relationships really served this function? If they defend society against the bureaucratic apparatus, is the public bureaucracy not mixed up in this situation? But it is not the case – as we read further in Mastropaolo's text – that “the personalization of leadership and neo-clientelistic mediation between citizens and the public bureaucracy can very easily become a dominant political phenomenon in modern society.” It works this way because, among other reasons, members of parliament, “marginalized in the decisive political processes,” attempt to compensate themselves for the loss of influence through clientelistic mediation within internal political circles, between public bureaucracies and interest groups of various kinds (including on the local level) and individual voters.

It is difficult not to think that Mastropaolo's basic argument, if not his goal, is to recognize Italian realities of the last half century as European “normality.” In any case he cites in his summary the view held by Joseph La Palombara that, despite certain “anomalies,” democracy is deeply and firmly rooted in Italy.<sup>533</sup> A key term in Mastropaolo's concept of how to interpret the Italian situation is “localism,” which is – according to Mastropaola – the second reaction (alongside clientelism) exhibited by local societies in their attempt to adapt to threats tied to economic and political modernization. The matrix common to both reactions is “particularism.” The proliferation of “isms” is nothing strange to us, but in this context it seems especially difficult to place them alongside one another.

We have a problem in the field of political science in Poland with the term “particularism” because its original meaning points to provincialism, something parochial. But the native Polish term *prywata*, which closely corresponds to the term *particularismo*, is too strongly associated with the language of heroes in the works of Henryk Sienkiewicz. One might consider *lokalizm* – which I understand as efforts by small, peripheral communities to preserve their identities or (more generally) as a defense against threats emanating from the center – to be a prevalent phenomenon or (more specifically) one that we see in various regions. That having been said, there is no reason to believe that clientelistic relationships are

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533 Ibid., 213. J. La Palombara, *Democratie a l'italienne* (Paris: 1990), no pages indicated. La Palombara emphasizes the exceptional influence of interest groups in Italian politics; see La Palombara 1964.

always a form of defense for the periphery; they could just as easily connect the periphery with the political center, an idea that was at the heart of the party system reforms introduced by the five-time Christian Democratic Prime Minister of Italy, Amintore Fanfani.<sup>534</sup> The view that “clientelism is a certain kind of political organization whose task is to alleviate ‘functional scarcities’ of official organs” is common among political scientists<sup>535</sup>, but one must keep in mind the scope and size of this phenomenon. If it is widespread in an administrative system and is at the foundation of how political parties operate, then it creates a new quality, a kind of socio-political society that in practice is not subject to oversight, which involves particularly situations in which “clientelism of the ballot” overlaps with clientelistic relationships in the economy – in efforts to find work or purchase land. The agrarian question and its associated civilizational aspects remain a problem in the south of Italy, which is why the thesis cited above seems to me to be deeply unjustified. Clientelism in this case does not alleviate “functional scarcities” but is rather at their base. An active, independent electorate would attempt to contain them.

### 3. “Amoral Familism” and Limited Good

*Nel paese tutto si ottiene per favore, niente per via burocratica.*<sup>536</sup>

Edward C. Banfield, an anthropologist who in 1954/1955 conducted a 10-month field research project in a small town that he called “Montegrano,”<sup>537</sup> described the social behavior of “gentlemen” and “peasants” (and thus relations between the various “orders”) in the following way:

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534 See the section below entitled “Italy: From Unification through the Crisis in Christian Democracy.”

535 Resta 1984; the quoted passage, from p. 8 of this work, refers to R. Merton, *Teoria e struttura sociale*, t. 1 (Bologna: 1974), 208.

536 Resta 1984, 34. This epigraph comes from a statement made by a girl from a village in Apulia: “In the village one gets everything from acquaintances, nothing from the bureaucrats.”

537 “Montegrano” is one of many pseudonyms applied to localities so that respondents can maintain their anonymity. Field research of this type requires, among other things, acceptance on the part of those in the observed environment, who must get used to the presence of an outsider and reveal to him the prevailing relationships; in southern Europe, that means the scholar must shell out money for the cost of a sea of coffee and wine consumed in local cafés. For more on this subject in the context of the Mediterranean region, see Pitt-Rivers 1972.

When a gentleman [*gentiluomo*] of Montegrano buys a melon or a basket of tomatoes in the public square, he hands it wordlessly to the nearest peasant boy, woman, or man, who carries it to his home as a matter of course. He hands his burden to any peasant with whom he is acquainted, and there is no thought on either side of payment for the specific service. The peasant wants to be polite and amiable (*civile*) and he knows that a time will come when the gentleman can give or withhold a favor or an injury. Even those peasants who are not anti-clerical will not lift a finger to assist a nun carrying a heavy burden to the orphanage at the top of the mountain. The nuns are upper class women, but they have no capacity to do the peasant a favor or an injury. Priests, of course, *can* do favors and injuries, and their bundles are carried for them.<sup>538</sup>

Events described in the above scenario are not a direct sign of patronal relations, though they create a favorable climate for them. The gentleman appears as a person from the upper class, as a patrician, and for this reason he deserves respect and small services. But in relation to his neighbors and tenants, at home and not at the market square, he is a patron, who might regard such services offered to someone else as being detrimental to himself. Twenty years earlier – Banfi Id continues – the gentleman would ask a peasant to chop wood for him, or perhaps pick his grapes, etc. The tax collector would get his grapes picked even now, not because the peasant feared that the collector, if refused, would add to his taxes, but simply because it was always smart to be on the collector’s good side. For Christmas, a peasant living in the village (some peasants live in Montegrano itself) would bring a rooster or a basket of eggs to two or three gentlemen whom he considers his “friends.” While one of them might be his godfather, another might have once helped him or his father, and yet another might be his occasional employer. The gentleman does not pay the peasant back for the gesture because he considers it a “pleasant custom” that the peasant brings him gifts. These gifts have a certain material value, but they are also of symbolic importance, and both parties understand this fact. If a peasant woman wants to speak with the gentleman, then she might bring along a couple eggs. All of which means that the relationship between them is not between equals, though it can be maintained to the benefit of both parties. Such behavior was common in the old days, though “Montegrane” peasants’ opinions about their lords varied and were expressed in servility, contempt, or (hidden) hostility.

In Banfi Id’s view, clientelism as practiced in Montegrano was thus conditioned by class: a high social position gives a person the status of patron, creating a system that resembles the dichotomic division of Rome in the times of Romulus – as

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538 Banfi Id 1958, 76–77; below I make use of Banfi Id’s observations described on pp. 77 ff.



presented by Dionysius of Halicarnassus – into patrons and clients.<sup>539</sup> However, one must keep in mind that this connection is a very peculiar dyad because it does not preclude, indeed it assumes, a multitude of loose relations into which the small farmer could enter. The gentleman has many clients of this type, but it is also a fact that peasant families attempt to have, alongside the parish priest, more than one “state” that keeps them in mind. The very possibility that one can make use of a contact, when the gentleman’s influence (in one way or another) turns out to be necessary, makes this situation a clientelistic relationship “in being” – that is, one that is ready for use, has potential.

Observation of the attitudes of peasants in the peninsular south led Banfi Id to the theoretical concept of “amoral familism,” which has caused lively debate not only among anthropologists and Italy specialists.<sup>540</sup> According to Banfi Id, in an isolated and backward village, family interests are at the heart of moral conduct; they shape what we might call (using different terminology) its moral economy. One could say that its “moral horizon” does not reach beyond the family, which suggests a lack of motivation to create any sort of wider social bonds.

Jan Brögger, a Norwegian who for a period of time positioned his observatory in a desolate Calabrian town, also detected the mechanisms of “amoral familism” in the society he researched, though he considered the phrase itself to be unsuita-

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539 See the chapter above entitled “Two Legends.”

540 Banfi Id 1958, 85–163. For the Banfi Id-Sydel F. Silverman discussion, see *American Anthropologist* 2 (1968); see also Brögger 1971. Albert O. Hirschman wrote: “In the 1950s, newly fashioned cultural theories of development competed strongly with the economic ones (which stressed capital formation), with Weber’s *Protestant Ethic* being modernized into David McClelland’s ‘achievement motivation’ as a precondition of progress and into Edward C. Banfi Id’s ‘amoral familism’ as an obstacle. According to my own way of thinking, the very attitudes alleged to be preconditions of industrialization could be generated on the job and ‘on the way’, by certain characteristics of the industrialization process.” See A.O. Hirschman, *Rival Views of Market Society and Other Recent Essays* (New York: 1986), 19. The following passage also fits in this context: “The anthropologists may make naïve assumptions about the complex of events which lies at the boundaries of his circumscribed fi Id [...] We go as far as to say that he [the anthropologist] has a duty to be naïve in this way about his outside assumptions, and a duty to avoid attempting to deal with aspects of reality which can only be handled by some other discipline than his own. Provided that it is appropriately used, this naivety will not mark his work.” See Gluckman and Evon 1964, 165. In Poland, Jacek Tarkowski has referred to this concept of “amoral familism” (See Tarkowski 1994); see also the exchange of opinions between me and Zygmunt Bauman, *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 12 June 1995. It remains a mystery to me why Professor Bauman regarded my comments on *his* article as an attack on Elżbieta and Jacek Tarkowski.

ble.<sup>541</sup> He accuses Banfi of pessimism and argues that the American-protestant was not able to put himself in the shoes of the southern Italian peasant in order to understand his life conditions and ways of thinking. Such an attack amazes me as a historian. And yet it is difficult for me to regard the small and primitive peasant economy as “not normal”; on the contrary, it is a dominant phenomenon and is widespread in vast expanses of the world.<sup>542</sup>

One might find in this “familism” a certain analogy to the ethics of *wilczy kapitalizm* (a term that is popular recently in Poland, one that means ravenous, or wolf-like, capitalism): everyone is a competitor, and thus everyone is an adversary. However, there is one very important difference, namely that peasants (not just in southern Italy) do not make up a group that is as internally diverse as entrepreneurs are, and that they – not without reason – are often convinced that their access to wealth is limited.<sup>543</sup> Above I attempted to show that this phenomenon has deep historical roots.

The theory of “limited good” was created by the American anthropologist George M. Foster on the basis of material gathered in Latin America. According to this theory, the peasant (but not the “farmer,” who produces mainly for the market) acts as if “his social, economic and natural *universum*” – that is, all of the

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541 Brögger 1971. In Brögger’s “Montevarese,” old folks still knew some Greek, and apparently Arab traditions were still alive. The only source of energy was human and animal muscle; the soil was turned with a scratch plow because a heavier plow would dry out the soil. Plows and wagons were pulled by oxen and cattle (few people drank milk) and things were carried by donkeys: a “paleotechnic ecotype.” Brögger’s monograph goes well beyond the subject matter of standard social-anthropological field research. Among works that make use of the usually dry and refined “social-science English,” the Norwegian’s work, intoxicating in the Italian sun, stands out as extraordinary.

542 Brögger 1971, 35. Banfi of sees the problems in “Montegrano” and the solutions to those problems in this way: “Amoral familism is not a normal state of culture. It could not exist for long if there were not an outside agency – the state – to maintain order and in other respects to mitigate its effects.” If the state did not exist – Banfi of believes – a battle of all against all would break out. What, then, could provide the impulse for change? “The change in outlook that is needed might conceivably come as the by-product of Protestant missionary activity. There is little prospect, however, that Protestants will be permitted to proselytize in southern Italy.” Instead, Banfi of suggested education through “government workers” (about which he writes extensively). See Banfi of 1958, 171.

543 With the term “peasant” I mean small agricultural producers only, those who produce mainly for their own needs and who bring few of their goods to market. In contrast, there is the “peasant-farmer,” who is closely tied to the market.

resources that are important to him (land, water, the forest, and all other things necessary) – have always been limited and too small in quantity. What is worse, it is not in the peasant's power to increase the amount of these resources.

To me, both of these theories – Banfi ld's and Foster's – are convincing, not as alternatives to one another but because they complement one another. Thus it surprises me how much resistance they have faced among anthropologists. The historian whose focus is the medieval village or even early modern serfdom will find in these theories a key to interpreting many behaviors, not just the "peasant's psychology."<sup>544</sup> Banfi ld described hypothetically the working principle of the peasants he researched in the following way: they believe that one must "maximize the material, short-run advantage of the nuclear family: assume that all others will do likewise." This would resemble the opposite of the principle of "limited trust" in road traffic or – using a higher measure – of Kant's categorical imperative. But what does "family" mean in the context of familism? In "Montevarese" the son/daughter-in-law (*jenneru/nora*) are relatives but the parents of the married couple are not (they define themselves as *simpertheru*); grandparents and (even more) great-grandparents are usually forgotten. Whoever is not a *montevaresano* is regarded by locals as a *forestieru*, and there is a prevailing belief in the universal kinship of the *montevaresani*.<sup>545</sup> Banfi ld does not take into consideration the fact that even the most backward peasant society builds intricate coalitions, often with an eye toward increasing shared resources.

But one must suppose that the situation in each local community looks somewhat different. For example, research conducted by Michał Kopczyński on the peasant family in the old *Rzeczpospolita* shows that family farms/households of various kinds coexisted.<sup>546</sup> But when it came to the issue of resources, it was the fact of common habitation, and thus common husbandry, that defined the makeup of the family. Of course one must remember the existence of parents and grandparents *na wycugu*<sup>547</sup>, whose fate in these circumstances was often pitiful.

What kind of connection does all of this have with patron-client relationships? I would argue that the connection is close because poverty and lack of

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544 The problem is general: in pre-industrial conditions marked by slow economic growth, the matter of "limited good" in the agricultural sector was of fundamental significance.

545 Brögger 1971, 83, 91.

546 Kopczyński 1998, chapters II and IV.

547 Translator's note: *Wycug* (or to be *na wycugu*) is difficult to translate into English; it refers to a system by which old peasants-farmers who were no longer able to work were provided a certain level of very basic security and protection.

opportunity naturally encourage a person to seek assistance. Poor mountain societies, especially those in the Mediterranean region, were often cut off from the world, and the only chance to escape the banality of everyday life was some sort of contact with this outside world.<sup>548</sup> Such circumstances open the field of action for brokers, who are able to connect a society or particular family with a potential patron active on the outside.

Another common thread is tied to the fact that one could expand the family unit through – for want of a better term – contractual kinship, especially by coopting godparents into the family.<sup>549</sup> In many societies, Catholic societies in particular, such a path is the simplest and most common. One must select as *compadri* useful people for the children; the best choices are those who are wealthy and influential, who have “possibilities” or “access” to other wealthy people and to important resources.

One could apply all of the above, *mutatis mutandis*, to very different, indeed opposing systems, such as the milieu of petty and middle noblemen in the old *Rzeczpospolita*, who gained – as I discussed above<sup>550</sup> – potential access to resources through clientelistic relationships with a wealthier and more powerful neighbor, whether those resources be royal favors or sausage and booze from the lord’s table surrounding the *sejmiki*.<sup>551</sup>

At the same time both of these concepts could apply even to ... today’s Bangladesh (I wanted to write “to Bangladesh, which is significantly more exotic to us,” but the literature on clientelism has convinced me that – at least in this area – exotica is not a function of distance either in space or time, but rather of differences between social systems). The analogy to Southeast Asia is so striking that, in anticipation of further comments on the subject of Asia, I will devote a few sentences to the subject here.

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548 I have chosen to use the past tense here in the context of the *pueblo* located in the mountains of Andalusia called Grazalema, which Pitt-Rivers called Alcalá de la Sierra. It was a community that was mostly cut off from the world, but in recent years international tourists have beaten a path to the village. Such is not the case with the villages in Epirus studied by Campbell (Campbell 1964).

549 For more on this subject from the perspective of everyday life, see *Historia życia prywatnego*, vol. 3, particularly articles by Castan (Castan 1999) and Aymard (Aymard 1999). See also Eisenstadt 1958.

550 See the section above entitled “The *Magnateria*: Magnatial Rule over Space.”

551 Marcin Matuszewicz took care to set up tables even if his patron was not interested in a given *sejmik*, the idea being to not lose contact with voters. See Mączak (1994) 2000, 221.

## a. Scarcity and a Lord's Grace

In a country where agriculture is a constant “economy of scarcity” (Eirik G. Jansen entitled his work *Rural Bangladesh: Competition for Scarce Resources*<sup>552</sup>) millions of small peasants who barely – if at all – produce a food surplus persist in constant conditions marked by a shortage of land, deficient tenant contracts, and inadequate access to credit and employment. Broader relationships based on clientelistic bonds (factions) emerge when the common interests of the patron and his clients are threatened, and they break up only when the danger disappears.<sup>553</sup> The strength of clientelistic relationships hinders or completely prevents the establishment of horizontal bonds – here, the source of the above familism. That having been said, every family economy (the multi-generational family, the so-called “extended family,” is not at work in Bangladesh – i.e. in Bengal) is linked together by bonds of dependence that presuppose the right of people of a higher rank to demand work, services and respect from people of a lower rank. In turn, the latter can expect material assistance (and other kinds of assistance) from their patrons. Moral justification comes from the notion of *daya*, which Stanley Kochanek translates as “grace” or “blessing.”<sup>554</sup> Such blessing, flowing from above, legitimizes and even sanctifies the ruling system. It also serves to smooth over its basically exploitative nature. I might add that what is essential here is the fact that the above “grace” is, at the same time, an *obligation* tied to one’s high position in society. Those who have access to resources are supposed to distribute them among their clients; such a policy is, after all, just a matter of basic reason because personal and collective interest tend toward systemic stabilization. However, from an economic perspective, what is essential to this system is the fact that the redistribution of resources is more important than their creation and increase.

One might add, by way of commentary on the impression given by the above-mentioned work, that the existence of patronal bonds can – indeed should – mitigate the “amorality” of behaviors exhibited in the battle for existence among neighbors, inasmuch as the patron plays his social role. Which is precisely what the *gente Ruthenus natione Polonus*, Stanisław Orzechowski, was writing about when he denounced Piotr Kmita for having not acted as a mediator and a mitigating force in conflicts among his clients, and thus for contributing to the destabilization of the social compact.

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552 Jansen 1986, 300.

553 For more on factions in the context of postwar Italy, see Zuckerman 1975, 45.

554 Kochanek 1993, 45.

## 4. Sicily

This is not the first time a scholar has jumped from the *Rzeczpospolita's* nobility to Sicily's nobility. Such a jump has been taken before, though in the opposite direction. In the introduction to their co-authored work on the economic roots of contemporary Sicily and its distinct, civilizational features, the American scholars Jane and Peter Schneider mention the inspiration of Immanuel Wallerstein:

We seek the origins of these [cultural] codes in early adaptations of the Sicilian people to externally generated political and economic forces, and suggest that similar codes may have played similar roles in other pre-nineteenth-century colonial regions. [...] In particular, his [Wallerstein's] analysis of Poland – which was also a wheat-exporting peripheral region – helped us to clarify our own understanding of western Sicily.<sup>555</sup>

The parallel with Poland did not play a large role in this important and well-documented monograph, but I nonetheless think that the argument made by the two authors is good. At the same time, it is perhaps supported too much by the works of Wallerstein, who was in turn far too dependent on Polish publications translated into the English and French languages that focused almost entirely on the economy.<sup>556</sup> More recent works have convinced me that the *Rzeczpospolita's* economic system and its social-political system were highly interdependent. Much like Sicily's.

Sicily did not experience even the brief phase of development that Naples did, though its “backwardness” – if one can use such a term to mean the opposite of development – is not easy to define; certainly it does not mean primitivism.<sup>557</sup> The island's economy was extensive in a double sense: the latifundia were large and the yields were low. When it was possible, starting in 1819, to import even wheat, the island began to do so.<sup>558</sup> Here the feudal past seemed to be ubiquitous – more

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555 Schneider and Schneider 1976, x.

556 In his introduction to Wallerstein 1974, Wallerstein thanks Ferdinand Braudel and Marian Małowist for their inspiration.

557 Barzini writes about the “exorbitant” intelligence of the people of Sicily; see Barzini 1964, 252. Here I understand “modernization” to mean the opposite of “development.” See Hansen, Schneider and Schneider 1972, 340 (as well as Schneider and Schneider 1976, 3–4): “Modernization refers to the process by which an underdeveloped region changes in response to inputs [...] from already established industrial centers; a process which is based on that region's continued dependence upon the urban-industrial metropolis.” This is a very narrow definition, but it is well-suited to the situation in *Mezzogiorno*. Development, on the other hand, “refers to the process by which an underdeveloped region attempts to acquire an autonomous and diversified industrial economy on its own terms.”

558 Schneider and Schneider 1976, 114.

so than in the north of the continent.<sup>559</sup> A variety of formal and customary feudal duties – *diritti angarici* – showed great durability, such as tribute paid to a priest visiting the *feudo* to hold a mass, the lord's *ius prima noctis*, which was still in practice in certain places, and finally *diritto di cuccia e di maccherone* – that is, the duty to host (room and board) the lord's *campieri*.

Alongside the *gabellotto, il campiere* – a mounted and armed guard – was one of the central figures in a set of social circumstances that became the foundation of the mafia. The *baroni* – as the great landowners were known, who also, as a rule, had an aristocratic title – did not farm (or necessarily even manage) their lands directly, but rather handed them over to tenants under conditions that were harsh and where the tenant's rights were negligible. Nonetheless, the organization of great landed estates presented problems that one can explain by drawing a contrast between the latifundia in Sicily and those in the *kresy* of the *Rzeczpospolita*.<sup>560</sup> This contrast is of significance to our subject insofar as it involves the island's social structure as the foundation on which the mafia was formed.

In the sixteenth century, heads of the great possessions in Poland and Lithuania were building ever larger administrative apparatuses, though by the end of that century Anzelm Gostomski, the voivode of Rawa, was cautioning against this development. Administrative structures, wastefulness, peasant resistance, and finally abuse by stewards and managers were combining to place a heavy burden on the estates. To paraphrase from the notes of an inspector at the properties of the archbishops of Gniezno (1512), one might say that administrators there were parasites, "like worms digging through wood." But at the heart of this wasteful system was a solid rationale, which was that the latifundium provided employment and the *panem bene merentium* for magnatial clients on various levels.<sup>561</sup> Like everything (the historian does not much like this word) in the old *Rzeczpospolita*, mechanisms by which the great estates functioned were dependent on the structures of the noble order and served that order's economic and political interests.

Sicily, on the other hand, knew nothing about the *vulgus nobilium*; the nobility (*nobiltà, baroni*) was equivalent to aristocracy. Its numbers grew thanks to

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559 The great estates of *Mezzogiorno* are defined as *feudo*. A significant part of the tenants' burden involved feudal duties. On the other hand, as I mentioned above in reference to Naples, these tenants benefited from certain easements on the lord's lands (in the pastures and forests). The "abolition of feudalism" meant the replacement of various burdens and forms of dependence with a uniform land rent.

560 We find an allusion to this topic in the introduction to Schneider and Schneider 1976, though the authors point only to the different consequences that come with the connection of the great feudal estates with the foreign market.

561 Mączak (1994) 2000.

the intensive sale of aristocratic titles, which had begun under King Charles I of Spain (simultaneously Emperor Charles V). A Baron – whether he came from an old family, or was a Genoese banker who had paid for his aristocratic title, or was a creditor of the Spanish court – divided his time between his rural residence somewhere on a *feudo* and his winter palace in the city, particularly Palermo, just as the Prince of Salina (in Giuseppe Tomasi di Lampedusa's *The Leopard*) did by spending summers in Donnafugata and the colder months in Palermo. Contracts concluded with tenants were of two kinds: *terratico* (rent paid in wheat, depending on the area) or *metateria* (for want of a better term, a half-share agreement, according to which the tenant was nonetheless bound to pay two-thirds of his harvest to the lord's granary).<sup>562</sup> The lease period was short, usually 2 or 3 years. After 1860 when, in the wake of the Expedition of the Thousand led by Giuseppe Garibaldi, Sicily became part of the Kingdom of Italy and the barons (usually) leased part or all of their estates to rural entrepreneurs, *gabellotti*, who paid the rent in cash. In turn, the *gabellotti* squeezed rent payments out of the peasants cultivating the land, while they often took part of the land for their own crops worked by hired hands and their teams and machinery. The *gabellotti* concluded long-term contracts with the owners, though they were also generally not interested in investing in anything other than the expansion of their possession: it was more profitable to squeeze out some sort of rent in kind from the petty tenants. A system emerged that was in conflict with concepts put forward by the Physiocrats, who idealized the great tenant farmers, *fermiers*, as an economy's enterprising and creative element.

The above-mentioned *campiere* was a figure well known even in Bourbon times. He functioned essentially as a policeman within the *feudo*, where the baron carried out his public duties, but he also defended his lord's interests against external rivals. Guards were recruited from the families of small tenants, and they were supervised by *soprastanti*. The *gabellotto*, as Luigi Graziano described it:

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562 Graziano 1973, 31. *Metateria* is the Sicilian version of the Italian *mezzadria* or the French *métairie*; an English equivalent would be “sharecropping,” though this translation is inaccurate because, with sharecropping, the harvest does not have to be shared by half. The “half-share” phenomenon reaches beyond Europe – with similar social consequences – and emerged even in the Soviet Union, where – in the reformist era under Khrushchev – leaders experimented with a policy to allocate seed, fertilizer and equipment to brigades and to exact from them half of the harvest. Economically, the experiment turned out to be very successful, but it was widely regarded as politically risky and was thus soon abandoned.



took advantage of his strategic position between the peasant and the absentee landlord and built his fortune by exploiting both of them. He is the symbol of the kind of feudal entrepreneurship which epitomizes Sicily's encounter with capitalism.<sup>563</sup>

Using the simplified terminology proposed by the American scholar Charles Tilly to describe systems of European rule, one might well define the structure of Sicilian society in those days as “coercion-intensive” (as opposed to the “capital-intensive” societies at the European center).<sup>564</sup> Tilly applies this division of Europe mainly to rural economic systems in Eastern Europe, where the management and cultivation of land required that subjects be forced into serfdom, and where the system of tenancy for cash rent placed the landowner and tenant into an entirely different arrangement.<sup>565</sup>

The Sicilian tenant systems, particularly the *metateria* system, were “capital saving” or – to use a more extensive term – “capital poor.” Highly unfavorable for peasants, these systems required coercion, and a significant role in this coercion was played by the mafia.

## 5. The Mafioso and his Clientele: From the *Feudo* to Crime Syndicate

*The Mafia at the same time gives and receives protection, and the stronger it gets, the more it sees people having recourse to it, rather than to the legitimate intervention of the authorities.*

Raimondo Catanzaro (citing the opinion of the Italian Minister of Justice)<sup>566</sup>

*If there was not a Mafia already, one would have to invent one. I am a friend of the Mafia, even though personally I am against crime and violence.*

Andrea Finocchiaro Aprile<sup>567</sup>

*The entire world is as if it were our home.*<sup>568</sup>

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563 Graziano 1973, 8.

564 Tilly 1990; Perry Anderson divides modern Europe in a similar way (see Anderson 1974), but he does so by using an East-West arrangement and omitting entirely the European South. Quite rightly, Samsonowicz proposes a North-South concept (see Samsonowicz 1999).

565 The corresponding Marxist terms would be “economic” and “non-economic coercion.”

566 Catanzaro 1992, 19.

567 Aprile, a member of the pre-fascist political elite, was a popular speaker. It was said that, at the end of the war, he was in close contact with “Winnie” and “Delano,” arguing that Sicily needed to be independent. Pantaleone 1966, 73.

568 A Sicilian proverb (known also in many parts of Italy): *Tuttu lu munu è comu casa nostra*. Quoted in *Biblioteca delle tradizioni popolari siciliane*, per cura di Giuseppe

I write the word “mafia” without capitalization because it does not refer to a single organization.<sup>569</sup> One can view this phenomenon from two angles: as an expression of a collective psyche or as a structure. In the second we have a central character; the typical head (*capo*) of the rural mafia was the *gabellotto*. As much as (before the year 1860 – that is, before unification) he worked in the interest of the baron, he gained – under the new conditions – a significant amount of independence. The new rulers from the North, bureaucrats with a different tradition, did not trust the Sicilian and Neapolitan barons. Nonetheless, the *gabellotti* often maintained good relations with them, testimony for which comes from Lampedusa’s literary depiction, to which it is always worth referring in order to get a feel for the era.

The mafia, which is a phenomenon that is intertwined with the traditional structures of Sicilian society (still on the Italian periphery), has shown itself to be extremely adaptable; it has proven itself able to exploit the slow evolution of the island’s economy. Originally a mainly rural phenomenon, the mafia penetrated the cities in the nineteenth century, and as the state bureaucracy grew in strength, so too did its dependence on mafia bosses. In terms of parliamentary democracy, especially elections, that dependence extended to the world of politics and brought the mafia’s interests directly into the center of power on the peninsula.

There is a school of thought by which scholars interpret the mafia as a psycho-social phenomenon, as a certain cultural type and a particular system of thought. The German scholar Henner Hess relied on court testimony given by witnesses and defendants put together in the nineteenth century (more recent evidence was not yet available to him).<sup>570</sup> The psycho-sociological approach did not lead Hess to justify crime, but it did help him reconstruct the thinking of those who were caught up in crime or approved of the mafia. Indeed, such an approach was to explain why, over the course of a certain period of time, the mafia gained such broad approval. And then there was the peculiar tradition in the South by which the law

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Pitrè, *Proverbi siciliani*, vol. 11 (Torino-Palermo: 1880), 118. See also *All’omu onestu ogni paisi è patria* (ibid., 114).

569 A number of works have appeared that attempt to address the issue of the mafia as a whole. One of them has been published in Polish (Matard-Bonucci 2001), which liberates me from having to cover more general issues in this regard. For a bibliography of the mafia, see V. Marcadante, *Mafia: Bibliografia ragionata* (Palermo: 1986). See also *Antologia della mafia: documenti inediti, dibattiti parlamentari, inchieste, saggi dai primi anni dell’unità ad oggi...*, ed. N. Russo (Palermo: 1964).

570 Hess 1970; for similar views offered by another German scholar, see Stölting 1983.

is regarded: lawlessness rules in Naples; Sicilians hold the law in contempt – the literature on Sicily and the mafia is full of such *bons mots*.<sup>571</sup>

One side effect of the dramatic growth in organized crime has been the overuse of the expression “mafia.” It has become an abbreviated equivalent of the American term “organized crime.”<sup>572</sup> For several years we have read about, and spoken of, the “Russian mafia” and (in Poland) the *pruszkowska*, the *wołomińska*, and even the *wyszowska* mafias.<sup>573</sup> The mafia is no longer so exotic; indeed the Polish organizations once set up a broad front of businesses in Warsaw’s Old City. The word is resonant, suggestive, and easy to use, which is precisely why it is overused. There is also no shortage of attempts to modernize the definition.<sup>574</sup> For this brief outline I will use the term only in its Sicilian sense<sup>575</sup>, though not necessarily in its original and most narrow sense.

Whoever writes about the Sicilian mafia cannot help but discuss the island’s complicated history beginning in ancient times, with its countless invasions and foreign settlers, from the Carthaginians to the Arabs and British, and from the *Risorgimento* to ... Piedmont. The distinct character of Sicily’s social structure and the peculiar psycho-social nature of its people has often been attributed to its openness to – or rather its defenselessness against – foreign invaders; such an approach has been taken even by authors of works in political science that lack

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571 Matard-Bonucci 2001.

572 Salvatore Francesco Romano (1964) sees in the mafia a crime organization that is interested and embroiled in politics, which is precisely what distinguishes it from other such organizations.

573 Translator’s note: The names of these various Polish “mafias” refer to the towns around Warsaw with which they are associated (Pruszków, Wołomin, and Wyszów).

574 L. Będkowski, “Mafia zarejestrowana,” *Życie Warszawy* (*Życie Extra*), 11 August 1994: “Leaders in the [Polish] Interior Ministry and in the police no longer claim with such conviction – as they did even a year ago (rejecting the opinion of journalists) – that there is no mafia in Poland. In their arguments they depended on semantics that ‘the mafia is the penetration of the *world of rulers* by the world of crime’ [author’s emphasis – A.M.], which has not been confirmed in Poland. One can thus talk at most about organized crime. But now we finally have proof in the form of security and property protection agencies. They have maintained broad connections with those who survived [the political changes of 1989] on various levels of the state apparatus, or with those old friends who have regained their positions of authority. This is our contribution to the development of the mafia world.”

575 I was not able to get my hands on the article by J. Walston, “Distinzioni fra camorra mafia calabrese, mafia siciliana e clientelismo,” *Polis* [after 1988].

literary ambition.<sup>576</sup> It is an entirely exceptional case when social scientists recognize clearly the temporal, historical dimensions of social phenomena and yet also allow themselves to be carried away by tradition.

Every author also expresses an opinion on the subject of the origins of the term “mafia.” Popular etymological works, including those that are full of pure fantasy, date back to the island’s turbulent history in the early Middle Ages (the Arabs!), and what is significant about these works is that, as a rule, their conclusions are tinged with emotion, either positively or negatively. More often positively, even if the word’s first appearance (1658) in an official document involves a witch named “Catarina la Licatisa, Nomata ancor Maffia”;<sup>577</sup> here, “maffia” means boldness, ambition, or arrogance. Around the middle of the nineteenth century, in a poor neighborhood of Palermo (Borgo), the word “mafia” was associated with beauty, pride (or arrogance), and perfection. A pretty girl was *della mafia*, *mafiusa*, or *mafusedda*. And a fine home might be defined as *una casa ammafiata*, or the like. Referring to an expert in the Sicilian dialect, Hess indicates the extent to which this word was commonly used by citing a song sung by a street vendor selling brooms: *Haju scupi d’a mafia! Haju chiddi mafiusi veru!* His brooms were *mafiusi* – simply excellent, perfect! *Mafiusi*-people are similarly great. As early as 1838 the public prosecutor at Trapani spoke of illegal “brotherhoods” and “parties” (*fratellanze, partiti*)<sup>578</sup> without openly expressing exactly what he was talking about, but a quarter century later a theatrical comedy set in a Palermo prison was called *I mafiusi della Vicaria*, in which there was talk of initiation rites and the respect and obedience that the principle characters get from their fellow prisoners “because they are members of an association.”<sup>579</sup> The *mafiusi* had become an exemplar of order based on their own, internally recognized principles.

However, the genesis of the mafia as an informal association, one that was – as Henner Hess put it – “anti-authority,” is tied to the rural landscape.<sup>580</sup> Political unification and development of fiscal and judicial structures in Italy created new life conditions, which together were perceived on the island as the dictatorship of Piedmont – thus, of foreigners. Viewed broadly, one could argue that a situation had developed that was favorable for the mafia in two ways: first, the mafia was able to expand beyond the borders of the *feudo* and to develop its ties with the town market in order to establish contacts with the state at its political center; and

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576 Müller 1991, 65.

577 Henner Hess 1988, 1. Below I continue to refer to Hess’s work.

578 Pantaleone 1966, 27; Hess 1988, 2.

579 Ibid.

580 Hess 1988.

second, it became for many Sicilians a refuge and defender of local interests. The second aspect of the issue would play no small role in events of the first half of the twentieth century and an even greater role after the Second World War. The mafia was able to play on widespread regionalist sentiments, on a sense of having been wronged or at least of being different, and on efforts to achieve autonomy.

The criminal side of the mafia and its expansion have been described many times, usually in full color, but I will not address that subject here. Rather, I want to direct our attention to the complexity of its clientelistic aspect.

An analytical field study carried out in the early 1970s in a village (*paese*) called “Campopace” in Trapani, a province in the west of the island (13,000 inhabitants, 8,000 hectares of land that was 97% arable), showed the uselessness of the accepted criteria of social stratification.<sup>581</sup> In the minds of inhabitants of this village there exist two social categories: *auvtu* and *vasciu* (*alto* and *basso*). The first are *pirsunaggi*, and the second only *genti*. The authors of the study observed the behavior of people in the village square, which served as a kind of village forum, and took note of the way they greeted each other, etc.<sup>582</sup> Conspicuous in the front was the *galantomu*, the equivalent of Banfield’s *gentiluomo* (see Mosca 1980), a role played by every local burgher (every “*Bürger der Gemeinde*,” the author writes), who follows all norms and behavioral conventions, the latter of which are more important than wealth. The Sicilian social worker Danilo Dolci’s two interlocutors pose as notables on whom little people, lost in today’s world, depend for everything.

### a. Don Calò and Don Genco: “Honey wouldn’t melt in their mouths”<sup>583</sup>

The social activist Danilo Dolci, a famous mafia opponent, engaged in discussions with Sicilians at all levels of society and collected the contents of those conversations in a book. Here are fragments of two interviews,<sup>584</sup> the first of which is with Don Calò:

He relaxes in his easy chair. We are in his Palermo office. Sixty, originally from Caltanissetta, he is a typical product of the Mafia-client system. During the 1964 elections in Trappeto (population somewhat more than 1,000), he collected 400 votes – without being known personally. He is a dangerous man. Two years after this interview, while he

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581 Mühlmann and Llaryora 1973.

582 Various levels of greeting from *i miei rispetti* – *bacio le mani* to the cooler *buono sera*.

583 Dolci 1981, 180.

584 Ibid. For the passages cited below from the interview with Don Calò, see pp. 35–37; for those from the interview with Don Genco (Genco Russo), see pp. 67–68.

was undersecretary of the National Ministry of Health, we denounced him for his direct political connections with the Mafia. [...]

“Now me, I believe in cooperatives, I founded them by the dozens. But in practice, they’ve all fl pped. [...]” Agriculture in “all of central Sicily” has “one thing in common: backwardness, and that comes from feudalism. It’s not a result of the large land-holding system. No, it’s their tendency to depend economically on a single crop. [...] It’s just a vicious circle. Man’s mentality, like the economy, is feudal. I mean individualistic, anarchical, absolutely lacking in the spirit of association. You ask me why? On those huge estates, man is isolated. [...] There’s no integration into the social structures. The only coherent unit is the family. [...] They’re suspicious about joining any sort of group.” Everyone asks: “what kind of guarantees can they give me that they’re watching out for my interests?”

“I am not dependent on power blocs and lobbies. As you can surmise, I have grass-roots connections. I know everybody in the front office of the province, in all its influential organizations. [...] I have official ties with all these groups. They send me directives and requests.”

Don Calò emphasizes that he follows an open door policy, he understands the needs of the people he talks with. Many of them promise him their vote and, whether they actually vote for him or not, they all expect something in return.

“My constituency consists of peasants, farm owners, a few masons, and artisans too. But mostly I attract the peasants. They come to me in swarms, giving me a landslide of 81,000 votes. Then you have to add another 80,000 who promise me their vote but don’t come across. Whether they vote for me or not, they have their pitch all prepared: ‘I voted for you, so let’s see what you can do for me.’” [...]

[Don Genco] His full name is Genco Russo (famous in the olive-oil and meat industries). At sixty, he is still one of the most powerful Mafia bosses in all of Sicily. We met at his home in Mussomeli, heart of Mafia country. He is gracious, almost obsequious, but always paternal. He chooses every word with caution and design.

“I was born this way. Acting without ulterior motives. It doesn’t matter who you are, ask me a favor, and I do it. That’s my nature. Human nature. We’re made that way. It’s fellow feeling. [...] People can identify with me.

“A man’ll come to me: ‘I have a bone to pick with X, could you help me out?’ I get ahold of X, here or at his place, it’s all a matter of diplomacy. We make peace. [...] I have open arms for every size and shape.

“Meanwhile, here you have me. After all, you’re my guest. Come ask me a favor, it’s said and done. I can’t say no. It doesn’t matter who you are, how hard the job. I can’t resist. [...] I’m obliged to help other people. [...] But don’t ask me. Ask the people I help. And

the police. [...] Come to me, I do you a favor, just the way I do for your enemy. That's how it's done. It's habit. So the circle where my name is known keeps swelling."<sup>585</sup>

We will return to this interview soon, but first I need to write a few sentences about Danilo Dolci.<sup>586</sup> He was born in 1924. As a secular social worker, he attempted to organize peasants and enter their milieu (he married the widow of a fisherman with five children and had five more children with her), but his activities in the spirit of radical non-violence attracted the mistrust of authorities. Harassed by police and prosecutors, he became famous and earned for himself four peace prizes (including the Lenin Peace Prize in 1957). Paradoxically, the mafia – which he condemned and against which he organized the poor – prudently tolerated his activities; his troubles came from the Church and the state. He informed the world about the mafia and, more generally, about the nature of Sicilian society, but above all he organized the inhabitants of the Sicilian province in an attempt to liberate them from precisely the kind of clientelistic and familial dependencies that we recognize in the interviews with the two dons.

But when it comes to his interlocutors, both of them were among the favorites of the allied occupying authorities. Banditry disappeared from Sicily; everyone was busy trading with the Americans and with smuggling on the continent.<sup>587</sup> Don Calò (Calogero Vizzini) became the *sindaco* (mayor) of the small town of Villalba. He passed himself off as a person whom people widely trusted: two of his brothers were priests and two uncles were bishops. Don Genco set up a business exporting (illegal at the time) spaghetti made from flour from his own mill. The *mafiosi*, whose activities were semi-legal at the time, accepted automobiles from the Americans, and their people were allowed to carry guns (to defend themselves against fascists in hiding).

These interviews ought to remind the reader of something. After all, this is how Don Vito talked in Mario Puzo's novel. Of course this Italian-American author knew perfectly well the style of people like Don Calò (including from Danilo Dolci's books) and – along with film director Francis Ford Coppola – recreated their image so powerfully that it is difficult for us today to imagine Don Calò as anything different than the character played by Marlon Brando. But the real problem is altogether different and larger.

The mafia acted in two modes: openly and underground. Despite all the legal and parliamentary investigations, many people have vehemently denied or ig-

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585 For more excerpts of this conversation, see the section below entitled "And thou shalt take no gift [...]"

586 I based the following mainly on Mangione 1985.

587 Pantaleone 1962, 71–80.

nored its very existence, from Catholic bishops all the way up to John Paul II.<sup>588</sup> Sicilian regionalism works in the mafia's favor. Another writer and social activist, Leonardo Sciascia, highlighted certain historical-structural factors that contributed to this phenomenon. In his opinion, a highly important historical aspect of "Sicilianism" involved the apostolic legation in whose name the Kingdom of Sicily in the late Middle Ages gained its religious and church authority, which lent the clergy on the island a lay character. From the womb of "Sicilianism" emerged a social group that might be called "mafia- bourgeoisie," which was represented by the character Sedara in *The Leopard*. But in the Kingdom of Naples there existed a court aristocracy and bureaucracy, and the clergy was directly tied to the Roman curia. The bourgeoisie in the north of the peninsula better understood that "if we want things to stay as they are, things will have to change,"<sup>589</sup> that joining the Italian Kingdom, by which certain privileges tied to autonomy were given up, accelerated the "transformation of leopards into jackals."<sup>590</sup>

Even in the 1960s, accusations raised against the mafia could easily offend Sicilian sensibilities. In a 1964 pastoral letter, Cardinal Ruffin attacked Danilo Dolci as a "publicist" tied to a "gigantic conspiracy" to defame Sicily in front of the entire world. As one of Dolci's co-conspirators the cardinal named Lampedusa, who had passed away several years before, for having presented in his novel a "false and outdated image of Sicilians."<sup>591</sup> Such an accusation is strange given that Lampe-

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588 Individual priests have long come out in opposition to the mafia. In 1982 Cardinal Salvatore Pappalardo delivered a harsh sermon at the grave of a victim of the mafia (condemning the ineffectiveness of authorities in Rome), but in his homily the pope, who had visited Sicily two months earlier, avoided mention of the mafia, even though such mention appeared in the earlier version issued to the press. In 1993 John Paul II chose Agrigento as the place to deliver his most important and harshest words against the mafia. Two months later a bomb exploded at the San Giovanni basilica in Laterano. One of the four Sicilian parish priests who had been under police protection was murdered. The main issue in the mafia's battle with the Church involved the active struggle carried out by certain members of the clergy against the drug trade. See "Papst Johannes Paul II hat die Mafia während eines Sizilien-Besuches als Teufelswerk gegeißelt. Er rief zum Kampf gegen das organisierte Verbrechen auf," *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 10 May 1993, 6. For more on the subject, see "Fathers join battle for the soul of Sicily," *The Guardian*, 19 November 1994.

589 Giuseppe di Lampedusa, *The Leopard* (Pantheon: 2007), 28.

590 Sciascia 1975, 69.

591 As a psycho-political matter such comments are not as surprising as they might seem today; as I write this text a discussion is taking place in Poland on the subject of the murders at Jedwabne (1941), in which there is no shortage of such comments.



dusa's work is, in fact, a historical novel set in the nineteenth century. Almost as shocking – according to Ruffin – was the third way in which Sicily's image was being falsified: the size of secret organizations (the mafia) throughout the world is exaggerated, as is their real influence. Pope Paul VI publicly approved this letter.

It is difficult to find a common denominator between Prince Tomasi di Lampedusa and Danilo Dolci, the latter of whom survived 8 hunger strikes throughout his campaign in support of oppressed peasants. Uncritical admiration for Sicily would lead rather to an emphasis on the contrasts between the two. Jerre Mangione reminds us of what the wife of an Italian consul-general said to Dolci during a visit to the United States: "Why do you insist on writing such depressing things about our beautiful Sicily? There is so much romance there yet you are so completely blind to it. Why can't you write about Sicily as Lampedusa does in *The Leopard*? Now there's a book that is worthy of Sicily!" In response, Dolci showed her a photograph of an open sewer in a muddy street in the little town of Palma di Montechiaro, and said: "Madame, it was on this very spot that the Prince in Lampedusa's novel looked up at the sky and admired the stars."<sup>592</sup>

As viewed from the continent, it is easy to underestimate this psychological and insular aspect of how the mafia functions, one which was first highlighted by Henner Hess.<sup>593</sup> At the same time, one cannot ignore the mafia's half-legality or practically legal status, which could not help but expand its clientele, both in terms of its ability to demonstrate its power and effectiveness, and in terms of its more spectacular manifestations. After all, *mafiosi* acted ostentatiously, in such a way as to satisfy their vanity and display their strength. A mafia *capo* from the time before the fascists took power, Don Vito Cascio Ferro from Biscuino (Palermo), was:

[...] a welcome and gratuitous guest in the best hotels. He was generous, too, in the way typical of people who do not have to count their money or even know where it comes from, and it is said that when we went to visit "his area" the mayors of the towns through which he passed met him at the town gates and kissed his hand in homage.<sup>594</sup>

Mafia dignitaries could count on people to pay public homage to them even after death. The funeral ceremony was a public manifestation of loyalty toward one's patron. When Don Francisco di Cristini died in Riesi (in the province of Caltanissetta) in 1961, his funeral was accompanied by a memorial necrology

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Particularly unpleasant for Cardinal Ruffin must have been the prediction made by Lampedusa-Salina regarding leopards, jackals and hyenas.

592 Mangione 1985, 16.

593 Hess 1970.

594 Pantaleone 1962, 40.

that included a list of his virtues.<sup>595</sup> Sixteen years later (1978), despite a changed situation, the funeral procession for his son (an accountant by profession, after the verdict on his temporary release from prison) brought together many officials, 200 students and a mayor (from the Christian Democratic Party). As was widely reported in the press, “schools and office were closed, stores were closed until after the funeral, cinemas were closed for two days, traffic was held up for many hours while ten thousand mourners passed in procession.” That number amounted to half of the inhabitants of Rieti, including infants. The police ticketed 48 people for blocking traffic. It is impossible – Sciascia comments – that they had all attended the funeral out of fear:

It is as if the *carabiniere*, the state, and the law did not exist with regard to those participating in the procession, as if they did exist [...] for the citizens of Rieti this ceremony was an act of life, their way of life, their view of the issue, of the only law – moral and practical – the only sense of inner order, social order, that they truly knew.

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595 It is worth reading this memorial for its bombastic style:

Realizzandosi  
in tutta la gamma  
delle possibilità umane  
fece vedere al mondo quand potesse  
un vero uomo  
in lui virtù e intelligenza  
senno e forza d'animo  
si sposarono felicemente  
per il bene dell'umile  
per la sconfitta del superbo  
opero 'sulla terra  
imponendo ai suoi simili  
il rispetto dei valori eterni  
della personalità umana  
nemico di tutte le ingiustizie  
dimostr'n con le parole e con le opere  
che **la mafia** sua non fu delinquenza  
ma rispetto alla legge dell'onore  
difesa di ogni diritto  
grandezza d'animo  
fu amore  
(Sciascia 1979, 29)

Indeed, according to the paradox described by Gaetan Falcone (although he understood it entirely differently): “In Sicily we are all *mafiosi*.”<sup>596</sup>

A couple decades ago the statesman and enlightened liberal Vitorio Emanuele Orlando stated:

If by the word “mafia” we understand a sense of honour pitched in the highest key; a refusal to tolerate anyone’s prominence or overbearing behaviour; [...] a generosity of spirit which, while it meets strength head on, is indulgent to the weak; loyalty to friends [...] If such feelings and such behaviour are what people mean by “the mafia,” [...] then we are actually speaking of the special characteristics of the Sicilian soul: and I declare that I am a *mafioso*, and proud to be one.<sup>597</sup>

The fact of the matter is that the criteria that Orlando chose are highly subjective. In any case, whatever people might think, they do not speak about it openly today. Spadolini was the first president to condemn the mafia, against which the parliament passed stricter criminal legislation.<sup>598</sup>

It would seem that I have wandered far from the issue of clientele. But I am in fact closer than one might think. One issue that is at the heart of the Sicilian mafia, a condition for its emergence and rise, involves Sicily’s isolation or – using the terminology of academia – the *encapsulation* of some of the island’s sub-regions and communities (although the organization has expanded quite easily from there into developed regions). Only in such a circumstance does this or that local *don* become the single intermediary with the broader world. As we read, Don Calò was well aware of this fact, though he reverses the issue in his lamentations over the fact that the peasant cooperatives are not working and that he alone can advise the forlorn peasant, including on the issue of how to vote.

But the situation is changing. The huge emigration (of those in search of jobs) from Sicily has, on the one hand, deprived the island of its most energetic minds and muscle and has, on the other hand, expanded its contact with not just the northern peninsula, but also Germany and Switzerland. Another factor fueling change is the growth in literacy on the island. A third factor might well have been the “fall of the Berlin wall”: Dolci’s radicalism had caused concern among authorities both secular and religious, and the Italian Christian Democrats, along with the Catholic Church, had seen in the mafia an unpleasant and embarrassing

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596 “In Sicilia tutti siamo mafiosi, si tratta di quantità, anche il professore che vi sta parlando le è in quota. [...] In realtà, la chiave del fenomeno è nel rapporto tra l’isola e l’individuo siciliano.” Falcone 1975, 7.

597 A lecture delivered at the Teatro Massimo in Palermo in June 1925. See Arlacchi 1983, 206

598 Arcà 1982, 14–15. See there the resolutions of the *legge antimafia*.

ally (but an ally nonetheless) in the battle against communism, which posed the greatest political threat. In the last decade of the twentieth century this threat was no longer so important.<sup>599</sup> Soon, great criminal trials would begin.

In the second half of the twentieth century the Sicilian mafia's activities were no longer based on local or regional clientelism; they moved one step higher, where they were met with significantly more resistance than ever before.<sup>600</sup>

## 6. The Peripheries and Extremities of the Mediterranean Region

Here I present several cases of groups that are, each in its own way, alienated from the environment in which they live. They are bound together by a concept to which we pay too little attention: trust. The *cosca* and other such patronal structures are, above all, groups of trust, a kind of instrumental friendship. The element of instrumentality (or is it "self-interest"?) may well grow stronger as the number of people who trust institutions declines, as the natural bonds among neighbors, or the social and professional bonds that extend beyond their (usually ethnic) group, grow weaker. Highly useful material for the rise (and closing off) of groups is provided by immigrants or other ethnic groups who are threatened or who have shallow roots in the new environment. Such a phenomenon is broad, but the Mediterranean region seems to generate such situations in its own lands, and it seems to export them to Europe.

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599 An analogy emerges here involving an issue that has not yet been entirely clarified, namely that of the assistance the Americans sought (and received) in the landing operation in Sicily. The American mafia, through its powerful influence within labor unions, made sure that German spies did not gain access to the Atlantic harbors and ports, and "Lucky" Luciano – along with other *mafiosi* – established contact with the Sicilian mob (which was being harassed and spied on by fascist authorities). The conditions under which the allies occupied the island and the southern peninsula (the mass smuggling of cigarettes, etc.; the fact that local authority was handed over to mafia notables) created the foundation on which illegal networks could flourish in the postwar era. For the American context, see Kefauver 1951, 100 ff., and for the Sicilian context, see Pantaleone 1962. Luciano was conditionally released from prison in 1946. Pantaleone (1962) offers a thorough overview of the evolution of relations between the mafia (and groups associated with it) and the fascist regime in Italy.

600 I omit here a discussion of the conflict between the Sicilian mafia and the fascist state; the mafia's rapid rebirth after the allied invasion indicates that repression had no lasting success. Some mafia scholars argue that its social function had been taken over by state authorities under Mussolini.

The first case could be found in a chapter on contemporary Germany or any other country that serves as an immigrant destination. A German doctoral student has researched the clientelistic network among Turkish immigrants in a large West German city.<sup>601</sup> At the heart of the work is a particular incident in which one Turk murdered another Turk, which led – of course – to an investigation. The key character in the researched environment was one Umur, the owner of a café with slot machines whose activities resembled those of a classic Sicilian patron.<sup>602</sup> Young people worked for him whose job it was to maintain peace and order in the establishment and to kick out any unwanted guests. The expression *fedai*-soldiers (*fedaini*) is not the only example of a word that has made its way into the Polish language; these soldiers collect the *haraç* (another such example, which effectively means protection money) from cafés that are under Umur’s control, and they are tasked with recovering various other debts. They are paid for their work and they do not have to pay off their gambling debts, as long as those debts are not too large. They may transfer their allegiance to another patron if he is a friend of the original patron. That having been said, they make up only one of the structural layers that characterize – I might add – such a small, closed and alienated community functioning on the edges of the law; they are more like “servants” than clients (Umur does not know them very well, though he basically selected them himself in his desire to not accept volunteers). The patron’s closest circle is populated by relatives and friends, while true clients are Turkish immigrants who are dependent on the loans that Umur gives them and on other kinds of assistance that he provides; these clients are also able to change their patron. In the most distant orbit around Umur are people and authorities (*Behörden*) with whom he has contact inside Germany and abroad, who make up his system of mutual dependencies and interests.

This patronal system is thus different than the majority of other such systems I have presented so far. In this system there is (as far as I know) no homage paid to the patron, the kind that the traditional *mafiosi* like so much, and what remains is a simple system of dependency and extortion (of one kind or another). Every newcomer must count on the fact that he will go to this patron in search of an apartment, work, or support.

The above example involves newcomers from across the Mediterranean who settled in the North. Now, we turn our attention to a case of people who were

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601 Schmitz 1991. The eponymous *kumar* means a Turkish game of chance in which the stakes are too high.

602 The dissertation’s author makes use of the schema set forth by Jeremy Boissevain (1966 and 1974).

ethnically distinct in their environment but who settled there long ago: Jewish merchants from Islamic Morocco.<sup>603</sup> Relations between Jews and Muslims were traditionally diverse: the sociologist Shlomo Deshen recognizes that in those places where the sultan's authority was weak, relations between people, including clientelistic relations, did not develop along ethnic and religious lines. An important factor in this regard was the security situation. Jewish merchants, forced to pay off highwaymen, searched for protection from among Muslim patrons. What is particularly interesting in the context of my topic of patron-client relations is that fact that their contribution to the system was not just money, but also services, and that these agreements were long-lasting (they were passed on to the sons). "In this manner," Deshen writes, "patron-clients relations were sometimes bolstered by family tradition, feelings of loyalty and trust." Such relations had a ritual (even sacral) aspect – the guiding principle of *'ar* and a sacrificial animal placed at the Muslim patron's door – with an added element being a kind of forced (even "extorted") protection, because (according to *'ar*) if the wealthier and more powerful person rejected the gift, he would "bring shame upon himself."<sup>604</sup> But pressure applied by a potential client is something quite different than the widely known pressure exerted by patrons. It is interesting that relations established in this manner brought the two sides closer together: patrons and clients visited each others' homes during holidays, and they even carried out common ceremonies (the visiting of graves, prayers for rain). Muslim potentates supported their Jews in the courts, who often wanted to bypass their own courts in favor of the Islamic courts, where they could expect to receive precisely such support (though a powerful patron could also influence Jewish judges, even in marital cases).

Sources – including statements made by Jews who emigrated from Morocco to Israel – paint a complex picture of their situation in that country. But even newcomers from the Atlas Mountains, who did not deny that their life there was difficult, claim that to have one's "own Jew" was a sign of high status among Muslims, which meant – for the Jews-clients – guaranteed protection.<sup>605</sup>

We find in Morocco several decades ago a situation that was advantageous for Jews. Patronal relationships there led to stronger bonds between adherents of different religions; they even tied clients-Jews with state-Muslim institutions. The patron-clients bonds were in large part ceremonial. External pressures and threats contributed to this overall situation, but the starting points were various. The Turk

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603 Deshen 1984.

604 Ibid., 215.

605 M. Shokeid, "Jewish Existence in a Berber Environment," *Jewish Societies* 1982, 116.

in Germany feels foreign; he is at most a second-generation immigrant. And his clients, or quasi-clients, as we saw them, are poor people. But in Morocco they were merchants living in communities with deep roots in tradition and established economic specializations.

A third Mediterranean image comes from the north, from the mountains of Epirus in the 1950s. The British anthropologist John K. Campbell carried out fieldwork there that was interrupted as a result of the British-Greek conflict over Cyprus.<sup>606</sup> The local community was divided between mountain folk-sheep breeders and valley dwellers, and over time shepherds leading their herds to mountain pastures in the springtime grew dependent on products supplied by merchants; quickly, the shepherds fell into constant debt to these merchants. But only with the rise of the welfare state did a new issue develop in the form of clientelistic bonds,<sup>607</sup> because in order to benefit from insurance compensation tied to their herds, shepherds grew dependent on village heads and local attorneys, and the expansion of public institutions deepened the dependency of mountain folk on people living in the valleys, who had broader connections within the community and with the outside world. Thus, the more the state was “protective” and bureaucratized, the broader was the playing field for local patrons. By necessity (and quite apart from abuses), the state opened up possibilities for arbitrary bureaucratic decisions (here, I would apply the English adjective “particularist”).<sup>608</sup>

We see in this case – as in the case of Andalusia, as researched by Julian Pitt-Rivers – the influence of the state. The role of the patron is played by someone who has “access” to the state apparatus on the regional level. The village head, the

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606 Campbell 1964.

607 Relations of the kind described by Campbell – that is, shepherd-merchant relations – are often unusually durable. My father, who as a student and assistant-botanist at the Uniwersytet Jana Kazimierza in Lwów had travelled widely through the Chornohora mountain range, told me about relations between the mountain folk-shepherds and the merchants (Jews from foothill villages) who bought up their products as repayment of credit. As in Epirus, the buyer-creditor received the entire supply of products brought down in autumn from the polonyna. The shepherds were never in a position to fully pay off their debts. An argument for the secular durability of such relations emerges from research conducted by Roman Rybarski: *Kredyt i lichwa w ekonomii samborskiej* (Lwów: 1939), which discusses peasant debt in the Podkarpackie region in the eighteenth century!

608 Nikos Marantzidis and George Mavrommatis discuss another example of “ethnic” clientelism, in Greece. For this, see their “Political Clientelism and Social Exclusion. The Case of Gypsies in the Greek Town of Sofades,” *International Sociology* 4 (1999): 443–456.

policeman, the attorney, and the clergyman play the role of intermediary with state authorities.

Whether the intermediary's main role was to protect the client against burdens (taxes, military service, etc.) or to assist in bureaucratic procedures which would allow one to obtain, for example, insurance benefits (in the case of Epirus, compensation for dead sheep) depended on authorities' actions and the overall condition of the population.

Michael Kenny, who researched patronal bonds in an isolated pueblo in Castile at the end of the 1950s, pointed to social and social-psychological (rather than economic) mechanisms,<sup>609</sup> according to which the patronage system among peoples finds its direct reflection in their relationship with the saints and Mother Mary; all of which helps – the argument goes – to balance out social inequalities.

As opposed to parliamentary democracies north of the Alps, the Euro-Mediterranean *Mezzogiorno* and Sicily are classic regions of political clientelism that grows from the trunk of social structures. In this regard, Corsica is more Italian than French, though it is above all – simply put – itself.

### a. The Feud, or to be a Client from the Cradle

This is not an exceptional situation; more than one young member of a Scottish family who was bound by his father's bond of *manrent* found himself in a similar situation. But the topic of discussion below is not the sixteenth century and Scotland, but the twentieth century and Corsica.

Here we have a child, who has just been born in a mountain village. It was born in the upland region around Fracaghju, and not low-lying Grodula. Soon it will begin to have a sense of solidarity with its little region and against others, with its village against other villages of this valley, with this valley against neighboring valleys. The child was born into this family and not another family, and thus gained natural friends and enemies, because that is political reality; inheriting from an abundant inventory allies and enemies. [...] At the same time the child was born a client of a local patron, who is the client of another patron, who appears every time before an election asking its father for votes, one-on-one in the house behind closed windows – that patron, who is the client of an eminent person, about whom one speaks, and whose good deeds one can list. It was born far from the state, the very idea of which in these mountains (as in others) is unclear.<sup>610</sup>

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609 Kenny 1961, 86.

610 Lenclud 1993, 86.



We have a case here in which clientelistic systems adapt perfectly to changes taking place on the outside. A prevailing and incessant feud (or vendetta) hinders, it would seem, the mobilization of forces directed against the distant (though ever more real) enemy-state. But perhaps it is different: these countless divisions prevent Corsican society from being turned on its head, much like they deprive the island of a chance to liberate itself from foreign domination.

In this environment, marked by such violence in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (Corsica had the highest murder rate in Europe), “genealogy was the only science practiced” – indispensable knowledge, since *family* was understood as including third cousins, fourth cousins, and beyond. Future relationships were set early, usually at the time of a young person’s first communion, when godparents were named. It is not surprising that it was good to have among one’s relatives-allies a member of the clergy (preferably an influential one), who could act as advisor, and not as leader. But the priest had to be “ours,” and not “theirs” (how could one confess one’s sins to a stranger – even if before one’s execution?).

Like all feuds, a Corsican feud was highly suitable alternative to a court, which represented distant (indeed foreign) rulers, but which (at least at the lower levels) was made up of people who, in one way or another, were entangled in separate and various agreements; justice from such a system could not be blind. For Corsicans, the patron saint of legal matters was “Santa Nèga” (“I know nothing” or “I deny it”) and there were few authorities on the workings of the courts. In 1836, a French prosecutor mentioned the case of a Corsican widow who had come to accuse those who murdered her husband. He praised her for wanting to pursue justice rather than vengeance, but she refused his praise, saying: “You are mistaken. I would have preferred vengeance, but my son is a coward who dishonours the family. I could not persuade him to kill our enemy.”<sup>611</sup>

The mass, endemic feud – as presented by Stephen Wilson – could not in reality become very bloody, just as the old-Polish *zajazdy* had certain limits.<sup>612</sup> But it contained great symbolism, and what required blood was mainly unacceptable

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611 Wilson 1988, 271.

612 However, according to research conducted by Keith Brown, “selective killing” occurred in 16.4% of feuds in Scotland in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and “indiscriminate killing” occurred in 18.6% of feuds (Brown 1986, 278, table 5). Data of this type is based mainly on accusations and, as Brown pointed out, is difficult to verify.

and symbolic faits accomplis, such as the demolition of a bridge or the destruction of a wall or fence.

Wilson argues that modernization of the kind introduced by authorities in Paris over the course of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries contributed to a weakening of the vendetta because families, factions and parties obtained a new weapon: political manipulation. Marta Petrusiewicz, who reviewed Wilson's book, does not accept this interpretation; the feud began to weaken, in her opinion, only after the First World War.<sup>613</sup>

One might regard the institution of the feud in its traditional forms as a part of Corsican identity, much like a lingual distinction.<sup>614</sup> But its usefulness in new circumstances sinks to the level of traditional custom. It is different with clientelistic systems, which – in the face of a growing bureaucracy, a broadened electoral system, and expanding entrepreneurship – find new applications for old bonds.

## 7. “And thou shalt take no gift [...]”<sup>615</sup>

*Clientelism covers [...] the process of individual or group control over the political distribution of economic resources (patronage is the more limited form of this disposal of posts which may in turn entail material benefits).*<sup>616</sup>

A certain New York gangster is supposed to have once expressed the following opinion to a writer: “It’s human nature that you can’t corrupt someone who doesn’t want to be corrupted. And someone who wants to be corrupted is *already* corrupt.”<sup>617</sup> No doubt what we have here is a competent and (as it were) expert psychological analysis of corruption, though perhaps also an attempt to shift e-

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613 Petrusiewicz 1990a, 300.

614 By 1918 the French had managed to root out the Italian language from Corsica; the next goal is to root out the Corsican language. *Ibid.*, 300–301.

615 “And thou shalt take no gift: for the gift blindeth the wise, and perverteth the words of the righteous.” Book of Exodus (23:8). I refer in this section to issues about which I wrote in Mączak (1994) 2000.

616 Toinet and Glenn 1982, 194.

617 O’Brien and Kurins 1992, 83. The quote, attributed to Joe Gallo, is preceded by: “Gimme a break! Andy, you’re in the human nature business, right? [...]” The book is written in the third person by two FBI agents who were assisted by a ghost writer. For many months they had taped conversations carried out by the gangster-boss in his headquarters. Almost all of these conversations are cited as reported speech, and it is thus difficult to fully believe them. This type of reporting is very typical for an American book on organized crime, which are nonetheless quoted as a source.

sponsibility for corruption onto corruption itself. In any case it is perfectly clear to both interlocutors what is, and what is not, legally acceptable. And yet, on the historical and anthropological scale the issue is significantly more complicated. One thing is certain: we usually find corruption where the public and private spheres intersect, and the gray zone between them is not always clearly marked or carefully controlled. One might well make the argument that precision in this regard, or the attempt to be precise, is an achievement of Western civilization. And one that has only recently been accomplished, we might add.

Even though corruption is immortal (we read about it several times even in the Old Testament), and even though it is condemned in every definition (the term “corruption” – depravity, debasement – contains within itself condemnation), there is a certain subjectivism involved here.<sup>618</sup> The definition of what is (and what is not) permissible and thus what is (and what is not) honest, is an attribute of the ruler. A political dilemma arises when the governed have an opinion on this topic that differs from that of those who govern. This problem is huge,<sup>619</sup> but what is its connection with clientelism? Here, it is only this aspect of the problem that we must address.

One cannot help but reject as exaggerated attempts to include individual services-courtesies under the category of clientelistic relationships that do not serve as a link in a system of reciprocal but unequal benefits. I do not intend to split hairs, but certain cases involving universities seem interesting to me because they fall on the border between clientelism and corruption. Here we must remind ourselves of the interview Danilo Dolci conducted with a figure already known to us, namely “boss” Genco Russo:

People seek advice about how to vote. They feel it's a duty to show their gratitude. You see, they're confused and want to be sure to reciprocate. Take tomorrow, for example. I'll drop everything, my threshing machines, animals, my own business, and run off to Agrigento to recommend that a certain person pass an exam.<sup>620</sup>

This courtesy has a place in the long chain of political patronage. Anthropologist Jeremy Boissevain provides a similar report from Palermo.<sup>621</sup> One case he cites involved a student from Syracuse and his attempt to get a professor to accept his thesis even though the deadline had passed two months earlier. To this end, the

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618 Book of Exodus (23:8); Book of Deuteronomy (16:19), 2 Chronicles (19:7); Ecclesiastes (7:7).

619 *Political Corruption* 1989; regarding Greece, see also Moisisdis 1992.

620 Dolci 1981, 68.

621 Boissevain 1966, 25–28.

student linked a series of intermediaries: an attorney (who was the Secretary of the local branch of the Christian Democratic Party), the attorney's cousin, and the cousin's brother (who had a friend on the university who was one of the professor's assistants, to whom the cousin's brother introduced the student as his *carissimo amico*). Eventually, the professor let it be known that he was running for a seat in parliament and that the student was to help him. In the end he gave the student a grade of very good, even though he failed to gain a seat in parliament. This colorful chain of intermediaries, this *do ut des* involving lawyers and politicians and others, marked the border between corruption and clientelism, though the clientelistic chain in this case does not seem to be long-lasting, at least on the student's end. Corruption would be obvious if the professor or his assistant "took" something in return. In any case, Boissevain's article contains the suggestion that similar, circumstantial needs could give rise to more durable relationships.<sup>622</sup>

Beyond individual services-courtesies, I would also not include bonds which, in a situation marked by market shortages, join – for example – a store manager with a client who receives from him an under-the-counter product for an inflated price. On the other hand, a long-term connection of this type that is based on the transfer of valuables that are meaningful or essential for the client (in the colloquial – i.e. market – meaning of the word) can lead to the rise of relationships that are of interest to us here. Which is no doubt why, in the first studies of public opinion after the breakup of the Soviet Union, respondents mentioned directors of meat stores as people in authority. In a command-distributive system, such a "redistribution of resources" is – by its very nature – illegal, but it is in fact ubiquitous; indeed, one could consider it an immanent feature of the system.<sup>623</sup>

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622 Boissevain also cites another case in which a father suspected that a teacher was intriguing to prevent his son from being accepted into university. The father turned for help to his brother, who knew someone important, who could in turn apply pressure on the person making the final decision. The case ended in success. Here we see an action in which a "sleeping" or ready-made agreement is used. For another observation from the university milieu, this time in Belgium, see *Terrain* 1993. For what amounts to an encyclopedia of clientelism in university settings in German-speaking countries, see the monograph by Wolfgang Weber, *Priester der Klio. Historisch-sozialwissenschaftliche Studien zur Herkunft und Karriere deutscher Historiker und der Geschichtswissenschaft, 1800–1970* (Frankfurt a. M.: 1984). See also, for Belgium, Winkin 1993.

623 Besançon 1987. In the last years of the PRL, a retired person who bought rolls at a bakery in Przemysł, and then transported them to a town where so-called *uspołeczniiony* ("socialized") trade did not deliver better baked goods, would face punishment. See also, for Maghreb, Adreski 1989.

On a mass scale (though in small measure), it also appears in the form of bribery, as – for example – in the exchange of goods or services that are unattainable in “socialized” (*uspołeczniony* in Polish, effectively “state-owned”) trade. As a consequence, often in such cases the value of one’s job or position depends not so much on salary or prestige, but on one’s ability to appropriate the desired products and to accumulate clients (in the colloquial sense of the word!). And authority means the ability to fill such lucrative positions. The battle at higher levels does not stray far from the principles that apply to normal people, though I detect here a tighter connection between corruption and clientelism: both signify the “privatization of the public sphere” and both are a consequence of such privatization’s inordinate expansion in a command-distributive dictatorship. The point of view represented below seems to be accurate:

Currently we have in Russia a system that is half-democratic, but authoritarian tendencies could tip the scale. W. Pastuchow from the Institute of Comparative Politics illustrates the situation vividly: the state is not a neutral referee on the field, but rather a playing manager. The ethos of public service has disappeared to such an extent that it is difficult to talk about corruption in the classic sense, because the bureaucrat in Russia who has taken a bribe treats it as something that justifiably belongs to him; he is not obligated to handle the issue [around which the bribe revolved].<sup>624</sup>

### **a. Corruption in the Building of Socialism on One Country**

There will be more discussion in later sections about how the clientele functioned in the Soviet system, which is why at this point, in the context of corruption, I want to quote the reflections of two victims of the system who came from the outside. Stanisław Vincenz (memories from the years 1940/1941):

A gymnasium graduate, let’s call him Mirek, who worked as a writer in this department, told the following story. One day the Soviet head of the finance department made a proposal to his two young fellow-workers. “They don’t give us money or a place to live, but they hold us responsible, so let’s divide the money among ourselves and write the protocol so that it looks like when we arrived we found our office broken into and the desk drawers had been rifled through.” The young Mirek was too ashamed to reject this offer from the older department head. At first he agreed, but then he realized that he would have to admit it to his father, and he knew perfectly well that his father, an orthodox and strict Jew, would give him a slap upside the head and would throw him out of the house unless he immediately returned the money. So he said, half in fear and half out of

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624 *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 12 June 1995: Conference “Od komunizmu do demokracji” (report from Kraków). See also M. Karp, “Słabszy musi być twardy.” A discussion with Edward Krzemień, *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 21 March 1996, 10–11.

shame: “Do what you want. I will write the protocol but I don’t want any money.” [...] In the end [his boss] kicked him out of the office and shouted these exact words: “Ubirajsia won, durak! My biez tiebia postroim Socjalizm! [Get out of here, you fool. We will build socialism without you]!”<sup>625</sup>

Not much later (in 1941, in a train evacuating people from Saratov) a Jew – a former director at the Uniwermag department store – told his fellow prisoner (and Polish poet and writer) Aleksander Wat why corruption was necessary in this system. Years later Wat paraphrased the Jew’s conclusions in this way:

Who makes things dynamic? They know at the top that puritanism puts a halt to turnover in economic life, in social life, etc. And in the Soviet system what can get the machinery going? Theft, ot, etc. This kind of turnover is a dynamic principle.<sup>626</sup>

Parenthetically, I might add that some Western economists see certain benefits in corruption, even for a market economy.

If we associate clientelism with something negative, it is mainly because we associate clientelism with corruption, which is often justified, though not always. One must remember that the clear (at least in theory) difference between *publicum* and *privatum* is a new phenomenon, one that is limited to certain civilizational circles and remains subject to great stress and challenge. The strength and weakness of that point where clientele meet corruption are a matter of nuance. If a British civil servant in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries accepted money for appointing someone for a position in India, it would no doubt have been a transgression. But if his family came into play? His good background? Recommendations? British statesmen like Prime Minister Asquith and his mentor William Gladstone<sup>627</sup> had the necessary authority and strength of will, but the practices of many parliamentary systems have often been quite different. Particularly in Italy – as I will discuss below – the entire party-parliamentary system worked differently than it did in Britain.

In his collection of biographic reflections Winston Churchill pointed out, citing several examples, that a given statesman, having come to the end of his active political career, retreated into a modest life, sometimes of relative poverty (Philip Snowden, Georges Clemenceau). With this he wanted to emphasize the excep-

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625 Vincenz 1991, 164.

626 Wat 1977, vol. 2, 136 (chapter XXIX), 169–171 (chapter XXXI).

627 Churchill remembered that when he was being offered a Cabinet position in 1908, Asquith quoted Gladstone: “The first essential for a Prime Minister is to be a good butcher,” and he added “there are several who must be pole-axed now.” See Churchill 1937, 141.

tional nature of such a situation, because the world that he was describing is not a sphere in which people enrich themselves. It is the world of great politics, one which is populated – as a rule – by wealthy gentlemen; it is yet another “world we have lost” (though not quite in the meaning put forward by Peter Laslett<sup>628</sup>)

We can find a contrast to that image of political ethics in today’s Italy, where an argument in favor of Silvio Berlusconi is based on the folk wisdom that if a politician is rich then he will not have to steal from the public coffers.<sup>629</sup> But the problem is that the spread of everyday clientelistic bonds contributes to the proliferation of corruption, which in turn encourages the establishment of more durable clientelistic bonds.

In the international, indeed global economy, different norms of behavior lead to collisions, particularly at points where the West and the Orient meet. Ever since the Lockheed bribery scandals, legal conflicts and court cases have repeatedly made headlines focusing on bribery tied to huge international contracts in the high-tech and electronic equipment industries. At the same time, it is widely known that in Asia (speaking very generally) a transaction cannot be completed without a certain amount of *baksheesh* for directors, ministers, sheiks, or whom-ever is in power. Leaders of industrialized states oscillate between a principled puritan-Victorian stance and the customs that dominate in foreign markets. The tradition of the orient, or that of the European *ancien régime*, often come out victorious.<sup>630</sup> A conflict of principles at the junction between various political cultures

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628 Peter Laslett, *The World We Have Lost: England Before the Industrial Age* (London: 1965).

629 U. Eco, “Ist Berlusconi ein Kommunist?” *Die Zeit*, 19 April 2001 ([www.zeit.de/2001/17/Ist\\_Berlusconi\\_ein\\_Kommunist\\_/seite-3](http://www.zeit.de/2001/17/Ist_Berlusconi_ein_Kommunist_/seite-3) [accessed 4 September 2016]). Umberto Eco’s words: “[...] weil er reich sei, brauche er nicht zu stehlen” [because he is rich, he doesn’t need to steal]. Eco adds that what also assists Berlusconi is “die mythische Überzeugung, dass ein Mann, der es geschafft hat, so enorm reich zu werden, auch das von ihm regierte Volk zu Wohlstand bringen könne.” [the mythical belief that a man who has managed to become so rich can also lift the people he governs into prosperity]. In this context one forgets that it did not work this way under either Bokassa or Milošević. Translator’s note: Translations of the Eco text are mine, from the original German.

630 Ole Stavad, the Danish finance minister, stated that “bribe expenses are tax deductible, provided companies can document that they were necessary to secure a sale of goods or a business contract,” the suggestion being that Danish entrepreneurs active abroad can report such expenses as “consulting fees.” See *Newsweek* (Europe), 14 June 1993.

has existed since time immemorial, and globalization in contemporary politics and in the contemporary economy has served only to deepen that conflict.<sup>631</sup>

Corruption can exist without clientelism, but where is their point of contact? Toinet and Glenn write: "Clientelism covers [...] the process of individual or group control over the political distribution of economic resources (patronage is the more limited form of this disposal of posts which may in turn entail material benefits)." They go on to draw subtle distinctions between the two concepts.<sup>632</sup>

A direct connection between corruption and clientelism is at the heart of a code of conduct developed for the state of Nigeria in the 1980s that involves financial statements to be submitted by public servants, the goal being to stamp out corruption.

The declaration of assets [...] should cover those of the officer, spouse and all [other relatives ...] – that a public officer should

- (i) not engage in and shall oppose and expose anywhere the use of one's official position to enrich oneself, relations, friends, patrons or clients legitimately or illegitimately and the acquiring of any privileges or services one is not officially entitled to;
- (ii) not engage in and shall oppose and expose all attempts or commission of corruption and bribes which includes the use of money, goods or services to induce, influence or attempt to influence the conduct of an officer or a person in an officer's position.<sup>633</sup>

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631 Maria Dąbrowska discusses such a cultural-political contrast between German and Russian bureaucrats, with whom Polish landowners came into contact during the First World War. She wrote: "When [noble] citizens were to submit to the [German] *Landrat* an application for an increase in the official price of potatoes, that application was, during a drinking party, so stained with wine that Niemojowski (from Marchwacz, the future leader of the Provisional Council of State) had no place to put his signature. German officials were invited – as Russian officials had been in the old days – on hunts, and when the hunt was finished and they loaded the game onto the *Landrat's* carriage, he tossed it back out, telling them that he was no Russian *powiat* boss." M. Dąbrowska, *Dzienniki 1914–1945*, ed. T. Drewnowski (Warszawa: 1998), 85 (14 December 1915). English travel books (e.g. John Murray's *Handbook for Travellers to ...*) provide interesting material regarding the nineteenth century; they informed disoriented British gentlemen in which countries they should provide "tips" to customs officials or other officials, and in which countries they should not. There emerges a sharp contrast between Russia and Turkey on the one hand, and Prussia on the other.

632 Toinet and Glenn 1982, 194 (see the epigraph at the top of this section).

633 Imam 1987, 4.



This is perhaps the only example – most certainly an exceptional example – of a state document designed to modernize a political system that recognizes the existence of patrons and clients as potential beneficiaries (including family and friends) of official corruption. Sociologists and demographers would notice that the declaration takes into consideration the traditional extended family, which includes not only blood relatives but also relatives by marriage. The reader of this book might well ask, how is one to learn details about the condition of one's own patron's wealth? But it would be inappropriate for us Poles to ridicule this text, despite its naiveté, in light of how difficult it has been for the Sejm and Senate of the Polish Third Republic to introduce (and execute) declarations of income for deputies and senators, not to mention to decide upon potential disciplinary consequences.

In the case of Nigeria we have indications of either utopian optimism or cynical mendacity, precisely because in post-colonial Africa the gray area between the public and the private is particularly wide and poorly defined.<sup>634</sup> Norms derived from tribal traditions collide dramatically with principles imposed by Europeans and eventually adopted by Africans. General poverty and the terribly low salaries paid to bureaucrats only serve to highlight the benefits that can come with “access to resources” – that is, a bit of power.

It is appropriate to repeat that the range of these phenomena depends on the breadth of the public sphere; on the one hand, corruption contributes to the decay of the public sphere, but on the other hand it feeds off the public sphere. If one adopts the interpretation of the political order of the *Rzeczpospolita* in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries as one that was dominated by magnatier clientelism, then we would narrow the confines of corruption to obvious cases involving the embezzlement of public funds and extreme cases of abuse of trust in political life.

Writing on another occasion about corruption in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, I discussed the case of Francis Bacon, but it is nonetheless appropriate for me to return to “merry England,” which wrestled with the dilemma of what is a transgression and what is not. Contemporaries drew a distinction between gifts and a bribe – that is, “a conditional offer of a material reward in pursuit of a desired objective.”<sup>635</sup> We deal with the same problem even today. As early as the Middle Ages the English parliament formulated very precise bans that de-

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634 See the chapter below entitled “Africa, Kings, Dictators and Citizens-Subjects.”

635 Block 1998, 52 (I cited Block's words from a review of his book by William B. Robinson, *Albion* 30, no. 4 [1998]: 680–682).

finished corruption even among the Crown's highest officials.<sup>636</sup> In 1346 judges were prohibited from taking gifts, "rewards," and other benefits; as of 1388 England's highest officials were not allowed to appoint anyone to an office in exchange for a "gift, brocage, favour or affection"; the focus was thus not only on unacceptable *do ut des*, but also on personal bonds. In 1552 the word "corruption" emerged, which had to be avoided wherever "true Administration of Justice or Service of Trust" was necessary.

But how was one to choose suitable people for important positions, and how could one judge their honesty? As mentioned above, the border between *publicum* and *privatum* was not clearly defined, and the interests of the treasury demanded that not only the Church but also the state be frugal. Joel Hurstfield, who has analyzed attitudes in England under the Tudors and the first Stuart monarch, drew the conclusion that the public interest as a criterion for correct behavior was, at that time, not easy to clearly define, because it was not clear how to define "merit." As I will discuss below, the term "merit" would raise doubts and cause problems in subsequent centuries. It could not be otherwise, since – as Robert Harding writes – "Patronage was the best available system for assessing merit,"<sup>637</sup> and the high official complemented his group of subordinates according to principles that were not always clear but which rendered them subject to both the public authority and to him personally. The identification of the monarch with the state paved the way (rather paradoxically) for the identification of his ministers with the state. Today's historians also talk about corruption with reference to officials and ministers who failed in this regard. While Richelieu, Mazarin and Colbert shielded themselves from accusations of corruption through their service to the state, Superintendent Nicolas Fouquet (who enriched himself in public service less than they did) became infamous for his wealth.<sup>638</sup>

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636 "Item: that no Chancellor, treasurer, keeper of the privy seal, counsellor of the King, sworn of the King's council, nor no other officer, judge, nor minister of the King, receiving fees of the King for the said office or services take in no matter in time to come, any manner of gifts or brocage of any person for doing their said office and services, upon pain to answer the King the treble of what they so take, and to satisfy the party, and to be punished at the King's pleasure, and shall be discharged from his office, service, and council for ever." This is a quote from an act of parliament from the year 1410, which because of a legal error never became law. Prest 1991.

637 See section below entitled "Palimpsest of Friendship: Victorian Patronage among Gentlemen." See also Harding 1981, 48.

638 Dessert 1984 and 1987.

In his work on the Italian Renaissance, Hans Baron pointed out that the principles of public service (ability, honesty, devotion to the republic without regard for family and personal connections), formulated in Florence by Leonardo Bruni and his followers, found their place north of the Alps only with difficulty.<sup>639</sup> This observation raises the question: do we not have here a conflict between the urban-republican and the noble-monarchist points of view, as seen from Renaissance Naples?

An object of discussion in France, and a source for conflict of interest, was *vénalité* – the sale of office – that would pass as an alternative to patronage.<sup>640</sup> But as we have seen, both systems found over time a common platform; admittedly, the support of a wealthy and powerful person freed no one from the need to pay for an office according to the principles of *la paulette*, first instituted in 1604, but the fact that the purchaser thereby earned a place in that person's entourage meant that that office (and the fact of holding that office) increased in value.<sup>641</sup> The debate over corruption at the end of the sixteenth century and in the seventeenth century was tied in France to broader complaints about the depravity of "our times." People yearned for the golden century of honesty, which was originally associated with Francis I and later with Henry IV (whose rule was often compared to the years that followed, under Marie de' Medici). A keen observer of his times, Jacques Auguste de Thou, dated the beginning of this corruption to the year 1574, when Henry III returned profits derived from the mediation of official appointments to his court *mignons*/favorites – a policy that was carried out at the expense of the old nobility and aristocracy.<sup>642</sup> Secretary of State Nicolas de Villeroy advised Queen Marie to treat her great aristocrats with generosity, which would indirectly improve the conditions in which their noble clients lived (the nobility's poverty was a constant motif in the political literature of the French ancien régime). But let us look at it from the royalist perspective: "ulcers" in the body; "true corruption" is ingratitude on the part of the recipient of royal favor.<sup>643</sup>

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639 H. Baron, *The Crisis of the Early Italian Renaissance* (Princeton: 1966), 421–423.

640 Mousnier 1971; Reinhard 1974; for a review of recent literature and an analysis of the problem, see Reinhard 1999. For *vénalité* and patronage, see Harding 1981, 50.

641 Kettering 1986, 1988, 1989a, 1993; regarding the Condé family, see particularly Béguin 1999.

642 This "beginning of corruption" is more understandable than the later case, defined in the same way, described by Marcin Matuszewicz.

643 These are the words used by Jacques de la Guesle, the *procureur du roi*; Harding 1981, 62.

Lawyers were also concerned about corruption. Charles Loyseau emphasized “merit” as the criterion to be used when nominating someone for a position, though he understood merit in the spirit of his times: it was noblemen who, by definition, possessed the virtue of bravery, prowess. Many writers regarded it as obvious that the son of a good father inherits the father’s best features, which gave the *noblesse de race* its advantage. Sometimes a cautious conclusion was drawn from this, namely that when candidates are equal in terms of their qualifications, then the candidate who is able to show that he has an elite and ramified family tree has priority over the other; such an argument was designed to absolve nepotism, with advocates arguing – for example – that any nepotistic connections between judges and litigants would have no influence on the course of justice.<sup>644</sup>

The main dilemma involved how to distinguish between accepting a gift as a sign of gratitude and – as the French called it – a *don corrompable*. It was also difficult to define the respective responsibilities of giver and receiver of objects of value. For example legal experts, beginning with Jean Bodin, argued that it was a matter of merit, but also obligation, that the monarch bestow gifts on foreign subjects and diplomats, though the latter were not supposed to accept them.

That having been said, there was – as Harding points out – a tendency during the Renaissance “to view corruption as a systemic evil” and not to search for systemic solutions. Such figurative terms were dominant: sickness, ulcers (again), an imbalance of “humors.”<sup>645</sup>

Having raised the issue of corruption, it is not easy to let it drop. Which is why – writing about the division of social income and the functioning of political parties – I will have to refer to this problem in all of its complexity.

## 8. The Patron, the Client, and the Division of Social Income

The market aspects of the patronal system have been a topic of discussion several times already. So, too, has been the fact that this system feeds mainly from the public trough. My comments below are intended to present the diversity of these phenomena.

When Jan Rutkowski began his pioneering research on the division of income in old-Polish society, he proceeded in terms of assumptions that were both theoretical and practical. The theoretical significance of this subject requires no justification today. Research results, particularly those stemming from analysis

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644 Ibid., 55.

645 Ibid., 57.

of Crown land accounts, have shown that it is easier to investigate the division of social income or wealth than it is to investigate their size.<sup>646</sup> This is of fundamental importance to the issue of the division of income, particularly in traditional societies, because it manifests itself not only in the direct transfer of money or material goods from one hand to another. Alongside the turnover of goods, rents, plunder<sup>647</sup> and taxes, the flow of resources<sup>648</sup> also takes the form of one-way or two-way benefits, those which are characteristic of clientelistic relationships. One could hypothetically argue that the intensity of such a flow of benefits is, to a certain extent, in reverse proportion to the development of the cash-commodity economy; but a large role is played here by traditional and often paternalistic forms of authority. Rutkowski, whose research focused on the rural economy and was based on analysis of a certain kind of sources (inspections and inventories of Crown properties), did not manage to address macro-economic issues, particularly those that are on the border between the economy and authority.

Resources in clientelistic systems flow in both directions, and it is impossible to balance that flow; beyond that, the subjective feelings of all partners are a factor. The issue is very broad, and the entire sphere of these issues is highly diversified culturally. As a rule definitions of the patron-client relationship do not state precisely the direction in which resources flow between the elements of this dyad. Verene Burkolter thus includes in her definition of patronage the asymmetrical “exchange of resources (goods and services) in totalistic terms (package deal),”<sup>649</sup> without prejudging what would flow and in what direction. The image offered by historical and anthropological studies is neither uniform nor clear-cut. We thus have, on the one hand, tenants-“sharecroppers” from the Italian *Mezzogiorno* or Sicily, for which the balance of material resources is unfavorable, and who hand over to the lord around half of their harvest, etc. And we have, on the other hand, the patron’s munificence (which includes his assistance in times of need), which is emphasized both as a virtue and an obligation. When it came to votes (and the

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646 See *Badanie nad podziałem dochodów w Polsce w czasach nowożytnych*, vol. 1 (Kraków: 1938).

647 Unlike anthropologists, historians often do not appreciate economic relations as a factor. See, however, the reflections collected in Lane 1979; and in N. Steensgaard, “Violence and the Rise of Capitalism: Frederic C. Lane’s Theory of Protection and Tribute,” *Review* 5, no. 2 (Fall, 1981): 247–273.

648 Translator’s note: Here Professor Mączak uses the Polish term *środki*, which is a broad term that literally refers to “means,” but can also refer, more specifically, to “financial means” or “resources.”

649 Burkolter 1976.

above-mentioned *kreski na sejmik*), as in (for example) when noblemen gathered for the *powiat sejmiki* as described by Marcin Matuszewicz, clients had a right to count on what one might call “electoral” sausages and beer, even if the patron was demanding nothing in return. Items of material or cash value could flow in both directions, though not at the same time; more typical was the exchange of material goods in exchange for services and symbolic actions, which included clients participating in the patron’s entourage during public events and in public places; services like this also served as a proclamation of praise for the patron. As a rule such actions had elusive, intangible material consequences. But – in the context of the *Rzeczpospolita* – the client’s duties also included participation in the organization of the patron’s *zajazd*.<sup>650</sup>

The situation could be the opposite in cases in which a cash transaction led to dependence, but this is only a hypothesis based on analysis of credit transactions contained in the *kontrakty lwowskie* of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, which I mentioned above. What could check the validity of this hypothesis is an analysis of social relations among individuals known as *kontrahenci* (roughly: parties) to contracts. In this understanding, loans that were often very small (when viewed individually) but were given on a mass scale to the *jaśnie oświecony*<sup>651</sup> by the merely *urodzone* (well-born) neighbors, were essentially a form of – to use modern-sounding terms – interest-bearing capital deposits, which indicates the trust the *urodzone* had in their wealthier neighbors (and the lack of urban bankers). One might also argue that such a deposit was tied to a particular wealthy neighbor. A juxtaposition of credits and land sales suggest that money invested in this way with the great owners was used to buy up noble land and, to a certain extent, contributed to the fact that many property owners were turned into tenants or became residents at the lord’s court.<sup>652</sup>

A great deal of information about the material elements of the clientelistic system involve services/benefits coming from the patron. I see in them a dual nature: a direct service/benefit and (using the terminology of anthropology) “brokerage.” The first one belongs to the category of “virtue” and at the same to the lord’s obli-

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650 For more on this topic see Iwona Pugacewicz 1996. I thank the author for providing me with additional information on this topic.

651 Translator’s note: *jaśnie oświecony* is a form of address that effectively means “His Royal Highness.”

652 The as yet unpublished research of Michał Kopczyński and Władisław Marek Kunicki-Goldfi ger, based on records of the *pogłówny generalny* (general head tax) from the third quarter of the seventeenth century, indicates that the number of noblemen residing at magnat courts was not large.

gation to be munificent,<sup>653</sup> but “protection” is at the same time support in times of need. Mediation in a client’s access to resources of all kinds was often the patron’s most basic direct obligation and was – viewing it from the other side – his most fundamental means of action. When it involved active electoral law, the situation changed, because part of the electorate held the trump-card, which they did not want to play for free. Here, serious differences become clear that are the result of social agreements, economic circumstances, and finally cultural traditions. In England, for example, clientelistic obligations under the first Stuarts played a relatively small role in elections to the House of Commons, in any case a smaller role than they would play in the following century.<sup>654</sup> In the old *Rzeczpospolita* the structure of the land-owning order seems to have had a decisive influence on the density and the significance of clientelistic networks.

This issue has also been a topic of discussion in the context of the electoral systems in the United States and Italy. In the classic case of Chicago, to which I will return below, authors criticizing Mayor Richard J. Daley and his system of rule emphasize the well-developed dependency/relationship between work done for the “democratic machine,” which is directed by the omnipotent mayor, and the distribution of positions in the city’s administrative apparatus.<sup>655</sup> But one must remember that this kind of machine system of clientelistic dependence was supported by public funds (as I said, I will have more to say about this subject later).<sup>656</sup> Since a political-administrative system that functions in this way favors the proliferation of official positions, which are a basic tool used to mobilize the

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653 Parenthetically, the English King Edward IV had interesting views on the issue of monarchical generosity; his court, based on the Burgundian model and according to the Household Ordinance of 1478, was to be guided neither by “avarice” nor “prodigalite,” but by the “virtue called liberalite.” See A.R. Meyers, *The Household of Edward IV* (Manchester: 1959), 3–4; quote from Kipling 1981, 119.

654 See Hirst 1975; Brewer 1976; Wellenreuther 1979. All works on this subject in the context of the British Isles owe a great deal to the classic work of Lewis Namier (born Ludwik Niemirowski), *The Structure of Politics at the Accession of George III* (Manchester: 1929).

655 Royko 1971 and O’Connor 1975. It is important to point out that authors who write about Daley with great sympathy (see Pastusiak 1997) avoid discussion of his “structure of politics,” as specified by Lewis Namier. No one raised accusations of the misappropriation of public funds or “mismanagement,” but he was commonly accused of awarding city contracts to businessmen who contributed to the Democratic Party.

656 See the section below entitled “Chicago: Mayor Richard J. Daley and the ‘Democratic Political Machine.’”

party faithful,<sup>657</sup> what we have here is yet another model by which resources can flow. What is important here is that this system does not close itself off in a patron-client arrangement. As opposed to transactions that involve traded goods or gifts, this clientelistic relationship organizes the social structures and other social bonds in which it (the relationship itself) functions and over which it dominates. Later I will talk more about this subject in connection with the party system in Italy, particularly under the governments of the *Democrazia cristiana*.<sup>658</sup> Suffice it to say here that the relocation of resources at the disposal of local and regional authorities and the state administration was, until recently, regarded in Italy, on a practically official basis, as a paternalistic function of political parties and their internal factions.<sup>659</sup> In the next few years, when the new political system becomes stable, one will be able to answer the question of how patronal systems have survived and how they have been reshaped after the recent collapse of the old party system, particularly after the collapse of the powerful Christian Democratic machine.

As is well known, history repeats itself, “first as tragedy, then as farce.” But Black Africa, where countries began the era of independence faithfully following western examples, seems today to be a scene of constant tragedy. Before the period of civil wars, which came mainly in the form of inter-tribal conflicts, the original relative stability was characterized by the exploitation of the country and the state’s resources, which was often conceived within clientelistic structures. In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, systems existed in many (though not all) equatorial countries that today are defined by anthropologists using such terms as *féodalité* (in the French) or patronage and clientage (as in the Anglo-Saxon tradition). They were characterized by significant stability; they lacked something that was typical on the Europe scene after the disappearance of what Max Weber called the *Personenverbandstaat*, namely the contradiction between formal state structures and inter-personal bonds. In the African Great Lakes region the transfer of cows – a subject to which I will return – had symbolic importance but also material importance: it represented the flow of resources from patron to client, who performed in exchange a wide variety of duties, whether they involved

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657 The experiences of the Polish Third Republic teach us that the state apparatus brought under party control means rather a growth in the number of well-paid director and advisory positions, but the number of lower officials grows automatically according to Parkinson’s law.

658 See the section below entitled “Italy: From Unification through the Crisis in Christian Democracy.”

659 Graziano 1976, 1978; the second issue of *Meridian* is devoted almost entirely to clientelism in the South.



manual labor or military services. The activities of colonial rulers in the twentieth century could not help but have an influence on these relations, though the fact is that they mainly attempted to take advantage of existing structures and their ruling apparatus was not, in this regard, excessively burdensome.

Decolonization energized these relationships, because the makeup of the ruling apparatus changed. The mono-party systems that dominate Africa today have fed the ambitions of a new elite, whose individual and collective aspirations seem insatiable, and whose *modi operandi* seem highly diverse. The literature in African Studies also provides information about the role played in this regard by clientelistic structures. For example, in his analysis of the situation in Senegal in the 1980s, Robert Fatton Jr. claims that clientelistic arrangements there are a refraction of deep social inequalities and constitute a form of coercion. It is mainly local notables who benefit from them (“peripheral clientelism”), which explains efforts on the part of central authorities to limit such bonds.<sup>660</sup> Fatton belongs to that relatively small group of Anglo-Saxon political scientists/Marxists who make use of the concept of clientelism (what is most often conspicuous among them is the fear that this concept might serve to conceal class conflict). Summarizing Senegal’s political evolution over the course of 15 years, Catherine Boone (writing in 1990) focuses on – among other issues – rivalries among factions in the mono-party system led by Léopold Sédar Senghor.<sup>661</sup> “Spoils-oriented factions,” as Boone calls them, make use of various methods. “Particularism [i.e. private interests – A.M.] and clientelism within the one-party state,” she writes, “blocked the organization of interests outside the corporatist institutions set up by the government.” Patronal bonds played in this period a decisive role in the economy in general, and in employment specifically. Particularly affected in this regard was state-controlled trade, which “allowed for the dramatic expansion of the domestic accumulating ‘class,’” which was comprised of “clients of the state,” as Boone calls them, who – through their own businesses and operating alongside members of their own families – connected political and administrative functions.<sup>662</sup>

The structures of postcolonial rule in African states – based on the references I made to the above works – indicate highly diverse ways in which clientelistic bonds

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660 For more on the subject of coercion and the unequal exchange, see Fatton 1986, 61, 69.

661 C. Boone, “State Power and Economic Crisis in Senegal,” *Comparative Politics* 22, no. 3 (1990): 341–357.

662 “This group was composed of clients of the state who collected politically generated rents: bureaucrats, politicians, UPS bigwigs and operatives, and their relatives and clients.” *Ibid.*, 347–348.

are applied. What is indeed striking here is their diversity: traditional bonds often serve to defend the interests of local notables against the interference of a voracious Center with all of its bureaucracy. But at the same time, that bureaucracy – closely tied to a party apparatus – creates new systems of dependency that serve to expedite immediate profit and to strengthen the political support of groups and individuals. As one might guess, the patron-client system is usually not recognized as proper, particularly when set against a seemingly modern administrative apparatus.

It is not easy to find a common denominator for the above considerations and to extract a conclusion from this highly varied image of relations. The hypothesis emerges that the patron-client system can be an essential factor in the relocation of resources. Essential, but – as a rule – indirect. Clients are seldom obligated to provide direct benefits or services; on the contrary, it is the patron who is supposed to care for the client and is often expected to offer him material support. But this “lop-sided” personal bond is often a form of dependence that can easily manifest itself as exploitation (in the broadest sense of the word, and in highly varied forms), which comes as a result of the client’s limited ability to maneuver, particularly when the only path to resources and personal advancement leads through the patron, with whom the client has no way to break ties.

A key factor for the clientele in these circumstances is exploitation of the public sphere, which – as a result of such exploitation – can become exceptionally large. The patron exploits his access to public resources and, thanks to his influence, is able to give his client access. He might also take them over (in a sense, “privatize” them) and use them to create the foundation of his own power. This second path was characteristic of the *Domänenstaat*.<sup>663</sup> Classic examples in this regard involve the fate of Crown lands in Poland and the rents from peasant farms in Sweden.<sup>664</sup> At the heart of the transition from a *Domänenstaat* to a *Steuerstaat*<sup>665</sup> in Europe was a more clear definition of the public sphere, particularly in Brandenburg-Prussia, which developed relatively early a modern ethos of service to the state, though the domains would long remain the basis for state finances.<sup>666</sup>

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663 This concept was created by Joseph Schumpeter: *Die Krise des Steuerstaates* (Wiesbaden: 1951; first published in 1918).

664 On methods used to retrieve these incomes, comparatively, see Maćzak 1989a; domains did not exist in Sweden and Finland, and there was thus only the *rentor*. However, on the conquered territories of Livonia and Pomerania, the estates were built by civil and military dignitaries. But starting in 1680, the *reduktion* of lost incomes was resolutely carried out.

665 Ladewig Peterson 1975.

666 For the sixteenth century, see Kąkolewski 2000.

## Chapter 8: The Clientele and Political Parties

*“When they ask me to vote,” an old farmer said, “I ask who for, and when they tell me who for, I vote. And if they don’t ask me to vote I stay home and mind my own business.”*<sup>667</sup>

*Once he spoke of his clan chiefs when they would go with us to war, now they go with us to vote.*<sup>668</sup>

*What do we have between us to quarrel about? Better that you take, and I take, and we agree we each other.*<sup>669</sup>

*Tutti vogliono un posto di lavoro su basi clientelari.*<sup>670</sup>

Has political clientelism become outdated? Does it exist today as a *residuum* on the margins of modern forms of rule, as a sign of political backwardness? Is it not a part of political life, not so much essential as natural and timeless? It is difficult to answer these questions because it would first be necessary to define all the features of political modernity. Max Weber’s vision in this regard – a *Rechtsstaat* – leaves little room for a positive answer to the last question and corresponded in large part to the German reality of his day. But in other undoubtedly advanced states – particularly in Great Britain – these issues are complicated.<sup>671</sup>

In this regard it is worth taking into consideration (though not to juxtapose Germany with Great Britain!) the above-mentioned distinction between *modernization* and *development*, as proposed by Jane and Peter Schneider with mainly Sicily in mind.

Societies that modernize in the absence of economic development are vulnerable to the ideologies and life-styles of industrial metropolitan centers, as well as to their manufactures and capital. [...] A developing society, by contrast, attempts to withdraw, at least partially, from the influence of advanced metropolitan centers in order to create a more diversified economy and exert greater control over its own natural and human resources.

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667 From an interview with a resident of the Andalusian pueblo (early 1950s), Pitt-Rivers 1972, 159.

668 Lenclud 1993, 82, according to P. Bourde, *En Corse: l’esprit de clan ...* (Paris: 1983).

669 Matuszewicz 1986, vol. 1, 688.

670 Resta 1984, 34. A statement recorded in Apulia in the early 1980s. It means essentially that “we all search for work through connections.” I cited the text in the original Italian in order to highlight how powerful the word “client” is in that local consciousness.

671 See *Private Patronage* 1982; Klimó 1997; *Clientélisme politique* 1998.

But such development requires the accumulation of capital, a process that can be slow.<sup>672</sup> A society that modernizes without parallel economic growth and appropriate social processes becomes particularly susceptible (indeed exposed) to an expanded gray zone between *publicum* and *privatum*, which – with the surrounding modernity – means the spread of clientelism and corruption. This is easy to detect.

Study of the clientele in the context of political life raises the following question: What is the connection between political patronage and clientelistic bonds in social-economic structures? And it suggests a division between countries or areas – on the one hand – in which the phenomenon of the clientele has always been (or still is) endemic and on this basis flourishes also in politics, and – on the other hand – those countries in which clientelism is mainly *political* (and in which other forms of clientelism are weak). Clientelistic systems that are political in nature show certain peculiarities. Referring to the figurative “unequal (lop-sided) friendship,” one must emphasize that, in parliamentary life, it is a bond that is – by and large – instrumental. Political loyalty, as a lasting or permanent connection with a party or faction with a patronal structure, may be tied to a leader’s charisma or to the charm of a party symbol, though actual parliamentary practices do not encourage such a connection.

This specific topic brings to mind the political reshuffling that took place in Poland especially in 2000/2001 between the “right” and the “center-right.”<sup>673</sup> By way of contrast it is worth trying to place the political camp of Józef Piłsudski (and its various phases of evolution over the course of the 1920s and 1930s) into the framework of clientelistic systems. The writings of Felicjan Sławoj Składkowski would no doubt provide excellent material for such an attempt. It opens up the issue: how do political-clientelistic networks evolve over time when they lack a charismatic leader?

In an open electoral system, neo-classical (so defined) political parties, which cannot use coercion, must respond to the wishes of the electorate, just as businesses must adapt to their clients (in the colloquial sense of the word).<sup>674</sup> Two

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672 Schneider and Schneider 1976, 3–4. See also Hansen, Schneider and Schneider 1977, 474.

673 Translator’s note: Professor Mączak is referring here to, among other developments around the years 2000 and 2001, the dissolution of Akcja Wyborcza Solidarność (Solidarity Electoral Action, AWS) and to the flow of politicians between such political parties as Unia Wolności (The Freedom Union), Platforma Obywatelska (Civic Platform), and Prawo i Sprawiedliwość (Law and Justice).

674 See Shefter 1994, 25 ff.

strategies are applied: patronage toward the individual and benefits for a supporting group, with clients in this context include immigrants, peasants, voters uprooted from their environment, the poor. There is another open question, one that for us is essential: why is it that not all parties, or rather not all parties in all countries, pick up this tool?

Leon Epstein's theory that, while parties emerged in Europe after the passage of civil service laws, they emerged in the United States before such laws were passed (which would explain America's well-developed system of political patronage<sup>675</sup>), cannot withstand confrontation with the political scene, viewed broadly, in twentieth-century Europe. This issue, I believe, might well be based on a misunderstanding regarding the social character of patronage-clientele. After all, it was one thing to create an electoral clientele that is necessary for a single, one-time act but that is sometimes tied to a given party through the diligent use of various methods of agitation and concrete benefits and services, and it is quite another thing to build an apparatus of semi-professional or professional politicians who are constantly and closely connected with party bosses. Patronage might not be worth it, if a substantial portion of public opinion is opposed to it, even if members of the party apparatus see patronage to be in their interest. Here is the decisive calculation: Whether the party "will gain more than it will lose if it intervenes within the administrative process on a partisan, case-by-case basis. Whether gains will exceed losses, or losses will exceed gains, depends upon the relative strength of the elites and party cadres" and the range and character of popular support.<sup>676</sup> Thus, differences in political culture are also involved here. I will return to this topic in connection with political clientelism in the United States.

The above-cited American political scientist Martin Shefter has come up with a broad hypothesis on this subject. He argues that, in countries where well *organized* political parties<sup>677</sup> emerged before the masses became engaged in politics, such parties were not able to use patronage as a way of bonding with the base, but rather

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675 Leon D. Epstein, *Political Parties in Western Democracies* (New York: 1967). Shefter cites Epstein in Shefter 1994 (see chapter 2 entitled "Patronage and Its Opponents: A Theory and Some European Cases," including p. 27).

676 Shefter 1994, 29–30. Shefter quotes Samuel Huntington: Political parties are "formed by the organized linking of political faction to social force" (p. 30).

677 *Ibid.*, 35. Shefter uses the terms "absolutist," "progressive coalitions," and "internally mobilized parties." His concepts were developed in previous works. Shefter writes that there are two kinds of parties: externally- and internally-mobilized. While the first tends to support itself through patronage, "internally-mobilized parties will tend to be patronage-oriented unless they operate in a setting where either an Absolutist

had to fall back on other forms of organization (churches, interest groups) and motivations (e.g. patriotic sentiments). Because they did not create a clientelistic network with local politicians, political parties were not absolutely dependent on them. On the other hand, in countries where such parties did not exist before the expansion of the franchise, they had to (and could) use patronage as a tool to gain support without encountering resistance from the bureaucracy.

Actually it does not appear to be quite so simple. In the spirit of Shefter, Jean-Louis Briquet has argued that in Germany the early development of a bureaucracy (in the sense of “civil service”) prevented political parties from reaping the benefits (the Italian term would be *utilizzazione particolaristica*) of state resources and prompted them to adopt an ideological character. But in Italy and the United States, the lack of an “autonomous administration” (?) led – the argument goes – to the “colonization of the state by parties,” which involved the mobilization of people for the appropriation (*allocazione particolaristica*) of public resources, and which had little regard for ideological content and political mottos.<sup>678</sup>

I would argue that no such all-encompassing formula applies here because what is involved is a phenomenon that is conditioned not just politically, but also culturally, and that is diverse within itself and very capable of adapting to new conditions. For this same reason it is impossible to expect – as Shmuel Eisenstadt prophesied<sup>679</sup> – that political patronage would disappear in the face of modernization (in the broadest sense of the word). Income growth indicators – for example – can be placed on a linear scale, but cultural phenomena and social bonds cannot. If one wanted to employ a graphic comparison, the latter would be best described using a sinusoid.

#### a. “*Besen-, Fakten – und Aktenrein*”

Every day, important newspapers add new facts or analysis to the subject at hand, namely the political clientele. There is no way to comprehend it all; sometimes what appears to be trivial turns out to be important. But the recent (1998) changing of the guard in the German Chancellery is of particular significance to our subject. It turns out that, even in the fatherland of Max Weber, more than a half-century after the fall of the Nazi state, the border between *publicum* and *privatum* remains unclear and decisions on where to draw that border can be appropriated

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or a Progressive coalition became entrenched prior to the mobilization of the masses into politics.” I quote from Briquet 1998, 20.

678 Briquet 1998, 20–21.

679 See also Nolte 1989, VIII.

(such an expression is, admittedly, ugly, but it is a useful one) by political parties and leaders marked by strong personalities.<sup>680</sup> This leads inexorably to my main subject: patronage-clientele.

In 2000 one of Helmut Kohl's ministers handed his office over to his successor in Gerhard Schröder's new cabinet, and he did so in tidy fashion – that is, after undesirable data from computer disks had been deleted and documents destroyed.<sup>681</sup> The mood throughout the Chancellery was – as one official put it who was overseeing the transfer of power – “as if the Russians were coming.”<sup>682</sup> Wilhelm Hennis, a political scientist at Freiburg/Br., wrote that “according to Kohl's guiding principle, the German Chancellery did its work based on absolute, *personal* loyalty,” and high officials acted like co-conspirators, of whom fidelity was required.<sup>683</sup> We will come across this problem again later, but the case of Helmut Kohl is particularly important because – I emphasize once again – it points to the limitations and dangers at the very heart of the Weberian *Rechtsstaat*. “Corruption, nepotism, cliques [*Seilschaften*] and favouritism, the primacy of political loyalty over the cold rules of civil service law, exist everywhere – more here, a bit less there.”<sup>684</sup> But Professor Hennis's final conclusion addresses the reluctance of officials in the post-Kohl Chancellery and of prosecutors to investigate crimes

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680 For the nineteenth century, see Obenaus 1989; Klimó 1997; and Trzeciakowski 1989.

681 W. Hennis, “Deutschlands untertänige Justiz. Die Kohl-Affäre: Die Bürger sollten sich schriftlich beim Generalstaatsanwalt in Köln beschweren,” *Die Zeit*, 19 April 2001, 9. The expression “Besen-, Fakten – und Aktenrein” is from Michael Neumann, as is “blitzblank, gähnend leer, ein Inbegriff abgerissener Kontinuität.” Hennis refers to *Die Zeit* 28 (2000).

682 When a certain high official from the new team entered his future office he came upon a lady stuffing documents into a shredder. When he asked what she was doing, she responded maliciously: “Surely you see.”

683 Hennis's full conclusion is broader: “Gemäß Kohls Grundprinzip des Handelns war das Bundeskanzleramt unter ihm auf absolute *persönliche* Loyalität aufgebaut. Da niemand ihm hineinreden konnte und die hohen Beamten nicht nach Gesetz und Beamteneid Berater, sondern zu persönlicher Treue verpflichtete Mitverschworene zu sein hatten, konnte ein persönliches Regiment, das *ihn* über alles moderne Amtsrecht stellte, zur obersten Maxime werden – so wie sein Ehrenwort bis heute vor Gesetz und Verfassung regiert” (author's emphases – A.M.).

684 “Ich bin nicht der Meinung, daß es in anderen deutschen Staatskanzleien völlig anders zugeht als zu Kohls Zeiten im Bundeskanzleramt. Filz, Nepotismus, Seilschaften, Vorrang der politischen Loyalität vor den kalten Regeln des Beamtenrechts gibt es überall – hier mehr, da etwas weniger.” Horst Ehmke, chief of staff of the Chancellery under Willy Brandt, made similar comments in 1969.

committed in this context, and he calls on citizens to make use of article 17 of the German constitution to petition prosecutors with their accusations.<sup>685</sup>

What we have here are political *Seilschaften* that are no doubt tied in some way with big money (which is indicated by mysterious donations made to the CDU, whose sources Kohl did not want to explain, and by similar affairs in the SPD revealed later), yet another case of connections between political clientelism and corruption, the motive for which did not involve direct and personal profit in cash, but rather “party interests” (that is, *power* and – in the case of Kohl himself – a *mission*).

## 1. “Palimpsest of Friendship”: Victorian Patronage among Gentlemen

*The manners and habits of patronage [...] were embedded in the manners and habits of society. Patronage was an extension of ordinary gentlemanly intercourse, by the same means. Here lay a good reason for its continued acceptance.*

C. J. Hamilton<sup>686</sup>

The topic of discussion now will be the civil service and patronage in the army and fleet of Great Britain. And it is appropriate here particularly to discuss the issue of protection in the East India Company and, after it was dissolved, in the administration of that pearl of the British crown.

The parliamentary system before the Great Reform Act of 1832 was widely known as the “Old Corruption.”<sup>687</sup> “Political corruption” was the eponym of the era, when Britain became the “world’s factory” and the country ruled the seas, confronted Napoleon, and built an empire. How to reconcile these facts?

Reform of the British electoral system seriously restricted political patronage, but it did not eliminate it right away. Estimates are that, even after the new legislation went into effect, patrons selected 59 members in 32 districts in England

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685 Some 13,000 readers responded to Hennis’s call, which no doubt had some influence over the government’s actions. D. Zagrodzka, “Opoka na ruchomych piaskach,” *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 18–19 August 2001, 9–11. The author (without defining her terms) also points to Kohl’s characteristically patronal way of working as head of the CDU, and to his sense of mission.

686 Hamilton 2000, 59.

687 Rubinstein 1983, 55. Regarding other aspects of the “Old Corruption” I refer to Wellenreuther (1979) and to my own comparative reflections in Mączak (1994) 2000, 216–219.



and 73 members from 42 proprietary boroughs in Wales.<sup>688</sup> Even though the social-political aspect of this phenomenon interests me, it is worth emphasizing that, for British elites at the time, reform was rather a moral issue. Much like in France, where a certain amount of wealth gave one the right to an aristocratic title, in Great Britain a single property owner (along with perhaps a couple tenants who were dependent on him) voted in certain “rotten boroughs” – the symbol of which was the impressive settlement of Old Sarum near Salisbury. *Ius patronatus* was a *right*, sanctified by custom and tradition, which was now being taken away from these British elites. We find evidence for the depth of this problem in the case of a man who would later be Prime Minister (4 times), William Gladstone. His father, a wealthy merchant, moved from the Whigs to the Tories and, based on the recommendation of Prime Minister Robert Peel, he took a seat in the House of Commons in 1818–1827. His career in parliament was ruined when he lost his seat in a bribery scandal (nonetheless he became a baronet in 1846). Gladstone himself initially saw in the Reform Act of 1832 “an element of Anti-Christ,” but he soon reconciled himself with it, an event that coincided in a certain way with an extraordinary, emotional revelation-experience he had in St. Peter’s Basilica in Rome.<sup>689</sup> Five weeks later, during the same trip, Gladstone received by letter a proposal from the Duke of Newcastle to take a seat in the House of Commons representing Newcastle’s private borough, Newark.

This first parliamentary reform changed nothing in the system by which bureaucrats were recruited, who made up a second, parallel field of patronage in the system of government. A British scholar examining the fall of the “Old Corruption” writes:

I found, much to my surprise, that a sizable proportion of those who flourished during the early nineteenth century were neither landowners in the strict sense, nor manufacturers nor merchants, but were engaged in activities which would now be classified as in the professional, public administrative and defense occupational categories, including especially Anglican clerics, soldiers, lawyers and judges, government bureaucrats and placemen.<sup>690</sup>

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688 For estimates, see N. Gash, *Politics in the Age of Peel* (London: 1953).

689 Phillip Magnus, *Gladstone. A Biography* (1954) 1960, 12. As we read in his travel diary, the young Gladstone recognized in Rome – putting it simply – that the Anglican faith did not have a monopoly on truth in matters of faith. See the unusually interesting work *The Gladstone Diaries*, ed. M.R.D. Foot and H.C.G. Matthew (Oxford), under the date 13 May 1832.

690 Rubinstein 1983, 56.

The bureaucracy grew quickly. In 1797 central and local branches of the government employed 16,000 people. Over the course of the next half century that number fluctuated (in 1841 it dropped from a maximum of 27,000 to 17,000), but in 1871 there were 54,000 government employees; in 1891, 79,000; ten years later 116,000; by the outbreak of the First World War, Great Britain had 281,000 government officials.<sup>691</sup> The question of how to properly recruit these people became a fundamental administrative problem – as least as viewed from the perspective of those in power. But at the same time employment “in a government position” represented, as before, the best chance for a young person without resources to advance in life. Before 1854 chaos reigned in recruitment, with “public patronage” – that is, positions in public institutions gained through private recommendation – blended with other forms of patronage.

In the nineteenth century patronage was broadly understood to mean all activities intended to support individuals trying to find work. One spoke of “industrial” or “working-class patronage” when, for example, the chocolate producer George Cadbury employed girls to work in his factory; he spoke personally with each of them and he took lively interest in the morality of his employees and their families.<sup>692</sup> It was in everyone’s interest that this issue be regulated, including those who wielded patronage; after all, the huge pressure applied by suppliants in the public sphere could make the life of a well-connected person miserable. Sir Walter Scott and the wife of Warren Hastings (one of those who helped create the British civil service and who was, for some time, Governor-General of India) were famous for the intensive support they lent to the young people recommended to them. It was said that “during the governor-generalship of the Marquess of Hastings [...] ‘if one whistled or called outside the government house at Calcutta some Jock or Mac would assuredly appear at the window’”<sup>693</sup>

This leads us to a huge issue, namely to civil and military service in India. Such service represented not only a certain amount of personal risk, as a result of the Indian climate, but also an incomparable opportunity to enrich oneself. In the navy of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth centuries an important role was played by profits derived from “prize money” (the value of goods taken from enemy ships); in this regard Admiralty courts extended broad privileges to commanders. And officers on ships run by the East India Company (so-called “East-India men”), who were not well paid, placed particular value on their right

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691 Bourne 1986, 22.

692 Ibid., 115 ff. (from the year 1882).

693 By “Jock or Mac” is meant a Scot. Ibid., 129.

to load their own goods: a captain could load up to 30 tons and a second officer up to 6 tons. Estimates are that, while a captain could earn up to £10,000 at a time, a new official at India House earned £20 per year (from which he could not make a living) and – after three years – £70. Only a department director could count on between £500 and £2000 per year. In this light one can understand the influx of people competing for positions as cadets and writers in all three of the colony’s presidencies: Bengal, Madras and Bombay.<sup>694</sup> Whoever survived the climate and tropical diseases and received financial support from his family could, after a number of years, count on a decent salary, one that was – in any case – larger than one would receive at home in Britain. Bengal was a prestigious station; Bombay paid the least at the beginning, but promotion there was often more rapid.<sup>695</sup>

Company directors were hired who swore that they would not benefit financially through the nomination or appointment of employees, so a scandal broke out when, in 1783, an announcement appeared in the press in which an individual offered a thousand pounds for a position as writer in Bengal. In 1772, word was that people were offering even two or three thousand pounds for such positions. What else were candidates for service to do if they could not find “access” to influence people? These problems were addressed by the East India Company leadership.<sup>696</sup>

Such cases had disappeared by the time the century was out and were replaced by protection provided by members of the House of Commons. The Charter Act of 1793 limited the ages within which a person could be first hired in India to between 15 and 22 years; in subsequent years, more than any such rule, this one was carefully followed.<sup>697</sup> It is not surprising that mothers of sons looking for protection protested at the office of East India Company directors and that, even-

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694 It must be pointed out here that this pressure to attain a position in India was, at that time, a relatively new phenomenon, one that dated back to the years of peace after the Seven Years’ War, when the Company gained strength in Southern Asia. The man who established British power on the peninsula, a victor at the Battle of Plassy (1757), Robert Clive (1725–1774), was sent at the age of 18 to Madras as a writer, mainly because – as Macaulay writes – he was an extremely difficult boy who was not at all promising. See “Lord Clive” in *Lord Macaulay’s Essays and Lays of Ancient Rome* (London: 1889), 503. See also the essay “Warren Hastings.”

695 Holzman 1926, 229; Sunter 1986, 14–19.

696 *Abuse of Patronage* 1801.

697 Such a conclusion is indicated by an investigation into alleged corruption, *Proceedings* 1828, 16.

tually, women were prohibited from entering the India House.<sup>698</sup> The atmosphere in these offices is illustrated by this letter from a suppliant in 1801:

I conclude you are aware that when a great man comes into office, his little friends immediately think that he cannot do better than employ his power in their service and that besides this the friends of their friends think they are also entitled to a share of his favours. I take this system to be so well established that you will not be surprised at my having received the enclosed, or at my confidence in begging you to read it.<sup>699</sup>

J.M. Bourne described this situation as “constant disequilibrium.”

Every favour asked for and every one given created a new obligation, a future claim for reciprocation and the excuse for further solicitation. In this way, the lives of whole families and whole generations became shot through with patronage. Patronage was laid upon layer of patronage, a palimpsest of friendship, loyalty, obligation, charity, humanity, hope, ambition and service.<sup>700</sup>

That is a fine, literary way of describing the situation, but it is not necessarily the case that such a description provides evidence of disequilibrium. Rather the reverse: one might well regard the persistence of this system, along with its prevalence, as a sign of stability. Bourne continues in the same vein: “Family was pregnant with obligations, dilemmas and opportunities.” But this system was not limited to the family alone; rather, it extended to other relatives, even distant relatives, including those by marriage. Efforts to fulfill family goals were not a matter of sentiment, but of necessity: no one felt safe beyond the confines of the family.

What we are talking about here is the “middle class” understood not as a class of small- and medium-sized entrepreneurs (as broadly understood lately in Poland) but as a stratum populated by those who are not at all wealthy but who do not “work with their hands.” At the same time, candidates for protection were also young people from good and even very good families. This “first industrial nation,” as Peter Mathias called it, had an aristocracy whose influence was highly developed, with one-quarter of all land belonging to 110 of the 970,000 land owners. The exception was London, where the names of streets and squares in the busiest and richest neighborhoods offer us indications that property owners were well-born. In the nineteenth century the greatest incomes came not from land, though the great land owners enjoyed not only high prestige but also powerful influence. Between 1780 and the outbreak of the First World War, 17 of the 25 British prime ministers were either peers or sons of peers. The decisive influence of aristocrats

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698 O'Malley 1931, 229; Bourne 1986, 93.

699 R. Gibbs to Lord Lewisham (1801), Bourne 1986, 96–97.

700 Ibid., 97.

among the Tories weakened only in the middle of the 1960s, when they began to organize annual party congresses based on Labor's example.

All of this is connected to the patronage-protection system, in which the aristocracy's role was key by virtue of birth and through its broader function in society.<sup>701</sup> But the elite's social duties were never precisely defined because public opinion in this regard – as Bourne puts it – was “at once idealistic and principled and cynical and pragmatic.”<sup>702</sup> No doubt both group and individual expectations were at play here. Generally I would define it this way: a traditional obligation to be generous fell on the shoulders of the wealthy and powerful and distinguished them from the rest. But this generosity should not be understood as simple hand-outs, as it had been at lofty moments in days gone by. In the eyes of those in the middle and lower strata of British society, it involved the elite's obligation to support those who deserved it. Patronage was supposed to alleviate social anxieties by supporting those in need. At a time when social security programs did not yet exist, and when people were already experiencing the effects of powerful economic transformation, this was a task of great importance. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, aristocrats were convinced that, from their higher perspective, they were best positioned to perceive which “merits” and “virtues” were worthy of praise and support. Davies Gilbert (1767–1839) – member of parliament, President of the Royal Society, and patron to inventors (including the chemist Humphry Davy and the engineer-inventor Richard Trevithick) – once declared that wealthy people should be “guardians and trustees’ for the social order, with responsibility for ensuring that able men fulfil themselves whatever their social origins.”<sup>703</sup> No doubt the reverse was also true: the perception of the nation's elite took shape in large part on the basis of how it was able to fulfill its own social obligations, because the duties of well-born patrons were to search out merit and to help those who deserved support both in the private sphere and in public service.

To illustrate: during a storm in Leicestershire (the year was 1783) two characters took cover under a tree, Baron Francis Rawdon (1754–1826), a decorated veteran of the war against the rebels in America, and John Shakespear, the son of a small farmer. The aristocrat was struck by the peasant's intelligence. Later he gave him an education, and the young man of humble origins, talented in languages, became an orientalist. Rawdon, mentioned above as the Marquess of Hastings and

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701 For more on this issue, see Cannadine 1991.

702 Bourne 1986, 56–57. Mary Edgeworth's novel *Patronage* gives us a literary treatment of these issues, and it is from this work that I extracted one of the epigraphs for the introduction to my book.

703 Bourne 1986, 57.

a bit earlier as Governor-General of India, was able to appoint Shakespear professor at the military seminary at Addiscombe, where he trained officers for service in India. From the sale of his textbooks to cadets, he was able to accumulate the means to purchase the estate on which his father had worked and to establish the beginnings of his family's financial success.<sup>704</sup> (We cannot conclude from this – I should emphasize – that, during a storm, one should take cover under a tree.)

The belief that a member of the elite (whether political, entrepreneurial, or intellectual) has – through his position above others – a particularly auspicious perspective on matters, and thus can and should use that position to promote promising individuals, is deeply rooted in Anglo-Saxon society. It is the fruit of political stability and durable institutions. Similarly, each U.S. Senator has the right to nominate one candidate per year to the military academy at West Point, and in Great Britain a local parish priest, a member of parliament, a bank director and many other figures can act in an official capacity as a person of public trust. Mistrust of the political class – whether it be reflexive or based on experience – is not the heritage of “contented nations,” if one may generalize freely.

The expansion of patronage – as I have repeated often in this book – benefited the patron, but – as Bourne claims – the true reward in nineteenth-century Britain was not money, but the satisfying and ennobling “act of giving.” That having been said, this act could also become a burdensome duty. A certain secretary responsible for Irish affairs submitted his resignation after four months because he was not able to handle the high number of applications. Robert Peel, after becoming prime minister in 1841, wrote: “Such is the number of applications addressed to me for employment in the Civil Service that I should be only deluding candidates [...] by holding out expectations which it will never be in my power to realize.” In his first weeks at 10 Downing Street he spent six hours everyday responding to letters, even during Christmas. It astonishes us today to read that he carried out this duty personally and did not hand the work of such correspondence over to a secretary. How small was this world, the world of gentlemen, of educated and well-bred people, even if they were not necessarily wealthy!

As this era was coming to an end, testimony to the existence of this small world was provided by a young Winston Churchill in his diary; during the colonial wars in India, Sudan and Southern Africa he was constantly crossing paths with friends and acquaintances from Harrow School, Sandhurst, and the 4th Queen's Own Hussars; with relatives, with people he had gotten to know in his mother's salon, and with his father's former subordinates.

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704 Ibid., 67.

Thus, no doubt, Gladstone's preoccupation (much like that of other prime ministers and other important ministers) resulted from the fact that a significant portion of the letters-applications for positions in the state administration came from families whose members would not be satisfied with just anything and would not appreciate a response from just any bureaucrat (the only way to handle them was with a personal, hand-written letter). But over time the problem of recruiting personnel for the English bureaucracy and the overseas service grew quickly and thus became more complicated. The appeal that Rudyard Kipling formulated at the very end of the nineteenth century for the "best ye breed" to "take up the white man's burden" raised a dilemma, one which had come to light at least a half century earlier.<sup>705</sup> In the middle of the century, the Crimean War had revealed the inefficiency of the British ruling apparatus, particularly its military leadership, and the self-sacrifice and bravery of its officers and soldiers could not fully compensate for this problem. The pressure to obtain favors within the army was huge, and though at least the navy tried to resist it, strict adherence to the rules of seniority made it difficult for talented individuals to advance.<sup>706</sup> In 1852 the House of Commons debated the issue of preferences given to officers' sons. A parliamentary commission determined that, from 1834/35 to 1850/51, 857 of 4,900 cadets were son of officers. These gentlemen did not argue about the facts, but the number 1,082 was also tossed around<sup>707</sup> and projects were proposed to regulate those numbers. Most relevant in terms of patronage *sensu stricto* were arguments put forward in connection with the policy to bring India under the direct rule of Her Royal Highness. On the one hand, situations in which a minister wielded patronage could lead to decisions being made under the influence of political considerations or "private friendships" (in any case, such a situation would open the minister up to accusations of this kind). On the other hand, a lack of supervision over the distribution of positions could weaken the minister in his position. The main argument against bringing an end to patronage is interesting: "the introduction of a competitive system, in primary appointments to the army, strikes at the very root and principle of military discipline and organization."<sup>708</sup> Today it is difficult to understand such an argument.

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705 Take up the White Man's Burden –  
 Send forth the best ye breed –  
 Go, bind your sons to exile  
 To serve your captives' need. [...]   
 "The White Man's Burden" (1899)

706 Dandeker 1978.

707 *Claims of the Indian Army* 1852, 11.

708 *Indian Patronage* 1858, 5.

The state administrative apparatus grew in the nineteenth century, but this fact did not satisfy the needs and ambitions of the “new middle class.” Demobilization in the army and navy, and in particular with the liquidation of many associated civil agencies, left a relatively large number of people without financial means. Army officers were moved to so-called half-pensions. Though it is easy to imagine the flood of applications, letters of recommendation, and ladies intervening on behalf of “promising young people,” what is less obvious are the mechanisms by which decisions were made. The system was as complicated and perplexing for the protégé as it was for the broker-patron; the fact that a supportive official handled any particular issue complicated relations between him and his superior, ministerial committees, and colleagues whose assistance he had used.

John Wilson Croker, a first secretary of the Admiralty for more than 20 years, remained influential in the British body politic until his death in 1857, and his correspondence over many years (1809–1830) has been preserved and collected.<sup>709</sup> This Irishman, connected with the Tories, was active in both the Admiralty and the House of Commons. Without connections with people in high positions nothing came quickly. In 1808 he entered parliament as a member for Downpatrick in Ulster; he worked satisfactorily on behalf of his most influential constituents.<sup>710</sup> Though he lost his seat five years later, he still had to fulfill promises he had made earlier, including when he regained a seat in parliament in 1817, this time from Cornwall. In the flood of cases, it was a success when he was able to place an applicant onto one of the many candidate lists maintained by every minister. A kind of line formed in which the most highly supported candidates skipped to the front, but once the lucky person was appointed, his efforts did not end, because soon the issue of promotion emerged. Hence, Croker uses the following argument with the treasury secretary: “You promoted him once before, and if you can give him this additional step you will be rid of him forever.”<sup>711</sup> And in fact this poor man with a large family but with modest ambitions disappeared from Croker’s correspondence.

Success in handling such matters required great focus and precision in the maintenance of notes and records. For example the secretary kept a letter from Viscount Melville, First Lord of the Admiralty, regarding a certain John Jesse, whom Melville was supporting because Jesse was someone from the Duke of Clarence’s circle (which means royal family circles). But the letter’s recipient reminded

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709 See Hamilton 2000.

710 Ibid., 51 ff.

711 Ibid., 52.



the viscount that he had already once nominated Mr. Jesse and that he was able to indicate exactly where.

There were surprisingly few key positions in the central administration. The Lord Chancellor made decisions for positions involving the Church; the secretary of the treasury, the Chief Secretary for Ireland, and the Prime Minister himself made decisions regarding government positions. Other ministers and undersecretaries of state had few positions at their disposal. The line of potential candidates was handled by a hierarchy of officials who pushed their cases through higher and higher instances of authority. In turn, the candidate would feel obligated to whomever had provided him support, as expressed in words like these: “[...] and if you are so good as to grant the favour, you will confer a great obligation on me.” In full accordance with the theory of gift exchange and the principles of clientelistic systems, such a broad obligation, over the course of years, could be set in stone.

Such often troublesome issues seem to have been an important element of how a high official functioned, which is what C. J. Hamilton sees in Croker’s correspondence in 1818 with the Commander-in-Chief of the Mediterranean Fleet, Admiral Charles Penrose. The first secretary requests from the admiral fragments from the marble and porphyry columns that were so common in Tunisia, in order to decorate his salon. The admiral promises to provide them, but he also mentions areas in which the two could cooperate, an exchange of services that could turn out to be beneficial for both sides: from time to time, the admiral had positions to fill, and an obligated official in the Admiralty was no small asset.

This world of middle and high level administration (in the military, civilian, and Anglican spheres) was the domain of gentlemen, who were supposed to extend such favors to one another even across party divisions, unless the matter at hand was a seat in parliament. Corruption played only a small role here, indeed a marginal role, even though something was accepted (and acceptable) that might well be defined as involving material resources. Croker collected revolutionary pamphlets, the kind that one could find on the continent, and he liked noble drinks (sherry, port, madeira, champagne, arrack from the East Indies, curacao available in Holland, just not wine from the Cape of Good Hope). These products must have been high quality and not inexpensive – and he paid for them. Sometimes one had to provide someone in weak health a comfortable cabin or arrange some other sort of small thing, though it had to be something that required a favor and effort and was not available through normal means.<sup>712</sup>

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712 Ibid., 53–55.

All of the above allows the historian today to approach this system with some understanding. But the pressure of money sometimes led to corruption, which had little if anything to do with patronage. Corruption was an object of discussion within British society, and the protocols of an East India Company, circulated as leaflets<sup>713</sup> read like Dickens' *The Pickwick Papers*. One gets the impression that these gentlemen sense an unpleasant smell, but they do so precisely because they are trying to emphasize the dignity of their own excellent circle of people. It is worth quoting a fragment of one protocol, to give a feeling for the moment. The session from the year 1801 included great praise for:

the Chairs of the Company [which] were now filled by men, who had never been known to deviate from their duty. [...] They were not contaminated by the systems of Rousseau and Voltaire; they lived like Christians in a Christian country; they knew that religion was the best tie to bind society together, and keep men honest. He [Mr. Durant] could not help reflecting with peculiar pleasure, that the Chairs were so filled at this time; because if the Committee should go on with their enquiry, which he trusted would be recommended to them this day, headed and constituted as it was, the Proprietors and the World would be able, on some future day, to determine by their report, whether the rumours that had spread abroad were right or wrong.<sup>714</sup>

The investigation did not indicate who was guilty, but the content of the speeches is interesting. There is no doubt that Company directors were under intense pressure. One of them was asked by a certain young man under that director's care if he thought it was worth giving 3 thousand pounds for a position as writer in Bengal, a proposition he had just received. It is interesting that, instead of taking this opportunity to teach the young man about prohibited practices, the director sought out information whether – in cases where such transactions had been concluded – it had been worth the money.

Richard Twining (1749–1824), who was one of the Company's most influential directors (1793–1816) and was founder of the tea import company that is famous even today, recognized that the situation was complicated, though he emphasized that neither money nor other such valuables (including jewels) could influence patronage. For example, a member of the council of directors accepts in deposit a significant sum, and after a considerable amount of time the depositor asks him for a "writership" – that is, a position as writer, a request that could not be fulfilled. Or this example: a director has a position at his disposal, but he does not want to send his son to India, and another gentleman has a son who does not want to

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713 I found in the British Library two publications on this subject: *Abuse of Patronage* 1801 and *Proceedings* 1828.

714 *Abuse of Patronage* 1801, 22–23.

join the clergy. Would an exchange be acceptable? “Certainly not.” Which raises the question: why not? Because that would amount to a sale (“It is to all intents and purposes a complete sale”).

Analysis of another protocol of an investigation indicates where the line was drawn between legal patronage and corruption.<sup>715</sup> Patronage allowed a position to be given to a young acquaintance or even a close relative under the assumption that a gentleman in a high position would not support an unsuitable individual, and that the closer that gentleman is to the individual, the better he knows him. A mock transaction involving the appointment of a supposed acquaintance would, however, be a crime. A case in the years 1827–1828 was based on the fact that a member of the Company Court of Directors, Charles Elton Prescott, recommended to a certain Colonel Toone<sup>716</sup>, who was in charge of cadet enlistment, a certain young individual whom Prescott knew well and who was “as fine a young man as any in England.” Prescott added that “he knew his father.” But this was not the truth and the colonel testified against Prescott. The matter turned out to be very complicated and involved many people, with evidence being bank notes of £500 and £800, or rather – strictly speaking – their detached halves, which would be joined only after the appointment document had been signed!<sup>717</sup> First a committee of the Company Court of Directors found Prescott not guilty and then it reversed its verdict, but the Court of King’s Bench finally found him not guilty. Only smaller characters were convicted.

It is difficult to reconcile oneself with what these documents attempt to convey. Particularly, it is difficult not to suspect that Company directors defended their colleague. There is no doubt that personal patronage was not only abused (allegedly only the acquaintance with the candidate), but that it could also be a commodity in candidates’ efforts to gain positions as writers or cadets. In the end it was a matter of course that patronage meant support above all for relatives and acquaintances, people in one’s own circle. As long as an effective system for selecting candidates was not worked out, this system of patronage was neither illogical nor dysfunctional. Such a system is, in fact, not so strange to us even today.

Traditional patronage: Is it corruption? Is it functional? This problem loomed large, at least in the minds of the British intellectual elite, as evidenced by an essay

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715 *Proceedings* 1828.

716 I was unable to find this name in the Dictionary of National Biography.

717 “The papers were put into the hands of Sutton [no longer *Mr.* Sutton] and the use made of his possession of them was an endeavor to obtain a delivery of the remaining halves of two bank notes for £500 and £800, and actually to obtain a delivery of remaining half of the latter.”

on Bacon published in 1837 by Thomas Babington Lord Macaulay (1800–1859), who was at once politician, popular historian, writer, and legal advisor to the Supreme Council of India (with an annual salary of £10,000).<sup>718</sup> As David Wootton has written: “It is worth remarking that fundamental to Macaulay’s famous attack on Bacon is the rejection of a culture of patronage, friendship and gift giving in the name of the values of a professionalized civil service.”<sup>719</sup> This was an early signal of approaching changes.

The first attempt to find a complex solution to these problems arguably came with a report prepared by two high officials, Sir Charles Edward Trevelyan (1807–1886) and his colleague Stafford Henry Northcote. Working for the East India Company, Trevelyan eventually became Governor of Madras, and he later served as the Indian Finance Minister. In 1854 he also served as Assistant Secretary of the Treasury in London. Stafford (who later took the titles Earl of Idesleigh and Viscount St. Cyres) was a conservative politician with a long career ahead of him in parliament and government in general.

The report that they co-authored formed the basis for legislation on the civil service, whose significance is often compared to the Reform Act of 1832 and the Municipal Corporations Act, which became the foundation of the kingdom’s modern parliamentary and municipal system. The report concisely presented the existing situation (the section was barely 23 pages *in quarto*) and praised the idea of a permanent civil service, one that was independent of any governing party and was based on clearly conceived principles for recruitment, promotion and official responsibility. In these regard the United Kingdom was well behind Prussia (where competitions for state service were known since the 1770s) and France (where such reform had been implemented gradually since the times of the first emperor). Trevelyan did not limit himself to pushing his project through the normal legislative path; he also skillfully (and often unscrupulously) acted to influence public opinion: he wrote to *The Times* and organized leaks of information to the press.<sup>720</sup>

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718 *Lord Macaulay’s Essays...*, 349–418. This essay first appeared in the *Edinburgh Review* (July 1837). The salary quoted here is recorded in *Chambers Biographical Dictionary* (1938 edition).

719 David Wootton, “Francis Bacon: Your Flexible Friend,” in *The World of the Favourite*, ed. J.H. Elliott and W.B. Brockliss (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999), 202–203 (near the end of footnote 7).

720 In one letter to *The Times*, he wrote: “There can be no doubt that our high Aristocracy have been accustomed to employ the Civil Establishments as a means of providing for the Waifs and Strays of their Families – as a sort of Foundling Hospital where

Similar solutions were considered within the East India Company as early as 1833, but the directors effectively scuttled them. They returned in the 1850s in connection with transformations in the education system. “Merit” (in the sense of qualifications) as a criterion of employment became a condition for acceptance at a time when education began to ensure social status, all of which was tied to the expansion of the education system in general.

The British public school system emerged, as we know, from educational institutions that date back as far as the Middle Ages, but also from those that were established when, in the sixteenth century, something was needed to replace religious schools that had been dissolved with the introduction of the Reformation. In the nineteenth century, based on those old and famous examples, new schools emerged that – like the religious schools – were not run for profit but in the public interest. At a time when very few people were able to benefit from a university education, the role that public schools played in the education of British elites was decisive. It was costly to send a son to such a school, but it was well worth the family’s investment. At boarding school, youngsters from the middle class rubbed shoulders with aristocrats, refined their life habits, learned proper pronunciation. These schools did not lose their significance as higher education became more common because a significant percentage of students at Oxford and Cambridge had not come out of those schools. The distinction in British society between public school graduates and “grammar school boys” was clear 200 years ago and 50 years ago, and it retains a certain significance even today in English pronunciation and particular cultural styles. But what has been most significant might be the contacts one makes in one’s youth and the value of the old boys’ network in attaining public positions.

But let me return to the subject of protection and favors in public service. For graduates of British public schools (e.g. for the character Stalky and his colleagues from Kipling’s novel *Stalky & Co.*) a career in service as an official or officer in the colonies was a matter of course; in fact there was practically

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those who had no energy to make their own way in the open professions, or for whom it was not convenient to purchase one in the Army, might receive a nominal official but real pension, for life, at the expense of the Public. The Dukes of Norfolk, for instance, have provided for their illegitimate children in that manner, generation after generation. There are still several of them in the Public Service, and one of them is the most notorious idler and jobber in it.” Bourne 1986, 166. Bourne believed that Trevelyn’s “letter [...] was the merest fustian which will not stand up to a little gentle questioning much less detailed investigation.” Bourne, *Patronage and Society*, 166.

no alternative.<sup>721</sup> Trevelyan argued that it was important for the best graduates from these schools and universities to go to India. Such circumstances also created opportunities for these schools, which were – at this time – experiencing a crisis as centers of research and educational institutions; hence, the support from schools, on the one hand, and mistrust and irony on the other. All of which explains Lord Robert Cecil’s definition of the Northcote-Trevelyan Report as a “schoolmasters’ scheme” – a ruse, almost a conspiracy, of pedagogues designed to support their graduates and to raise their own importance in society.<sup>722</sup> Resistance came primarily in the form of opposition to reform and to the introduction of a rigorous system of public service examinations. Interesting in this regard is the example, from around the year 1855, of Bernal Osborne, who – at least on one occasion – proctored examinations personally. Bourne writes:

After examinations were introduced into the Admiralty, shortly before the creation of the commission of 1855, the first vacancy was given to Augustus Spalding, the son of a friend of Bernal Osborne, the Parliamentary Secretary to the Admiralty, and a young man well known for the insufficiency of his education. Osborne declared that this first examination was so important that he would conduct it himself. He withdrew to his room with Spalding to reemerge after a suitably decent interval to declare that the candidate had passed with flying colors, especially in Theology!<sup>723</sup>

A large role in this system of favors and protection was played by the process by which candidates were nominated to take examinations, which was not a matter of open competition. Members of parliament, who often backed candidates, claimed

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721 R. Kipling, *Stalky & Co.* (1899). Kipling, born in Bombay in 1865 (he died in 1936), included in this novel about public school life a powerful biographical element (he appears as the character Beetle). Friends in his little gang (Stalky and M’Turk) presented these issues years later in a separate book devoted to Kipling. *Nota bene* Kipling, who helped create the literary myth of British India, never joined the army.

722 Bourne 1986, 33; Hamilton 2000, 63.

723 Bourne 1986, 37. The state system implemented after the British government took over the East India Company anticipated exams in 12 selected fields. There were 6,875 possible points, with 1,000 possible points in mathematics; 500 points in chemistry, electricity, magnetism, natural history, geology and mineralogy; 375 points in Sanskrit; 750 points in history and ancient Greek literature; etc. There were 500 possible points for an English essay; 1000 points in English literature in connection with law and constitutional issues; 375 points in the living languages. Theology was omitted. Precise data in this regard can be found in John Murray, *A Handbook for India...*, vol. 1: *Madras* (London: 1859), CIVff. *A propos* Latin: many fans of Kipling do not know that *Stalky & Co.* contained in its full version a chapter devoted to a class led by professor King in which there was almost as much Latin as there was English.

that the examinations strengthened, and did not eliminate, the protection system because, whereas every candidate's success served as testimony to the efficacy of the intermediary-protector, his every failure was the fault of the commission. The rules were changed in 1870, when access to examinations was opened to the public, though I am not certain that this system of presenting candidates was truly brought to an end given that Robert Bruce Lockhart, who would later become a famous British diplomat-agent in Bolshevik-run Moscow, owed his "nomination for the next examination" for consular service to the initiative and protection of Lord John Morley. This in the year 1910!<sup>724</sup>

This favor/protection vs. examination alternative was only apparently simple. Today, while the system's frailties seem obvious, we consider its virtues with reluctance. But we must understand that doubts could arise even when, as the result of examination, the right selection was made. Above, I mentioned the examination in theology used for entrance into the navy, but much later Winston Churchill himself had to wait a long time before he could enter officers' school at Sandhurst to finally become a colonel of the 4th Hussars because he was not able to pass the exam in Latin.<sup>725</sup>

What qualifications did a British civil servant or commissioned officer need? How could one evaluate through the exam the kind of "leadership potential" that was so important for service in the colonies? Psychological tests were not known in the nineteenth century, but can a test determine who is, and who is not, a gentleman?

J. M. Bourne, whom I have cited several times already, conducted his research not without prejudice.<sup>726</sup> However, he wrote:

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724 Lockhart 1950, 41. His father "produced [...] a letter from John Morley announcing that he had been able to procure for me a nomination for the next examination." The proposition was unexpected because Lockhart's grandfather had been one of Morley's rivals for a seat in parliament, "and such is the sporting spirit of English political life that twenty years afterwards the great man had seen fit to bestir himself on behalf of the grandson of the defeated candidate." Churchill (1937) also wrote about Lord Morley's great style and statesmanship. John Morley (1838–1923, as of 1908 Viscount) distinguished himself as the author of excellent biographies, mainly of Enlightenment thinkers but also of Gladstone, whom he supported (including on issues related to the civil service). He was an energetic Chief Secretary for Ireland and Secretary of State for India.

725 Churchill and Lockhart, along with many others, described the courses and tutoring that developed around the examinations for state service.

726 "The prejudice that had to be conquered was my working-class-grammar-school-boy's hostility to patronage. Only when I realized that there was more to patronage than an iniquitous obstacle in the path of ambitious meritocrats did I begin to realize its importance as a historical problem." Bourne 1986, vii.

The “evil” administrative consequences of political jobbery must be consigned to the dustbin of history [...]. Administration was not sacrificed to political utility in the nineteenth century. The competent manning of the public services became increasingly necessary for the efficacy of government in the face of unique and intractable problems.<sup>727</sup>

In other words: since the problem emerged, the problem was solved. Someone writing from a different geographic region can only express envy that Bourne could regard this to be so obvious. But Winston Churchill, who had more parliamentary and military experience than anyone else, considered it proper to praise Prime Minister Asquith with the following words:

Loyal as he was to his colleagues, he never shrank, when the time came and public need required it, from putting them aside – once and for all. Personal friendship might survive if it would. Political association was finished. But how else can States be governed?<sup>728</sup>

How else? Everyone knows.

## 2. Italy: From Unification through the Crisis in Christian Democracy

*Spartizione clientelare camuffata da appalto*<sup>729</sup>

[...] *la politica clientelare* [...]

*Non siamo Bocconi per soddisfare appetiti clientelari.*<sup>730</sup>

Such slogans as those in the above epigraph, which I saw used during strikes in Rome, would be unthinkable in Poland. We in Poland speak and write about *ku-moterstwo* (cronyism, nepotism, favoritism) and about *kumple u władzy* (buddies

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727 Bourne 1986, 191. Rubinstein, citing the critical opinions put forward by E.P. Thompson, summarized his work in this way: Victorianism was “not sexual prudery and an apology for capitalistic exploitation but the imposition of rationality and ‘modernity’ upon the irrational and pre-modern – a gain for the ordinary man, not a loss – as well as individuality, the coincidence of merit and reward, and the extension of responsibility and privacy.” Rubinstein 1983, 86.

728 “Herbert Henry Asquith,” in Churchill 1937, 114.

729 “The clientelistic division disguised as contract.” I saw such a slogan on a banner held by striking workers picketing the Rome headquarters of a privatized state firm INA (Istituto Nazionale delle Assicurazioni) in 1992.

730 “We are not a *bocconi* to satisfy the appetites of patronage.” *Bocconi* is difficult to translate literally, but it involves the “amount of food one can chew and swallow at one time” – thus, a mouthful. I [Professor Mączak] want to thank Marzio Achille Romani, Professor at Università Luigi Bocconi in Milan, for kindly explaining this slogan.



in power, perhaps even the network of “good ol’ boys”) because we are sensitive, at least in terms of language, to horizontal (and not vertical) relationships. But Italians are highly sensitive to, and aware of, vertical (clientelistic) bonds, which is the result of the Italians’ personal experience and of a deeply rooted cultural-political type, though this subject matter appears often in the media, particularly during parliamentary elections or after a political scandal has been exposed, etc. Writing about great crime syndicate trials, the press gives wide coverage to patronal relationships among *mafiosi* and between *mafiosi* and politicians. Books by such authors as Danilo Dolci and Leonardo Sciascia that raise social awareness, along with novels on the mafia and other works on, say, peasant poverty, provide readers not only sensational stories about the world of crime but also great knowledge of clientelistic systems, especially in the Italian South.

Let us move on to party politics. The Italian Christian Democratic Party developed broad social support even before the emergence of conditions that led to the creation of a civil service apparatus.<sup>731</sup> But the issue reaches back further even than the fascist era. After the *Risorgimento*, the bureaucracy of Piedmont – despite good intentions and great effort – was not able to oversee the entire country. Members of the Southern middle class were tied to the new system by positions they occupied in the bureaucracy, but the nobility was interested mainly in maintaining its local authority; it supported Piedmont against political and social radicals on the local level, and it retained decisive influence in local matters. Shefter draws a comparison between political solutions adopted in the early years of the Kingdom of Italy (the 1860s) and those implemented after the Second World War. In both cases an alliance of conservative forces emerged. In 1945 two parties – the Christian Democrats and the Liberals (the successors to the parties that dominated in the years 1876–1920) – brought down the government of Ferruccio Parri and brought Alcide De Gasperi to power. The main issues were: should bureaucrats from the fascist era be purged? Should prefects created by the National Liberation Committee (Comitato di Liberazione Nazionale, CLN) after liberation (if that is what we can call the situation in Italy) be replaced by professional officials, in order to solve the problem of left wing disorder? Backed by the Allies, De Gasperi attempted to reconstruct the old centralized state; at the same time, he eliminated the socialists and communists from government. However, the Christian Democrats’ popular support weakened in the wake of their agriculture reforms (in the 1953 elections they earned only 40.1% of the vote). Amintore Fanfani (secretary general of the party as of 1954) tried to reduce the party’s dependence on local

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731 For this introduction I depend mainly on Shefter 1977, 70 ff.

notables and big landowners and to strengthen party structures. Alongside the old patronage he expanded the role of associated Catholic organizations.<sup>732</sup>

Nonetheless, the old mechanism of small-time (but mass scale) patronage still dominated the public services mainly (but not only) in the South, where popular support for bureaucratic autonomy shaped the party itself.<sup>733</sup> Sidney Tarrow defines this matter as the transition from clientelism of notables to clientelism of bureaucracy; in other words, from vertical to horizontal *clientelismo*.<sup>734</sup> Political-administrative structures emerged that functioned according to principles resembling those that governed business in the south.<sup>735</sup> The word used in Italian for the Polish term *kielbasa wyborcza* (roughly “pork barrel” politics) is *pasta*; in a modern party system along the lines of *Mezzogiorno*, “pork” is replaced by official positions, trade licenses, lines of credit.<sup>736</sup> In 1989 the director of the post office in Calabria, Silvio Zagari (from the Italian Republican Party), sent out a letter informing readers that he would employ at his post office 2,000 young people, after which he got 17,000 votes. The minister of finance Emelio Colombo sent out a similar document, but I am not aware of its effects.<sup>737</sup>

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732 For more on the Christian Democrats, see the fine work of A. Zuckerman (1975 and 1979).

733 Zygmunt Bauman has also written about the “*patronacki*” system. See *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 12 June 1995. I do not regard this form as very useful; in Polish, one might easily associate it with a “*sklep patronacki*” (translator’s note: roughly equivalent to a “manufacturer’s outlet”).

734 Tarrow 1967, 341. Why did industrialists (*Confindustria*) tolerate political patronage, when along with it came corruption and a dysfunctional state? According to P.A. Allum (*Italy: Republic without Government?* [New York: 1973], 25–29), the Italian economic miracle was the result of low wages before 1963 and the credit system, the so-called Einaudi line, which did not require an efficient bureaucracy. The Banco d’Italia remained beyond the patronage of the Christian Democrats and so an alliance between industry and the Christian Democracy was possible, and beneficial relations with party activists on concrete issues were more highly appreciated than the general efficiency of the state apparatus (e.g. the treasury). This situation changed in the 1960s. For example, Fiat reconciled itself with communist governments in Turin (1975), because it meant more efficient bureaucracy and social peace. But the forces supporting the Christian Democrats were already powerful enough to block reform.

735 P.A. Allum, *op. cit.*, 39.

736 For more on the meaning of this phrase, see Alessandro Fiandino, “Mafia e sistema bancario. L’importanza dell’accesso privilegiato al ‘mercato’ del credito,” *Studi storici* 33, no. 4 (1992): 775–807.

737 Müller 1991, 117.

The existence of parliamentary governments dominated by a single party and its political clienteles encourages – and sometimes even requires – the construction of competing structures, though this does not mean that they must be based on the same principles. In Italy a system took shape – one that has also been improvised in the Polish Third Republic, under less stable conditions – in which administrative agendas were divided up along political lines, with such a division being an important element in the parliamentary coalitions<sup>738</sup> which the Christian Democrats were forced to join: in particular, provinces, big state companies, and television channels fell into the hands of various political parties and groups.<sup>739</sup>

Sidney Tarrow, mentioned above, compared – in an unusually precise way – two populations of local activists (mayors) in Italy and France. He based his analysis on questionnaires and interviews with representative samples of 117 people in France and 132 people in Italy.<sup>740</sup> The differences between the two countries are significant. While in France 46% of mayors had no party affiliation, that number was only 16% in Italy.<sup>741</sup> In France the highest number of mayors (33%) indicated that their path to political activity involved organizations (like Catholic Action), trade unions, or participation in *La Résistance* (in Italy that number was 68%; research from the middle of the 1970s); but the “traditional family” turned out to be significantly more powerful in France (11% compared to 1% in Italy).

Generally speaking, while the French mayor has to reckon mainly with the state administration-prefect, the Italian mayor must deal with the parties. In France, mayors commonly indicated that – for the good of the position they hold – they make use of their contacts with people in the prefects and in office above that.<sup>742</sup> But in Italy what mayors regarded as most important were contacts with deputies

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738 Tarrow 1977, chapter 6: “Political Entrepreneurship and Clientelism,” 173–202.

739 As might have been expected, the official Christian Democratic version of its history avoids discussion of these issues (Parisella 1997). Parisella mentions (p. 202–203) only that within the party there are *correnti* with individual publishing houses, that local *notabili* were active in the beginning, and that locally approved leaders easily make their way into the upper ranks of the national party. No details.

740 These are the greatest numbers appearing on the statistical lists included in the above-mentioned chapter 6.

741 The weakest party bonds can be found, of course, among the *maires des villages*: in France, Tarrow found 58% of them, and in Italy 20%; in larger cities 41% and 7% respectively. See Tarrow 1977, table 6.10, 189.

742 Ibid., chapter 5.

in parliament.<sup>743</sup> At the same time, as many as 70% of Italian mayors (compared to 30% of French mayors) turned for assistance directly to politicians at a higher (central) level. Interestingly, they did not always turn to members of their own party. Regarding the Italians, Tarrow draws the following conclusion:

Italian party activists are neither rootless agents of the national party system, inactive spectators of local public life, nor politicians whose contacts are limited to those made available by their own party organizations. They are essentially political entrepreneurs with a wide network of contacts in both local and national political systems who use their party affiliations to open up a network of contacts in seeking resources for their communities.<sup>744</sup>

The conclusions that one can draw from Tarrow's material point to the ties between political parties and the state administration.<sup>745</sup> In Italy heated political conflicts led to paralysis among decision-makers, particularly in the area of structural changes, which made it difficult for the country to escape the crisis of the late 1960s and early 1970s. For municipal politicians the most important questions involved how to obtain funding from upper administrative authorities and how to obtain loans from banks, both of which could be answered by using party connections. Thus, Tarrow continues, "the problems of Italian policy paralysis are not only a result of the inefficiency of the bureaucracy; they are an outcome of the combination of a strong party system and a bureaucracy that has been inflated and turned to political purposes. The result is clientelism."<sup>746</sup>

We are, of course, talking here about Italy. A table found in Tarrow's book correlating the political (party) activity of mayors with the effectiveness of their efforts to obtain funding from the state treasury offers up some interesting conclusions. In France, politically active mayors (i.e. those active within the party) achieved less for their locality than did their less active colleagues. In Italy it

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743 One of the mayors put it this way: "More than help us out, they take an active interest, promising help in the hope of getting paid back politically some day for the contributions they can make." *Ibid.*, 177. Parenthetically, a certain architect reported to me (in 1977) that, when it comes to obtaining approval for a building project (like a yacht marina), decisions are ultimately made by the party that is dominant in the region.

744 *Ibid.*, 182.

745 I avoid here a discussion of Tarrow's comments on the decline of parliamentary authority in France in the face of the Gaullist administration, which arguably influenced the depoliticization of local self-government.

746 *Ibid.*, 194.

was the opposite.<sup>747</sup> But one must keep in mind the social weaknesses and costs associated with this type of political clientelism. The way of distributing public resources is very often chaotic, accidental (even if it goes according to the actors' intentions). Even worse, clientelism reduces trust in public institutions. In the end, it is important to remember Tarrow's conclusion:

Clientelism specializes in individualistic benefits to the exclusion of collective projects and programs, unless the latter can be clearly translated into benefits for individual voters and leaders.<sup>748</sup>

The clientelistic system (or systems) in the Italian province were, as we know, much older than political parties. But dramatic changes, the reconstruction and conversion of the economy, and finally the political evolution that took place after the Second World War, transformed local relationships significantly. It is difficult to grasp precisely the impact that the 20-year fascist rule in Italy had on local elites and government authority, but it is easier to detect the consequences of the transformation of social ties and the centralization of resources that remained in the hands of the bureaucracy. In this context one cannot help but take into consideration the effects of emigration (in the search for work) to Switzerland and Germany. The importance of local party bosses grew at the expense of traditional notables. These *gentiluomini* or *galantuomini* were (next to the great landlords and leaseholders) *professionisti* (those who worked in the liberal professions) or petty burghers (*piccolo o media borghesia locale*), who were nonetheless able to monopolize contacts between their community and the external world – that is, they simply “had connections”: lawyers had contacts with clients (in all of that word's meanings), doctors knew the families that were in their care, and both – who were often called *grandi elettori* – could give advice, make requests, or apply pressure, depending on needs.<sup>749</sup> Their support implied the votes of group of constituents, whom one might define as (political) clients only in a loose sense of the term, because it is difficult to state precisely how benefits flowed between them and the *grandi elettori*. But it was precisely this social system, which was so elusive for an outsider and about which Banfield and Barzini (as cited above) wrote, that granted them such a role, including in politics.

In the 1950s and 1960s *il politico imprenditore* (the political entrepreneur) emerged, who replaced the local notable, who was often an entrepreneur in the

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747 Ibid., table 6.13, 196.

748 Ibid., 198.

749 Zuckerman 1979, 47 ff.; Müller 1991, 86–91.

full sense of the word, and who functioned as a delegate of the ruling party. His position no longer had deep roots and was thus not secure; he was just an intermediary, a broker, though one with powerful political backing.<sup>750</sup>

Luigi Graziano analyzed the case of a small village near Salerno, which until 1954 was dominated by local industrialist, who – as a wealthy employer – controlled a large number of votes.<sup>751</sup> But the local elections that year, which were won by the Christian Democrats, brought in their wake activists of precisely this new type, who built their (and their party's) clientele thanks to contacts with central authorities. Money for the construction of orphanages; work for 600 people in 3 factories controlled by the state; personal issues handled in Rome through mediation by party activists. With such solutions the party bought constituents' votes. On the other hand, the voter did not feel himself to be suppliant to the same extent as earlier. His relationship with the party boss took on the character of a contract, and the activist adapted to the rivalry with other parties and with factions within his own party. One former mayor told Graziano that the "town hall had become a sort of 'charity institution,'"<sup>752</sup> and that he had referred certain people and matters to other suitable institutions, like Catholic trade unions. In this way he entered into relationships with other activists because the union took a fee for handling these matters.

All of the above represents a local manifestation of the great party reforms introduced (as mentioned above) by Amintore Fanfani. The party – which henceforth was a mass party – would liberate itself from the pressures applied by various groups and from the dominance of, say, the Catholic Church and the huge industry confederation *Confindustria*. In the South the party would also shake off the influence of the local notables (who were already disappointed by most of the agricultural reforms introduced by Rome). In order to neutralize these notables, to strip them of influence, Fanfani created the *Ufficio Zone Dipressi*, a central organ with a local agenda and with plenty of government money, one of whose functions was to organize centralized patronage. One might think that it was Fanfani's sincere intention to mobilize the "grass roots," but – as Graziano put it – the Christian Democratic Party "became less of a mass party than a party of mass patronage." Such a development could have

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750 See Gribaudi 1991, 72.

751 Graziano does not give the name of the village, but one of the interviews he conducted took place in Paestum.

752 Graziano 1973, 23.

been avoided by activating the peasants and drawing them into politics, but the Christian Democrats turned instead to the middle class, which then became the “pilot of Southern Italian society.”<sup>753</sup>

Fanfani’s policy, which drew various previously autonomous organizations into the Christian Democratic orbit, created an entity of a new kind that Sidney Tarrow has called “horizontal clientele.”<sup>754</sup> According to Tarrow, who researched mass organizations in *Mezzogiorno*, many of these organizations – having been subordinated to the party (a fact that at least gave their leaders direct “access” to influential people in Naples and even in Rome) – lost their original tasks, which often ran contrary to Christian Democratic goals and ideology. Tarrow and Graziano’s analyses, both of which are based on field interviews, indicate the monopolistic model of Christian Democratic activity in the South. Attempts were made to intimidate and/or bribe any new and independent political actor that might emerge.<sup>755</sup> But above all it was necessary to control existing organizations, which emerged on a mass scale after the fall of the fascists. Using academic terminology from sociology and political science, Graziano describes the Christian Democrats’ technique in this way:

In a particularistic culture and organization of power it [absorption] occurs through dyadic contacts established between the various group leaders on one hand and the power holders on the other.

Instead of leading a great social battle in the interest of his union’s members, the union leader is guided by the results of personal contacts with other leaders; in effect, he deals with only petty matters tied to his union members and loses sight of the larger goal.

Hence the structuring of the relationships within the trade union in a hierarchical, dyadic way with the leader in the traditional position of “gatekeeper”. The secondary group is formally categorical, but everybody is aware that what matters are special connections with the group leader.

Graziano emphasizes the direct consequences of this situation:

In a society where non-particularistic attitudes are difficult to conceive and where men of power have always been seen as engaged in a common conspiracy against the sub-

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753 Ibid., 24, 25.

754 Tarrow 1967, 332 ff.

755 Ibid.; Graziano 1973, 26 and footnote 75. In this context Graziano is blunt: “The possibility of a free confrontation is something which is foreign to the culture of a ‘particularistic’ leader, and which is above all too threatening for his totalitarian power.”

ordinate, the new clientele system has surely destructive effects. I witnessed myself the *enormous distrust* felt by the workers toward their union leaders in the town I studied.<sup>756</sup>

A paradoxical situation arose, in the sense that it was internally inconsistent: members of a union search for help among people who can provide such help because these people have “contacts” and “access,” but for this very reason they do not trust these people. Graziano perceives a similar situation as researched in India<sup>757</sup> (I would argue that a case that was much closer both geographically and culturally would be “real socialism” in the USSR and the Soviet satellites), which can be explained to a certain extent – though the author himself does not seem to be aware of this – by his use, with reference to the Italian Christian Democrat, of the term “totalitarian.”

Graziano’s critique of the system is far-reaching. As the main consequence of political clientelism in the South, he emphasizes the decrease in the intensity of social initiatives. But when one juxtaposes the material presented here with the material addressing *Mezzogiorno* as a whole, there are indications that such *political* clientelism is merely a consequence of social relationships deeply rooted in the past.<sup>758</sup>

The Polish reader, having familiarized himself at least generally with the political organization of *Mezzogiorno*, might well detect certain analogies, with the question being how deep they reach. Especially older Poles would be struck by the Christian Democratic Party’s political quasi-monopoly, along with its control over other organizations that are not interested in politics, because they remember the process by which, under the PRL a half-century ago, previously autonomous organizations surrounding the party were transformed, or liquidated.

But the Italian Republic is not the PRL, and the Christian Democratic monopoly was only a quasi-monopoly, even in the South, and even if, for a moment, we do not take into consideration such organizations as the mafia, the camorra (Naples), and *ndrangheta* (Calabria). The Christian Democratic Party was not able to use force or threaten to use force; the battle for power required persuasion complemented by enormous resources (money, jobs) supplied by the bureaucracy and state companies. After its great electoral successes in the first decade after the war, the Italian Christian Democrats had to battle hard to

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756 Graziano 1973, 26.

757 F.G. Bailey, *Politics and Social Change: Orissa in 1959* (Los Angeles: 1963).

758 For more on this matter, which we see most clearly in regions that are the most peripheral, like Sardinia in the postwar years, see Pinna 1971, particularly chapter 7, entitled “Familismo, clientelismo e trasformismo,” 153–172.



hold onto power; they joined various governing coalitions, as factional battles within their own ranks grew more intense. In such conditions, maintenance of their quasi-monopoly throughout the country was served by an unofficial (but universally known) agreement between the parties by which the Christian Democrats abandoned the idea of unquestioned dominance in this or that province. As a certain Neapolitan historian-political scientist put it during a discussion with me in 1976, such divisions have a long historical tradition; in the old days, including after Italian unification, almost all government offices in the southern part of the peninsula were filled by lawyers from the university in Naples. Mussolini tried to break that monopoly and created a university in Bari, which soon engulfed the eastern half of the south along the Adriatic and Apulia. Governments under the Republic went further by creating more universities, and the effect was the same: the universities in Lecce and Cosenza dominated Apulia and Calabria respectively. That having been said, I can only pose such a thesis to an expert in issues tied to *Mezzogiorno*, though it could be checked using prosopographic methods.

Precisely such a method is what Árpád von Klimó used, with great consistency, to compare the ways in which state officials were recruited in Germany (mainly in Prussia) and Italy in the period 1860–1918 – that is, beginning with the unification processes of both states and ending with the postwar crisis.<sup>759</sup> In fact, in the case of Italy, Klimó reaches a bit further, into the first years of fascist rule. His analysis of 150 Prussian ministers and high officials and twice as many Italian ministers and officials offers us an image that is full of contrasts. What is particularly interesting is the fact that this analysis presents political reality (in a broad sense) in which Max Weber and Gaetano Mosco, at this very time, were developing their theories of power. In Germany a *Fachbeamtentum* emerged, and on the peninsula *una classe dirigente* rose up. In the first case, the bureaucracy consolidated its dominance in relation to the parliament, and in the second case it was the opposite. There was a close connection between the two. In both systems of rule the state played a particular ideological role, though that role was understood differently in each case.

In Prussia a candidate's qualifications for bureaucratic office had to include devotion to state service, or (using the German terminology of the day) *Verinnerlichung des Staatsgedankens*,<sup>760</sup> which consistently restricted the role of

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759 Klimó 1997.

760 *Ibid.*, 162. In this regard Prussia was not an exception. Interesting quotes from the literature on this subject are contained in E.K. Bramsted, *Aristocracy and the Middle-Classes in Germany: Social Types in German Literature, 1830–1900*. Revised edition

society's elected representatives (in the Reichstag) in shaping official/bureaucratic careers, and which raised the significance of *Erbe* (legacy, inheritance) and that peculiar kind of upbringing that was tied in Prussia to military service and the cult of the official's uniform (Klimó called it *Erwachsenensozialisation*).<sup>761</sup> This "social capital" had decisive influence over recruitment into the body of bureaucrats, in part by placing barriers in front of Catholics and Jews, and one's position in this body determined his personal position in society and the level of associated prestige.<sup>762</sup>

It was different in Italy, where groups who had tied themselves to Piedmont's governing elite created – over the course of the three decades after the *Risorgimento* – a "ruling class." Politics in Italy reached into areas that were much broader and deeper than in Prussia, beyond the Reichstag and into the state administration, culture, and academics. While loyalty to the liberal state (in conflict with the clergy and traditional aristocrats, and later with the republicans and socialists) was an absolute necessity in order to build a career, actual promotion depended – to a much greater degree than in Germany – on one's origins and territorial and familial connections, on personal contacts with individuals in the state apparatus. Hence, the existence of a very large group of candidates for government positions whose chances increased or decreased as a result of changes of personnel in government and parliament. Arrangements of this type (clientelistic) caused the bureaucracy to become more extensive in Italy than it did in Germany.

In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, clientelistic systems in the womb of public service appear to have formed in different countries in different ways. The subject of the United States raises issues of a particular kind.

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(Chicago-London: 1964), 274, 294 (and other pages). This work was first published in 1937.

761 Prussia did not hold a monopoly on the cult of the *military* uniform (in the nineteenth century almost all public functionaries in many countries on the continent wore uniforms). The spell cast by the yellow trousers of an official in the Swedish General Staff was a "most perfect" thing; for this, see Karl Axel Bratt, *I krigarens lovliga avsikt* (Stockholm: 1952), 92. See also G. Aselius, *The "Russian Menace" to Sweden. The Belief System of a Small Power Security Elite in the Age of Imperialism* (Stockholm: 1994), 56.

762 Bramsted, op. cit., 273, with a reference to Karl Mannheim.

### 3. The United States: The White House and its Surroundings

*Politics is the art of putting people under obligation to you.*<sup>763</sup>

*Patronage is the root of all evil in politics. It keeps people in bondage.*<sup>764</sup>

“ – How loyal is that man?

– Well, he seems quite loyal, Mr. President.

– I don't want loyalty. I want loyalty. I want him to kiss my ass in Macy's window at high noon and tell me it smells like roses. I want his pecker in my pocket.”<sup>765</sup>

These powerful and “manly” words of Lyndon Baines Johnson reflect this president's peculiar vocabulary and the kind of rhetoric he used when talking with trusted personnel at the White House, but he was not the only president who had such a fascination with loyalty.<sup>766</sup> This is an interesting aspect of the durable clientele in full bloom: on the one hand the socio-psychological issue of personal loyalty, and on the other hand the functioning of state power, the civil service. Needless to say, though I do not take LBJ's words literally, there is no doubt that he expected from “his people” full and personal devotion.<sup>767</sup> Could such devotion be reconciled with “loyalty to the United States of America,” which in the McCarthy era had been such a threatening political slogan and which weighed heavily on the American political vocabulary?<sup>768</sup> Whatever the case may be, here we are talking

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763 Colonel Jacob L. Arvey, cited in Tolchin 1971, 3.

764 Arthur Telcser, Republican, member of the Illinois House of Representatives, cited in *ibid.*

765 Halberstam 1993, 432 (Halberstam's *The Best and the Brightest* was first published in 1972). This LBJ quote, which highlights a vocabulary that characterized this U.S. president, was the only quote of this type included in *The Oxford Dictionary of Political Quotations*, ed. A. Jay (Oxford-New York: 1977).

766 Such coarse language from the mouths of public officials was not acceptable to Americans at this time. The foul language heard on the Nixon tapes shocked America.

767 See also the section above entitled “In Search of Words” and Jerzy Chłopecki's comments on loyalty.

768 I was not able to make a broader inquiry in this regard, but *The Oxford Dictionary of Political Quotations* includes British quotes: loyalty to the king from the mouth of Samuel Johnson, and today toward the political party. In trade we talk about “brand loyalty,” particularly in terms of cars, which is of measurable size. See also A. Barth, *The Loyalty of Free Men* (New York: 1950), from a radical left point of view. In Poland under Edward Gierek and Wojciech Jaruzelski loyalty was not associated with ethics, but with the *lojalka*, which is the main reason this word lost a great deal of its value. Translator's note: The word *lojalka* is an abbreviated form of *deklaracja lojalności*, a

about something else. If one examines the American press in the first half of the 1970s and re-reads Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein's books on the Watergate scandal, one gets the impression that the microcosm of the White House was, in this respect, highly peculiar.<sup>769</sup> But the issue is much broader, because it encompasses the charisma of a leader, a phenomenon that manifests itself (regardless of how paradoxical it might sound) in such distinct systems as contemporary American democracy and Hitler's Germany. What follows is a depiction of these issues, one that is (I think) significant, or at least telling.

### a. The Führer's *Gefolgsmann*

Hermann Goering called on an airman, Captain Nicolaus von Below, who was from an old Pomeranian Junker family, to be Luftwaffe adjutant at the Führer's side, and he ordered him to declare whether he could be Hitler's *Gefolgsmann* in both body and spirit.<sup>770</sup> For Captain Below, it was obvious because – as he recalled in his postwar biography – as a member of the Wehrmacht, he had given an oath to Hitler as leader of Greater Germany. But Goering had something else in

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declaration of loyalty, which – under the PRL and especially during martial law in the early 1980s – opposition figures were required to sign in order to, for example, avoid further repressive measures.

769 The long-term Chief Usher of the White House, J. B. West, who worked there from 1941–1969, put it nicely: “My loyalty was not to any one President, but rather to the Presidency, and to the institution that is the White House” (West, 1974, 8). West was also loyal to all of the first ladies whom he served. His memoirs contained not a single compromising anecdote and he poked fun at no one in the families of six consecutive residents of the White House. Nonetheless, it is fascinating reading. The books by Woodward and Bernstein to which I referred are, of course, *All the President's Men* (New York: 1974) and *The Final Days* (New York: 1976). When talking about such loyalty in the White House, it is probably appropriate to use the past tense; an indication of how things have changed is the way the press covered the Monica Lewinsky affair when juxtaposed to the complete press silence that surrounded the adventures of President Kennedy. For more on this see R. G. Martin, *A Hero for Our Time. An Intimate Story of the Kennedy Years* (New York: 1983), chapter 16 entitled “The Other Women.”

770 Below 1980, 17. “Er [Goering] fragte ausschließlich sofort, ob ich die Stellung annehmen wolle und könne. Ich kam nicht dazu, darüber nachzudenken, den er fuhr fort, wenn ich nicht *mit Leib und Seele Hitlers Gefolgsmann sein könne, dann sollte ich sofort selbst sagen*” (author's emphasis – A.M.). The statement above was quoted as reported speech and was no doubt a loose quote. Would Goering really use the name “Hitler” instead of the “Führer”? The German term *Gefolgsmann* is best translated simply as “follower,” but “liegeman” also works.

mind, namely that special relationship to the Führer that was maintained within the most narrow Nazi circles (that is, in the SS) and that was highlighted in Nazi propaganda in order to develop the cult of the legendary Germanic *Gefolgschaft*, which is briefly a topic of discussion in other parts of this book.<sup>771</sup>

It is important to strongly emphasize here (and I direct this comment at reviewers) that comparisons between the *Reichskanzlei* and the White House are, in fact, negligible. I personally do not detect them. Something in particular that distinguishes the two systems involves the issue of “trust” – a matter that is reflected less clearly in the Polish social and political consciousness than in the American consciousness.<sup>772</sup> As an interested reader who is by no measure a specialist in the American system of government, I have used extensively the excellent works of David Halberstam, especially his *The Best and the Brightest* (1972), which analyzed the ruling elites and the presidential decision-making processes in Washington under Kennedy and Johnson. In his books the journalist Halberstam focused his attention on issues that escape the attention of political scientists, who are mainly interested in the legal mechanisms of power and politics.

### **b. “The Best and the Brightest”**

David Halberstam devoted his extensive and perhaps most interesting book to people in power in the United States as the country was getting involved in the Vietnam War.<sup>773</sup> Much like his study of the American press,<sup>774</sup> *The Best and the Brightest* is a penetrating analysis of the mechanisms of power as viewed through the psyche and actions of leading figures in the American system. Halberstam used the techniques he learned as a journalist: he talks with people, collects their statements, ties together information, searches for confirmation. “This book is largely the product of my own interviews. For more than two and a half years I worked full time interviewing people who might be knowledgeable about the

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771 See, for example, the section above (Chapter 1) entitled “In Search of Words” and the section below (Chapter 10) entitled “European Words in the African Bush.”

772 See Sztompka 1999.

773 Halberstam 1993. On Halberstam and an earlier work, see I. Kristol, “Teaching In, Speaking Out. The Controversy over Viet Nam,” Letter From New York, *Encounter* 143 (August 1965): 65–70. “The [New York] *Times* former correspondent in Viet Nam, David Halberstam, whose reporting had the State Department and Pentagon in a state of perpetual hysterics, has just written a book which shows how inept and self-deceiving American policy and policy-makers have been – but which also goes on to say that an American withdrawal from Viet Nam is unthinkable” (p. 67).

774 Halberstam, *The Powers That Be* (New York: 1979).

men, the events, the decisions.”<sup>775</sup> He talked to around 500 people and with some of them as many as 10 times. It might be interesting for us to examine what *The Best and the Brightest* tells us about the topic of clientelism, which is ubiquitous, though the author does not make an interpretational axis out of the topic.

Thus we have here protégés – or what in France they used to call créatures – among whom are Michael Forrestal (one of Averell Harriman’s people) and General Paul D. Harkins (“a man of compelling mediocrity”), the first commander of the Military Assistance Command, Vietnam, who was once a protégé of General Patton and was, in addition, a friend and confidant of the powerful General Maxwell D. Taylor.<sup>776</sup> In the White House, and in the military, loyalty to one’s immediate superior was an obligation; it was a principle that stood out most clearly during the period of crisis in Richard Nixon’s second term.<sup>777</sup>

These were not the only clientelistic relationships. In Halberstam’s works I also found evidence of a phenomenon which I will discuss below, namely clients on a global scale.

The above choice of issue and quotes is a bit biased; from the more than 800 pages of Halberstam’s text I extracted only the most characteristic examples of clientelistic relations and, at the same time, gave a representation of the terminology used by the author-journalist. The peculiar clientelistic aspect of the Vietnam War did not involve just the transfer of American relationships onto the field of activity in Indochina. In fact, it involved above all their contact with various authorities in the Republic of Vietnam, where each person of a higher rank had “his own people,” and where the internal game was, for everyone (or almost everyone), more important than the defense against communist aggression.<sup>778</sup> A British writer describing these events, Dennis J. Duncanson, added a thoroughly mundane observation, namely that each American leader, beginning at

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775 Halberstam 1993, 668.

776 *Ibid.*, 180. “Harkins was, in addition to being a protégé of Patton’s, a trusted friend of Taylor’s. They had known each other well from the days of West Point and had kept in touch. When Max Taylor was Superintendent of the Point, it was not surprising that Paul Harkins turned up as Commandant of Cadets, and later when Max Taylor had the U.S. Eighth Army in Korea, it was not surprising that Paul Harkins was his chief of staff.”

777 This subject is practically a leitmotif of Woodward and Bernstein’s *All the President’s Men* and *The Final Days*.

778 “[...] himself [Gen. Minh], Tran van Don and Tran Van Kim, all respected and none of them commanding troops, because they had followings of their own, and were thus considered dangerous by Nhu.” Halberstam 1993, 298.

the battalion level at least and ending with the highest commanders and civilian officials, acted within a particular dyad with a Vietnamese official. It was precisely through the offices of the Army of the Republic of Viet Nam (ARVN), advised by the Americans, where the stream of valuable resources flowed, which were then directed toward the market. "Each such dyad [was] buttressed by prospects of personal equipment, an overseas tour, and sometimes the control of aid to the masses from which the client could deduct a modicum for himself at the same time as he attached to himself clients of his own at lower levels."<sup>779</sup> Duncanson's comments reveal the immense complexity of these clan-political relationships, which reached into the sphere of the South Vietnamese state and army and the way they functioned. Each one of Diem's brothers had long had their own sphere of influence, one of which was the Catholic Church (one of his brothers was a bishop).<sup>780</sup> The sphere of influence controlled by the president and the Americans dovetailed, though not without friction, and Diem – who was concerned about the growing influence of his American patrons – supported for a certain time the idea of British observers in South Vietnam.

By way of recapitulation, I will move on to a brief discussion of the Republic of Vietnam's great ally and protector. The portrait that Halberstam paints of the American administration between the Second World War through the height of the Vietnam War is one that is far from the ideal Weberian type of "rational" *Rechtsstaat* and – I might add – highly realistic.

That small group of policy makers came from the great banking houses and law firms of New York and Boston.<sup>781</sup> They knew one another, were linked to one another, and they guided America's national security in those years [...] although they had worked for Roosevelt, it was not because of him, but almost in spite of him; they had been linked more to Stimson than to Roosevelt. [...] They were men linked more to one another, their schools, their own social class and their own concerns than they were linked to the country.<sup>782</sup>

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779 "The method of operation was clientelistic in its very conception." Duncanson 1982, 108. The later article by Duncanson highlights the sociology of the political mechanisms in South Vietnam more dramatically than his book published in 1968.

780 Duncanson 1968 and 1982. *Nota bene*, Buddhist monks remained outside these patronal networks, in part because they did not have a centralized hierarchy.

781 Mentioned here are James Forrestal, Douglas Dillon and Allen Dulles, whose "great leaders" were Henry L. Stimson and George C. Marshall.

782 Halberstam 1993, 6. Stimson was Roosevelt's Secretary of War. It is characteristic that Halberstam emphasizes this fact.

This aspect of personal bonds stand out clearly in Halberstam's work. Common education and then service (either civilian or military) encouraged the development of common political views, though there was also no shortage of cases in which individuals resigned their positions when their views clashed in fundamental ways with the political line of their superiors. It is worth pointing out here that the issue of material benefits as an incentive played not even the slightest role in Halberstam's works (according to Halberstam, though surely he – as a journalist – must have been sensitive to this issue). Rather, the goal was the kind of power one gained by being close to the Oval Office and to centers of decision-making at the State Department and Pentagon.

The Pendleton Civil Service Reform Act, which was passed by the U.S. Congress in 1883 and which introduced competitive exams, significantly limited a president's freedom to maneuver in the replacement of federal bureaucrats. Around this same time, the "merit system" – according to which people were hired and promoted according to their qualifications – was adopted in various states (we will soon meet an opponent of the merit system, Mr. Plunkitt of the New York State Senate)<sup>783</sup> and in the middle of the twentieth century it reached its apogee. But forces in opposition existed at the time and have never burned out. One president after another took office who was mistrustful, even hostile, to the professional "career bureaucracy" and tried wherever possible to appoint people who were close to him either politically or personally.<sup>784</sup> One expert on this topic, James P. Pfister, has highlighted the differences between the American system and the democracies of Western Europe, in which, whereas around 100 positions are distributed according to political criteria, the rest are occupied by "career executives." One might well argue with the above numbers, but at the heart of the difference between the United States and Europe is the idea implemented by Andrew Jackson that every citizen is capable of governing.<sup>785</sup> Of greater significance in the development of "political jobs" than any social theory, no doubt, was the presidents' mistrust of the professional bureaucracy, which was shared as much by Lyndon Johnson as by Richard Nixon.

Let us return to the characters in Halberstam's book: practically all of the decision makers in the Kennedy and Johnson era described by Halberstam were outstanding people who, without exception, were highly educated at the best East Coast universities or at West Point. The problem was thus not a matter of

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783 See the interlude below entitled "The Reflections of Mr. Plunkitt."

784 Pfister 1987, 57.

785 One might add here that Lenin expressed a similar idea in *The State and Revolution*.



competence (or a lack thereof), which has been a popular topic of discussion with regard to leadership in the Polish Third Republic. But Pfister nonetheless sees here a threat to administrative efficiency. Generally speaking, during the months of November-January in presidential election years, tensions rise in Washington and members of the American press spend a great deal of time speculating on which individuals from the election campaign, deserving in one way or another, will get which positions,<sup>786</sup> and on how many more people will be disappointed than will be rewarded and satisfied. A great deal in this regard depends on the character and personality of the president. Below I cite an extreme case, one which is set during the critical and dramatic last moments of the Nixon presidency:

Nixon [...] exploded when [White House Chief of Staff Alexander] Haig told him of the Court's unanimous decision. How could the men he had appointed – Burger, Blackmun and Powell – not follow their conscience, fail to support him?<sup>787</sup>

Not follow their conscience? Or perhaps not follow the principle of clientelistic relationships, which – Nixon firmly believed – were created automatically through the nomination process?

#### **4. Chicago: Mayor Richard J. Daley and the “Democratic Political Machine”**

For many years after the Second World War, Richard J. Daley was a dominant political figure at the city, state and federal levels. He created and symbolized his own kind of “political machine,” which joined the huge success of one of the most dynamic big cities in the United States with a system of political activity that provoked the opposition of not just Republicans.

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786 A significant example of such a career is Joe Kennedy, father of the president and Robert and Edward Kennedy, founder of the powerful Kennedy clan. Having grown rich in the alcohol trade during Prohibition, he helped Roosevelt in his campaign for president and was then named by FDR ambassador to Great Britain. After every presidential election the American press returns to the subject of tactics used to obtain a position close to the newly elected president. See S. Waldman, “Jockey, Scheme and Pray: Hopeful Hints For Career Seekers in Washington,” *Newsweek*, 3 April 1989, 24. An observer of the Polish political scene would recognize such a situation when he reads that “if you [...] don’t qualify for a full-time job, don’t fret: you may be up for an advisory commission.”

787 Woodward and Bernstein 1976, 264. During Nixon’s time in the White House, 3 seats became vacant, which Nixon filled with conservative lawyers Warren Burger, Harry A. Blackmun and Lewis F. Powell Jr.

When, as a guest of Professor Arcadius Kahan, I spoke with several professors of University of Chicago's Department of Economics, I asked a couple simple (and, as it turned, naïve) questions to elicit their opinions of the mayor and his method of governing, questions that caused a certain embarrassment: "but, after all, they collect the garbage" and "but there is a level of order." More or less, that is what I heard in response to my questions. Behind these statements was approval of the protection that this rich and famous university enjoyed, situated as it was in one of the city's "black" and dangerous neighborhoods. At the same time, one could also detect a certain awareness that *something* was in fact not quite right. I quickly understood that this was a subject not to be discussed at the dinner table.

The development of Chicago in those days is inseparable from its mayor Richard J. Daley (1902–1976)<sup>788</sup>, and the "Democratic machine" famously led by him refers to a concept that is of immense importance in any true understanding of American internal politics. "Richard J. Daley" was a concept, and his system of rule has been defined with these words: "a 'machine' may be defined as a party organization held together and motivated mainly by the exchange of personal favors for votes."<sup>789</sup>

I have taken up this subject not because of the city's beauty or size, but because of the classical shape that clientelistic and kinship systems took in Chicago. Viewing this issue *in abstracto*, I have been able – in academic settings – to discuss the "casus Daley" as an analogy for how the magnatial clientele functioned in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania or in the Ukraine of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. I will draw such an analogy here as well.

In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Chicago was one of the most rapidly developing urban areas in the world. Like most places in the United States, Chicago attracted immigrants from near and far, who settled in particular neighborhoods, creating a kind of "ghetto" from which they took part, more or less, in the business of governing the city. The future mayor was born in Bridgeport,

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788 The mayor's name is always accompanied by his middle initial in order to distinguish him from his son, Richard M., who was also mayor of Chicago.

789 E.C. Banfield and J.Q. Wilson, *City Politics* (Cambridge, MA: 1963), 92. I quote from Pastusiak 1997, 257. Most works devoted to urban political machines involve the Third World and the Italian *Mezzogiorno*. See Scott 1969; Chubb 1982; and R.E. Wolfinger, "Why Political Machines Have Not Faded Away and Other Revisionist Thoughts," *Journal of Politics* 34 (1972): 365–398; and J.M. Nelson, *Access to Power: Politics and the Urban Poor in Developing Nations* (Princeton: 1979). Focused on the United States: A.B. Callow, *The City Boss in America: An Interpretive Reader* (New York-Oxford: 1966).

a neighborhood of poor immigrants – Irish, Lithuanian, German, Polish, Italian – surrounded by black neighborhoods.<sup>790</sup> His family was Irish-Catholic and the everyday morning mass was a rule, which was true until his last days. As an only child, he attended a Catholic secondary commercial school. He went on to finish his law degree through night school. Biographers are unanimous that his membership in the Hamburg Athletic Club (of which he became president in his early 20s), which was viewed with suspicion by some, was of great significance to his career. In any case, the fact is that many of his friends from the club would move into careers in city government. I might add that, contrary to life's rules, the mayor – who over time would be called a “kingmaker” because of his influence over the election of Democratic candidates for president – never moved out of the suburb of Bridgeport and never changed his modest middle-class life style. Daley's diligence, his typing skills, and his knowledge of accounting (Len O'Connor, Daley's critical biographer, argues) caught the eye of neighborhood activists in the Democratic Party. Essentially, this was his first step in politics. Summarizing his quick rise through the ranks, one cannot help but emphasize that he took his studies seriously and finished his degree in law at DePaul University. With his particular skills, Daley quickly became indispensable to the local Democratic Party organization, whose finances he controlled. I will avoid here a discussion of his psychological traits and his personal talents, about which much has already been written; significantly, he always remembered that “politics is the business of doing things for people.”<sup>791</sup> His path to the office of leaders within Democratic Party organizations and to Chicago's City Hall provided an example of how to rise quickly through the city's political *cursus honorum*, but such a rise was possible precisely because the future mayor understood perfectly the rules by which urban politics worked in the middle of the twentieth century, rules that could be brutal

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790 For Daley's youth I depend on O'Connor 1975 and Royko 1971. It is interesting that Longin Pastusiak (1997), a one-time member of the Polish Senate, who knows about both of these works, makes no reference to the topic I am addressing here and makes no attempt to argue with either of these two authors or other analysis of the democratic machine (see, in particular, Pastusiak 1997, 264–275). It amazes me that this political activist and political scientist writes so superficially and formalistically about the Chicago political culture and draws no conclusions in light of Banfield and Wilson's above-cited definitions. While gathering material for this book I noticed many times that the practice of politics does not serve the practice of political science. And what about the other way around?

791 O'Connor 1975, 23.

but were more polished and covered in phraseology than had been the case a half century earlier – in the era of George Washington Plunkitt.

### a. The Reflections of Mr. Plunkitt

Mr. Plunkitt was a New Yorker to the bone, a man who earned himself a special place in American books of quotes even though he never made it beyond state politics. “Exactly what he thinks” is what he gave journalists, sitting in his chair at the bootblack stand at the County Courthouse. This is how a Democratic Party leader at the time described him: “Senator Plunkitt [...] believes in party government; he does not indulge in cant and hypocrisy and he is never afraid to say exactly what he thinks.” George Washington Plunkitt (1842–1924) was born in a poor Irish neighborhood of New York. He devoted his entire life to local politics as practiced in that big and rapidly growing urban agglomeration. For a certain period he held two official positions in New York, city assemblyman and state senator, and throughout his career in politics he made himself a very rich man. He was a mouthpiece in opposition to civil service reform; indeed this opposition is one of the main subjects of the statements for which he is famous. Many of his reflections do not seem that far removed from our contemporary reality, so I will cite several of them:<sup>792</sup>

- “How are you goin’ to interest our young men in their country if you have no offices o give them when they work for their party?”
- “These men were full of patriotism a short time ago. They expected to be servin’ their city, but when we tell them that we can’t place them, do you think their patriotism is goin’ to last?”
- “First, this great and glorious country was built up by political parties; second, parties can’t hold together if their workers don’t get the office when they win; third, if the parties go to pieces, the government they built up must go to pieces, too [...].”
- “The politician who steals is worse than a thief. He is a fool. With the grand opportunities all around for the man with a political pull, there’s no excuse for stealin’ a cent.”
- “I seen my opportunity and I took it.<sup>793</sup> I haven’t confi ed myself to land; anything that pays is in my line. [...] I’ve told you how I got rich by honest graft.

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792 *Plunkitt* 1963, 3 ff. Some of the interviews with the Senator contained in William L. Riordan’s book appeared originally in the press.

793 This thought, which Plunkitt repeated often, was particularly indicative, and it is the one that political scientists and journalists have cited most often.

Now let me tell you that most politicians who are accused of robbin' the city get rich the same way. They didn't steal a dollar from the city treasury. The just seen their opportunities and took them. That is why, when a reform administration comes in and spends a half million dollars in tryin' to fi d the public robberies they talked about in the campaign, they don't fi d them."

- "If my worst enemy was given the job of writin' my epitaph when I'm gone, he couldn't do more than write: 'George W. Plunkitt. He Seen His Opportunities, and He Took 'Em.'"

In the American political system many positions are filled through election; in addition to alderman, there are judges, prosecutors, sheriffs, public education officials, and others. Thus, political parties – mainly the Democratic and Republican parties – have had to battle constantly for votes. In many big cities, the Democrats, who have benefited from a multi-cultural electorate,<sup>794</sup> are practically certain of the results of elections; in practice most of these elections are determined in party primaries. The Democrats' dominance, and their certainty of holding on to power in cities like Chicago, have been so great that businessmen, who tend to be Republican, have had to support the Machine and its candidates if they want to be part of the huge investments made by the municipality in the postwar years. The party's power lifted Daley's prestige in the city of Chicago and in Cook Country (in which Chicago is located) to the state and federal levels.

Despite their overwhelming advantage in Daley's Chicago, the Democrats never neglected their search for votes. On the lowest, neighborhood level the job of preparing the ground fell to "precinct captains," who were precisely the ones who were to "do things for people," which meant to "help an old person," to fi d work for unemployed constituents, to take care of offi al matters effectively for potential voters, to help out a family if a child was in trouble with the law.<sup>795</sup> The effect was usually visible and measurable, at the polls, and the course of an activist's career was directly dependent on success in this regard. At the ward level (and all higher levels) a politician from the governing party had at his disposal the most basic tool: government jobs. In Daley's time the city of Chicago employed around 30,000 people, from janitors to high city offi als, who managed huge sums

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794 In 1931 the leader of the Chicago Democrats, Anton J. Cermak won over to the party one of the city's African-American leaders and thus assured to a large degree the city's political stability.

795 Royko 1971, 68. Included here is a long list of services.

of money from the municipal budget.<sup>796</sup> The Cook County Board controls about 15,000 more jobs.<sup>797</sup> On the one hand, the mayor could distribute such positions to “his people,” and on the other hand – by the very fact of giving such jobs – he could attract new supporters: two sides of the same phenomenon. But the most important thing to keep in mind is the fact that, as a rule, the condition that had to be met in order to receive a city position was service to the Machine. Most valuable in this regard was the welfare department, which had at its disposal 1,500 jobs, none of which were subject to the clear principles of the merit system; people who received a job understood that it was a favor from the Democratic Party.<sup>798</sup> The party apparatus thus operated cheaply, financed as it was from public funds. It was like a modification, or even an inversion, of the famous statement made by John F. Kennedy: “Ask not what your country can do for you – ask what you can do for your country.”<sup>799</sup>

Daley did a great deal for the development of Chicago; he improved its image significantly and, more than anyone else in such a position, he became identified with the city. But alongside such development, the clientelistic system in service to the Democratic Party came into full bloom. The Machine knew perfectly well who could do what for the system. Daley had earlier attained the position (by appointment) of chief deputy Cook County comptroller, which in practice was the county treasurer. This position gave him access to information about who was

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796 This job estimate is conservative. Regarding the Daley era, other analysts talk about as many as 250,000 people, including families “directly dependent on the favor and good humor of the mayor.” G. Suter, “‘Machina’ rządzi Chicago” (a translation from *Die Zeit*), in the *Polish Forum*, no. 37 (1980): 8.

797 O’Connor argues that the governor of Illinois had more than 60,000 positions at his disposal “because the political impact of a smaller number of jobs in a smaller area is much greater than the impact of a larger number that has to be spread over the entire state.” O’Connor 1975, 34. What is involved here is political favoritism in the deals involving government contracts. Melvin A. Kahn and Frances J. Majors estimate the number of “patronage slots” in the hands of the mayor at 35,000 (Kahn and Majors 1984, 55). In turn, *Die Weltwoche* (translated into Polish for *Forum* from 11 September 1980, 6) cites 250,000 people “directly dependent on the favor and humor of the mayor, including city workers, bureaucrats, judges, and attorneys and companies under contract with the city. Which is perhaps why he also expect favors – *do ut des...*”

798 Banfield 1961, 73.

799 Apparently Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr. made a similar statement in 1884. See *The Oxford Dictionary of Political Quotations*, 3rd edition (Oxford University Press: 2007), 212.

on the pay list, who put them on that list, how much they received, and what they did to get their position.<sup>800</sup> Having served as client to bosses in ever higher positions, he worked his way up the ladder – through hard work and his undoubted service to the party – to become candidate for mayor and eventually mayor. He did not create a new situation insofar as the Democrats, in this ethnically diverse city, had long enjoyed political supremacy and exploited it without ceremony. But one might say that Daley civilized these relationships, that he adapted them to the realities of the politics and media culture of postwar America. In an era of great economic boom, which included incomparable growth in public investment, an additional and powerful argument in favor of the mayor-patron involved the infrastructure orders placed with (and filled by) construction companies. Thus, businessmen – even if they were Republicans – helped fill the coffers of the Democratic party.

I suggested above that one could draw an analogy between Daley's system and the client system of the old *Rzeczpospolita*: I see such an analogy in the fact that the entire system of dependencies was financed through the use of public resources. In Daley's Chicago people who carried out all kinds of services during electoral campaigns were rewarded with jobs in the public sector or with construction contracts, much like clients were rewarded with official posts of various kinds centuries ago in Poland.<sup>801</sup> To some extent the state (in Daley's case, a city) as an enterprise was identified with the direct interests of the governing elite.

I see the beauty of Richard J. Daley as a patron in his people skills and in his direct control over all the personnel under him. As Royko (an up-close observer of the Chicago political scene) wrote, one day the "director of patronage" dropped by and handed Daley a list of all the new city employees for the day, including the window washers and garbage collectors, with information about their background and political sponsor. "He must see every name because the person becomes more than an employee: he joins the political Machine, part of the army numbering in the thousands who will help win elections." The mayor, who was personally conservative and decidedly traditional in his moral views, was concerned about whether new employees were "clean," but he was also able to forgive. As Royko put it, "he will forgive everything short of Republicanism."<sup>802</sup> Royko estimated

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800 O'Connor 1975, 32.

801 One might find a difference between the two systems in the fact that the Machine offered rewards for services that were already carried out, and that it paid in advance to a lesser degree than the old Polish system did. That having been said, I am not sure of this thesis.

802 Royko 1971, 22–27.

that half of the people who visited Daley in his office came with either a request or a complaint. The mayor rarely addressed their issues immediately; he weighed the arguments, he made sure to understand all the circumstances (as a rule he was already informed of details by the bureaucrat to whom the suppliant had first presented his problem). Outsiders without family or political connections were sent to party activists in their neighborhood. A young Jesse Jackson, who would go on to be famous for his work in the black (or, using today's politically correct terminology, African-American) civil rights movement, once presented himself to Mayor Daley with a letter of introduction from the governor of North Carolina describing Jackson as a highly promising young political activist. Daley sent him down to the neighborhood level for a political apprenticeship solving constituents' problems. No doubt a post of some kind would become available for him, perhaps as toll collector in the city's transit system.

He remembered "his own" people perfectly – both alive and dead<sup>803</sup> – and he always made sure that everyone knew it. Chicago has not forgotten him.

This aspect of the Chicago Machine requires further research, but at this point I lack sufficient material.<sup>804</sup> Too bad, because in a clientelistic system it is often the breakup of that system that clarifies its working mechanisms better than its growth process. In a well-developed and bureaucratized urban administrative structure, the person of the patron, his personality, plays a decisive role because he represents opposition to the heartless bureaucracy, but also because of the complicated and multi-level relationships over which he is supposed to rule. The personality of the boss fulfills a condition that is necessary, though not necessarily sufficient, for the functionality and efficiency of that which Americans understand as the Machine: approval "from the top," which is something that Chicago has missed since Daley's death. Can a patronal system continue to function without the unitary patron? After the mayor's death, the Chicago Machine – lacking the force that had unified the entire structure – lost its functional precision. The Democratic Party remained in power, but internal conflict was no longer so easy to avoid. The young Jane Byrne, one of Daley's long-time protégés – capable and ambitious, but lacking talent with the media – clashed with Daley's successor, Michael Bilandic. Though she did not have the Machine's support during her campaign, she immediately came to an understanding with it after her election (1979). She disappointed blacks and liberals, who had helped her to victory, and her policies united labor

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803 For more on Daley and his clients' funerals, see *ibid.*, 27–28.

804 Pastusiak (1997) writes about Daley's successor but he does not discuss the evolution of the Machine.



unions against her; thus she upset people in the economic sphere whose interest was governmental stability and social peace. “She created fierce enemies and she weakened the machine, which had not found a way to stand up to her authority.”<sup>805</sup> In these circumstances Richard M. Daley became the Machine candidate, who easily won the election for state attorney; some years later he was elected mayor of Chicago. But none of the boss’s successors, including his son, was in a position to recreate and maintain the Machine in its original form. This representative – or even most prominent – example of the phenomenon of machine politics points (or rather seems to point) to the significance of subjective factors, because – in order to achieve some level of certainty – an analysis that I am, at this point, not able to carry out would be necessary. Scholars of this matter point to other factors. As Jean Louis Briquet put it:

In order to be functional, the machine readily utilizes activists who are “at the margins of the law” and “non-conventional,” whether that involves corruption or connections between the political world and the world of “business,” and thus organized crime. It is at the same time an obstacle to the durable legitimacy of institutions because loyalty is made dependent on the satisfaction of material interests, it impedes the consolidation of political identity based on support of the collective interest and group solidarity, which are the only things that ensure the stabilization of the system.<sup>806</sup>

James C. Scott adds that such a political machine fosters in people the desire to take advantage of short-term benefits, which works at the cost of long-term transformations. Without any ideological or charismatic foundation, the ruling system loses its footing as soon as it no longer has at its disposal the necessary resources to maintain the social bond.<sup>807</sup> In this sense, Scott argues, the political machine stood in opposition to economic development, which builds and strengthens professional and class bonds. Such an argument is certainly justified, though I get the impression he is speaking here about a different political mechanism than the Chicago Machine described above. Rather, Scott seems to be referring to poor South American neighborhoods, or to Naples or Palermo.

Jane M. Byrne went through Daley Senior’s political school, but she did not know how to mobilize her “own people” around her. Byrne’s decisive approach to the office of mayor resembled Daley’s in crisis situations, but she was unable to smooth over failures, and various factions within the Democratic Party worked against her. The situation faced by the boss’s immediate successor had been simi-

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805 G. Suter, *op. cit.*, 8.

806 Briquet 1998, 16–17.

807 Scott 1969, 1155–1156.

lar.<sup>808</sup> What was necessary to stabilize one's rule in the city during times of bitter political conflict were the qualities exhibited by the "tefl n" president Ronald Reagan; nothing stuck to Richard J. Daley, no stain and no mistake. If the public did not forgive him for a misdeed, then it was practically forgotten, as in the case of the brutality with which his police treated young Democrats in 1968. Michael Bilandic, on the other hand, was brought down a notch by just about everything.<sup>809</sup> Over time, something similar happened to Jane Byrne. In 1974, at a time when Daley was extremely sick, the entire Chicago ruling elite was going through a crisis. She denounced those about to take power as "little men of greed" and "political vipers," which attracted the favor of the mayor-convalescent; she was thus promoted by him through the party (in any case, it was necessary for a woman to hold a prominent position). But this was not a good introduction to a great career.

After Daley's death the situation changed in many ways. The black vote became important, and based largely on black support two African-Americans headed up city hall. In the opinion of many observers, the importance of politically connected city workers increased at the expense of precinct captains and their activities, which led to what was widely called the "pin-striped machine." But supporters of Daley Sr. and Jr., though they rejected such criticism, admitted at the same time that it would be impossible to return to the old style of governing, which was true in part because of court decisions which impeded the very patronal relationships that were at the foundation of Daley's system,<sup>810</sup> and which broke that system's monopoly. The contemporary urban machine functions without charisma, and yet – as I view the matter – it cannot truly function without a leader-figure who is capable of preventing conflict, or at least resolving conflict, within its top echelons. And the fact is that, even though Democrats continue to enjoy an overwhelming advantage over Republicans, they have not been able to avoid bitter rivalries in

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808 Byrne started the battle for city hall by accusing the mayor of bribery in the matter of the maximum taxi fare, for which she was forced out of her job. This event represents, no doubt, a crack in the "machine." See "The Lady and the Machine. Rebellious Jane Byrne Knocks Out the Mayor of Chicago," *Time*, 12 March 1979, 32–33.

809 Ibid. Bilandic faced intense criticism when, after the 1979 blizzard, it was revealed that he had paid one of his cronies \$90,000 for a 23-page snow removal project that resembled something a high school student might write up. Bilandic compared attacks directed against him to the crucifixion. Such an exaggeration, which was not entirely strange even in Daley's time in office, exposed Bilandic to ridicule, particularly when he drew comparisons to the potential collapse of his government in Chicago to what was happening in Iran and Cambodia.

810 See commentary in the *New York Times* (National), 5 April 1989.

the womb of the governing party. New candidates for leadership in the party and at City Hall have constantly emerged, with evidence of crisis in the traditional machine being the 6-year mayorship of an African-American (Harold Washington, who died during his second term). In 1989, when the boss's son, Richard M. Daley, ran for mayor, his Republican opponent won barely 4% of the vote, but the independent black candidate won almost one-third of the vote (even though he had spent roughly 10 times less on his campaign than Daley) and put forward the accusation that, despite promises, Daley was "getting ready to reopen his father's plantation" and that he would recreate the autocratic style of governing in City Hall.<sup>811</sup>

I want to mention once again Stanisław Orzechowski's lament regarding the skills that a good patron must exhibit. It is not enough to allow the exploitation of the public sphere and its resources; one must also keep things in moderation and maintain some semblance of order. After all, the glue that holds the big city political machine together is a complex community of interests, which requires more than the defense of itself against political opponents.

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811 D. Johnson, "Daley Wins Post as Chicago Mayor: Vote on Race Lines," *New York Times*, 5 April 1989 (the data offered here was provisional).



## Chapter 9: The USSR: Lenin, Stalin and Collective Leadership

When searching for an appropriate subtitle for this book I once thought (half seriously) of using “From Caesar (or Romulus?) to Brezhnev.” If I chose a different one, it is not because this one would be baseless. Diachronic comparisons through millennia are highly risky – I myself recommend that journalists be careful<sup>812</sup> – but the fact is that certain things are comparable over time. Though the administrative systems, the means of transportation and communication, and many other elements of state structure create entities that are entirely distinct and incomparable in the broad diachrony, it happens that there are interpersonal relations that can be juxtaposed and compared over time and space. Such, at least, is the assumption behind this book.

Both of the leaders mentioned in this chapter title (along with many others) made good use of clienteles, and what is more, both empires were familiar with a particular “inter-state,” and even “global,” kind of clientelism by patronizing – in a sense – their satellite states.<sup>813</sup> I added the words “in a sense” because of the presence in this patronage of large amounts of force used against the Soviet Union’s weaker partners, though we know that a certain amount of force is acceptable in all clientelistic relationships. Beyond that, as I will attempt to clarify in the next section, what is involved here are relationships that are highly complex, so much so that one must – in evaluating them – examine separately the interests of the governing elites and the interests of the broader expanse (one might say the “rest”) of society.

### 1. The Legacy of Autocracy and Revolution

Western political scientists – rejecting the Soviet Union’s self-interpretation of its system of rule – have searched for the real mechanisms by which Communist Russia was governed, and one such mechanism that has emerged is the clientelistic relationship. In this regard, the breakthrough that came with Joseph Stalin’s death

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812 I am strengthened in my opinion by Joachim Tauber’s attempt to compare the ancient Roman Republic with the “Russian autocracy” (Tauber 1990). On the other hand, repeated attempts to interpret, on a broad scale, examples in which empires have experienced crises and fallen belong to a great tradition of historical syntheses.

813 See the chapter below entitled “The Clientele Today on a Global Scale.”

could not help but be particularly important. Under Stalin's omnipotent rule, anyone's attempt to establish a clientele around himself would have been suicide. The dictator was fully aware of this fact, given that he himself had conquered – through his own people – the apparatus he would use in his battle with Leon Trotsky, which ended with Trotsky being labeled a “reactionary-nationalist deviationist.” By this time Stalin had already gathered plenty of experience in this regard.

John P. Willerton, who devoted an article and a book to the subject of Soviet clientelistic relationships, connects these relationships with experiences in the pre-revolutionary past.<sup>814</sup> I detect here a certain level of exaggeration. The nature of the Tsarist bureaucrat is well-known, but I would not attribute significance to these traditions in an interpretation of the Soviet system.<sup>815</sup> It is not necessary to search for the roots of this phenomenon in the distant times of Tsarist autocracy. The example of Czechoslovakia, which had a strong tradition of Austro-Hungarian *Rechtsstaat* and almost two decades of experience with effective parliamentary democracy, indicates that the communist system – including communist clientelism – does not have to have deep roots and easily destroys old traditions, including the principles of a functioning civil service. Which is why I detect in Willerton's comments cited below a mixture of obvious and only apparent relevance:

The emergence of a Marxist-Leninist regime in Russia did not vitiate the importance of patronage in elite mobility and regime formation. To the contrary, the behavioral norms and revolutionary conditions of the previously clandestine Bolsheviks enhanced the critical role of these informal arrangements in the country's political life. The institutional arrangements that emerged under Soviet leaders further reinforced the political salience of patronage networks.<sup>816</sup>

Writing about the beginning of Bolshevik rule in Russia, Daniel Orlovsky offered a different interpretation of the durability of traditional Russian clientelism:

It would be the revolution's task to melt down all the competing centers of power in the provinces (no easy task as the Soviet regime was to learn in its attempt to set up soviets at all provincial levels and control them via a party hierarchy that was almost immediately seen as a necessary control mechanism) – and of course in this meltdown new provincial clienteles (the residue of which went into the new soviets) were created. Though the men and their class origin may have been different, the institutional structure, patterns of behavior and above all the nature of clientelism remained strikingly

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814 Willerton 1992, 21–24.

815 For more on this subject, see Orlovsky 1983.

816 Willerton 1992, 24. See also Woslenski 1983.

similar to the patterns we have observed during the last years of the old regime – and under the Provisional Government.<sup>817</sup>

Orlovsky goes on to claim that new personnel “drawn from the lower class faced institutional and cultural pressures that resulted in the reproduction in the new setting of older patterns of organizational behavior.” But perhaps it is just as likely (or even more likely) that – in a period of revolutionary improvisation, chaos and insecurity – the fulcrum for Soviet bureaucrats (or Bolshevik party activists) was their superior, “someone above,” a fact which created interpersonal bonds based on influence stemming from one’s position in the ruling apparatus. The factor of insecurity, along with a state of general and permanent shortages (which a commissar, through a single decision, could mitigate), set the foundation for more or less traditional patronal bonds. This was quite a time for people with personal authority, even charisma, and for military improvisationists-commanders (the Chapayevs and Machnos), who threatened the Bolsheviks’ political goals.

Though R.H. Baker draws different connections between pre- and post-revolutionary relations, he – on a highly abstract level – also points to the establishment of clientelistic relationships as a common motive in the creation of interpersonal bonds; in a state of insecurity (and thus fear), Russians were in search of protection from above,<sup>818</sup> which is something he detects in the ruling apparatus of both Nicholas II and the communist governments. But if general psychology suggests fear as a common denominator, it is the circumstances surrounding (and particularly the intensity of) the phenomenon that took shape differently in jubilee year of the Romanovs (1903) than they did 20 years (or especially 35 years) later. In Tsarist times the possession of a wealthy and powerful protector was a prerequisite for greater stability and promotion within official circles; over time it would become a condition for survival, in the strictest sense of the word.<sup>819</sup> Baker also tries to use fears of the apparatus to explain the fall of Khrushchev in 1964. But we are getting ahead of ourselves.

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817 Orlovsky 1983, 197.

818 Baker 1982. Baker’s article departs from the analytical works of most Sovietologists. Lacking evidentiary material, it represents a synthetic interpretation of the phenomena. Baker claims that there are no articles and books on clientelism in the USSR, but it surprises me that he did not know of the article by Willerton published three years earlier (Willerton 1979).

819 Baker 1982, 37. Baker put it in a more scholarly way: “Twenty years after the last Czar’s death, with an intense and politically dynamic insecurity fastened upon society, clientelist relations would be transformed to maximize not venal self-interest but chances of survival.”

## 2. From Cliques to Terror

Quite apart from the concerns of the general populace and officials in the lower bureaucracy, insecurity among the Bolsheviks themselves was reflected in the very makeup of the inner governing circle. In the first years of Bolshevik rule it was relatives and wives, protégés and friends from before the Revolution who took high positions in the party-Soviet apparatus, including Lenin's wife Nadezhda Krupskaya, but also his sister and her husband Mark Timofejewitsch Jelisarow (as a people's commissar), the wives of Bonch-Bruyevich, Dzerzhinsky, Kamieniew, Krzyżanowski, Sverdlov, Zinoviev, and Trotsky, along with two of Menzhinsky's sisters. Lenin appointed trusted friends and collaborators from Switzerland, and Lunacharsky filled the People's Commissariat for Education with his people. "Loyalty and reliability were key recruitment criteria as the Bolsheviks asserted their authority over an often antagonistic bureaucracy and tried to counter the attacks of domestic and foreign adversaries."<sup>820</sup>

The above facts seem to me understandable and obvious, though they do not tell us much. During the Revolution and the subsequent civil war, the Bolshevik cadre was extremely thin, both at the center of power and around the country.<sup>821</sup> Regardless of the fact that they rejected the "bourgeois" system of civil service (which in Tsarist Russia had its own peculiar characteristics),<sup>822</sup> and given that they had to act under conditions (indeed in the psychosis) of a besieged fortress, the Bolsheviks could count only on people close to them. But it is also true that, when they took power, the Bolsheviks were internally divided and were forced to enter into political coalitions (to which no one intended to remain loyal). It is also the case that every difference of opinion regarding issues of tactics – no matter how minor or temporary – could lead to a sharp antagonism.<sup>823</sup> It is precisely this aspect of the Bolshevik political system that allows the story of Soviet clientelism to be read like a thriller.

After the revolution was won and its leaders' political rivals (the Mensheviks, the Socialist Revolutionaries, etc.) were eliminated, a short period of Bolshevik stability followed – short, because the man who knew best how to exploit its possibilities was Stalin. As the head of the Bolshevik cadre (he was General Secretary of the Communist Party as of 1922), he was able to place his own people in key

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820 Rigby 1981, 7. Quote from Willerton 1992, 25; both authors take the data on women from Sheila Fitzpatrick 1979.

821 See Fainsod 1953 and 1958.

822 Orlovsky 1983.

823 Such conflicts were an important motif in Lenin's commentary and correspondence.



positions, organize elections at party congresses, and – using various means – eliminate rival political forces. But in fact his rule over the “party machine” dates back even earlier – from the X Congress of the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks), when his man, Vyacheslav Molotov, became Responsible Secretary and Lazar Kaganovich took over Communist Party personnel matters.

T.H. Rigby, who has analyzed clientelistic relationships during the battle for power in Russia and the first years after the civil war, detects what he calls “cliques” that were broadly active in the administrative and party apparatus of the Bolshevik state.<sup>824</sup> He estimates the number of Bolsheviks at the beginning of 1917 at 20,000, who were carrying out functions in several dozen relatively independent territorial (*guberniya*) organizations. Transportation and communication in this huge country were so difficult that the party leadership was able to maintain only general control over their activities, and the formation of a core of paid party officials (but not a civil service!) was just about to begin. But within a year after the St. Petersburg putsch a:

contemporary sample, taken from the central provinces of Russia proper and excluding military organizations, showed that only 4% [of party members] were workers or peasants holding no administrative position; 57% were in government jobs and the rest in other positions of authority, mostly in industrial and commercial organizations.<sup>825</sup>

The incompetence of party committees in dealing with the state bureaucracy was of concern to delegates of the VII Party Congress in March 1918 (the soviets were disappearing and their executive committees had lost their original significance). Central directives were carried out mainly by the Cheka, the Red Army, and civil agencies armed with “exceptional powers.” Based on a decision from the next party congress, local party authorities were under the obligation – using communist jargon – to “secure the personnel situation” within the administrative apparatus, which meant filling key positions with “suitable comrades” and creating party caucuses (*fraktsii*) within institutions. Their work was successful, though with a highly ambiguous effect. In October 1919 a significant statistical sample of members of the Bolshevik party indicated that 60% of members were bureaucrats/functionaries in various organizations (including administrative organizations *sensu stricto*); one-quarter of them served in the Red Army; and 11% worked in factories. A full-time party apparatus thus emerged such that, by the end of the civil war, a hierarchy of party committees had taken shape parallel to the “soviet” administration – the nucleus of a system that would proliferate over the course of the next

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824 Rigby 1981, 7 ff.

825 Ibid., 8.

seven decades. Rigby points out a paradox (one of many of this kind, I might add): “Ironically, while intended in part to counter the bureaucratization of the regime by separating the party from state officialdom and giving it power to control the latter, these measures had the effect of further entrenching bureaucratization by extending it to the party itself.”<sup>826</sup> Bureaucratization, the lack of “worker’s control,” etc., became the object of criticism from below, with which Bolsheviks at various levels were supposed to battle. At this time the makeup of the group of party activists was changing: in 1919 more than two-thirds of the members of *guberniya* committees had party experience that did not date back further than the February Revolution; at lower levels that number was two times smaller.

Alongside these personnel issues there was the problem of a shortage of supplies. The growing bureaucracy could not solve these shortages, so they were handled by taking extraordinary measures. But those who participated in Bolshevik rule gained access to desired resources that were, as a rule, inaccessible to the ordinary mortal; an orderly market was practically non-existent before the New Economic Policy (NEP) was introduced in 1921. Such a situation could not but encourage corruption, particularly in light of the Bolsheviks’ programmatic principle of equality. The NEP, in turn, created additional stimuli for corruption that do not need to be discussed here, but the fact is that all of the above factors encouraged the growth of cliques. Central authorities tried to soothe conflicts between and among them, to interrupt interpersonal contacts and relationships over which they did not have control. Functionaries who were entangled in conflicts with the party and administration were sent to distant regions. It is amazing that party leaders saw in these relations a certain benefit, but only at first glance. “Stalin told the XII Congress that such inter-group conflicts had their good side, since they arose from efforts of local officials to form themselves into a close-knit effective working team.”<sup>827</sup> Such a statement was typical of Iosif Vissarionovich (Stalin): every conflict at the bottom invited interference from above and created opportunities to place one’s people into new positions and to break up local groups that were otherwise difficult to control. Indeed he exploited such opportunities only when suitable people were available to be sent out to such localities. These *naznacency*<sup>828</sup> came armed with the authority of the supreme power. Yevgeni Preobrazhensky put it this way at the XII Congress in 1923:

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826 Ibid., 9.

827 Ibid., 20.

828 Translator’s note: A loose but suitable translation for *naznacency* into American English would be “carpetbaggers.”

Comrades who have come to the locality and do not meet with sufficient support [...] group around themselves certain comrades who disagree with the local people, and as a result we get a state within a state.<sup>829</sup>

Thus a perfect foundation was established for the emerging Stalinist system. Anyone who had a proper position in this system could exploit it, but – and this is significant – it was Stalin who first fully recognized this fact. One could interpret Lenin’s famous “Testament” – in which its author raised concerns about Stalin, and which was kept secret from the public until Khrushchev’s speech at the 20th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union – as a warning against the future dictator’s power as a patron. Stalin bet (cleverly, as his subsequent career would show) on the prospect that the party’s bureaucratic apparatus would grow (particularly the Communist Party’s Secretariat), and – with the help of people close to him, including Kaganovich, Molotov, and Valerian Kuybyshev – he eventually made that apparatus dependent on himself. His opponents either did not have such possibilities or they did not know how to create them. Claims made by Stalinist conspiracy propaganda notwithstanding, significant and organized opposition did not exist. In his memoirs, Trotsky entirely avoids the issue of opposition.<sup>830</sup> No doubt personal bonds between Stalin’s trusted people persisted on lower levels, but they did not reduce the risks: we might recall the fates of Feliks Dzierżyński’s successors at the head of the Cheka/GPU/KGB. The fall of a patron could not help but mean the fall of his clients.

So, to what extent can we describe these arrangements as clientelistic? It is conspicuous that the insecurity that characterized relationships within the ruling apparatus, along with the need to maintain contacts that gave one access to basic resources for living (or to those luxuries that came with one’s social position), inevitably grouped “personnel” around influential party comrades. What is more, these relationships were built on state resources (often taken ad hoc from “class enemies”). Never and nowhere had those (basic) resources been so firmly in the grip of political rulers, a fact that – on the one hand – reinforced the omnipotence of the despotic state and – on the other hand – opened up opportunities for smaller despots. Stabilization of the system after the civil war and the Peace of Riga (1921) also meant that loyal relationships – those “cliques” that Rigby talked about – would evolve. In effect:

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829 Ibid., 24–25.

830 However, one cannot draw conclusions from this fact (that Trotsky avoided the issue of opposition) because of fears that his allies might be denounced.

These local cliques took on more and more of a clientelist character with the provincial party secretary as patron. As we have seen, this process was well advanced by the time Stalin secured control of the Central Committee apparatus, and plainly it required no exceptional perspicacity or wiliness on his part to discern the possibility and advantage of progressively converting the corps of provincial party secretaries into a personal following and encouraging the latter to do the same with local officials coming under their authority.<sup>831</sup>

Such a system seemed to guarantee them stability and the possibility for promotion, but only for a time. After all, one cannot view the construction of Stalinism in the clientelistic category of a patron's monopoly. Party purges and mass terror – which were the crowning achievement of that construction process – do not fit into any definition or description of clientelism, because they conflict with the guiding principles of a clientelistic relationship: duration between unequal partners and mutual benefits. As Baker writes:

Once he [Stalin] had established the major goals of social transformation and determined on ruthless methods to achieve them, his subordinates were reduced to a desperate quest for self-preservation in which clientelism had, and could have, only marginal utility.<sup>832</sup>

It would be appropriate rather to include Stalin in the list of rulers who successfully pursued the elimination of direct bonds between members of an elite who were able, to one degree or another, to threaten their monopoly on power. The well-developed (though of course not formulated) ideology of Stalinist rule – the cult of personality, which was the Soviet version of the Nazi *Führerprinzip* – consisted of a personal and direct bond between Stalin and every citizen. The secretaries-intermediaries only reflected the light of the great leader. Translating this ideological construction into the terms of social anthropology, one might put it this way: Stalin and the individual “Soviet man” created a dyad; there were as many dyads as there were citizens of the USSR (not counting – on the one hand – party members and “fellow travelers” overseas, and – on the other hand – “traitors,” “Japanese spies,” etc.), but direct bonds between clients were to be weak, temporary, and developed only to the extent that cooperation was required to carry out a plan that was invested with intense ideological content.<sup>833</sup> In this context the obsession with threats posed by the ubiquitous enemy of the people and

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831 Ibid., 25.

832 Baker 1982, 43.

833 I remember, as sort of a symbol, the senate hall at Lomonosov University in Moscow, in 1963. The long table was shaped like a gear so that participants were not sitting next to each other elbow to elbow. Rather, everyone was sitting facing the speaker

imperialist spies broke horizontal bonds, which was suspicious in nature and subject to control from above. In his writing of 1984, George Orwell understood this perfectly well.

Along the margins of the debate among historians and Sovietologists on continuity from the Tsars through the communist “first secretaries” in terms of methods and styles of rule, certain comparative reflections emerge. I am thinking here about the above-mentioned and complex issue of anxiety and friendship. Anxiety (in the sense of anxiety toward people and institutions) and friendship are located at the poles of inter-personal bonds.<sup>834</sup> Stalin liked to refer to Tsar Ivan, and the history and deeds of that terrible ruler were presented in Stalinist historiography and propaganda as an important political message; in this context it is enough to mention Sergei Eisenstein’s 1944/1958 film “Ivan the Terrible.”<sup>835</sup> A great deal has been written already on fear during the Stalinist purges, and here I can only add that one could interpret Stalinism and related systems of totalitarian rule as the maximum expansion of the public sphere at the expense of the private sphere, both in the sociological sense and the psychological sense – a matter well captured by Orwell in 1984 as the delegalization of privacy in an extreme totalitarian system. Orwell’s vision, like Kafka’s, has no room for clientelistic systems.

Stalin era ideology and propaganda placed special emphasis on the “collective.” Activists on all levels, including young activists, understood that one had to keep track of all inter-personal bonds that did not fall under their direct control. They saw in such bonds one’s “break with the collective.” In the social-psychological dimension it meant for the individual a constant state of anxiety, encirclement, and fear. In the literature on social realism, friendship was a collective phenomenon, whose focus was a work group or brigade; it was a relationship held together by a common (so-called “socialistic” or “communitic”) goal, normally handed down from above and specially set by a “party instance.” It was not a many-sided psychological bond between two or several individuals.

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and could see only the back of the person in front of them. No one had a neighbor with whom he could furtively talk or exchange notes. It seemed to me genius in its simplicity.

834 For more on the subject of fear and anxiety, see the essay by Stanisław Grzybowski, whose definitions I adopt: “Oderint dum metuant (Fear in the Sixteenth Century: New Attitudinal Patterns),” in *State and Society in Europe from the Fifteenth to the Eighteenth Century*, ed. J. Pelenski (Warsaw: 1985), 267–280; see also, of course, the works of Jean Delumeau.

835 For more on this film against the backdrop of historical debates and in the context of Stalinist ideology, see Rafał Marszałek, *Filmowa pop-historia* (Kraków: 1984), 299–321.

One might also detect here an imitation paternalistic feature, typical of this system, in the way Stalin's closest subordinates addressed the Generalissimus using the term *chozjain* (host, owner, proprietor). Within the framework of the "soviet people" this form of address was to indicate a direct bond with Stalin. However, for those in the broader "camp of peace and socialism" and communists of this ilk living beyond its borders, the issue was complicated by cults of personality that were more regional in nature, those that were important within the borders of particular people's democracies. At the October 1956 plenum of the Central Committee of the Polska Zjednoczona Partia Robotnicza (Polish United Workers' Party, PZPR), Władisław Gomułka spoke of the ubiquity of this phenomenon, a kind of system of "cults of personality." To a certain extent party leaders in individual "*demoludy*"<sup>836</sup> fell victim to this phenomenon, as they were accused of being "nationalist deviationists." The course of the political career of Marshal Josip Tito – totalitarian schismatic or dissident – showed that the cult of personality was inherent in the system. And the fact that Romania eventually strayed from the Soviet system (though in a way that lacked any liberalization in its political and economic structures) could not help but lead to the late-flowering and caricatural cult of Nicolae Ceaușescu.

What endured from Stalin's system? For how long did Stalinism survive its creator and eponym? A certain scholar from Moscow, who – in the Brezhnev era – expressed a desire to emigrate to Israel, later described and analyzed how attitudes of people around him changed as a result. Having announced his desire, he became in the Russian capital an untouchable pariah, alienated and excluded from any close ties of friendship.<sup>837</sup> In his opinion, the issue here is fundamental to "real socialism" and goes beyond the question of fear: the system pushed personal bonds to the margins, limited the private sphere to a minimum. Friendship was understood institutionally, in a utilitarian way. It would be (and this is something which the Moscow scholar was not aware of) a kind of reference to friendship as it was viewed in the seventeenth century, though – clearly – the historical context is so different that a close comparison is impossible.

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836 Translator's note: "*demoludy*" is an abbreviated form of *demokracje ludowe*, or "people's democracies" – that is, the USSR's satellite countries in Eastern Europe.

837 Vladimir Shlapentokh 1984.

### 3. Clienteles in the Era of “Collective Leadership”

*What is particularly upsetting is the fact that “informal” categories currently include high civic initiatives, common social circles, groups of drug addicts, and certain simply anti-social entities. [...]*

*The division of society into formal and informal structures is, generally speaking, not justified – because the latter exists both outside and inside formal structures, as well as along the border between the two. In addition, this division is movable.*

*Kommunist*<sup>838</sup>

Such was the position of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) to the end, but the epigraph indicates that there was interest in this issue and it was a problem that had to be solved: *Tertia Roma locuta*. But the battles among the diadochi after Stalin’s death, and particularly after the unexpected fall of Nikita Khrushchev, imposed on Sovietologists the need to reveal in the Soviet party-government apparatus the mechanisms by which factions were created and by which they functioned, which had direct and practical implications for the foreign policies of Western states, particularly the United States. It was broadly understood that the Kremlin’s system of government was not as coherent as many people in the West believed; in any case it rapidly eroded after the death of the *chozjain*.

In light of arguments made by Baker,<sup>839</sup> I view the issue of post-Stalinist clientele in the following way: The death of Stalin opened the gates for a kind of political NEP, which served as a solid foundation for patronal relationships, for the kind of patronage that was focused on its own survival and whose aim, in effect, was the creation of a stable system of rule. Lavrentiy Beria was a threat to such patronage, but once he was eliminated, and once the power of the Ministry of Internal Affairs/KGB within the governing apparatus was restricted, people in government circles could calmly devote themselves to the battle for influence, the key to which was the expansion of crony-clientelistic alliances. But in contrast to Baker, who tends to equate “competing policies” with “institutions pitted against institutions,” I would argue that the distinction is only apparent. Such programmatic differences could, to a large degree, be translated into a program favoring one or another sphere of the economy. The fact is that Khrush-

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838 *Kommunist* 1988, no. 9. Quote from “Zrzeszenia, inicjatywy, obywatel, władza,” *Forum*, 18 August 1988.

839 Baker 1982, 44–48.

chev, even at the height of his power, did not enjoy the kind of monopoly over patronage that Stalin had enjoyed (which was one of the conditions for stability within the governing team), but he was able to guarantee that team a high level of prestige and security in terms of employment. At the same time, it seems to have guaranteed his own position as well. But having taken sufficient control of the Central Committee to carry out fundamental reforms, Khrushchev carried out other reforms that were highly unpopular with those in the apparatus. Baker wrote: “Unfortunately Khrushchev seems to have been less aware than his clients of the reciprocal nature of the relationship into which he had entered; or at least unable to maintain the reciprocity.”<sup>840</sup> At the same time, the system ran according to an unwritten rule-logic that a leader strives toward absolute power.<sup>841</sup> The gradual fall of Khrushchev’s influence between 1958 and 1964 was accompanied by growing uncertainty among apparatchiks, many of whom were concerned by the introduction of the new principle of “systemic renewal” in Communist Party ranks. Depending on the position of the institution in society (the Central Committee, the committees in the republics, regions and provinces), from one-quarter to half of party members lost their position “by choice.” Baker writes that in 1962, 62% of the Secretaries of Primary Party lost – though it would be more proper to say *changed* – their position. The number of cases of those who were transferred to higher positions was highly significant. Further steps taken by the “First Secretary” no doubt provoked even greater concern among the nomenklatura, which was tied to significant cuts in full-time party positions and the chaos that resulted from the division of party committees into agricultural and industrial committees. Incessant and arbitrary reorganization, the wisdom of which was questioned privately and was never proven correct in any obvious way, damaged Khrushchev’s authority, which was already undermined by his peculiar style of public behavior.

Khrushchev – Baker believes – acted as if he had monopolized patronage as Stalin had.<sup>842</sup> I sense some exaggeration here. However, there is no doubt that the high nomenklatura feared the “First Secretary’s” next unpredictable steps, because after he was “removed” from his position (as a result of a putsch at the highest levels), the organizational changes he introduced were quickly annulled, the result being the stagnation that many in the apparatus wanted. One might well

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840 Ibid., 48.

841 Linden 1966.

842 Baker 1982, 48.



regard these tendencies as a warning to future Soviet leaders, which is precisely how Brezhnev understood it.<sup>843</sup>

“As the experience of Stalinism limited Khrushchev’s scope for arbitrariness, so the experience of Khrushchevism has almost entirely eliminated such scope for his successors.”<sup>844</sup> These restrictions meant stagnation both in patronal relationships and in Soviet internal politics in general, because the construction of new clientelistic networks would mean the elimination of someone’s protégés. At the same time, it provoked stubborn resistance within the governing milieu. Western observers, whose task was now made easier, quickly perceived on many levels in the Soviet Union a blossoming gerontocracy, which peaked with the career of Brezhnev and the short governments of his successors.

After Stalin’s death, a term from the language of propaganda – namely “collective leadership” – came into broad use. There emerged at the summit of Soviet power a couple pairs of leaders: first Nikolai Bulganin/Khrushchev and then Brezhnev/Alexei Kosygin (and Nikolai Podgorny). None of them lasted very long, though conflicts never went so far as “physical elimination” of a dyad’s weaker partner, a structure that was formally horizontal and – unlike the clientelistic dyad – tied equal (or practically equal) party leaders and government administrators. The heir to the leader’s greatness was the “collective wisdom” of the broader leadership. All individual traits of the USSR’s political and administrative leaders, all differences of opinion between them, all conflicts at the top, and all power battles within the government apparatus, were strictly taboo in the press, though they were always the subject of rumors (one still dared to spread rumors). With the expansion of television, Soviet leaders made sure that no one from their ranks appeared on the small screen too often; those who attempted to gain popularity among the masses were breaking the rules of the political game.<sup>845</sup> It is worth remembering (this is a subject that has probably not been approached in the literature from the point of view of clientelistic networks) that “in the republics” – that is, where delicate problems of nationality came into play – the nomenklatura

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843 Baker even detected – in Khrushchev’s first front-page editorial after his fall, entitled “Partijnoj Žizni” – indications that apparatchiks of lower ranks were strengthening their positions and were establishing their right to criticize party directors. The emergence of this kind of “radicalism” was rather typical in the wake of a change in government. We also recognize such a phenomenon from the PRL.

844 Baker 1982, 49.

845 It was the same in the PRL. Any attempt to gain popularity by party or administrative activists was suspicious and frowned upon. Such behavior was viewed within governing circles as a sign of disloyalty to the idea of collective leadership.

followed a pre-established policy of ethnic parity (though KGB positions in the territories were, as a rule, filled by Russians). All of these relationships could not help but influence the decisions of potential clients.

For decades the public sphere was closing in around the Soviet man, and it was difficult for external observers and scholars to understand political mechanisms in the USSR. They searched for analytical methods that would allow them to predict the future, that would indicate with high probability who were the potential candidates for leadership in the Kremlin, and who were their closest associates. Rarely were the results of research into a society so important for actual political practice. Scholars put forth theories describing the criteria for promotion in the Soviet system of rule. Careful retrospective examinations of the press, including the provincial dailies, allowed Sovietologists to reconstruct the paths by which activists of various types – in the economic arena, through Komsomol (the main Soviet youth organization), and within the party – gained promotion; scholars were able to trace these paths back even to an individual's early years. Some sort of medal received in connection with a successful *oblast* kolkhoz, a speech given at a party conference, a person's first position taken in the apparatus and noted in the local newspaper, would allow a new name (and associated information) to be entered into the card index or computer memory, much like an entomologist might add a new cockchafer to his collection, or an ornithologist might tag birds to follow their movements. In order to effectively hinder such research, Soviet authorities in the 1970s blocked Western readers' access to the local press. By today's standards, computers in the 1960s and 1970s were very slow, and software was far from perfect, but enough information was collected in the West to map out, with a certain statistical regularity, the paths of political promotion – that is, the transition to ever higher positions and ever broader authority. But for Sovietologists it was never about figuring out statistical probability but rather about the practical ability to predict who would come to power, when the next *przeciąg* (draft) would pass through (as Stefan Kisielewski wrote in his 1967 *roman à clef* entitled *Widziane z góry*) – that is, a far-reaching shift in the leadership that comes as a result of the resignation of a high dignitary. Here, scholars were met by failure. From the late Brezhnev years (when the General Secretary was clearly losing strength) until Gorbachev took power, changes in personnel were frequent. In the West – and, I would argue, with even greater suspense in the USSR itself – kremlinologists read carefully edited communiqués for signs of a leader's health and – in the USSR's last decade of existence – for information on funerals. Particular attention was given to who paid their respects (and in what order) at the catafalque in the Column Hall of the Palace of Unions and then to

how notables were seated in the tribune of Lenin's Mausoleum. The results of these auguries were usually of limited importance.

Let us take the example – fraught with political implications – of Mikhail Gorbachev. He began his career in the nomenklatura as a regional head in Stavropol, where the spa city of Kislovodsk and the Krasnyye Kamni resort for Moscow elites were located. Whenever Yuri Andropov visited the area to nurse his weak health he was welcomed by none other than KGB generals and the city's host, Mikhail Gorbachev. Igor Korchilov, who would become Gorbachev's Russian-English interpreter, wrote:

Thus Gorbachev became a protégé of Andropov, who saw great promise in the relatively young regional Party secretary. When Fyodor Kulakov, the Politburo member in charge of agriculture, died in 1978, Andropov immediately proposed Gorbachev as his successor in the thankless job. By now Gorbachev was firmly associated in the Politburo members' minds with pleasant and useful weeks of rest and vacation. They also remembered that he was exceptionally young by their standards. Why, he was young enough to be their son. Hence he was not dangerous as a rival.<sup>846</sup>

We have a series of examples that nonetheless arrange themselves into a logical whole. Korchilov was well situated in these issues and understood perfectly well how bigwigs in the nomenklatura were promoted. But it is striking that the factors playing a role here were not discernible to Sovietologists who – when interpreting information from the media or often from rumors circulating among diplomats – did not have knowledge of the circumstances described by Korchilov. It was different in the case of Gorbachev's next step toward the highest office in the USSR. On the night of 10–11 March 1985, just after the death of Konstantin Chernenko, he was appointed chairman of the funeral commission,<sup>847</sup> which was a clear signal that it was the will of the highest nomenklatura that a day later he would become Secretary General of the CPSU.

Political predictions are like weather forecasts. We know more about how certain natural phenomena function, and meteorologists have increasingly accurate tools at their disposal. But the weather tomorrow likes to surprise us. Particularly in our part of Europe.

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846 Korchilov 1999, 289. Here Korchilov also describes the meeting in Mineralniye Vody, a town near Kislovodsk, where it was decided that Gorbachev would be called to Moscow. Brezhnev was there, along with Konstantin Chernenko and Yuri Andropov. In response to Andropov's proposition – Korchilov writes – “Brezhnev mumbled, ‘Agriculture is very important. You are a specialist. Save it.’ Gorbachev said firmly, ‘I’ll do my best.’”

847 Ibid., 249.

The fact that such calculations, based on detectable job-related movements of individuals within the Soviet nomenklatura, are far from perfect is indicated by the patron-client relationship (as presented by Gyula Józsa) that was created in the Politburo and the CPSU Secretariat.<sup>848</sup> Numerically, Brezhnev dominated, whose people – as apparent clients – included Chernenko (who, in turn, had 5 clients of his own). Only 2 people were attributed to Andropov, beyond his own son (likely as a client).<sup>849</sup> Among the future high dignitaries associated with Gorbachev we find V.A. Murakhovskii. But we see that Boris Yeltsin was an apparent client (one among 8) of Andrei Kirilenko. All of which shows how political crisis developed in a system which – as those in the governing milieu intended – was supposed to persist as unchanged as possible. But above all it proves how weak were their methods. On the other hand, Sovietologists were aware of the fact, for example, that Mikhail Suslov was a party ideologue and as such always remained in Moscow and was thus unable to bring “his people” from the provinces to the capital, and that because Andropov was a “chekist” – a man of the KGB apparatus – his team by necessity remained anonymous.<sup>850</sup>

But the above-described research technique, imperfect though it was in predicting the fate of individuals, proved useful when applied, statistically, on a mass scale. Scholars made use of the computer relatively early, in the 1970s, to research the factors determining the careers of 224 Obkom (*oblast* committee) secretaries from 1955–1967. They put forward two hypotheses:

- The decisive factor in determining the advance of a party functionary is his connection with a power-oriented patron;
- The decisive factor in advancement is ability and achievement.

This study’s ambitious goal was to define whether evolution of the system led to stagnation or to “pluralism.”<sup>851</sup> The report on the results of the analysis suggests that the dominant factor was performance, but these results cannot be checked: it is easier, despite everything, to confirm patronal bonds than it is to confirm a Soviet functionary’s actual achievements.

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848 Józsa 1983, 151–152. See also Willerton 1979, 166–167.

849 This list of party dignitaries includes, as clients, the sons of Andropov, Brezhnev, Andrei Gromyko (and also perhaps his grandson); Heydar Aliyev’s brother; Eduard Szewardnadze’s son-in-law; and Arvid Pelsze’s brother-in-law (Mikhail Suslov, who was Pelsze’s patron).

850 Hence the helplessness of Western commentators when trying to explain in 1999 the meteoric rise of Vladimir Putin.

851 Stewart 1972; Józsa 1983, 142.

The claim above is supported by Joel Moses's study, which is devoted to the promotion of Brezhnev's people during his time as Party Secretary in Dnepropetrovsk.<sup>852</sup> Over time these apparatchiks moved on to various positions at the center of power, including within the Central Committee and the party's Central Control Commission, while they also slowed the advance of people in Podgorny's Kharkiv. The promotion of this group dates back to 1954, as Khrushchev was consolidating his rule. The actual number of apparatchiks from Dnepropetrovsk was relatively small, but the method of analysis is verifiable: as a factor, the bond with Brezhnev turns out to have been dominant.<sup>853</sup> But Gyula Józsa also mentions "Brezhnev-ites" (from other local and regional apparatuses in which their boss had worked) and his offices and *politruks* (political commissars) from the 18th Army during the war.<sup>854</sup> But one must remember that Leonid Brezhnev, after Khrushchev's fall, worked intensively on his image as a great leader who allegedly played the main role in Russia's victory in the Great Patriotic War.<sup>855</sup> Such work was not easy as long as so many veterans were still alive.

The dilemma that emerges from clientelistic networks created under such conditions is based on the fact that a patron climbing the ladder of success has to construct around himself not only a loyal and subservient operative apparatus, but also one that is skilled and efficient. Subordinates-collaborators-clients who are loyal but ineffective are not of great value. Relatives, whose careers must be facilitated or who are tied to the patron by the very nature of their relationship, provide a certain exception. But the questions arise: what did skill and efficiency mean under "real socialism" in terms of work performed by bureaucrats and, particularly, party functionaries? Can we rely on the sources available to us: the opinions of superiors, the number of diplomas, clinking medals on both sides of the chest, panegyrics in the press?

In the end, the course of Brezhnev's putsch, much like the course of events in the Kremlin as reported by Khrushchev right after Stalin's death, point to a certain

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852 Moses 1976; according to Orlovsky 1983, 143.

853 There would be several more such situations involving particularly Gorbachev from the Stavropol *oblast* and Yeltsin from the Sverdlovsk *oblast*. In the PRL the *desant na Warszawę* (Warsaw landing) by Gierek's people from Upper Silesia is memorable.

854 Józsa 1983, 143.

855 There was a joke about Brezhnev according to which he, even as a child, advised Lenin in Smolny on the move that Lenin ought to make ... His fallen predecessor, Nikita Sergeevich Khrushchev, also created his own myth, one that was tied to his leading the partisan movement in territory occupied by the Germans; this myth was designed to efface his Stalinist past.

peculiarity in Soviet political clientelism. Clearly, the possession of an effective and subservient clientelistic network in the regions and provinces was important – even if only for observing rivals and to gain political intelligence – but any change of the guard at the very top, in the Kremlin, was decided by members of a small group surrounded by units of the KGB and the army, and by whomever else whose praetorian loyalty had to be assured in a timely fashion.

Sovietologists not only followed the Soviet press for biographical information, but also found there indications of the stigmatization of personal relationships that went against accepted “socialist principles.” The leader of the Ukrainian Communist Party, Volodymyr Shcherbytsky, criticized activists who did not maintain an equal and balanced distance with their subordinates, and the editor-in-chief of the CPSU’s ideological organ *Kommunist*, Richard Kosolapov, raged against those who were not guided by true *partijnost’* (party-minded-ness, partisanship) but by personal friendship posing as *partijnost’*. But what really did *partijnost’* mean?

In the republics and on territories inhabited by non-Russian peoples, especially in the Caucasus, there was the unsolvable problem of how to break national and clan bonds. Soviet political correctness required ethnic representation both in formally elective bodies and in executive and party organs (with regard to – among other issues – security, which remained mostly in “Slavic” hands; that is, in Russian or Russified Ukrainian hands). But clan relationships also came into play, as did animosities even between small ethnic groups. Stalin, who was a specialist when it came to the “nationalities question,” drew – with his mastery of intrigue – the republics’ borders by cutting and pasting local interests and attitudes in an attempt to hinder the development of separatist aspirations.<sup>856</sup> Such measures did not prevent local conflicts, which in turn made it easier for central authorities to intervene. But neither terror nor Moscow’s efforts after Stalin’s death broke clan and ethnic bonds, which would blossom after the fall of the USSR.

In September 1980 a front-page editorial in *Pravda* condemned relationships in North Ossetia in which a “certain comrades” were choosing an economic team according to the improper criteria of *rodstwo*, *ziemlaczestwo*, and *ugodniczestwo* (kinship, local ties, and servility).<sup>857</sup> *Miestniczestwo* – local interests – was of great significance, particularly in the economic sphere; it was, for example, possible to

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856 This might remind the reader of the later fates of Nagorno-Karabakh and Abkhazia.

857 Examples from Józsa 1983, 161. Józsa claims that Hungarian communists at this time were significantly more open than the CPSU in that they accepted the pressure of “subjectivism” and “favoritism.” But he mistakenly juxtaposes statements made by the cadres chief of the Hungarian Central Committee with analysis of Poland made by Jacek Tarkowski, who observed these issues as a sociologist (see Józsa 1983, 162).

improve the supply of consumer goods to the inhabitants of supported regions or to push greater investment funds in their direction.<sup>858</sup> In his memoirs describing his time in Kazakhstan (1954), Brezhnev wrote about the unhealthy relationships at work there; people on various levels were being favored for positions not according to their qualifications but based on personal bonds, not according to their value as employees but on “friendship ties.”<sup>859</sup> But it is not clear which concrete interests won the day there, or rather – to what extent some were opposed by others.

Methods developed in the United States to analyze group interests have turned out to be of little use when applied to one-party systems.<sup>860</sup> At the same time, scholars (Stewart et al.) have considered opposing models to explain how the Soviet governing elite came into being: the patron-client and the “rational-technical” models.<sup>861</sup> They posed several questions:

- “How much of the total variance in elite mobility is explained by patron-client relationship?”
- How much is explained by rational-technical criteria?
- How does the explanatory power of each model vary over time?
- What additional variables might explain the remaining unexplained variance in mobility?<sup>862</sup>

Reality turned out to be hardly transparent, though the conclusions were generally negative; for example, for the post-Stalinist period no calculation of the number and significance of clienteles involving members of the Politburo (whose members, particularly candidate members, numbered among the clients of the most powerful patrons) can explain the variance in mobility within the governing elite or how other events developed.

Willerton provides estimates of the number of clientelistic networks among leading officials in the Brezhnev era, and in so doing he distinguished between clients and protégés, by which was understood “politicians who shared with Soviet leaders a common past” and, together with them, began their careers under Stalin. Clients *sensu stricto* were those whose patronal bonds were not connected

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858 Not just in the economic sphere. In the spring-summer of 1968, after the Ukrainian Petro Shelest was allowed into the Politburo, store signs in Lviv and information boards at museums could be put up with bilingual texts. However, this does not mean that Shelest represented some sort of liberal program.

859 Józsa 1983, 164.

860 *Interest groups* 1971, 17.

861 Stewart 1972.

862 *Ibid.*, 1272, 1269, 1283.

personally with Brezhnev but with his people.<sup>863</sup> Obviously, such a distinction was not always clear-cut.

Table 3. *The main patrons in the Politburo and Secretariat of the CPSU Central Committee in the years 1964–1982*

Patrons	Number of clients	Including members of the Politburo and Secretariat
Brezhnev	48	10
Kapitonow	11	2
Kirilenko	12	1
Kosygin	9	–
Mazurov	9	2
Podgorny	13	1

Brezhnev’s “protégés” in the Politburo and Secretariat were Chernenko, Andrei Grechko, Kirilenko, Dinmukhamed Konayev, Shcherbytsky, Nikolai Tikhonov, and Dmitriy Ustinov; his clients were Aliyev, Konstantin Katushev, and Konstantin Rusakov. Gorbachev had 2 clients (according to Willerton 1979).

What is conspicuous here is the above-mentioned tendency to juxtapose two strategies: one “clientelistic” and the other “rational” – a tendency that contains a certain one-sided (I would say) understanding of rationality and that represents, in essence, a thorough misunderstanding of the political system in question. As a working definition for the patron-client system they adopted the following wording: “a vast collection of personal followings,” with the main factor being “patronage of dominant leaders.” But if by “rational” we mean “suitable to the situation” or “leading directly to the expected conclusions,” then one must establish what conclusions we are talking about, for what is the interest group striving. One could say that the problem does not fit into the clientelistic-rational opposition, but rather in a clientelistic-rational-party principled triad.

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863 Willerton 1979, 30, 51. At another place Willerton explains the purposefulness of this distinction. The client remains always in a subordinate position to the patron and highly dependent on him. “For the purposes of my studies, individuals who make two significant career advances under a patron during the *first* five-year period of the patron’s tenure are identified as ‘clients.’ [...] a new leader needs approximately five years to consolidate his power and form his own ‘team’ in order to advance his policy program.” See Willerton, *Patronage and Politics in the USSR* (Cambridge University Press: 1992), 246.



Not all scholars are fully aware of the peculiarities of the Soviet system. Observers, particularly in the United States, were eager to demonstrate this system's forthcoming convergence with capitalism. The desire to see an end to the Cold War sometimes translated into wishful thinking that the Soviet system would undergo gradual reform and would thus become more mild. At the same time, not all Sovietologists analyzed the distinctive features of Soviet clientelism. Below is a list of features attributed to the patron-client relationship by Grey Hodnett and John P. Willerton.<sup>864</sup> Such relationships are possible when both parties act in one more of the following areas:

- “promotion of one’s interests as a continuing member of the leadership;
- promotion of one’s factional interests;
- promotion of functional tasks for which one is responsible;
- promotion of interests associated with one’s general policy sympathies;
- promotion of sectoral (‘party,’ ‘governmental,’ etc.), organizational (departmental, ministerial, etc.), or geographical ([...] region, republic) interests;<sup>865</sup>
- promotion of interests associated with one’s past career experiences;
- promotion of interests arising from one’s membership in various age, social background, ethnic, and educational categories. [...]”

As opposed to countless highly theoretical and abstract definitions, the above list of motivations that directed the actions of Soviet functionaries is extremely concrete, though conceived in terms that are discretely courteous and relatively non-controversial. It lacks reference to “party principles,” and the point about “general policy sympathies” raises great doubts, though it strikes me that the above rules of action can be useful.

Gyula Józsa introduced the term-metaphor *Seilschaft* into academic currency in reference precisely to the political mechanisms of “real socialism.”<sup>866</sup> Józsa uses *Seilschaft* as a synonym for patronage, clientelism and patron-client relationships. He uses this term wrongly to the extent that (and because) mountain climbers and alpinists alternate tasks: one leads while the other belays or protects, and then

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864 G. Hodnett, “Succession Contingencies in the Soviet Union,” *Problems of Communism* XXXIV, no. 2 (1975). See also Willerton 1979, 162.

865 I have excluded here the incomprehensible “province” as a territorial unit higher than republic.

866 For the English version (Józsa 1983) the expression *Seilschaften* was not translated, but the author explains that it refers to a “roped-party of climbers whose mutual aid, protection and support enable them to scale heights that would be beyond their individual powers.”

vice versa.<sup>867</sup> Nonetheless, a use can be found for this questionable metaphor. For example, in this economy of scarcity, cooperation was necessary, particularly in the supply of raw materials, spare parts, etc. “Production” literature was full of ways to solve dilemmas in this regard. The enterprise director was effective and efficient who was able to assure his workplace a consistent production routine, which required, mainly, various kinds of cooperation with other directors, an understanding with officials who were responsible for allocations, allotments, norms, etc. Everything in this system was considered “political,” including – even especially – a failed plan. If we walk in the shoes of the people who were responsible for an enterprise or production division, it is easy to imagine the mechanisms of cooperation, for example in the downgrading of norms, or in the increased allocation of raw materials. And there existed common interests within entire industries (which demanded that collective pressure be applied on central planners) and common interests within regions, etc. All of which played itself out in an atmosphere of verisimilitude and ruse, and all of which created as many areas of fierce competition as it did areas of cooperation, which – from an ideological point of view – was not so much “cooperation” as it was cronyism and favoritism. After all, such cooperation often turned against directives issued from above.

#### 4. “Anatomy of a Spectre”

It is interesting that scholars of clientelistic, family and clan systems in the USSR have not taken into account the synthetic model of the Soviet system constructed by Alain Besançon.<sup>868</sup> In his Sovietological essay, this French Russianist proposed an economic interpretation of the Soviet system that lacked the kind of statistical underpinning and logical apparatus usually employed by economists. In the economy – indeed in the system as a whole – he saw three sectors. The first sector – military – was highly secret and the most efficient, though it also wasteful because of the privileges from which it benefited. For Soviet leaders this was the most important sector, and the civilian sector was entirely subordinate to it. The second, civilian-economic sector was – by contrast – highly inefficient; it took a back seat to the defense industry in terms of resources both natural and human (the most talented specialists). As a rule it did not carry out its task to provide for the people. To the extent that the system as whole functioned – Besançon

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867 Parenthetically: metaphors are often risky. In colloquial Polish we have the word *asekurantwo* (guardedness, over-protectiveness), which signifies the behavior of a person (a “social actor,” the anthropologist would say) that is decidedly negative.

868 Besançon 1987.

argues – it was because of the existence of the third, private and half- (or fully-) illegal sector. The role played by garden plots as an intensive and market-oriented area in any collectivized agricultural system is widely known; because this sector existed outside the sphere of central planning (and thus beyond the allocation of resources and employment) it was, by the system's very nature, illegal. Nonetheless, as Besançon emphasizes, this market-oriented sphere was fundamental to the wider economy, and it alleviated the shortages with which the centrally planned system had to struggle. This third zone was not so much made up of separate enterprises as it represented a sphere of individual initiative, of resources that were saved from the pool of public waste, but it also performed part of the public's task by supplying people with "scarce" clothing or building materials that were normally available for purchase only with special checks in Soviet government stores (*Beryozki*) – like the *Pewex* stores in the PRL – and others. At its heart it involved items smuggled through the factory gate, spare parts for a bicycle or motorcycle, a home appliance.<sup>869</sup> It was a breeding ground for crime, one that was stigmatized by party-state propaganda but was, at the same time, a school for corruption sponsored by the system itself. For us Poles it is important because, though it – on the one hand – loosened the official corset on the official economy, it was able – on the other hand – to set the foundation for new forms of dependency.

#### a. Sweaters for the Arctic

The gray economy often creates a favorable foundation for clientelistic relationships. Let us take an angry commentary published by *Pravda* that was reprinted as a trivial curiosity in the French *Le Monde* in 1976.<sup>870</sup> The residents of the Stavropol *guberniya* at the time – *nota bene* governed by Mikhail Gorbachev, and situated at the foot of the Caucasus Mountains – occupied themselves at that time with the production of hand-made knitwear. Scarves and sweaters were sent by post to the distant north. Certain individuals – we read in *Le Monde* – did not hesitate to gather up the entire village's knitting production and resell it at astronomical prices on the markets of northern cities. Two or three trips allowed these "Argo-

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869 *Nota bene*, Professor Valdo Zilli, a historian-Russianist in Naples, once mentioned to me (in 1976) that, in shops around the "Alfa Sud" automobile factories, built for the economic development of *Mezzogiorno*, one could get spare parts taken by factory workers.

870 "Une passion lucrative," *Le Monde*, 5–6 September 1976. No doubt any translation fails to reflect the tone of the original Soviet prose.

nauts of modern times” to buy themselves a Zhiguli.<sup>871</sup> *Pravda* regretted that all the inhabitants of this region, descendants of the famous Cossaks-Dzhigits, had taken up knitting; even teachers and postal workers were knitting during work hours. The wool came mostly from herds being bred illegally by individuals. The article also claimed that the amount of wool from the kolkhozes was going down year by year, which only proved that some of it was being stolen.

In this realistic portrait of the gray socialist economy I detect the basis of an energetic growth in clientelistic relationships. This was not a note from a policy-court file, but rather a report that expressed outrage over a moral plague sweeping through an entire region. The procedure described in the article required an expansive and efficient organization that allowed thousands of people to make a living, some of them a very nice living. It was a regular *Zunftkauf* – that is, the purchase of an entire production as happened among weavers in eighteenth-century Silesia. Cottage workers in the Caucasus region, with their spinning and knitting, had a collectively organized existence based on terms dictated by buyers and the entrepreneurs hiding behind them. This system could not have functioned without the undoubtedly silent (and not uninterested) permission of local dignitaries. It functioned at the cost of the civilian sphere of the official economy, in part because it benefited from excessively cheap air transport in the Soviet Union, though – I suspect – also from countless instances of assistance provided at, and around, the point of production; after all, in the USSR one could not legally rent a warehouse or trucks, which were always subject to inspection by the police/militia. Such a situation raises the issue of corruption, which I discussed separately above, but the system as a whole bound people permanently together; it created dependencies that could not be reconciled with official ideology and the official economic system.

Ilya Zemtsov, an emigrant who discussed the issue of corruption from an insider’s point of view, provides what is – in my opinion – a simplified image.<sup>872</sup> Perhaps it is an image based on folklore from the Caucasus: everything for sale for gold, platinum or diamonds. But it is a Caucasus that is entirely different than the one we read about in the above *Pravda* commentary. To be sure, both involve alternative economies, hidden in full view, entirely market-oriented; spheres that are oblivious to official ideology. But their functions are fully divergent. On the one hand, “Proles” (to take a word from Orwell’s vocabulary), working with wool,

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871 Translator’s note: A Zhiguli is a compact automobile produced by the Soviet manufacturer AvtoVAZ, better known as Lada.

872 Zemtsov 1976.

basically saved the system; they filled glaring gaps in a decrepit economy, and their efforts had a beneficial impact on the living conditions of people in the Soviet North. On the other hand, it is difficult to regard jewels used to purchase positions in the apparatus or membership in the republican academy of sciences as a market mechanism with any kind of social value. Even worse: the second case meant devaluation in the academic sciences. According to Zemtsov, between 1969 and 1972 Aliyev filled around 2,000 positions with his people from the KGB. What did he achieve with this? And what damage did he cause?<sup>873</sup>

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873 Ibid., 149.



## Chapter 10: Africa, Kings, Dictators and Citizens-Subjects

Africa is a concept that is mainly cartographic, much like Asia: Differences between regions stand out more than similarities. However, this does not mean that the Africanist has no concrete research tasks. The historian is struck by the great diversity of African lands, their inhabitants, and their various fates, but above all by their relationship with outside factors – Arab and European merchants, slave traders, and colonial powers. Within the continent itself, particularly in its interior, transportation and communication was – and remains – difficult. To all of this one must add ethnic differences (those that exist in fact, along with those that exist only in the collective consciousness), the multitude of languages, and the chasm between the world of the Maghreb and Black Africa. The continent is thus a collection rather than a syndrome of cases. More than one Africanist would surely disagree with me and might well be right in doing so, but my point of view is particular: I am in search of the rules and characteristics of clientelistic systems in widely various social and natural environments. One should regard what I present here as reflections on relationships that are clientelistic in nature, reflections carried out as a historiographic object conceived from the point of view of a European and a historian of Europe. I would not be able to look upon Europe from a sub-Saharan perspective, which is something both understandable and rarely admitted by whites. I do not claim that African issues are too important to leave to Africans themselves. On the contrary: I approach the subject fully aware that I am a non-expert, even a parasite foraging through the results of anthropological research in the field.

At this point one cannot avoid thoughts about anthropology and history. Basically, for anthropologists and sociologists, field research – if those who carry it out are aware of the dimension of time – is only one of the many ways to gather material, a fact that is particularly clear with reference to *Mezzogiorno* and Sicily, where scholars underpin their observations with statistical material even when talking about the nineteenth century; the historical dimension is clearly prominent there. In Africa today, the ways in which social processes in the pre- and early-colonial periods are dated are highly doubtful. I cannot avoid a question to which there is no clear answer: Is the cultural distance that divides the Western scholar from his research environment in Black Africa smaller or greater than the temporal distance that a historian in Europe feels toward the object of his research? I would argue that these two situations are comparable.

## 1. European Words in the African Bush

*And we should stop selling off second-hand concepts to nonsuspecting non-European cultures.*

Anthony Black<sup>874</sup>

In the last half-century, Black Africa has become one of the most important areas for research in what I have called informal systems of power. After all it is precisely pre-colonial and colonial Africa that indicates how imprecise the expression “informal power” can be. Several forms of clientelism have been especially well developed there and have often been precisely formalized. White travelers who (mainly in the middle of the nineteenth century) described the power systems of the African “kingdoms,” along with missionaries, colonial administrators, and eventually professional anthropologists, all attempted to present relations among the natives using categories established in past European societies; they wrote about “kings” and their “ministers,” “knights” and “subjects,” about “lords” and “vassals,” and finally about “patrons” and “clients.”<sup>875</sup> Each of these terms has its own European history, and most of them were, at one time or another, precisely defined, but social reality is so rich and diverse that they emerged over the course of history in various forms and contexts. Much like the case with the Near East, it was inevitable that local social and power systems/relationships were described using Western categories. But if we demand of the historian and anthropologist the kind of conceptual precision that characterizes formal logic, then what would suffer is comparative social research. In an extreme case, every system of interpersonal relations, and – in a given phase of evolution – every social actor, would get a separate name and we would lose the comparative plane.

So, can we analyze these power systems using concepts created in Western Europe and tested on the material of European civilization? This is a question of fundamental importance to social scientists: If we describe relationships dominant in a civilization with certain traditions using terms created in a different environment, then the question emerges whether such a procedure reflects reality with

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874 Black 1997, 69.

875 Authors of the first volume of *Historia Afryki* (1996), in an order to avoid the European vocabulary, appropriately use the term *władca* (power, authority); it is not possible, however, to avoid *państwo* (state) or *państwewek* (statelet), etc. After all, the first whites who got to know the power structures in certain regions of central Africa, particularly in the African Great Lakes region, were surprised by their modernity, or rather transparency, for people who knew Europe's past. For more on this topic, including concise methodological comments, see Bronisław Nowak (1996, p. 670).



sufficient precision. Or are we not trying to place reality into a procrustean bed of concepts known only by white people?

When it comes to administrators and missionaries, an extreme example – one that is famous in literature – involves not Africa but the Fiji islands. In 1877 Lewis Henry Morgan's book *Ancient Society* appeared, which would soon help shape Marx and Engels' thinking on the evolution of mankind from a "primitive community" to a future "classless society," but efforts were also made to apply Morgan's theory to administrative practice. Guided by this theory, Sir Arthur Gordon, the British Governor of Fiji, mistakenly interpreted the question of land ownership among the natives of the colony he ruled. He argued that they were emerging from "barbarism" and moving into stage of "communal property." Lorimer Fison, a Methodist minister, detected there a Morganesque state of pre-feudalism; since the natives did not know about iron (how could they possibly have known about it, on an island that had no ore?), and – thus – as a people of the stone age, they lived in a stage of "middle barbarism." Both of them regarded indications that the natives recognized private property as signs of depravity freshly imported from Europe. In a kind of perverse sense, such arguments were justified because the natives quickly understood on what their "true and ancient traditions" were based; they "discovered" their own genesis myth, and – to the White Man's satisfaction and for their own peace – the natives obediently adapted themselves to a Morganesque theory of the uniform and staged development of civilization.<sup>876</sup>

I do not know of a direct African equivalent to the above anecdote about Fiji, but it is instructive because the construction of a colonial administration, and with time a political system for independent countries, required a certain interpretation of prevailing social relations. And the issue that is of greatest interest to us boils down to a choice: which term best describes the given relationships: clientelism or feudalism?

Most generally speaking, while French and Belgian researchers tend to write about feudalism, Anglophones talk about clientelism. This is not a particularly important debate: when the object of research (using the above, unavoidable European concepts) is relations between king and magnates, and particularly when this system of unequal partners is highly formalized and ceremonial, the analogy to feudalism becomes prominent. In other cases, the more flexible clientelistic formula is most useful.

The consequence of such views is the application of terms from the main Western languages. And in this regard one might notice that problems emerge not just

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876 See Cohn 1981, 237.

for regions of the Third World; it is often the case that we Poles search in vain for suitable equivalents. For example, we lack effective terms in Polish for such concepts, on the one hand, as “leader” and, on the other hand, “follower,” or *Gefolge* and *Gefolgsmann*.<sup>877</sup> “Patron” and “client” are too closely tied to the Latin tradition, which is why – beyond the cultural sphere – what sounds better in my ears are the Polish terms *przywódca* (leader) and *jego ludzie* (his people), especially since they share a connection with military matters. And there are sometimes other subtleties: for example, Ivan Karp noted that, among the Iteso tribesmen, the term for “client” is *itunga k’Omuse*, with *Omuse* being the name of a patron.<sup>878</sup> Client is a relative term, one that is always accompanied by information about whose person that client is, all of which emphatically confirms the general phenomenon.

In descriptive and analytical works devoted to particular areas and to individual tribes, scholars quite often use local terminology.<sup>879</sup> Sometimes forms of dependency appear that are clothed in characteristic ritual and that could in no way be distinguished from one another using Euro-American terms. We will discuss this issue more below, but front stage will be taken by the dilemma of African “feudalism.” With quotation marks, or without?

## 2. African Cases of Feudalism/Clientelism

How easy it is to fall into the Platonic cave of semantics. Recently Anthony Black counted the number of times scholars have committed a transgression in demand-

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877 See interlude above entitled “The Führer’s *Gefolgsmann*.”

878 Karp 1976, 163.

879 Some scholars, like Catharine Newbury in reference to Rwanda (Newbury 1988; Chrétien 1997), question the tribal character of social differences. The term Tutsi has long referred not to *ethnos* but simply to a tribe who possessed great herds of cattle and had ties to powerful chiefs. Whoever failed to meet these conditions had the status of non-Tutsi: “Au tournant des indépendances, l’ambiance est empoisonnée par ce fantasme” (Chrétien 1997, 174). During the Tutsi governments and when the Europeans were dominant, the benefits of being a Tutsi grew, as did the risks of being associated with the Hutus, which significantly intensified the sense that one was an “ethnic” Hutu. Whatever the ethnologists decide, distinctions in appearance became a burning problem during the conflicts and genocide of the second half of the twentieth century. A British journalist reported that Hutus murdered Tutsis based on the appearance of all those who were light-skinned, tall and slender, and based on entries in their personal identification papers. He witnessed a father begging soldiers to spare his son’s life: he was a Hutu, even though he was tall like a Tutsi. Thus, a person who was tall and thin but not Tutsi was put into a refugee camp – he must be a spy! (L. Hilsum, “Rwanda Revisited,” *The Guardian*, 26 January 1995).

ing the “decolonization of concepts.”<sup>880</sup> But the conclusions of his valuable article, though it has twice provided me a section epigraph, provide not so much practical propositions as they do a necessary warning:

But we may at least take pains to avoid the implication of unsubstantiated univocity that things are more or less the same whenever we happen to use the same word to describe them.<sup>881</sup>

It is dangerous to trace an expression by looking for it in the sources, by lurking in the shadows for every instance of – in this case – the terms patron and client. It is worth repeating that “wherever the concept is lost, the thing itself dies, but – on the other hand – the thing itself is often described using many words, or through verbal evasion. It is easy to forget that social relations and customs are governed by different laws than are language and vocabulary. Even taboo can come into play, but it is usually just about shades of meaning. A given term may sound honorable or contemptuous; each party to an agreement can use a different vocabulary.

We already know that one cannot turn in just any direction with the word “friend!,” because while the client is a *friend* of the patron, the patron is the client’s *lord*, *master*, etc. Even when two parties are touching one another, a certain distance can be marked out. But while in the sphere of Latin culture terminology rather connects and creates a common dominator, the field of social anthropology in Africa has at its disposal many terms that Western scholars regard as the vocabulary of clientelism. Such terms are supposed especially to define a client, because the wealthy or powerful partner is not just a patron. He can be a leader, ruler – generally a superior with various ranges of power, both formal and informal.

Below is a statement by a certain Hutu from Rwanda, which I provide as noted in the literature, in the original French, so as not to pile on further translations:

*Rugwabizi, mon grand-père, avait des vaches obtenues en dot de ses filles, et des vaches acquises contre des haricots. Il n'était client de personne, mais il s'était mis sous la protection du chef d'armée pour garder ses biens. Seul mon père, Rwangabo, eut un patron, un Tutsi qui s'appelait Rindiro. Mais ce fut Rugwabizi, mon grand-père qui, le premier, connut un chef de terre, pour qui il devait faire des travaux, ou donner des prestations en vivres.*<sup>882</sup>

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880 Black 1977, 55. The decolonization of vocabulary is not identical with political correctness. The latter could consistently demand that feudalism/clientelism be compared with *ubuhake* etc. systems. Both perspectives are equally justified.

881 *Ibid.*, 69.

882 J. Rwabukumba and V. Mudandagizi, “Les formes historiques de la dépendance personnelle dans l’État rwandais,” *Cahiers d’Études Africaines* 53 (1974): 6–25; quote from Heinrich 1978, 51.

Thus, the grandfather of the speaker here did not consider himself a client of a lower class, a client “for cattle,” but he benefited from the protection of a military commander who ensured him security (no doubt from bandits). The father already had a Tutsi-patron, but the one with decisive status was the grandfather, who knew the *chef de terre* himself. It is for him a matter of pride to do one’s duty and hand over his *naturalia* to someone of such high rank, all of which is interesting, but let us consider what message we have received. Such terms as *client*, *protection*, and *patron* appear in the French text. These nuanced social roles are important to the speaker. But it depends on the translator-anthropologist whether the word “client” is used or, for example, “vassal,” or something entirely different.

In these circumstances the adoption of a particular terminology can have important consequences. Terms used by experts build certain associations, serving sometimes as an abbreviation for rich content. And what’s more, they are not always unambiguous. One might expect confusion when we – in using such terms – attempt to describe a civilization that is entirely different than our own. After all, we in Europe have, ourselves, not reached complete agreement on what we mean when we use the term “feudalism.”<sup>883</sup> Jacques Maquet writes: “La Féodalité est un régime politique [...] La féodalité n’est pas un mode de production.”<sup>884</sup> But the alternative involves the lack of a common reference system, a certain incomparability, and inability to explain perceived phenomena. There is, of course, a middle path: using Western and local terms, one can describe in detail their meaning in a given context, one that is exotic compared to the original context, and thus both on the legal side and the custom-ceremonial side. In the end, we remember that the choice of terminology and the discussion that surrounds it are not devoid of evaluative accents – formerly racist, currently more often nationalistic.<sup>885</sup>

It is widely known that synthetic entries for an encyclopedia are the most difficult to write. Which is why I discuss here – without any sort of complaint against the author – the encyclopedia entry written by the preeminent Belgian

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883 Heinrich 1978, 59–66. Excursus: “Zur Bestimmung des Begriffs Feudalismus.”

884 Maquet 1961, 259, as quoted by Heinrich 1978, 60. But the German author accepts the connection between feudalism and “productive forces” and, in the end, claims that it did not exist in Rwanda. That society was a *frühe Klassengesellschaft*, something between a state of nature and a *hochkulturelle Gesellschaft mit ‘asiatischer Produktionsweise’* (ibid., 66–76).

885 *Nota bene*, considerations of political correctness also play a certain role in these issues; Fustel de Coulanges persistently wrote about “race” and the “Aryan” roots of clienteles. Justified or not, a hundred years later we no longer like such words. Sometimes Africanists also tread through the minefield of terminology.

scholar of the African Great Lakes region, Jacques Maquet, namely the entry on “sub-Saharan Africa.” He divided this section into civilizations of the bow, glades, granaries, spear, cities, and steel.<sup>886</sup> Within the civilization of the spear there emerged – Maquet writes – “feudal institutions,” and in several societies in the Great Lakes region, including Ankole, Rwanda, Burundi, and Ha, such feudal institutions strengthened the status quo. They functioned on the principle of “voluntary agreement” and mutual obligations between “a lord and his dependent.” At this point I detect hesitation on the author’s part: he calls these institutions feudal, but he does not always identify the parties to these voluntary agreements using such legal terms as “lord” or “vassal,” which assume a certain exactness and are associated culturally with Western European traditions. The Belgian is not consistent: here he writes of clientelism, and there of feudal society.<sup>887</sup> Concealed within all of this is a dilemma that characterizes modern Europe as well, one which we discussed above, and one that involves the question: what does the patron-client relationship have to do with feudalism (in the sense of *féodalité*). But it is also about the cultural baggage of the European-scholar, for whom it is easy to characterize a researched society using the term *féodalité*<sup>888</sup> but difficult to classify its social actors using the terminology of *Consuetudines feudorum*. In this regard, scholars of “pre-sociological” societies have had a more simple choice, interested as they are in the top of the hierarchy: the king, the cacique (a term taken from the Americas), and – as their environment, etc. – the “court.”

The scholar who used Western terms from the fields of history and political science most intensively is perhaps S. F. Nadel, with his work on the “Nupe State” in central Nigeria in the 1930s.<sup>889</sup>

Having discussed society-community relations through a reference to Ferdinand Tönnies (*Gesellschaft/Gemeinschaft*),<sup>890</sup> Nadel moves on to an examination

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886 *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, vol. 1 (1968) 1972, section “African Society,” including the subsection “Subsaharan Africa” by Jacques Maquet, 137–155.

887 Maquet 1954; Maquet and d’Hertefeldt 1959.

888 *Ibid.*, 209. These authors write about the transition phase into decolonization. “Dans les sociétés autoritaires et féodales – comme celles du Ruanda et de l’Urundi traditionnels – des assemblées politiques élues qui expriment une philosophie d’Égalité et de participation du peuple à son gouvernement, sont au premier abord comprises en fonction des attitudes traditionnelles. Par conséquent, on sera porté à élire des hommes appartenant au groupe reconnu depuis des générations particulièrement apte à gouverner, doué du prestige de la puissance et de la richesse et qui a joué le rôle de protecteur féodal de la masse socialement plus faible.”

889 Nadel 1967 and 1971.

890 F. Tönnies, *Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft* (Berlin: 1926).

of the power system which draws broadly on the vocabulary of societies (and states) of orders. The royal family is separated from the aristocracy (“nobility”); later we read of the “gentry” and then of “commoners” – that is, the “*talakawa*, the ‘poor ones,’ titled or wealthy though they may be, as the craft guilds or the traders.” Higher in the social hierarchy, “between nobility and commoners,” is the “intermediary class of half-free men” – that is the *bara* – whom the author calls “clients.”<sup>891</sup> Nadel draws analogies with two centuries of European history. The *bara* are close relatives of the Roman freedmen, though here the Roman Empire blends with the institutions of the Middle Ages.<sup>892</sup> In this argument both types of dependencies – feudal *sensu stricto* and clientelistic – exist side by side. Let us begin with the former. “Feudal lords” are defined (according to Nadel) by their position in relations to rulers<sup>893</sup> and not (as Marxists would have it) to their land and subjects; extensive property holdings are rather a function of status. There is thus the royal nobility, whose position is defined by family origin, and from which families the king is chosen.<sup>894</sup> The descendants of the conquerors, who took over all unowned or unoccupied land, grew wealthy through inheritance, but – according to Nadel – what was more important than property was the opportunity to advance through the official hierarchy, which offered social rank, influence, increased power, and – along with all of that – wealth. I might add here that such were the conditions of the European aristocracy.<sup>895</sup> Next to them were the “titled official nobility” (officials of state), which was one step lower than the “royal nobility” but equal in terms of political influence (which raises an obvious

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891 S. F. Nadel, “Nupe State and Community,” *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute* 8, no. 3 (July, 1935): 293.

892 “Protection against (just or unjust) claims of other people, assistance in matters which had to do with the central authority, were the promises of the protector for services rendered. It leads to an institution which impresses its stamp on the whole social system of Nupe, and of all the Hausa states in the north: the *bara*-ship (from *bara*, Hausa and Nupe, servant), but we might as well call it by the name by which this very same institution was known in Imperial Rome and in the feudal system of medieval Europe: the Roman *patrocinium*, or *clientage*.” *Ibid.*, 297.

893 Nupe State (which Nadel observed in the 1930s) had gone through a period of domination by the Islamic Fulani. As Nadel put it: “While the Nupe *kings* were absolute masters in their own country, the Fulani Emirs were, in a loose sense, *vassals* of a larger state, the Fulani Empire of Gwandu. Nadel 1942, 88–89. Author’s emphasis – A.M.

894 See Nadel 1942, 93–103.

895 Nadel goes on to discuss officials handed out by the king “in council with his princes and other officials of state.” *Ibid.*, 98.

comparison with the *noblesse de robe*). Its ranks were open, at least theoretically, though the highest positions were usually hereditary. As opposed to the courtiers, they did not accumulate functions, either military or civilian; the ruler may offer an office to “outsiders” and “commoners.” Wealthy local merchants had also gained the opportunity to advance into this group, acquiring titles by giving gifts to the nobility.<sup>896</sup> Such an office closed the path of advancement to other members of the family, which was nonetheless bestowed with a certain honor. The spirit of the times – that is, pressure applied by British authorities – manifested itself in the decreased importance of land and the slave trade and the increased importance of both direct income (from the performance of official functions) and the then still-present spoils of war. Nupe elites, exhibiting the features of an oligarchy, glow from light reflected from the ruler; they must remain in his vicinity, and they must constantly attempt to gain his favor.

It is necessary for me to omit details – some of them significant – regarding the organization of the Nupe state, about how “nobles” functioned as feudal lords who were responsible to the ruler for peace and order on lands leased by them, which was not altogether different than how the Junkers functioned while serving the state in two ways: as landowners and as civil and military officials.<sup>897</sup>

This would thus be a feudal structure. But since the ruler could annul privileges granted by others (his predecessors), the lords tried to secure their interests by other means, and they did so by using the above-mentioned institution of the *bara*. They pursued their interests there in two ways: searching for protection and distributing protection. With a gift, the candidate-client paid his way into the favor of a potential patron; he passed through a short trial period, after which a ceremony took place in which the new client received a turban and a sword.<sup>898</sup> His duties henceforth included the delivery of gifts and making regular payments of a tithe from his harvest. In return he received protection from other lords and the central ruler. Until “our times,” Nadel wrote, a peasant summoned before a

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896 Nadel mentions sums from £5 to £20. *Ibid.*, 98, footnote 1.

897 In order to not give the image that the system was perfect, I quote Nadel’s comments on earlier times: “Dans l’emploi de l’appareil politique, le privilège de classe ne s’accordait pas toujours avec le devoir envers l’État. Les fauteurs de troubles furent souvent les gouvernants eux-mêmes: c’était un seigneur féodal, faisant irruption sur le territoire d’un autre et y levant des impôts illégaux [...] c’était encore un prince de sang razziant ses propres terres, qui pourtant avaient déjà payé leur tribut et donc acheté leur droit à la ‘paix du roi’.” Such magnates violating the “King’s peace” were punished.

898 Acceptance as a client was often accompanied by voluntary conversion to Islam.

court turned first to his protector, and arrived in court accompanied by one of his people in order to demonstrate his connections with those at a high level.<sup>899</sup> Such was the case with people in the countryside, but the urban client had no harvest at his disposal, so he offered “his person and his service.” He entered the team of servants-members of the household or joined military units, which brought him closer to the person of the lord and raised the possibility of marriage with a girl from the lord’s family.<sup>900</sup>

The position of the *bara* closely resembles the client’s of antiquity, in part because of their diversity. Many of them were freedmen (slavery still existed there in the first half of the twentieth century), home administrators, confidants and servants, and sometimes individuals tied to the lord, which gave them a position that was practically hereditary. The lord paid their taxes, educated their children, and helped find proper wives for their sons. Such an interpretation is fully appropriate if one also takes into consideration the tendency of some scholars to attribute feudal features to relationships at the top of the hierarchy (in “court circles”) and clientelistic features to relationships established at lower levels. It is easy for the historian-Europeanist to see in the *bara*-farmer the tenant-sharecropper, though – on the other hand – the lord’s quality as a protector (of children, in the selection of wives, etc.) makes him a characteristic patron. The search for clear divisions turns out, once again, to be delusive.

The patron’s benefits stemming from these relationships are obvious, because his position in society was defined to a great extent by the number and quality of *bara* tied to him. One could say that they were his vassals, but a clever *bara*, under favorable circumstances, was able to choose his own protector, and to leave him if he were threatened or if he happened upon a more beneficial arrangement; such a move probably came easier in a city. A situation was also possible in which, having gathered sufficient means and established appropriate contacts, a certain *bara* would join the group of elite clients and become a *bara* of the king himself, which would give him new opportunities for advancement and, as it were, full liberation.<sup>901</sup>

Thus, that single term *bara* accommodates simultaneously vassal, the client-tenant (about which – as we will remember – the anthropologist has known since N.D. Fustel de Coulanges), the subject-peasant, and finally the client-freedman and household member. This bond encompassed not just individuals but entire

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899 Nadel 1971, 196 ff.

900 Ibid., 168.

901 Nadel 1967, 332.



families. And one final and extremely important thing: the act of resigning one's independence was a condition for social advancement. A multi-staged hierarchy of social dependencies emerged in which, however, expectations at the bottom and at the top of the social ladder were, not surprisingly, different.

A knowledge of the history of Europe often hinders, rather than facilitates, a clear understanding of African realities, a fact that manifests itself most clearly in examination of the African Great Lakes region, especially in connection with the long-discussed topic of the Tutsis and Hutus and their differences.<sup>902</sup> Fascination with the dominant Tutsi group, felt by the first European travelers in the region and then by administrators, lasted until the Second World War. One could quote a statement made by the Belgian governor of Urundi, Pierre Ryckmans, according to whom the Batutsi-Tutsis were born rulers surrounded by lower races, etc.<sup>903</sup>

The latter situation was about to change (*braves Bahutu!*), though it is worth pointing out that the above fascination with the beauty and stature of the Tutsis led to very bold historical parallels: The Tutsis were sometimes compared to the Normans conquering England ...<sup>904</sup> This is not a new topos, and is perhaps but an amusing sign of lingering antagonisms along the English Channel. In any case, let us set aside for the moment the contentious issue of the division between Tutsi and Hutu, whether it be ethnic or social-occupational in nature.<sup>905</sup> As of the first

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902 Chrétien 1993, chapter 12: "Les identités hutu et tutsi. Perspectives historiques et manipulations politiques." I am skipping the third group, Twa, because it makes up less than 1% of the population. Célestin Muyombano (1995, 26–29) puts it extremely simply: the pre-colonial era was dominated by clans, which involved all three groups (Bantu Hutu, Hamitic Tutsi, and the Twa, which is related to the Pygmies) comprising the *Banyarwanda* – that is, the inhabitants of Rwanda. The Belgian administration would break these bonds. Rwandan society was divided into the *Volk der Tutsi*, composed of natives with more than 10 cows in the family; of Hutu, with less than 10 cows; and Twa – adult males without cattle. These qualifications were hereditary, but sometimes brothers were separated according to the number of cows.

903 Ryckmans 1931, 26: "Les Batutsi étaient destinés à régner, leur seule prestance leur assure déjà, sur les races inférieures qui les entourent, un prestige considérable [...] Rien d'étonnant que les braves Bahutu, moins malins, plus simples, plus spontanés et plus confiants, se soient laissés asservir sans esquiver jamais un geste de révolte." See Chrétien 1997, 319.

904 "Le modèle du Moyen Âge européen est mis en oeuvre sur le double registre de l'archaïsme social et de l'idéalisation des hiérarchies traditionnelles par les autorités, laïques ou missionnaires, fortement marqués par le conservatisme. Les Tutsi sont censés être, comme les Normands, conquérants de l'Angleterre saxonne, les bâtisseurs d'un ordre naturel à ne pas le bousculer." Chrétien 1993, 323.

905 See Newbury 1988.

Hutu uprising (1959), and particularly since the Tutsi uprising in 1963, these criteria – in the face of genocide threatened by both sides – lost their practical significance.<sup>906</sup> One is a Hutu or Tutsi if others regard him as such, especially if they are persistent, fierce, and armed. The decisive factor is the information in one's *carte d'identité*, which people had to keep as part of a policy pushed by Hutu politicians allegedly in order to research how to put an end to social inequality.<sup>907</sup> They regarded such inequality as feudal ballast, more specifically one that was feudal-imperialistic in nature.<sup>908</sup> Thus the manifesto put forward by nine Hutu leaders in 1957, which became the program for a broad, multi-party movement and which opposed the Tutsi's political monopoly (in the broadest sense of the word), described the *travail-corré* as a form of labor that no longer suited the modern social situation and psyche; it also suggested that the Belgian administration, having tied itself to the local *noblesse*, encouraged the exploitation of the Hutu people.

*Corvée* and *noblesse* (the latter referring to the exploitative class): we are now closer to feudalism in the Marxist sense than to the Western *féodalité*. The “nobility” and the “aristocracy” – *noblesse* can be translated in several ways – is close to an *obszarnik* (landowner) and “magnate,” and thus the great landowners as understood in the spirit of the Polish protest song with the words “O cześć wam, panowie magnaci” (In reverence to you, gentlemen magnates).<sup>909</sup>

We see the terminology of “nobility” in Africanist works in various contexts.<sup>910</sup> Nadel, quoted above, writes – in reference to the Kingdom of Nupe in Nigeria – about “town-ranks” and “war-ranks” under the category of “nobility,” who do not enjoy access to the ruling clan but are active in the monarchical court. We thus have bonds that are clientelistic (“clients,” “followers”) and feudal (court, system of orders), and we have at the same time – and here is the next analogy to old

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906 Prunier 1996.

907 Newbury 1988, 191; Kamukama 1993, 5 ff.; for more on the *carte d'identité*, see Muyombano 1995, 26.

908 The Bahutu Manifesto of 1957 stated: “Le Ruanda est le pays des Bahutu (bantu) et de tous ceux, blancs, ou noirs, tutsi, européens ou d'autres provenances, qui se débarrasseront des visés féodo-impérialistes.” Newbury 1988, 191; Chrétien 1993, 325, 358.

909 Translator's note: These words, included in the Polish national song “Gdy naród do boju” (When the nation fights), are sung with no small amount of irony. The song itself was particularly popular among socialists in the mid-nineteenth century.

910 One can find the most information on the subject of the “nobility” in the collection *King's Men* 1964, especially A. I. Richards' contribution entitled “Traditional Values and Current Political Behavior,” 294 ff.

Europe – distinct relationships in the countryside and the city, though the “city” in Nupe (whatever that means) is something quite different than anything in Europe.

It is also the case that, in the discussion of African Great Lakes societies, lines have been drawn by the national historiographic traditions in which scholars were trained. As I mentioned above, whereas the Belgians and French tend to emphasize feudalism, the Anglo-Saxons emphasize patronage-clientele. It is worth considering this problem because it involves phenomena that are extremely widespread and that are shared by cultures that emerged entirely independently of one another. The implementation of some basic terminological order could, by itself, facilitate discussion.

At least since the appearance of Marc Bloch’s classic work *Feudal Society*, scholars have acknowledged the similarities between Western European and Japanese forms of feudalism.<sup>911</sup> The knightly ethos of the samurai and “feudal fragmentation” in Tokugawa Japan raise some obvious comparisons. But it is an open question to what extent we are able to apply feudal terminology to Black African societies in the pre-colonial and colonial periods.

The following proposition seems most appropriate and will serve as a theme for this chapter: in order to draw from both conceptual families in a parallel fashion, I will use “feudal” and “clientelistic.” Such an approach is convenient if we want to respect certain conventions accepted in Europe, though it suits, at the same time, the situation that took shape in Europe in the late Middle Ages and the early modern period.

I find all of these elements, along with the terminological chaos (which, as it turns out, is not dangerous), in a highly penetrating work on a rather small “community” in eastern Rwanda.<sup>912</sup> Its author researched the situation in this community in 1960; his interests clearly involved social anthropology. At the center of attention was the figure of the “chieftain,” who was surrounded by a “nuclear feudal cluster”; together they create the smallest social group – a patron surrounded by clients who are both Tutsi and Hutu.<sup>913</sup> But the leader-chief does not have to be the main patron; and politically powerful Tutsis living in the area can have more clients than does that leader-chief.

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911 For more on the adaptation of the concept of “feudalism” to societies beyond Europe, particularly in African societies, see Goody 1963.

912 Gravel 1968.

913 Gravel writes: “The nuclear group is then qualified as ‘feudal’ because of the nature of the relationship between patron and client.” *Ibid.*, 158.

The foundation of this social-economic system was *ubuhake*<sup>914</sup> – an institution that assured an individual the protection of a more wealthy and powerful figure in exchange for service and tribute appropriate to the situation. In the ethnic order between Tutsi and Hutu, the only situation that was unacceptable was one in which a Hutu was a lord/patron of a Tutsi. It is interesting that – as Gravel describes it – the initiative to enter into an agreement always came from the weaker party. For example, in a *uruharo* agreement, the potential client asked for a hoof and received it as a symbol of “friendship,” which obligated him to perform two days of unpaid labor each week. The transfer of a cow had material value, but it was also a symbol-guarantee for the protection of the peasant’s right to peaceably cultivate his land, from which he could not be removed. At the same time, however, the tenant recognized the lord’s *amarebo* entitlement and obligated himself to pay tribute.

The above situation involving the transfer of a cow – one might say “the cow’s two bodies” – is particularly complicated. It is simultaneously material and symbolic in nature. If the cow dies, the client receives a new one, but if the patron takes the cow away from the client, it means he has withdrawn his protection. Accordingly, the second, third and fourth cow given to a client signifies the patron’s growing recognition of that client. The cow-symbol was a universal indication of inter-personal relations. A person who had just arrived on a Tutsi chief’s territory would offer the chief a cow, in exchange for which that person received *amarebo* – the right to drive his cattle through a certain number of farms and to have the herd graze there, which usually involved grazing on sorghum stubble. The newcomer might also receive the right to free labor (*uburetwa*), or he could pay homage to the chief and then ask for a cow.

There were other equally important occasions in the chief’s home that led to the transfer of cattle: a death or birth in the family provided an opportunity for

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914 Ibid., 161–162: “*Ubugabira* – is the institution through which an individual [...] commends himself to a patron. The patron grants protection (most often from himself, as well as from other rapacious notables), and the client renders homage, paying services and goods according to his own station in life.” But Prunier (1996, 370) offers a definition that says significantly less: “*Ubugabira* – The main form of peasant contractual subordination in traditional Rwandese. To much of the historical writing about Rwanda, it was neither a happy element of social cohesion nor a form of slavery. Its real social and economic roles changed considerably over time and nineteenth-century *ubuhake* in Ndyifa had little to do with something by the same name in Cyanguu in 1930.” A similar system, known in Burundi as *ubugabira*, is presented by Trouwborst, who defines it as a form of “clientship” (1973, 112).

clients to rush forward with cows. At the same time, if a chief lacked a cow that he was supposed to give to someone else, he could turn to someone of equal status for a “cow of friendship.” Whoever found himself outside of the system would have to leave, and would become the client of another Tutsi.

Europeans have long detected on the huge expanse of Black African territory countless forms of dependency that closely resembled – for the first explorers and then for the European administrators – traditional European phenomena. The system of “indirect rule” applied particularly by the British changed – but above all strengthened – the dependence of “subjects” on their rulers, who now had new authority at their disposal and sometimes new and powerful means of force, especially farms.<sup>915</sup>

But it is important to keep in mind that the issue is not clear even in Europe. In the Middle Ages and in the early modern period, did the two systems – feudal and clientelistic – develop in a simple sequence, or did they co-exist? Is it clear when the historical subject matter at hand involves one and then the other? Are they separable?

It would seem expedient to distinguish between various levels in the hierarchy of prestige on which the diverse dependences discussed here have taken shape. The case of sovereign African rulers – that is, those who were subject to no one (except, eventually, to whites) – suggests an analogy to Muscovite autocracy rather than to absolutism. Decisive in this regard is their low degree of connection with the law (especially law as applied to property) and their complete domination over subjected individuals, even over elites. They also remind me of Astolphe de Custine’s insightful digression on society and state under the Russia of Nicholas I.<sup>916</sup>

We can draw a similar analogy from the dual role played by the court, which was simultaneously a place that provided focus for ceremonial prestige and the hub for decisions and administration. With regard to African aristocrats certain questions arise: were they mainly the ruler’s functionaries, or did they also have a support base in vast estates? Did they have at their disposal local influences that

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915 *King’s Men* 1964, 25 ff.; Newbury 1988, 50 ff., 118 ff.

916 Custine 1995, vol. 2, 257, 410 ff. Much like in Russia, of great importance in the evolution toward modernity was the conferment upon the elite of the right to own land: “Landownership, like the possession of farms and the adoption of Christianity to which it can be traced back, created an absolute class distinction,” which we read in the context of Buganda after the year 1900, when British authorities introduced individual ownership of real estate. The purchase of land led to aristocracy, and after 1920 the turnover of land developed significantly; the British recognized that the “middle class” was growing. Wrigley 1964, 38 ff.

made them less dependent on the ruler?<sup>917</sup> In this system the “clientelistic sphere” is located lower than the “feudal sphere.” But the above-mentioned *bara* – whether they be servants, “friends,” or just confidants – could be found in one group or another depending on the individual patron and the form of dependency.

Since I have already mentioned Custine and the contrasts he drew between Russia and France, I will also refer to a recent bold attempt to compare the ruling systems in France under Louis XIV and in Zaire under Mobutu Sese Seko.<sup>918</sup> However, Mobutu and others like him, are – as dictators – a post-colonial phenomenon. It is thus worth considering what significance decolonization might have had on the ruling systems that are of interest to us here. But first, a couple observations regarding the diversity of these phenomena.

### 3. Variations on Dependence: Cows and People

Systems defined as feudal and/or clientelistic have been at work in Africa under various conditions and in many forms. In this section I will present, and comment on, several variants.<sup>919</sup>

One speaks of clientelism when:

- the authority of the leader (king) is based on his making local chiefs dependent on him (here, an analogy to liege bonds);
- a person’s position is defined by the number of cattle given in fief in exchange for certain services and recognition of the patron’s authority;
- personal dependence is tied, to one degree or another, to tribal affiliation;
- bonds of formalized dependency occur as a rule between relatives (e.g. uncle-nephew);
- a relationship of dependency connects every newcomer into the community with one of its recognized members, especially with the chief of the settlement;
- the colonial administration supports this type of dependency as a means of controlling the natives;

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917 For more on this topic, see Maćzak, 315–327. A similar gap between the ruler’s Court and his sphere of authority – and his base of influence – is discussed in Newbury 1988, particularly part I.

918 Callaghy 1984.

919 Here I have made use of Bourgeois 1958; Bretton 1973; Callaghy 1984; Chrétien 1993 and 1997; Gravel 1968; Gulliver 1969; Heinrich 1978; Imam (1987) 1988; Kamukama 1993; Karp 1976; Laely 1995; Lemarchand 1972 and 1981; Mair 1961; Maquet 1954 and 1961; Maquet and d’Hertefeldt 1959; Nadel 1967 and 1971; Newbury 1988; Olowu 1988; Prunier 1996; Roniger 1994; Strizek 1996. For abundant comparative material, see Lemieux 1977.

- in local administration, particularly in a post-colonial country, when groups of bureaucrats control access to certain resources (on several levels) and when members of the ruling apparatus create their own clientele for the defense of their position and for their battle with opponents;
- and finally, in conditions marked by unhealthy urbanization of the Third World, in a big-city environment, where only the “possession” of a patron (i.e. someone’s support) makes it possible to find work, or even odd jobs.

Above is my list of dependencies and the circumstances that favor them. Most generally, one might argue that in societies that do not draw clear distinctions between what is public and what is private, some sort of patron-client relationship has been most often a prerequisite for promotion and advancement. “Liberty” means a lack of protection; it renders the individual helpless and places him beyond the collective, with the condition for entry into that collective being the possession of a guardian-protector. Thus, in some countries a new arrival in the village becomes one of the chief’s “people.” On a higher level of ambition – if one can call it that – the support of a wealthy and powerful figure is a prerequisite for the social advancement of “his person”; on a lower level, it could be simply necessary even for basic, physical survival.

#### **a. Proverbs from the Lakes**

Those who do not have a control of Swahili or any other language used in Sub-Saharan Africa are forced to depend on a translation, which is always a matter of interpretation. With this caveat, I cite – from the French and English – a few Burundian proverbs.<sup>920</sup>

- He who has no patron will never have anyone under his orders;
- The house of a protégé will never burn;
- No one beats a dog on his master’s lap;
- The Tutsi is a cow because no one can deprive him of his prestige;
- Ibis is the image of the Tutsi: both live with cattle;
- *Amasabo arakize* – Dependence makes one wealthy;
- *Udasavye ntakira* – He who does not have a protector will never get rich;
- *Amasaka aba ku masabo* – Sorghum grows in the shade of subjection.

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920 Rodegam 1983; translations into English of the three final proverbs are provided by René Lemarchand in *Burundi: Ethnic Conflict and Genocide* (Cambridge: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 1994), 13.

The problem rests in the fact that, no matter to what extent Black African societies were subject to the process of violent change over the course of the last century, clientelistic bonds did not go out of date; they just changed their character relative to the situation. Particularly the last matter mentioned above, namely big-city clientelism, comes as a result of the recent growth (especially in the capital city Kinshasa) in urban poor looking for ways to make a living and – increasingly – in the influx of refugees fleeing war and banditry. The rationale behind traditional bonds is weakening, or being lost altogether, while relationships that prey on the public sector have intensified.

But it is easy to underappreciate environment factors, nature in general, and the mutual interaction of various farming and livestock cultures, and their influence on systems of exchange in products, services and – and one must keep this in mind – material/symbolic gifts

#### 4. Farmers and Forest People

This *casus* has been researched by an American ethnologist-Africanist, the focus being the symbiosis of two ethnic groups in eastern Congo.<sup>921</sup> I am writing about this subject, first of all, because – even though one might consider it marginal (whatever that means in light of the many different relationships discussed here) – it represents a certain, interesting relationship: a patronal system that is determined spatially, since the zones occupied by the two groups of people within the system supply different resources. The question of who becomes a patron, and who becomes a client, is defined culturally.

The second reason involves the differences in the image of social relations called forth by the divergent interests and research goals of two anthropologists.

Writing about this region, along with many other nations of Black Africa, I doubt whether I am allowed to use the present tense: so many tragic things have recently happened – elemental disasters (hunger) and conflicts that could not help but influence social structures and relations. Very often these conflicts take on the character of ethnic disputes marked by ethnic hatred, even if anthropologists regard these ethnoses as fiction. I would like my use of the *praesens* to be not just *historicum*, but also evidence of optimism and hope.

While the first to be discussed here are the Lese farmers, the Efe are foragers living in the jungle, who are also known as Pygmies, *les Nains*, BaMbuti, or – using the rules of political correctness – the First Citizens (*les Premiers Citoyens*)!

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921 Grinker 1994.



There existed between members of these two groups (who exhibited clear physical differences) persistent cooperation, for instance in the exchange of agricultural products (including marijuana) or iron products for meat, honey and other products from the woods. This exchange does not take place at a market place, but rather directly between families.<sup>922</sup> As a rule, the Lese-Efe relationship is hereditary: an individual Lese inherits his Efe-partner through his father. Close contact does not lead to intercourse; sexual relations between Efe men and a Lese women are forbidden; however, in order to become an adult “real man,” every Lese man should have an Efe partner for trade. Awareness of ethnic identity and distinctiveness consolidated the division of labor and strengthened the system of cooperation; it hindered the development of partner group experiences and thus the advancement of the “first citizens.”

Catholic missionaries have been deeply concerned about this situation; they are convinced that the Lese were holding the Efe in slavery, which explains why they have offered the latter Swiss army uniform buttons as tokens in exchange for handicrafts. With this currency the Efe (and others) are to purchase the vegetables they need from the missionaries’ garden. Lese are excluded from this exchange, the goal being to liberate the jungle people from the Lese’s monopoly. But the latter have regarded the buttons as a currency better than the zaire, and they have thus become the universal equivalent of a modified Efe-Lese exchange.<sup>923</sup>

As Grinker writes, “inequality and social difference [remain] in the service of social solidarity.”<sup>924</sup> The system owes its durability to its relative isolation from the outside world. Road construction, on which the Belgians forced the natives to work in the 1950s, turned out to be a fatal experience for the locals. The Lese did not regard the road connecting them with the world as their own (did it threaten their identity?), so after the fall of the colonial regime they allowed it to fall into ruin.<sup>925</sup>

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922 Turnbull 1962, 172: “The relationship between the two peoples was a strange one, full of ambivalence and uncertainty. By and large the village was their only common meeting place, for the Negroes disliked going into the forest except when absolutely necessary. The village was the world of Negro so he naturally assumed a position of authority and domination in that world. But it was a position without any foundations, for the Pygmie had only to take a few steps to be in his own world.”

923 Grinker 1994, 67.

924 *Ibid.*, 15.

925 *Ibid.*, 18: “Many Zairians who live with the road do not think of it as their own; it belongs to the tourists, missionaries, expatriate traders, and scientists, for whom, as some Zairians say, it was originally intended.” One must keep in mind that venereal diseases, including recently AIDS, are spreading quickly.

The Lese-Efe arrangement reflects many elements of a clientelistic system. It is unequal, personal, and durable. The Lese are convinced that truly good meat comes only from the Efe, though they never admit to white anthropologists that the Efe work in their fields. The Efe – as the Lese firmly believe – are different and thus a much worse kind of humanity.<sup>926</sup> The durability of the system has depended on the region's relative separation.

Colin Turnbull's work a generation earlier on a related subject revealed to me the risks associated with relying on summaries of field research, on the kind of cultural anthropology that discusses behavior but avoids (or treats marginally) social systems and structures.<sup>927</sup> Turnbull himself was interested precisely in behavior and custom; he focuses attention on individual characters and events which he personally witnessed. He does not wrap his observations in structural categories, does not draw conclusions. There is no way, on such a basis alone, to reach the kind of phenomena and systems that so intrigued Grinker. On the other hand, the image of the forest border area, as portrayed by Turnbull, is alive and vivid, and his subjectivism speaks to the reader; he discusses clientelism mainly in connection with his own theory of myth.<sup>928</sup> The differences, even contrasts, in the methodological approaches taken by the social anthropologist and the cultural anthropologist are unusually sharp. While Grinker's article belongs no doubt to the first category, Turnbull's book – written three decades later – belongs to the second. Grinker is closer to me as a historian who researches systems of rule, but I prefer to envision an alliance between different schools because forms of behavior, symbolism and customs also have – as we have seen – significance in terms of relationships and dependencies among people.

## 5. The Patron and Colonial Administration

The White Man conquering the interior of the Black Continent faced a question that was known to him particularly from South Asia-Indonesia: should one govern the colonies on all levels directly or should one depend on existing structures, transforming them (quite obviously) according to his own needs and sense of justice? Generally speaking, patronal dependencies showed themselves to be re-

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926 Ibid., 86, 132.

927 Turnbull 1962.

928 Turnbull (1962, p. 172–173) wrote that “the Negroes were unable to exercise any physical force to maintain their control over the Pygmies, so they created and maintained the myth that there was a hereditary relationship between individual Pygmies and families and individual Negroes and families. It was not a matter of slavery, rather of mutual convenience. The cost to the Negro was often high, but it was worth while.”

sistant to pressure applied (and force exerted) from above, though they underwent significant change.

Let us take as an example the case of the Southern Iteso, who belong to a group of Eastern Nilotic peoples and inhabit the border area between Kenya and Uganda.<sup>929</sup> In the period before the British set up their administration after the conquest of 1894–1895, the Iteso in this region were organized into around 12 territorial groups (*item*; plural: *itemwan*), connected by the lands they occupied but also by kinship and a shared stratification system. There was an chief in every *lok'item*, whose duties included settling internal conflicts and organizing groups for battle. He had the right to designate the chiefs of smaller groups (usually four) of *itemwan*. Chiefs on both levels were commanders because the Iteso were a rather belligerent people. They were chosen for their leadership abilities and their strength as measured by the number of warriors they could muster. Their authority was supported by “elders” who had the ritual power to curse the young, if they defied the authority of the group’s leader. Rivalry between candidates for chief led to incidents of secession: one of the candidates would set off with his people toward the border of the Itesa lands and establish there a new group. The tribe’s territory, which was never precisely defined, grew in the nineteenth century as a result of constant and brutal raids carried out against neighboring tribes. By the beginning of the twentieth century such events were a thing of the past. In previous decades the Iteso had suffered defeats: their opponents had armed themselves with firearms bought from Arab dealers, and in 1894–1895 the British sent Swahili warriors to fight the Iteso; these warriors were led by the commander Murunga, who bloodily pacified the Iteso commanders. Such previous failures no doubt created a crisis in confidence toward commanders; in any case, a tradition of disloyalty and betrayal was preserved.

The British were in no hurry to set up an administrative apparatus for these peripheral (from their point of view) lands. In the end, in 1910 – that is, 15 years later – they once again brought in that very Murunga who had earlier defeated the Iteso. The *itemwan* disappeared, and Murunga ruled through “bands of agents,” who came mainly from the Iteso. Over the course of his twenty year rule, Karp writes, there emerged from the Iteso ranks leaders who were able to gain the trust of the British and ultimately remove Murunga from power.

The system of rule that was created in this era of anarchy was in fact a new form of patronalism. The leader at that time was the *lok'auriaart*, whose personal traits very much resembled his predecessor’s: brave and victorious in battle, rich

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929 I base this section on an article by Ivan Karp (1976).

in both cows and wives, a man who is prudent in giving advice but capable in enforcing obedience. In times of chaos, blood ties lost much (though not all) of their significance, and one did not become *lok'auriaart* who did not gather around himself a sufficient number of people willing to follow him in hopes of protection and material assistance. He then became a patron *sensu stricto*. The rivalry over clients expanded, with clients becoming – we might say – a limited good, in Foster's anthropological meaning of the term. The patron had to show himself to be effective in defense not only against other groups from another tribe, but also against distant (and, at the beginning, indirect) colonial authorities. The mechanism by which the rivalry between these African *cosche* played itself out rewarded the most powerful patrons, who attracted clients with the size of their herd, which allowed their clients to survive periods of starvation. The latter performed work for the chief, and they could sow their own fields only after they had worked the patron's soil. Ritual sanctions (through the voice of the elders), solidifying the patron's authority, were no longer relevant, and the very name *lok'auriaart* now highlighted the voluntary, contract-like character of the relationship.<sup>930</sup> Connections and comparisons existed between this system and the former system.

*Primo*, the majority of new patrons were descendants of earlier patrons. *Secundo*, a patron who did not yet have a space or position could always search, along with his people, for free terrain or could subordinate himself to someone who was wealthier and more powerful. The system became more flexible and the field of choice larger.

The British administration turned their interest to local relations once a railroad line was built from Kenya to Uganda (1921). The missionary and government official became a local patron's competitors, all of whom had means at their disposal to which the patron (whose power base was cattle) did not have access. The bureaucrat had little to offer, but he could turn a blind eye when rules were broken and decide not to execute harsh financial punishment. Traditional patrons were able to adapt to this situation. There was a future for those who adopted Christianity, renounced the idea of multiple wives, and entered into strategic marriages within the circle of governing black dignitaries. Iteso territory was subject to the influence of various missionary groups, which opened up opportunities for many inhabitants. One can detect a kind of *cuius regio eius religio* in cases where missionaries changed a patron's (and thus his people's) religion.

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930 *Auriaart* signifies the place where cattle dwell and graze, and *etem* means hearth. See Karp 1976, 158.

As a consequence, traditional leaders tied themselves to external structures and enjoyed access to resources that originated outside Iteso lands. Though, in an economic sense, this territory remained in no way integrated with the rest of the world, the British colonial system reshaped it politically. The terms of power were changed: the new VIPs were the “chief” and “sub-chief,” in whom Karp no longer saw patrons organizing the neighborhood and serving as its “focal ego.”

There is no doubt about the influence the British administration had on local systems of rule or the disappearance of patronal relationships. Though the author of the work from which I derive this information was interested mainly in the fate of traditional structures, it is also appropriate to inquire into the position of “chiefs” strategically positioned between distant rulers and the local neighborhood. With the growing size of the state and the lack of Weberian checks on bureaucrats and their disregard for the law, one might well expect that such bureaucrats would do all they could to build their own patronal imperia.

There are two opposing but nonetheless mutually dependent mechanisms that strengthened what one might call the bureaucratic “joint venture.” In practice, the British liked to govern their colonies through “chiefs”-natives in part because they wanted to have effective bureaucrats who could exercise authority over the rest of the subjects. Regardless of the intentions behind the Colonial Service, its real position was strengthened by the fact that British officials were rotated in and out of colonies quite rapidly. A new administrator had to “make a deal” practically from scratch, during which he was, to some extent, dependent on local advisors and assistants. With their participation in the colonial administration, the latter enjoyed increased opportunities to enhance their influence and to build their fortune in a way that was difficult to do in the economic sphere.<sup>931</sup> Factors that contributed to continuity were thus the African subordinate clerk as well as the missionary. They themselves become patrons, whose clientele took shape largely independently of tribal bonds.<sup>932</sup>

The history of Rwanda, for example, clearly shows the destabilizing consequences of competitive strivings between African and European patrons upon preexisting clientelis-

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931 Once again the comparison arises – on a certain, not exaggerated level of abstraction – with strategies implemented by the Polish magnates: local influence led to participation in public power, which in turn increased one’s influence and wealth. All of which brought a kind of feedback that enhanced this social stratum’s position – at least as long as it did not stand in sharp conflict with the functioning of the state.

932 René Lemarchand, “Political Clientelism and Ethnicity in Tropical Africa: Competing Solidarities in Nation-Building,” *The American Political Science Review* 66, no. 1 (March 1972): 68–90.

tic networks. Already in the 'twenties, as a result of "their involvement in ever-widening spheres of African life, [the White Fathers] assumed more and more the character of patrons within the existing system.... The Hutu accepted these new patrons, seeing in them an additional source of security;" [...] The increments of security gained by Hutu clients inevitably meant a loss of social prestige for the Tutsi patrons.<sup>933</sup>

In practice cooperation between the colonial administration and church organizations offered clients the possibility of gradual independence from the Tutsis. It meant more freedom, but it was also a prerequisite for bloody conflict, from which no side would emerge innocent.

Such conclusions flow from arguments made by René Lemarchand, conceived on various levels of generalization and – as I see it – from the most relevant perspective, because this American Africanist perceives and recognizes conflictive situations. For example, the antagonism in Rwanda among African elites turned out to be stronger than conflict with Whites; one could view this as a rivalry over the role of mediator, which originally constituted the Tutsi oligarchy. But in the Ivory Coast in the middle of the twentieth century, the situation was the reverse: the main conflict burned between the Whites and Africans as planters. It dampened potential tribal conflicts and even pitted black planters against traditional tribal chiefs.<sup>934</sup> However, unlike Lemarchand, I see in this a distant connection with patron-client systems.

But along with Lemarchand I am inclined to agree that the colonial regime created a psychological climate that fostered a "dependency complex" among Africans.<sup>935</sup> What's more, the social transformation brought on by mid-century changes in the political system intensified feelings of insecurity and led people to search for some kind of support. Another contributing factor, I would argue, was the crippling Third World urbanization experienced by some African countries. Which means that Black African societies were not well prepared for decolonization and the independence that came with the newly emerged states. Were their elites prepared for all this? The answer to that question depends on the country being discussed, but also on the researcher's point of view and on the ethical and political criteria with which he confronts the governing elite.

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933 Ibid., 82. Lemarchand quotes here Alison Des Forges ("Kings without Crowns: The White Fathers in Rwanda," in D. McCall et al., eds., *Eastern African History* [New York: 1969], 181).

934 Lemarchand, 82–83, footnotes 61 and 62.

935 D. O. Mannoni, *Psychologie de la colonisation* (Paris: 1950); here the reader will find a concise summary of views and the author's comments and concerns; Lemarchand 1972, 106, 120.

## 6. Decolonization and the Myth of Modernization

Faith in the success of decolonization in Africa belonged, in the middle of the last century, on the list of optimistic myths that gave moral comfort to Western societies and hope to many Africans. The reasons these hopes did not become reality are today a topic of wide discussion. What is of interest to me here is the single issue of how the colonial regimes and their eventual fall influenced the form and function of clientelistic systems. In order to approach this topic, one must raise a few broader issues.

Over the course of the modern era the state in Europe has evolved from one in which personal bonds were dominant to one dominated by institutional arrangements. The “rationality” of the system of governance, in the meaning attached to it by Max Weber, remained, in its pure form, an ideal type. But in its political culture, the democratic West places great value in the merit-related qualifications by which one effectively carries out his official functions – which is something quite different from loyalty and obedience towards one’s superior as an individual or political leader. Clear deviations from this principle are criticized and attacked. To be sure, personal bonds in the political and institutional life of the state play no small role, but when they dominate it is viewed as a distortion of the system and is widely regarded as bordering on corruption.

Decolonization on the Dark Continent took place so quickly that “preparations for independence” in many former colonies did not play a significant role. The colonial powers had not attempted to introduce into their overseas possessions the kind of institutions that one associates with a modern state, in particular the institutions necessary for a representative society. If one were to search for a common denominator among Belgium, France, Portugal and Great Britain<sup>936</sup> in their scattered possessions, it would be the fact that the modernity of their administration was based mainly on the effectiveness of the fiscal system and on the judicial-administrative oversight of the native population. The Second World War did not create a situation that was favorable for decolonization, although the situation in India and the Near East opened British eyes to the fact that decolonization was what the world had in store. After the war, Europeans prepared themselves for a long-term process, in which the role of the patron-counselor would fall to them.<sup>937</sup> France and Great Britain created institutions intended to

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936 Germany was eliminated from the colonial competition after the First World War, though its rule left behind certain traces.

937 A personal memory: As a student researcher at St. John’s College, Cambridge, I shared rooms with a young Briton who was energetically preparing himself for work

maintain bonds with the former colonies and dependent territories, in which the power centers (e.g. Paris and London) took the leading role (the *Union Française*, the British Commonwealth).

Hopes were tied to the African elite. But nobody predicted the brutality and violence in the battle for power that would soon be unleashed in many of these new countries. The execution of Patrice Lumumba became a symbol of *mal africain* (though this expression was understood in several ways), and soon the rivalry between the political interests of Western states overlapped with the battle for natural resources and markets. A double cold war quickly reached Black Africa – one between the West and the USSR and another one between the USSR and Communist China. Not without connection with the rivalry between, and interference by, these super powers, but also out of their own potency, certain phenomena emerged that destabilized traditional social arrangements, which had been preserved under colonial rule. Wherever such phenomena existed, clientelistic relationships – which could not help but be transformed once a country gained independence – were powerful. The emergence of central and territorial administrative offices staffed by locals, created the foundation for new and informal relationships. We can forgo here the presentation of evidence and descriptions of the growth in bureaucracy,<sup>938</sup> but it is worth considering the reasons behind the great dynamism of this development. A certain role was played by ambition: for political reasons and because of a lack of qualifications, citizens of the new states in the colonial era had extremely limited opportunities to land a good job in the apparatus. Regarding the lack of qualifications, this issue had a political basis: especially the Belgians practically barred Congolese people from getting an education in the European style. At the same, the robes and wigs of judges – straight from Westminster – introduced in Ghana and in other former British colonies of the Gulf of Guinea symbolized the system's artificial and – in the end – superficial modernization and Europeanization.<sup>939</sup>

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in the British Colonial Service. Nothing could dampen his enthusiasm. The “Year of Africa” was dawning (1958/1959) but he continued to maintain that the White Man would always be necessary – in Kenya and Tanganyika (he was learning Swahili) – as an official with administrative and judicial authority. I thought: this poor man will have to take up the yoke of the White Man.

938 See Bretton 1973, especially pp. 171, 335.

939 It is worth remembering here what Schneider and Schneider (1976) wrote about modernization without development in reference to southern Italy. See the above chapter entitled “The Clientele and Political Parties.”



But as I view it, something else is the most important. Under conditions marked by the transfer of political power from the hands of the outgoing colonial powers, but also by a largely stagnant economy,<sup>940</sup> only positions in the state apparatus – in administration, parliament<sup>941</sup> or the army – now offered opportunities for material and social advancement. Sometimes such advancement was spectacular because the new “political class” became – in a quite literal sense – the state’s owner with all the associated consequences, and one could join this class with practically no investment at all. In any case, opportunities came more cheaply and rapidly here than they did in business.

Benefits derived from politics were obvious and direct: residences abandoned by Europeans were taken over; the state’s agenda was expanded; broad possibilities for semi-legal bribery opened up for officials at all levels; and – last but not least – high officials had direct financial assistance flowing in from the United States, Europe, and international institutions.<sup>942</sup> A position in state administration could bring more benefits with less risk than investing in an enterprise *sensu stricto*, and it required no capital. (When I write about “less risk,” I am not forgetting about frequent political crises, which were – however – equally risky for entrepreneurs). Military men could benefit the most when they achieved the level of official, which had previously been impossible for them. All of this opened up wide spaces for informal relationships, for the operation of Parkinson’s law bolstered by patronal mechanisms. The “Peter principle,” which says that every official endeavors to achieve a position that is beyond his level of competence, found wide application here because the new political arena offered a chance for self-realization to people who – during colonial rule – had no chance for promotion. One must include among those who enjoyed post-colonial success (regardless of their later fates) all of the dictators like Idi Amin in Uganda and Moïse Tshombe and Mobutu in the Congo. The self-perpetuating bureaucracy was no longer hampered by constraints

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940 What’s more, in many post-colonial countries trade remained in the hands of Asians; hence the racism in both program and propaganda found among certain leaders (for example Idi Amin in Uganda).

941 Bretton (1973, 107) quotes a (rather incoherent) statement made by a member of the Kenyan parliament: “If there is no money, we would never have come [to parliament]; because we were paid in money. Mr. Speaker, this is why I say whatever we say about money and the control, the techniques which are embodied [embodied? – A.M.] in this [declaration about African socialism] as political democracy or the political equality which we are talking about, is a mere daydream.”

942 See the chapter below entitled “The Clientele Today on a Global Scale.”

that had been applied by former rulers in London and Paris, who were always looking for ways to reduce operating costs.

In the era of independence, various connections – family or tribal (whether real or fictional) – played, and continue to play, the role of capital and resources in a political career, as do newly established personal relationships. I emphasize the new-ness of such relationships because I believe that there exists an important difference between the kind of patronal stability I discussed in the context of pre-colonial and colonial times and the construction (for oneself) of political support in the battle to gain (or retain) power. This difference is clearly illustrated by the case of the Congo (Zaire) under Mobutu's rule, a case that is the most famous and, because of its scale, especially important. One could use the term "extreme" case, were it not for the fact that Black Africa is strewn with so many other extremes.

## 7. Mobutu Sese Seko as *Le Roi Soleil*

S.F. Nadel called the Kingdom of Nupe in Nigeria "a black Byzantium" mainly because of the ceremonial organization of the ruler's court. Between the lines of his eye-witness account one reads a certain recognition of, indeed a fascination with, how this system functioned.<sup>943</sup> But since the fall of "Emperor Bokassa"<sup>944</sup> in the Central African Republic in 1979, regimes that are little more than lamentable parodies of European states have been a common sight in Black Africa,<sup>945</sup> a fact that is also manifest, perhaps most distinctly, in the case of Zairian "absolutism," in which the state was identified with the person of President Mobutu.<sup>946</sup> Mobutu built a system that was as centralized as possible, one in which punishment and mercy depended directly and irreversibly on him alone. Mobutu's system is worth analyzing because it emerged in the former Belgian Congo as a stable – by African standards – system of dictatorial rule that was both brutal and civil.

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943 See the sections "La royauté" and "Une journée à la Cour" in Nadel 1971, 146–160.

944 The quotation marks may give rise to concern, because Bokassa enjoyed, for a certain time, world diplomatic recognition; France's protection and his ties to Giscard d'Estaing (the issue of sapphires offered to Bokassa) are difficult to cross out of the pages of Africa's most recent history (though UNESCO publishers succeeded in doing just that); see the section above entitled "The Two Languages of Science."

945 For more on this subject generally, see Badié 1992.

946 Callaghy 1984, 143. The author cites Robert Mandrou's view that absolutism "c'est tout d'abord l'expression d'une volonté de puissance qui s'est exercé dans tous les domaines." What comes to mind here is the parallel disease, collapse and death of both the ruler and his state.

Since participation in the bureaucratic apparatus brought with it benefits and immediate gains that were unattainable through other means, that layer of Zairian society that the American political scientist and Africanist Thomas M. Callaghy called the “political aristocracy” or the “political class” (within which there are – and these terms are used colloquially, not just by the system’s critics – “*les barons*,” “*les Grands*,” and the “presidential family,” that is, as “one Zairian observer describes it [...] a ‘ruling elite perceived by the mass of subjects as foreign [...]’)” grew quickly and was widely regarded as “they.”<sup>947</sup> For the arguments I am making here it is essential to state that, though the dictator tried to keep the reins of power in his own hands and constructed, at the same time, a power apparatus according to purely formal conventions using Belgian and French terminology, a clientelistic system developed in this huge country, and it did so inexorably. And it was precisely on this principle that the Zairian “political aristocracy” took shape. Entrance (or rather, one’s introduction) into this group took place through a sign of Mobutu’s symbolic and material favor: a Mercedes, a luxury villa, or some other valuable gift. Arguably such items were mostly symbolic in nature, especially compared to the profits that came with an office or political position, which were incomparably greater, but the fact is that, as Callaghy writes, “the line between private and state property is almost nonexistent”; at the same time, Callaghy drew an analogy – one that was not entirely strict – between Zaire and the absolute monarchy of France.<sup>948</sup>

Such comparisons of systems that are so culturally distant from one another have their clear limits. There is, however, a grain of truth in the following argument:

If Louis XIV had ruled in an age of mass politics, he would have created a single Divine Right Party to foster the centralizing power of his absolutist state, and his intendant

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947 Callaghy 1984, 184. The motif of “ONI” (“They”), which Poles know well from the work of Teresa Torńska, has long been alive and well in Africa. In reference to the British colonial administration in Nigeria, see Wraith and Simpkins 1963, 46.

948 Callaghy 1984, 189. The author goes on to describe the legendary scale of the misappropriation and enrichment of high Congolese apparatchiks: a regional official in the province of Shaba (Katanga) derived barely 2% of his income from his official salary. After the fall of many regimes, especially the USSR, no newspaper reader is amazed to read about such stories. As Médard (1996, footnote 20) wrote: “J. Frémigacci has convincingly demonstrated that the state in French colonies was closer to the state of the ‘Ancient Regime’ than to the state of the Third Republic.” The work mentioned here has not been published (it is cited as “L’Etat colonial français, du discours mythique aux réalités,” Centre de recherche africaine. Université de Paris I).

probably would have had a series of “mobilization” functions similar to those of the Zairian prefects.<sup>949</sup>

At the same time, Callaghy claims that the “Zairian absolute state” does not generate many more state “services” than the French state did three centuries ago, with those additional services fitting rather into the sphere of “control and extraction” than assistance for inhabitants and making their lives better.<sup>950</sup>

To juxtapose the Zairian power structure with France at the end of the seventeenth century, as Callaghy does, is justified only on a high level of abstraction, and only if one overlooks differences in social structure and historical experience; but this is precisely what separates these two environments. One must add – as was discussed above – that Mousnier’s model of the French monarchy was not able to resist academic criticism.<sup>951</sup> But Callaghy finds in the Congolese basin counterparts to the Valois and Bourbon *pays d’état* and *pays d’élection*. The former are characterized by greater autonomy, greater significance, and the better organization of traditional rulers. As an example, Callaghy points to a Zairian province that is quite distant from the capital, located on the eastern edge of the country, namely Kivu. He writes: “Kivu is the Zairian equivalent of a French *pays d’état*”<sup>952</sup> But the makeup of the Regional Committee in this province looked threatening under Mobutu’s rule: the military leader of the 5th military region, the head of the National Gendarme, the head of the local youth *Brigade Disciplinaire*, and – among civilian officials – the local bosses of Mobutu’s political party, of its youth wing (*Jeunesse du Mouvement Populaire de la Révolution*), and of the federal trade union. It is difficult to see how this group represented the local society. No surprise: the region had just been torn from the hands of rebels (only in 1967 was the provincial capital of Bukavu retaken) and chaos and insecurity still reigned; “These people who hide in the bush ‘have not yet realized the multiple benefits of the New Régime’”<sup>953</sup> It is difficult to talk here about autonomy or local self-government, though it is easy to underestimate the meaning of the “judgments of customary law” still at work at the lowest level. New institutions created to deal with local problems (above all those related to refugees, both local and from Burundi) were led by people sent from Kinshasa, for example the

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949 Callaghy 1984, 412.

950 Ibid., 415.

951 See the above section entitled “*Fidélités-Clientèles*: Roland Mousnier and the Anglo-Saxons.”

952 Callaghy 1984, 264.

953 Callaghy 1984, 265; the quote is, of course, not the author’s, but comes rather from an “annual report” of the Kivu Regional Committee. See also pp. 339–344.

general and chief-of-staff from the Office of the President. After all, if something had to be handled quickly and efficiently, with initiative, a solution had to come from Mobutu himself.

Once we get at the heart of the issue – that is, to local relations and political bonds between the Center and the periphery – then the analogy with the monarchy of 300 years ago grows pale and disappears. But another image inevitably emerges: Soviet communism in its aggressive, Stalinist phase mixed with the decadent phenomena associated with Brezhnev’s “real socialism.” Callaghy’s first subsections under the section devoted to the “key processes” of Zairian absolutism – namely “Consolidation of coercive power” and “Dismantlement of inherited structures”<sup>954</sup> – focus on issues that are extremely important in the Leninist and Stalinist phases of the establishment of Soviet rule but that run contrary to the gradual progress of centralization in European states of previous centuries. After all, the modern state took an evolutionary path, transforming medieval institutions and giving them new meaning and social content. *Mutatis mutandis*, one can draw analogies between Mobutu’s system and various phases of the Soviet system. I am thinking here about the army: having used it to consolidate his power, Mobutu kept it at some distance from the government; fearing the opposition and a coup d’état, Mobutu eliminated that group that David J. Gould called the military intelligentsia. The military leadership entered the “patron class,”<sup>955</sup> though it clearly did not play in Congo-Zaire the role of the “military-industrial complex,” and military patronage soon transformed itself into open robbery. Under the new post-colonial conditions, this was not a situation that favored either economic development or the emergence of the structures associated with – to use Alain Besançon’s term with respect to the Soviet economy – a “spectre.”<sup>956</sup>

Callaghy’s monograph is an illustration of the dangers that accompany any scholar who approaches his research with a clear working hypothesis, whose important vision diverts one’s attention from other possible associations. The author overlooks the Sovietologists’ great achievements, and in his bibliography of cited works he takes note of works on France under Louis XIV that are marginal to the topic at hand.

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954 Callaghy 1984, 168, 171. I do not have the foundation in the sources to make an argument on the political ideology of Mobutu’s system, but some texts are striking in their use of fascist and Nazi slogans: Zaire “c’est tout d’abord l’expression d’une *volonté de puissance* qui s’est exercée dans tous les domaines,” etc. *Ibid.*, 143 (author’s emphasis – A.M.).

955 Gould 1980, 466–467, 469, 477, 503–511.

956 See the section above entitled “Anatomy of a Spectre’”

But let us return to the subject of clientele. Callaghy argues that the clientelistic network created through Mobutu's people – his nomenklatura – complemented the state apparatus, indeed that it was its “spirit.” But how is it that, in a patrimonial system<sup>957</sup> marked also by powerful tendencies toward centralized authority, relationships took shape that made up – to use a term already used once above – a kind of *Mitunternehmertum*?<sup>958</sup> Callaghy's analysis provides a great deal of material, and the image he creates is depressing. I have emphasized several times that one cannot treat patronal relationships *a priori* as reprehensible; with reference to neighboring lands of the African Great Lakes region, I tend to advocate the thesis that such relationships were even a decisive factor in the stabilization of societies, which was no doubt an exploitative alternative, though one that was at least more peaceful than genocide. But in the case of the dictatorship in the Congo, things developed differently. Members of the “presidential family” or “presidential fraternity” (an informal expression, but one that was adopted at the time) – that is, as political scientists would put it, the “political aristocracy” – enjoyed almost unlimited possibilities. But possibilities for what? Misappropriation, robbery, plunder? Any predatory expression fits here. At this point one could mention the huge fortunes accumulated in the seventeenth century by the French monarch's ministers-favorites – the two great cardinals, the famous case of the Superintendent Fouquet, and – in contrast to him – Colbert's royally blessed fortune. Or, in Spain, the *validos*, Lerma and Olivares.<sup>959</sup> Fortunately, Callaghy did not do this; the term “political capitalism” means something different today than it did 300 years ago. We associate Richelieu and Mazarin, Olivares and Colbert, with the *raison d'état*, a consciously implemented set of policies both domestic and – especially – foreign. To amass great fortunes, to build upon one's family's greatness – all of this was, practically speaking, a “lifestyle” for the wealthy and powerful, a real

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957 Callaghy (1984, 69) uses this term as Max Weber would, meaning a governmental system that is a direct or indirect extension of the court – in the sense of the ruling *Haushalt*/household. See also Abercrombie and Hill 1976; *Paternalism* 1983. The expression is used in various ways depending on the historical context. Médard (1996, 78) accurately writes: “The African state is not a patrimonial state, it is a patrimonialized state, and this is why it is better to call it neo-patrimonial.” Médard goes on to provide valuable comments on Max Weber, but the terminological subtlety indicated above seems to me to be pedantic. If what is involved here is depriving this word of virtue, “neo” is not enough.

958 Moraw 1988, 4. For previous mention of this term, see the above section entitled “The Era of the Republic: The Classic Clientele.”

959 For the latest information on favorites, see *World of the Favourite*, 1999.

status symbol. Also at work here was the idea that the monarch's main virtue was his generosity, as were the growing cash economy and the state's broadened agenda regarding its exploitation. But the Sword of Damocles was monarchical disfavor, which could ruin things not just politically, but also economically. With this element, wealthy and powerful Congolese resemble the créatures of centuries gone by.

It is difficult to find in the activities of Mobutu's Congolese dignitaries any sort of concept of the *raison d'état*. What's more, they acted as if they were in suspension between two economic systems: the huge (but, per capita, very poor) Congolese economy and the world economy. As I will discuss below,<sup>960</sup> precisely such a situation created (and creates for everyone who gets his hands on power in such a system) huge opportunities to misappropriate public funds. Millions of dollars stashed away by dictators in Swiss banks, and now in countries that are even safer, have their counterparts in the funds accumulated by their subordinates. One can describe how it works systematically: The head of state demands direct control over the apparatus on all levels, a demand that is served by, among other things, a patriarchal ideology, which is not in conflict with the creation by bureaucrats of their own clientelistic networks, especially those in local administration. The apparatus is constantly in motion, with the above-mentioned "draft" leading upward, which means, however, that – despite the ever-growing bureaucracy – some individuals would face an inevitable loss of position.

Below the "presidential family" there were mid-level bureaucrats and military officials in Kinshasa who aspired to join the president's circle, usually by being granted a position in the clientele of that circle's members. The third level, in turn, were provincial prefects and officials in provincial garrisons, groups of people that were diverse in terms of, among other things, how much loot they controlled in their territory. Members of this "state class" did not strive to reshape themselves into a "middle class" – that is, into entrepreneurs and businessmen – and what's more, conflicts of interest emerged between these two classes. When in November 1973 small and mid-sized businesses were "zairianized" (nationalized, or confiscated), the Congo reached economic independence only in terms of propaganda, while all of the between 1,500 or 2,000 confiscated businesses were eventually privatized and ended up in the hands of dignitaries. Some of them – including Mobutu himself – became owners of countless plantations. All of which had an effect on a national economy that resembled what the world witnessed in Uganda under Idi Amin, where Asian businessmen faced expropriation and exile. The

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960 See chapter below entitled "The Clientele Today On a Global Scale."

Congolese political class had neither the ability nor the desire to run businesses and did not intend to invest in them.

From a perspective distant in space and time, as I write this text at the threshold of the twenty-first century, it is too easy to generalize. Even if a scholar boldly rejects the association with *pays d'état* and *pays d'élection*, he would have to admit that there were surely significant differences between regions that depend on both the character of local relations and the quality of communications and transport to and from Kinshasa. All of which specified the extent to which provincial administrations were dependent on the Center and how that dependency, to a certain degree, determined how the spoils were divided. This specification does not seem to me to be an exaggeration. Frederic C. Lane would describe the benefits derived from the Zairian "president's people" as "profits from power" or "protection rent" (or "tribute").<sup>961</sup> But one must keep in mind the difficult-to-define border between protection and rapacious exploitation. Would it be a "state-society struggle," as Callaghy entitled his book? Can one speak of a Congolese *society* in the Western sense of the word? A Congolese state? From this angle, I view Mobutu's empire as an enterprise serving the rapacious exploitation of his subjects. It is a state, but it is one that lacks the Medicean or Bourbon charm. And unfortunately it is not an exception in the post-colonial world.

One might follow in Médard's footsteps and define the issue more scientifically and use, at the same time, language that is smooth and accepted in international institutions.<sup>962</sup> As Médard writes: "One can regard the neopatrimonial African state both as the form by which a Western-type state was adapted to African conditions and as an example of how its institutionalization failed." The word "institutionalization" sounds too mild in relation to reality in Black Africa.<sup>963</sup> The German political scientist Trutz von Trotha used sharper and more accurate terms to evaluate the colonial regimes; he speaks of expanding *Parastattlichkeit* (roughly: parastatal condition) after the end of colonialism, which is characterized by a loss of control over territory, loss of control over the bureaucratic apparatus, and the

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961 Lane 1979, especially the earlier published "The Economic Meaning of War and Protection" (from 1941) and "Economic Consequences of Organized Violence" (from 1958).

962 Médard 1998, 308.

963 Médard described it more accurately in Médard 1996, 84: after decolonization "the bureaucratic apparatus was considerably developed, even over-developed. And at the same time, it was patrimonialized. It became over-developed more for patrimonial than bureaucratic reasons. [...] This patrimonialization of the state has brought about [...] a kind of hybrid of patrimonialism and bureaucracy."



disappearance of loyalty toward that apparatus.<sup>964</sup> The consequence of *Parastatlichkeit* is “para-sovereignty” because various groups are created *ad hoc* (as an extreme example, I would count mercenaries in this group), self-interested groups, both internal and external, that take over entire regions of the state, assume particular responsibilities of the state, and act in its stead in certain areas. The state persists in a formal sense, but in practice it retreats in the face of these groups. Katanga emerges here as a classic example, whose natural resources made it one of the Congo’s greatest strengths, but was also an object of war between armed rivals who – from Tshombe to Laurent Kabila – strove at the region’s expense to gain funding and support from foreign, usually non-state, patrons.

At this point it would be necessary to ask: how are we to understand this country, as discussed above? Von Trotha accurately points out who benefits most out in the countryside, namely the tribal *Häuptlinge*, or chiefs. Subordinating themselves to one lord or another, they can most easily maintain control over their territory. But despite everything, Von Trotha appears to have difficulty rejecting the myth of the state. His comparative approach directs him toward the public institutions of the contemporary West. On the other hand, writing critically about Callaghy’s theses, I tried to point out that one can talk about Africa using the kind of state-enterprise-business concept that Frederic Lane proposed for examining Europe in previous centuries. This is all the more true given that both the governing and the governed interpret authority in this way. That having been said, I might add – though it might sound like a dark joke – that that enterprise-business phenomenon with which I want to compare the state can be – and is – highly diverse, characterized as it is by everything from joint-stock companies to the mafia. The latter model, in its open form, is nothing strange to Africa.<sup>965</sup>

But an author commenting in the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* on von Trotha’s article is too bold in his juxtaposition of the breakdown in African post-colonial statehood with the critical vision of the Western state with which Wolfgang Reinhard closes his outstanding *opus*.<sup>966</sup> Phrases like *zuviel Staat* here and *zuwenig Staat* there, used in a context dominated by non-state institutions, clarify nothing. “Citizens’ without a state” (“*Staatsbürger*” *ohne Staat*) are subjects

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964 Von Trotha 2000.

965 Dark anecdotes on this subject are not rare: “Oppositionelle für die Krokodile. Malawis Ex-Diktator Banda droht Mordanklage,” *Berliner Zeitung*, 7/8 January 1995; on Mobutu, see Callaghy 1984, 3.

966 M. Vec, “Freibeuter der Ordnung. Neue Herrschaftsformen verdrängen in Afrika die Staatlichkeit.” *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 18 April 2001; Reinhard 1999, 504–509. The entire Part VI of this extraordinary synthesis is devoted to the conse-

who are victims of a war going on above their heads. Not only does the authority of tribal leaders take on new meaning, but so does the power of various patrons who are able to ensure some kind of protection from dangers threatening from all sides. In such conditions, resources are themselves protection, but when the communication and transportation systems break down, only those who have strengths at their disposal (a gun, a vehicle, fuel) have access to resources not produced locally. In the most general sense, such circumstances bring to the historian's mind the times of the decay of the Roman empire. But the *inter arma* character of the system discussed here can hardly be portrayed as gentle. Indeed one cannot easily distinguish it from extortion and blackmail. Late antiquity also teaches us about this reality.

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quences of the European export of this kind of state over the broad sweep of time (see p. 613 for a bibliography of synthetic works on this subject); Reinhard does not discuss Callaghy's book.

## Chapter 11: The Third World: Unity and Diversity

African countries are diverse, conditioned by climate, culture and politics, and lacking in the kind of durable mutual bonds that are so important to the identity of Europe. But for me Asia is even more enigmatic. Which is why I raise issues related to Asia only as an essayist, not as a monographist, and thus mainly as a fascinated reader of ethnological literature. The exotic (from a European observer's point of view) mixes with the returning impression of *déjà vu*. Years ago, as I began reading in preparation for this work, I picked up a work by James C. Scott on the peasantry in South-East Asia in order to acquaint myself at the very beginning with a familiar topos. "There are districts in which the position of the rural population is that of a man standing permanently up to the neck in water, so that even a ripple is sufficient to drown him." And as Robert Mandrou writes, "everyone knows the picture drawn by Taine, so true for the whole of the ancien régime: 'the common people resemble a man walking in a lake with the water up to his mouth; the least depression in the bed of the lake, or the smallest wave, and he loses his footing, goes under, and drowns.'"<sup>967</sup> So, is it the same everywhere? Hunger, poverty, oppression, no prospects for the future, no ties with the outside world: we detect such problems throughout all of history and over broad geographical spaces. What makes clientelism – and not just clientelism – such an interesting and varied matter is its civilizational and political context, the way it inscribes itself into tradition, how it is tied to beliefs, how it shapes and defines the family. Something we most often see with this phenomenon is *compadrazgo*, which in similar forms but in very different times has connected, in particular, all countries that are associated with the Iberian tradition.<sup>968</sup>

### 1. Thailand and Quasi-Clientelism

Depending on the approximations one is willing to make, the various social environments I am discussing here are either strikingly similar (almost analogous) to one another, or are riven with distinctions and are dissimilar in color and tone.

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967 Scott 1976, 1; this is a quote from R.H. Tawney, *Land and Labour in China* (Boston: 1966), 77; Mandrou quotes Taine in Mandrou 1961, 13.

968 I am omitting here theoretical considerations included in *Friends* 1977 which precede publications tied to the field research done in Southern Asia and Latin America.

Thailand several decades ago: after the overthrow of the absolute monarchy in 1932 and the Japanese occupation, the long-lived military regime fell in 1973.<sup>969</sup> One might describe the system of rule before 1973 as bureaucratic: among those in power one could find civil bureaucrats and military men both active and retired. Given the society's minimal political awareness and activity, the business climate was favorable. In the concise review of the Thai state on which I am depending here, published in 1988, expressions related to, or derived from, the word "client" appear at every turn. Thus "autonomous" social groups "affected the policy of the state mainly in an informal, particularist, and often clientelistic manner." The dominant form of influence in business was "outright bribery" or the "creation of patron-client relationships with military-bureaucratic leaders." Bureaucrats were invited to join executive boards or "to hold stock in the companies at no cost."<sup>970</sup> Twelve of the sixteen commercial banks counted high military and civilian leaders on their boards of directors. The overthrow of the military regime by "college students and the urban middle class" did not lead to stabilization of the political system. Elections were now free, but building a parliamentary coalition turned out to be difficult. Retired generals were thus asked to join cabinets, and they took over key ministerial positions and even became prime ministers. At the same time the three main political parties were increasingly controlled by business. Since individuals do not have the right in Thailand to finance politics, businessmen as a group financed politicians as individuals. Laothamatas speaks here of "quasi-clientelistic" tactics.

I would not dare to pass judgment on the Thailand question – I want to emphasize – but it sounds believable to me that, in a country without European traditions, public issues translated simply into personal relationships.<sup>971</sup> In the above description what strikes me as a scholar – though one who, in this case, is rather an indirect observer of clientelistic relations – is the ease with which the term "patron-client" is used, even though it is never precisely defined who is who in the relationship. Clientelism would be identified with corruption in its pure form, the kind of corruption it would be easier to discuss if there existed clear and universally recognized criteria for bureaucratic honesty.

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969 My comments on Thailand are based on Laothamatas 1988.

970 Laothamatas 1988, 451.

971 When I first read this article by Laothamatas in 1989 I was far from thinking that my notes would lead to the reflections described here.

### a. Falcons and Camels<sup>972</sup>

As we know, rapid and violent modernization poses a threat to traditional forms of co-existence, which as a consequence becomes a risk for rulers both tribal and state. The fate of the Shah of Iran is the best example of such a development, but the problem arises in every country both small and large and especially in those involved in the extraction of oil. The United Arab Emirates, a federal structure established after the British departure in 1971, consisted of two levels of authority: the sheiks' families and a federal bureaucracy in which many foreigners were employed. This was essential for the functioning of the Emirates in the world – for the sale of oil. But the sheiks have shown a tendency to loosen federal bonds, and a fear of the growing influence of “foreigners” encourages them to cultivate traditional customs. In Dubai they built an all-grass golf course (with seed from Georgia, USA) at a cost of \$10.5 million. But to maintain political bonds, rulers in the Gulf raise falcons and travel every year, mainly to Pakistan, accompanied – as an American resident informs us – by “followers” with their falcons, for whom it was a way of “getting closer to the sheik and sharing in the largesse.” Another sport is camel racing, a modern element of which is money: a thorough-bred race-winner can cost as much as a million dollars, and most of the racing camels belong to the sheiks and their families, who pay Bedouin trainers “around \$50 per camel per year and other benefits to look after the animals, in addition to sharing prize monies that can run to hundred of thousands of dollars.” It sounds simply perverse that the jockeys come from beyond Arabia, weigh less than 40 pounds, and are sometimes only five or six years old. They have radios taped to their chests, through which they hear the trainer's instructions. And “yet this sport [...] functions as a means of keeping Bedouin tradition alive and establishing patronage between ruler and ruled.”

Generosity, we will remember, is one of the patron's main virtues.

## 2. Latin America: One or Many?

The peculiar nature of clientelism – or rather clientelisms – in Latin America seems to be defined (as a Europeanist, I formulate this stipulation with emphasis) by the ethnic diversity of its many countries and by its great disparities in wealth and lifestyle. The large expanses of territory from the Rio Grande to the Argentinian Pampas create a field of activity for countless relationships defined by ethnic

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972 Based on A. Cowell, “Fore! 18 Holes in Dubai, Then a Day at the Races,” *New York Times International*, 31 October 1988.

divisions, the economy, and the often violent way of carrying out politics.<sup>973</sup> The processes of modernization and globalization are both shallow and deep, which – alongside many other consequences – make possible the coexistence of various kinds of patron and client, both old and modern.

While Indian communities fear external patrons and try to hold them at arm's length, Creoles attempt to move beyond their community and establish contact with powerful people on the outside. Maybe sometimes the latter can become patrons themselves. In real economic practice that means the sale of products to a specified merchant, the use of his credit and influence. In political practice, it means support for the political aspirations of one's own patron against others. While Indians are thus oriented toward the community, Creoles are directed outward, toward the city, region and country, toward people in power who are active on all these levels. Such is the form of "participation" in the life of the country, and it is in this way that Eric Wolf and Edward Hansen broadly generalize relations between the periphery and the Center, and the reader of anthropological works in this field is, on the one hand, attracted by the sweep of these conclusions and, on the other hand, disturbed by the fragile reasoning.<sup>974</sup> It is logical and seems highly probably that two ethnic groups (in this case, Indians and Creoles) behave in different ways toward external factors. They evidently have different relations with the outside world, and this is no doubt why (the two authors suggest) only the Creole has a chance to become a patron; it might also be relevant that his environment is more individualistic. But how many additional factors might also have an effect?

In its own way, and not without reminders of the African Great Lakes Region, the issue of clienteles and cows takes shape. In Latin America the *rancho* seems to be especially fertile with matters of interest to me; it creates numerous dyads, bosses and people dependent on them of various kinds: the *ranchero* and cowboy; the shopkeeper and his indebted client (in the colloquial sense of that word); the owner of a *fazenda* and his "slaves" (the word used by Wolf and Hansen); the owner of a *hacienda* and his peon. But in Latin America, wealth and power come with obligations; the *patrón* or (in Brazil) *patrão* is supposed to protect people who are dependent on him, just as his servants owe him their loyalty and, in appropriate circumstances, their support. Highly personalized relations in business serve to expand the range of quasi-clientelistic (at least) dependency into this area as well. In fact it is widely believed that business and modern industry in Latin America

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973 See Leal Buitrago and Davila 1990.

974 Wolf and Hansen 1972, 72–76 *passim*.

represent an environment that favors patron-client relationships. There is a place in company administrations for the so-called *hombres de confianza* (trusted men) with whom one maintains contact but who are not directly involved in decisions. As in Japan, where businesses are run in a personal, almost family atmosphere, firing someone is regarded as a measure of last resort. After the boss's death he is practically canonized, which reminds us again of Sicilian traditions.<sup>975</sup>

Though American and European anthropologists and sociologists have traditionally been interested in Latin American clientelistic systems in village communities, we have also seen growth – based on a wave of political criticism – in interest in clientelism as a system shaping politics in the region. As Francisco Buitrago and Andres Davila have argued: “Clientelism has been a part of Colombia’s history. The weakness of the state and, as a result, the malfunction of institutions on which the political system has depended, has had an influence on the durability of these types of relationships in politics.”<sup>976</sup> It is a widespread belief that clientelism is prevalent in Latin America; the authors cited with approval a declaration made by Steffen Walter Schmidt, which in my opinion is an exaggeration, namely that clientelism is immanent in the political processes of every society, and that even though theory based on clientelism cannot replace universal theories because it does not have a global character, one must nonetheless connect it with social macro-theories.<sup>977</sup> Such a belief in the universality of clientelistic systems in no way prevents us from arguing that regimes or political groups in this part of the world created the conditions in which clientelistic systems could flourish. The element of social criticism contained in these arguments can be found in observations that clientelism today is customarily called political, that it cannot be separated from everyday life, and that public institutions (*el Estado institucional*) are just an addition to traditional clientelistic systems. For example, as Richard Graham calculated, participation in elections in Brazil around 1870 was among the highest in the world, largely because of pressure applied by the great land owners, who by winning local elections could bend central bureaucrats to their will and influence the results of indirect elections to parliament. When direct elections were introduced in 1881, this mechanism changed accordingly, but it did not disappear. Latin Americanists debate what conclusions should be drawn from this situation, but Graham convincingly ties this electoral system and the system of governing in general with the fixed system of values that prefers

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975 Ibid., 156.

976 Leal Buitrago and Davila 1990, 35.

977 S. W. Schmidt, “Political Clientelism in Colombia,” Dissertation Columbia University 1972, 41; also cited in Leal Buitrago and Davila 1990, 38.

the loyalty of clients and patrons in search of clients.<sup>978</sup> It is worth adding that the harmonious system outlined here was not inconsistent with brutal and bloody electoral battles.

All of the above takes place under traditional conditions. Unlike in the past, a leader of the new type no longer has to own land or derive prestige from his position in the economy. Such figures still exist and are active, but they no longer dominate. The new leader comes from the lowland plains, is a product of the political system that he is able to maneuver and exploit in order to become a patron. Briefly put, politics is a factor in social mobilization precisely because it creates new political leaders-patrons. Modern political clientelism lives off the state (*es [...] alimentado por el Estado*) and is maintained by the deeply rooted virtue of loyalty.<sup>979</sup>

I would add that the style of clientelism, even in its local color and tone, emerges precisely through the mixture of these traditional and modern elements. Along with the origin of the resources on which the system feeds, it is the patron's – not the client's – style that determines the shape of clientelism. Its modernity (sometimes lamentably) is tied to development in the tax system and expansion of the bureaucracy, which together put resources (money and jobs) into the hands of patrons-politicians.

As in the case of post-colonial Africa (as I emphasized above), scholars dealing with Latin America either perceive or avoid the issue of clientelism. But I have not met an author who would *expressis verbis* declare that this phenomenon does not exist. A tone of pessimism dominates, particularly because – in the subtropical zone – political life broadly understood involves not just parliamentarianism, but sometimes also *guerilleros* and terrorism.<sup>980</sup>

Sometimes we see signs of hope, which come most clearly from the scholars of relations in provincial Brazil, Cleidi Albuquerque and Dennis Werner, who write:

There are many variables that may affect the nature of political patronage systems. The factors mentioned here – greater ability to choose among alternative patrons, greater education, and the effectiveness of competitive job exams – are only a start in our attempts to distinguish the causes and consequences of these important social ties throughout

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978 Graham 1990, 5, 108.

979 Leal Buitrago and Davila 1990, 46–47.

980 See R. Zuluaga and U. Francisco, *Guerilla y sociedad en el Patía. Una relación entre clientelismo y la insurgencia social*, Santiago de Cali (Columbia) 1993; R.R. Kaufman, “Corporatism, Clientelism and Partisan Conflict: A Study of Seven American Countries,” in James M. Malloy, ed., *Authoritarianism and Corporatism in Latin America* (Pittsburgh: 1979).



Latin America and elsewhere. As long as people have the right (or obligation) to vote there will be pressure for political candidates to muster support in any way possible. As long as voters can acquire advantages in their relationships with political bosses, the political patronage system will endure.<sup>981</sup>

But it is easier to indicate the reasons behind a crisis, to postulate the effectiveness of competitive exams for public positions, than it is to reform a state that is permeated by a patronal system.

Having placed a question mark in the title for this section, it is appropriate for me to answer that question. I lean toward “many” Latin Americas because – on this great super-continent (after all, Latin civilization reaches through the isthmus all the way up to the Rio Grande) – the fundamental prerequisites for the kind of relationships we are discussing here were (and are) arranged in a variety of ways, in agrarian systems, in different forms of urbanization, in dictatorships and democracies with their various electoral procedures. There can be no doubt that blood – creole and Indian – can have an influence in this regard. Dynamic phenomena and permanent phenomena – unstable governments and eternal backwardness – both play a role. A historian viewing this subject from a distance can only ask questions, because he encounters in the literature either the view that informal systems of rule are absolutely dominant, or nothing at all.

I begin with an institution that typifies Latin America, though one that is not limited to its territory.

### 3. *Compadre-Compadrazgo*

However it is defined in canon law, “godfather” – *padrino* in Italian, and *compadre* in Spanish – is a term that has been recognized in thoroughly secular systems as well. For Englishmen or WASPs (American White Anglo-Saxon Protestants), the “godfather” is a phenomenon-institution that is altogether exotic. Left over from the old English, *godsib* (godmother) is only the word “gossip,” which is not too different than the Polish word *kumoszka*.<sup>982</sup> But in Catholic societies, which one might well define as traditional, the proper selection of godparents supplemented (and supplements to this day) kinship ties, which can play a significant role in relations among families, even among descendants. Although participation in the sacrament as godparents created a relationship that approximated kinship,

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981 Albuquerque and Werner 1985, 120.

982 Mintz and Wolf 1967, 175. These authors point to the Equadorian verb *compadrear* as a comparison. The Polish *kumoterstwo* (cronyism) is an entirely different problem; see the below section entitled “Patrons and Clients in Poland after the PRL.”

Saint Boniface allowed for the possibility of marriage between a widow (widower) and the father or mother of the godchild. Alfons Dopsch drew attention to the significance – in the feudal system of the eighth and ninth centuries – of fictional fraternity and kinship bonds reaching as deep as the seventh degree.<sup>983</sup> Marriages between relatives and relatives by marriage (including fictional ones) strengthened the ancestral, and not individual, character of property and were disadvantageous for the Church. Soon they would become inconvenient also for rulers, who benefited from *ius caducum*. So it was not surprising that the Catholic Church treated this issue seriously, and canon law (canon 768) forbade marriage between individuals tied by baptism. Such a bond strengthened alliances between families and was thus an element of a broad political strategy by families, one which the Council of Trent weakened by limiting the number of godparents per child to two (previously it had been as many as a dozen).

Martin Luther also came out strongly against this kind of “nepotism.”<sup>984</sup> In Protestant Saxony in 1550 the number of godfathers was limited to seven or nine for noblemen and three for burghers; the secular, order-related and material character of this institution was clear. The Council of Trent also strictly limited the number of possible godparents. Mintz and Wolf attribute the disappearance of ritual kinship within Western civilization to the new ethic of individualism.<sup>985</sup> I might add that special land inheritance rights enjoyed by the Church and monarchy, along with the threat they posed, also disappeared.

The above developments involved elites, but the position of the “godfather” maintained its significance where the basic unit of production remained the family, and especially in relations between people of unequal position or wealth. Feudal families strove to find godparents of the highest possible position, but in the Mediterranean region and in Ibero-America, and especially in village communities, success in finding a suitable godfather still ensures a child and his parents the care and support of a wealthier person.<sup>986</sup> The *compadre* or *padrino* thus

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983 Dopsch 1918, vol. 1, 378.

984 Translator’s note: In the original Polish text, Professor Mączak used, in quotes, the term *kumoterstwo*, which can be translated as “cronyism,” “favoritism,” “nepotism.” I have chosen “nepotism,” but the fact is that Professor Mączak used *kumoterstwo* because of that term’s association with a Polish word for “godfather,” namely *kum*.

985 “The new ethic put a premium on the individual as an effective accumulator of capital and virtue, and was certain to discountenance the drain on individual resources and the restrictions on individual freedom implicit in the wide extension of ritual kin ties.” See Mintz and Wolf 1967, 184.

986 Compare Klapisch-Zuber 1985.

became synonyms for patron, and scholars of Latin America have sometimes defined clientelistic systems there as *compadrazgo*. Use of the plural is necessary here because there are several dozen kinds of this relationship in this region as determined by the godfather's particular duties and obligations and his previous ties with the godson or goddaughter's family. *Compadrazgo* has also served to strengthen actual blood ties. The anthropologist Hugo G. Nutiri has counted as many as 21 kinds of such ties that are completely disassociated from their sacral foundation. *Compadrazgo*, as we understand this institution through Nutiri's Tlaxcala, may involve even a car or a truck, and it is dripping with alcohol.<sup>987</sup>

Is this perhaps an exaggeration? In any case, none of this is relevant to clientelistic relationships because it does not involve a bond between a stronger and a weaker party. As I understand it, the traditional appellation was subject to a transaction that was entirely banal, though one that was always worth celebrating in a joyous way.<sup>988</sup> But in this thoroughly researched environment, the relationship of inequality-dependency manifests itself in the active or passive stance taken by potential partners. The individual who establishes contact becomes the one who pleads the case, and it results from the logic of the relationship that he will take a place in that relationship that is subordinate to the *compadre*, and is, from that moment, obligated to make a public display of his respect.<sup>989</sup>

So far everything appears very simple, but the monograph on Tlaxcala from which I derive this information is made up of two substantial volumes, and practically every affirmative sentence is built surrounded by reservations or qualifications. This disarms, even discourages the reader, though on the other hand it gives him a sense of the intricacies of possible relationships and points to the risks associated with oversimplifying matters. From their multiplicity emerges the

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987 "Compadrazgo de jícara o jarrito" – Nutiri 1980–1984, vol. 1, 7–8. As Wolf and Hansen report (1972, p. 202–203; citing the work of anthropologist John Gillin), there are in the community of Moche on the coast of Peru 14 types of *compadrazgo*; godparents include "the midwife who delivered a child, the woman who first cut a child's nails, the person who baptized a child in an emergency [...] the person who first cut a child's hair [...] the woman who hung the first scapular around a child's neck," etc. The power of such bonds was often unequal; sometimes – no doubt depending on the status of these people – they transformed themselves into a patronal relationship.

988 Perhaps, much like when purchasing a horse in a village in old Poland, the presence of witnesses and the solemn completion of a document provided an essential legal argument if one of the parties later challenged the transaction.

989 Nutiri 1980–1984, vol. 1, chapter 7: "The Structural Implications of Asking and Being Asked to Enter into a Compadrazgo Relationship," 58–75.

following observation: in a local system, *compadrazgo* is marked by an age cycle tied to the level of family development: a young couple with a growing number of children is in the position of “asking,” but over time the head of the family takes on – or rather might take on – the role of *compadre*.<sup>990</sup>

George M. Foster (whose concept of “limited good” I use more broadly than does Nutiri) reminds us that, as a newcomer from the USA in the Mexican pueblo of Tzintzuntzan, he was regarded as “obviously a fabulously rich and influential man” and was “continually deluged with requests to be a *compadre*.”<sup>991</sup> His observations indicate that in this remote corner of the world almost every patron (and most important *compadri*) came from outside the locality; from the inside only priests were possible candidates. Relationships with both living and heavenly patrons (e.g. saints) usually did not last long.

Here is a concrete example. An official from town purchased some dishes from a certain local potter. The artisan treated this transaction as the beginning of a lasting relationship; after an appropriate period of time he brought more dishes to the town as a gift, for which the official found more buyers, and in turn the potter, when the occasion presented itself, asked the official to stand as godfather at the potter’s wedding. The official, now governor, was unable to personally attend the wedding, but he agreed to be *compadre*. As it turned out, the relationship would be beneficial to both sides.<sup>992</sup> Such a case is rare because an effective patron belongs under the category of “limited good” (“like all good things in life”), a fact that also applies to heavenly patrons: Mother Mary and the saints. One could not escape from turning to two different saints with the same request, from lighting a candle, or making a votive offering, to display images, if the saint did not do what was expected of him. In 1900, during a terrible smallpox epidemic, San Francisco did nothing to help; but when villagers turned directly to an old painting of Christ, the danger passed, and the community shifted its adoration accordingly.<sup>993</sup>

Though the dominant impact of this arrangement between adults was on the godparent-godchild relationship, the baptismal ceremonial grew immeasurably and in the process strengthened the material dimension of the relationship. The interests of the child’s parents are understood, but the *compadre*’s motives are less obvious – unless he became at the same time a patron.

The key to analysis of *compadrazgo* systems is the person of the *compadre*, not his godchild-client. Such a thesis can be applied to many of the asymmetrical

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990 Ibid., 70.

991 Foster 1963, 1284.

992 Ibid.

993 “Ay, Señor, porque no rescates a tu pueblo?” Ibid., 1290.

relationships discussed in this book. The wealthier and more powerful partner is defined by the resources that he has at his disposal (his advantage in relation to the client) and the goals for which this arrangement is useful to him. The family cycle could be significant in a local environment where disproportions in wealth are not great and the family is cohesive and developed such that, along with its growth, what could be called its patronal potential also grows. By way of exaggeration, one might say that every client is a potential *compadre*-patron. However, such a case cannot be related to a situation where a ballot and voting booth, or (generally speaking) a higher standard of living, are involved.

Thus an entirely different picture emerges in the application of *campadrazgo* by the wealthy in the Philippines.<sup>994</sup> In conditions marked by instability after the overthrow of Ferdinand Marcos, various forms of self-defense – mainly those controlled by the landowners – *hacenderos* – experienced a revival. Private armies<sup>995</sup> had their own traditions in colonial times, but now – in various gradually legalized forms – they stood up against diverse threats: there were pro-Marcos partisans, communist militias, common bandits, and secret societies, with some acting under Christian slogans. In 1987 Corazón Aquino subordinated them – at least formally – to the army and police. In his analysis of the brutal and dramatic situation on the islands, Justus van der Kroef tied the existence of local defense (self-defense) organizations to a deep cultural tradition of mutual obligation, kinship, and the equally important *compadrazgo* bonds, all of which applies to the *hacenderos* themselves and to relations between them and their tenants.

Obligations accepted at a child's cradle or the baptismal font can, but do not necessarily have to, have a patronal character, depending on the social position of the partners. Sometimes they bond families of equal status; sometimes they consolidate the common interests of both landowners and tenants, though – most importantly – they re-establish certainty surrounding the rights of tenants. Their dominant function is to stabilize the social compact.

#### 4. Between the Hacienda and the Ballot Box

Research on clientelism owes a great deal to the Third World broadly conceived. When one makes use of the catalogs of the great libraries, when we type the appropriate keys on the keyboard – forming such words as “CLIENTAGE, POLITICAL” or “PATRONAGE, POLITICAL” – the computer screen fills with titles of books,

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994 Van der Kroef 1988, 17–24.

995 Van der Kroef writes about them always with the use of quotation marks, no doubt seeing in this a *contradictio in adiecto*.

articles and brochures on political regimes and economic oppression in Latin American countries by authors who conceive themselves as whistle-blowers.<sup>996</sup> Other terms also emerge that were transferred to Spain, and even to us in Poland in a Polonized version: *cacique*, *caciquismo* (Polish: *kacyk*), which defines “a type of local, informal politics in the Hispano-American area that involves partially arbitrary control by a relatively small association of individuals under one leader. A *cacicazgo* is a concrete instance of *caciquismo*.”<sup>997</sup> Another form of local dictatorship.

Though the right to vote and development of representative institutions are widely regarded as essential aspects of modern political freedoms, indeed necessary conditions for their very existence, they are not sufficient conditions. The close connection between the way politics functions and economic organization and the structure of business, etc., are presented in Richard Graham’s excellent monograph on Brazil in the second half of the nineteenth century.<sup>998</sup> His analysis of the electoral system and its functioning indicate that access to the ballot box came early and was broad. Under Emperor Pedro II (in the years 1840–1849) the franchise included almost all men (free men, of course) regardless of their social position and race.<sup>999</sup> Thirty years later half of those with the right to vote registered themselves on the electoral lists and most of them voted. Brazil led the world in this regard. However, as we know, those elections were fixed by the governing party. They served – in a mild or brutal manner – to mobilize votes for the great landowners in local elections, victory in which gave the patron influence in the capital. Interestingly, that mechanism did not suffer as a result of the introduction of direct elections (1881). Since the abolition of slavery threatened a loss of control over a large mass electorate, registration rules were tightened and the number of potential voters reduced; the scope of the theatrics surrounding elections, which threatened public order, was also reduced.

A controversial question remains open regarding the nature and intensity of conflict between businessmen from the cities and landowners (Graham argues that their interests merged). Whatever the case may be, among the principles they shared was loyalty toward one’s patrons and concern for one’s clients.<sup>1000</sup>

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996 A typical sentence: *El Clientelismo forma parte de la historia colombiana* (Leal Buitrago and Davila 1990, 35).

997 Friedrich 1965, 190.

998 Graham 1990.

999 *Ibid.*, 108 ff.

1000 *Ibid.*, 5.

## Chapter 12: The Clientele Today on a Global Scale<sup>1001</sup>

*One could argue that, in the politics of the future, patronal systems will play a greater role. It is important that people be made aware of this phenomenon and that it be the topic of broad discussion.*

Hans-Heinrich Nolte<sup>1002</sup>

One again we have a matter that is – one might say – timeless and multicultural: as in ancient times, the parties to the dyad are not just people but also governments/states. This would represent a deviation from many definitions of clientelistic relations if it were not for the characteristic and personalistic conception of this relationship: Rome’s clients were “allies and friends” of Rome, and today’s heads of state and government (presidents, prime ministers) emphasize the “personal” friendship they maintain between themselves even when that friendship is evidently “lop-sided.”

We have seen how clients of the *senatus populusque romani* – “*socii* and friends of the Roman people” – could be rulers. With reference to the ancient world, we do not dig deeply into – indeed, we usually do not even ask – the question of who carried out the function of client. If he was a ruler, then the problem did not exist because a ruler could not be divided. But when a *polis* was involved, was the client then a collective, a community? Patronage among high Roman officials carried out on the cities, provinces and allies of Rome tied those officials with local elites. Municipal notables were more often clients of Roman officials than they were pa-

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1001 I am unable to benefit from the latest work on a related topic, which is supposed to be published in October 2001. Translator’s note: That work did appear on schedule: Simona Piattoni, ed., *Clientelism, Interests, and Democratic Representation. The European Experience in Historical and Comparative Perspective* (Cambridge University Press: 2001).

1002 Nolte 1995, 58. The full sentence, which concludes the article and which addresses modern Germany, continues as follows: “[...] damit man einem Patron mit seiner Klientel auch präzise die Frage stellen kann, ob sie wirklich gute Politik gemacht haben – oder ob sie nicht mehr der knappen Ressourcen dafür verbraucht haben, als man für den erklärten Zweck billigerweise zugestehen kann.” One can transfer this hope to countries with a well-established parliamentary democracy or one with a federal/autonomous democracy (Switzerland), but in the predictable future not on a global scale.

trons on their own territory.<sup>1003</sup> Clientelistic relations influenced internal relations within a statelet or dependent society, but – according to the principle of personal contact – they involved above all relationships between local notables and a caretaker working on behalf of Rome or an official representing Roman power.

Despite the complicated structure tying a person with a collective, this classical and sanctified tradition allows us to use clientelistic terminology with reference to modern states. I will begin with what is perhaps the most exotic example, namely Tibet.

## 1. *Mchod-Yon*: Patronage and the Sovereignty of Tibet

The title of this section, which might seem strange to the reader, nicely reflects my own surprise with what I saw on the computer screen while checking the online catalogue at the British Library. I was struggling with the library's new system of ordering books, when the screen showed me this title: *Tibetan Nationalism (the Role of Patronage in the Accomplishment of a National Identity)*.<sup>1004</sup> This small and somewhat amateurishly published book addresses Tibet's tactics toward the constant threat posed by its neighbors. I present this case because it illustrates a particular and cultural aspect of clientelistic bonds that, amidst the throng of structural analogies, might otherwise escape the reader's attention.

In the eighth century Tibetan monks from the Sakya Monastery concluded an agreement with the Mongol Empire, which ruled China at the time. In Chinese imperial tradition, such an act represented the subordination, even the incorporation, of Tibet.<sup>1005</sup> But in Tibetan tradition the Mongol khans granted the Tibetan patriarch full spiritual and secular authority over his territory, in return for which he was to carry out the function of Imperial Preceptor. Such a relationship indicates precisely what the *mchod-yon* dyad means. According to Tibetan historians, Godan Chan – a grandson of Genghis Khan – sent to Kunga Gyaltsen, the Sakya monastery patriarch, an ultimatum stating that “we need a lama to advise my ignorant people on how to conduct themselves morally and spiritually.” In 1247 the

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1003 Badian 1958.

1004 Klieger 1992.

1005 Ibid., 23: “To the modern Chinese, this had been but a demonstration of the *submission* of Tibet to the Mongols, corresponding to Western ideas of separation of church and state, the assumption of inferiority by the recipient in a patron-client relationship, and the resignation of religious ideology to secular concerns. Tibet became part of China in the 13th century, by an *ex post facto* ascription of modern Chinese national identity upon Mongol khans.”



patriarch and khan met in a border area in Gansu, and five years later a protocol was established outlining an ideal compromise: “Khubilai would occupy a lower seat than his lama when taking his Buddhist initiation, whereas the khan would assume a higher throne in secular audiences.” The relationship between the two of them – the author of *A Short History of Tibet* writes – provides an example of a concept that characterizes Central Asia, namely of a patron and a priest in which temporal and spiritual powers provide mutual support. “It is an elastic and flexible idea and not to be rendered in the cut-and-dried terms of modern Western politics. There is no precise definition of the supremacy of one or the subordination of the other; and the practical meaning of the relationship can only be interpreted in the light of the facts of the moment.”<sup>1006</sup>

The decisive significance of these events was to be confirmed by future events, but Klieger evokes here a distant, European analogy: the Empire-Papacy. In relations with expansionist neighbors, such a patronal formula seemed – for the highland theocrats of Tibet – to be an ideal solution. Leaders made use of this tradition as early as the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in negotiations with the United Kingdom and Russia, because – in the era of colonial power expansion – threats to Tibet’s independence came from changed directions. Tibetans referred to *mchod-yon* in their effort to translate this traditional system of bilateral relations in the language of modern diplomacy. But the principle of reciprocity of services between patron and client, particularly when interpreted as a slight superiority of the clerical client, had no chance of success in the era of colonial imperialism.

The 1904 Convention Between Great Britain and Tibet turned Tibet effectively into a British protectorate. Article IX of the convention stated: “No such [foreign] power shall be permitted to intervene in Tibetan affairs.” Russia was by necessity inactive in this region, but in 1950 Chinese units moved into Lhasa. Eventually the Dalai Lama set up a regent and fled to India. He turned to British officials with these words: “I now look to you for protection, and I trust that the relations between the British government and Tibet will be that of a father to his children.”<sup>1007</sup> Soon Great Britain would lose its paternal status. The next part of the story is well known and has no connection with any concept of patronage.

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1006 Klieger 1992, 41–42. Klieger cites Hugh E. Richardson, *A Short History of Tibet* (New York: 1962), 42. However, I have found in Richardson 1984 (p. 33) information indicating that, in 1253, Kublai Khan appointed Phagpa, a nephew of Sakya Pandita, as his chaplain and entrusted him with authority over Tibet. In 1260, when Kublai became ruler of all the Mongols, Phagpa organized on his behalf the bureaucracy and tax system in Tibet.

1007 Klieger 1992, 73.

## 2. Clientelism as the Highest Stage of Imperialism

One cannot help but regard the Tibetan variant of clientelism as peculiar mainly because of the theocratic character of one its partners. Nonetheless it teaches us that patron-client systems can be interpreted in a number of ways, a fact that has not always clearly manifested itself in the material I have analyzed so far. It reminds us that the stability of such a dyad can be threatened by someone from the outside, though as a rule one might well argue that what is involved here is not replacement of a patron but rather the introduction of a kind of dependency that is more direct.

One might wonder what modern examples of dependency might qualify for membership in the same group as an ancient one; though it seems like such reflections would be futile, the fact is that the number of satellite states in modern history is not small: the Habsburgs and their Italian duchies (?); Savoy after the Peace of Cateau-Cambrésis (1559) maneuvering between two dynasties/patrons, namely the Houses of Habsburg and Valois (?); the Italian republics set up by revolutionary France (?); the duchies and kingdoms that Napoleon gave to, or created for, his family (?). Of course all of these examples were ephemeral, with the exception perhaps of Savoy, which continued to maneuver between competing powers. But how long could one regard it as a client?

Only in modern times, particularly as a result of the super power rivalry after the Second World War, does the great issue of clientelistic networks on a global scale fully emerge. Political scientist J. Galtung has proposed to define modern imperialism as an arrangement between elites of developed and backward countries.<sup>1008</sup> Galtung conceives developed countries as the “center,” and he calls backward countries “peripheral” (I decline to use the politically correct and optimistic phrase “developing” countries). Of course one is talking here about the center of power, about peripheries as a sphere that is distant (cut off) from that decision-making center, and thus about subjects, or the governed. Both terms refer to a theory of international economics that uses the concepts of “center” and “core” in reference to regions that dominate in terms of technology and trade.

Such an approach seems correct because it is particularly clear in the Third World that the state is treated like a business, or – in other words – that political power can be viewed as a source of profit; we have already seen this in the case of the Congo/Zaire.<sup>1009</sup> One can interpret Galtung’s concept in the spirit of radical “anti-imperialism;” in any case, its political tones are unmistakable, which I would

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1008 Galtung 1971.

1009 See section above entitled “Mobutu Sese Seko as *Le Roi Soleil*.”

argue is why this concept is rarely discussed or even ignored in the literature of political science.<sup>1010</sup>

Galtung believes – justifiably, I think – that there is permanent social conflict between the “periphery in the periphery” (the symbol being **pP**) and the “center in the periphery” (**cP**) – that is, the zone of power. But **cC** and **cP** (respectively, the elites of the dominant state and of the peripheral/dependent state) are connected by a certain community of interests, which is precisely what is of interest to us here, because one can interpret it as a kind of clientelistic relationship on a grand scale. One might add that the matter of a “certain community of interests” is complex for, even if data provided in the press is exaggerated, there is no doubt that a large portion of the resources transferred by the “First World” (which includes international institutions) to poor countries disappears into the pockets of Third World dictators and elites.<sup>1011</sup>

It is worth referring here to the above-mentioned distinction between modernization and development, which admittedly does not suit our understanding of the first of these terms, but which accurately highlights how foreign civilizational models are – quite commonly in this world (superficially) – adapted without corresponding economic growth.<sup>1012</sup> Such “modernization is the fruit of contact between rich regions and poor regions; although it may be to the mutual advantage of certain interests in both, it maintains the basic relation of superordination and subordination between them,” which could mean a dramatic rise in standard of living especially for those in the privileged classes. “In modernizing societies a *dependence elite* has a vested interest in continued subordination to foreign powerholders”; but the elites of a *developing* society are rather interested in a flexible connection with international markets on the basis of a diverse economy and greater autonomy. Though they have conflicting interests, both types of elites are able to co-exist – and compete with each other – in the same time and place. But the first group (the “dependence elite,” as the Schneiders call it) has the upper hand. Development impulses have no chance of success if local intellectuals, free professionals and businessmen are loyal clients of the propertied classes – assur-

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1010 Such is the case with Gonzalez 1972; Shoemaker and Spanier 1984; Gasiorowski 1991; and *Superpowers and Client States* 1991. Compare Badié 1992, who nonetheless omits an element in Galtung’s model that is especially important, namely **pP** (see below).

1011 It is also an open secret that many foundations spend a large part of the funds provided by Western charitable institutions to help people in “developing countries” to cover administrative and travel costs.

1012 Schneider and Schneider 1976, 3–4. See the chapter above entitled “The Clientele and Political Parties.”

edly in the metropolis – who are keenly interested in consolidating the system of dependence. I would argue that such reasoning is better applied to post-colonial states and many regions of Latin America than to Sicily, in connection with which it was developed.<sup>1013</sup>

Though such an argument sounds convincing to me, one could make other arguments. For example, the American Mark J. Gasiorowski, in the theoretical introduction to his monograph on Iranian-American relations, emphasizes the client relationship in international relations as a mutually beneficial negotiated result. This relationship involves “reciprocal exchanges of goods and services which enhance their mutual security and which cannot be easily obtained from other sources.” For the patron, the political stability of the client is of great significance.<sup>1014</sup> The contrast between the theoretical positions taken by Gasiorowski and those presented above is clear, including in terms of terminology. The state-society dyad, which for Galtung represented a condition marked by a constant conflict of interests, is something that Gasiorowski defined as the “degree of [state] autonomy” – by which he understands the state’s independence from society (that is, a dictatorship; what a euphemism!). But the case of the Iranian Empire was so glaring that Gasiorowski’s conclusion here does not depart too far from Galtung’s reasoning, though he uses a specific and lofty political vocabulary that blurs internal conflict and a corresponding syntax:

The Iranian State’s high degree of autonomy in the 1960s and 1970s enabled it to operate without the kind of societal input that is often provided by such mechanisms as legitimate political parties, popularly elected legislatures, a free press, and local-level political activity.<sup>1015</sup>

In the postwar years, after the end of the allied occupation (by both Soviet and American forces), and after the period led by the communist Tudeh Party and the National Front (the times of Mohammad Mosaddegh and his prime ministership), the “rise of a highly autonomous state” interrupted the construction and political dominance of a middle class. State policies turned out to be contrary to the social interest, and the clientelistic connection with the United States, which deepened the state’s autonomy, contributed to the outbreak of revolution in 1977–1979.<sup>1016</sup>

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1013 On the other hand, the authors cited here understand colonialism (the colonial economy) differently; they write about “the early colonial period (during which Sicily exported wheat and animal products) and a later neocolonial period (during which manpower is the principal energy loss)” *Ibid.*, p. X ff.

1014 Gasiorowski 1991, 2–3.

1015 *Ibid.*, 197–198.

1016 *Ibid.*, 223.

“State autonomy” – I reiterate – is really just dictatorship, the issue being the sharp contrast between the rulers and the ruled, or in other words: the division of national wealth as determined by the level of participation in the apparatus of political power. The case of Iran is not inconsistent with the above-cited definition of international clientelistic relations because that definition emphasizes not the international, but the inter-governmental, character of the arrangement. Indirectly we reach conclusions that are not incompatible with the theory put forward by Galtung.

So let us have a look at a version of this schema that is extremely simplified but accentuates – and does not play down – conflicts, and that can be applied to two semi-colonial systems from the postwar era – the Soviet and American systems.<sup>1017</sup> The issue is somewhat complicated by yet another factor: the existence of international political and charitable institutions financed by highly developed countries. According to Galtung, such institutions serve to redistribute resources that are officially allocated for **pP**. Although a portion of these resources are taken over by the central and local authorities in poor countries (**cP**), such aid helps – despite everything – to bring an end to their exploitation by the elites of both types of countries (**cP** and **cC**). It seems that a ruling group’s hold on power in backward countries is based on such assistance: economic aid – provided by international organs, charitable organizations, and certain wealthy countries – temporarily relieves supply crises in Third World countries.<sup>1018</sup> But those who mainly – and most directly – benefit from such aid are groups and individuals in positions of power (**cP**). We notice, however, that Galtung seems to have forgotten – or perhaps he intentionally avoids – the fact that a client-state may have a democratic system or that a majority of its society might approve of the protection provided by a great power. The latter situation was surely what countries experienced that, without American assistance, were threatened by an external enemy or by internal chaos, examples being Greece in the years 1945–1948 and South Korea in 1950.

After the Second World War, and especially after 1960, when the number of countries – truly sovereign or only formally sovereign – began to soar, so-called foreign aid provided by the great powers and its significance as a means of gaining influence on the international stage (and in particular countries) grew enormously. What kind of influence it turned out to be – economic, cultural, or strictly political – is of secondary importance here.

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1017 I use the past tense when we talk about the USSR, even though the problem of clientelistic relations on an international scale has not lost its currency since the fall of the communist regime in Russia.

1018 Here I use the expression “Third World” in the broadest possible sense.

Analyzing the period 1954–1971, Gasiorowski defined the two clientelistic systems as follows<sup>1019</sup>:

*Table 4. The intensity of bonds between the USA and the USSR and countries dependent on them*

<b>Intensity of contact</b>	<b>USA</b>	<b>USSR</b>
Strong	Guatemala, Nicaragua, Panama, Cambodia, Iran, Indonesia, South Vietnam, Taiwan	Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Cuba, Mongolia, North Vietnam
Medium	Greece, Turkey, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Haiti, Honduras, Paraguay, Liberia, Zaire, Israel, Jordan, Tunisia	Guinea, Somalia, Egypt, Syria, Afghanistan, North Korea
Weak	Argentina, Chile, Peru, Ethiopia, Japan	Mali, South Yemen

The above classification of dependent states is not indisputable; no doubt changes would need to be made in light of rising tensions in the Middle East as of the late 1960s and the need to react to whatever moves were made by an opponent.<sup>1020</sup> Setting aside the political history of the last quarter of the twentieth century, I want only to point out the different ways in which the two researchers interpret the problem at hand.

Here is Gasiorowski's thesis:

An international clientelistic relationship is a mutually beneficial, security-oriented relationship between the governments of two countries that differ greatly in size, wealth, and power. Clientelistic relationships differ substantially in their specifics, but all involve reciprocal exchanges of goods and services which enhance their mutual security and which cannot be easily obtained from other sources.<sup>1021</sup>

The "clientelistic instruments" are advice, training, supplies of weapons and equipment for the client, whose stability is of essential importance to the patron. Gasiorowski – I want to remind the reader – calls the issue highlighted by Galtung (and de-

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1019 Gasiorowski 1991, 27.

1020 Data in Table 4 is from the year 1980.

1021 Gasiorowski 1991, 2

veloped by Callaghy), namely the state-society juxtaposition, a “high degree of [state] autonomy.”<sup>1022</sup> Gasiorowski pushes his political neutrality to such an extent that he claims that this high degree of state autonomy enabled Iran to function without legal political parties, elected legislatures, a free press and political activity on the local level.<sup>1023</sup> It is interesting that, in Gasiorowski’s view, the state’s autonomy is of primary importance; it is a kind of independent entity, while the manifestations of dictatorship are, in his opinion, secondary. Thus the emergence of this “highly autonomous” state interrupted the government of Prime Minister Mosaddegh (1951–1953), who based his rule on the emerging modern middle class (the Tudeh Party and the National Front). In the end, Gasiorowski states that the USA-Iran “client relationship” deepened Iran’s autonomy (with regard to its own society) and facilitated the outbreak of the 1977–1979 revolution.<sup>1024</sup> That having been said, Gasiorowski seems not to be interested in the connection between the “client relationship” and Mosaddegh’s sudden fall.

Gasiorowski neither quotes Galtung nor mentions him in his bibliography.

I have addressed these contrasting interpretations mainly because it has a bearing on the political aspect of our analysis of patron-client relations. I have already mentioned the reluctance of Marxist scholars (and those who were just flirting with Marxism) in this regard. The area of contemporary international relations seems to indicate that – at least in this field of study – such reluctance is not justified.

Another interpretation is worth mentioning. Like Gasiorowski, Christopher C. Shoemaker and John Spinner have examined the patron-client relationship as viewed from the level of governments.<sup>1025</sup> These authors emphasize “bargaining” over the conditions of the relationships: the patron and client are partners, who attempt to “extract from the other valuable concessions at minimal cost.”<sup>1026</sup> The case

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1022 Ibid., 197.

1023 The author admits that state policies were not beneficial to society.

1024 Ibid., 223.

1025 C. C. Shoemaker, J. Spinner, 1984; in their expanded typology of interstate clientelistic relations (Chapter I, pp. 27–44), the authors distinguish “patron prevalence” from a “patron-centric relationship.” The latter means “patron goals of ideological conformity,” but while the patron’s first goal is the client’s international solidarity (that is, in simple language, his full loyalty), the patron “will be more willing to tolerate client independence in its own internal affairs” (p. 30).

1026 Ibid., p. 24; the authors analyze the terms of the agreement between the USSR and Egypt; this is an extremely interesting case if only because it was the client who broke off the agreement. The mathematical analogy presented by the two authors looks as follows:  $V_p = 1/C_p = (G_p) \times (F_c)$ , where  $V_p$  is the value of the relationship for the

of Iran was analogous, and while Iran's breaking-off of relations with the patron was the result of revolution in the state-client, in Egypt it was the ruling group that changed its perspective. In both cases the patron was caught off guard.<sup>1027</sup>

The interstate patronage-clientele phenomenon grew dramatically after the Second World War, in particular through the creation the "people's democracies" in Central and Eastern Europe and the broader system in which they existed. Having inherited this system after Stalin's death, Nikita Khrushchev and his successors extended its reach much further geopolitically. In the era of ballistic missiles, they had a broader field for maneuver than had Stalin, who before 1939 tried to exploit only one situation far beyond his borders, namely the Spanish Civil War.

Since I mentioned Spain before World War II, it is worth recalling the wider situation in 1939/1940. In the exceptional circumstances that prevailed in the first few months of that two-year period, the USSR tried to gain control of the Baltic countries in two stages. In the first stage it forced governments there to make concessions (above all to let the Soviet Union set up Red Army bases on their territory); in the second stage it planted collaborators there and carried out rigged elections. We cannot apply Galtung's schema to this case. But in 1945 the Allied victory over Germany and Japan allowed the Soviets to create a Galtung-like system of forced alliances based on the common interests of (unequal) **cC** and **cP** partners – that is, the so-called "*demoludy*," or people's democracies. These "*demoludy*" provided an extreme case because rulers in the satellite countries ran the risk of being brutally disgraced by the **cC** (the Kremlin), as evidenced by the great political trials of that time (we must also remember that residents of the Kremlin were themselves often under threat). But there is no doubt that a community of interests existed between the centers of the satellite state and the main Center – interests that were both political and (ad hoc) material.

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patron;  $G_p$  is the patron's goal; and  $F_c$  is the ability of the client to achieve the patron's goals. When  $G_p$  is large (especially when it involves strategic goals), even a small  $F_c$  is of great value for  $V_p$ , and, at the same time, a correspondingly small  $C_p$ . Ibid., 25, footnote 4.

1027 "U.S. policy makers, not fully understanding the depth of Iran's resentment of its client status, were caught repeatedly off guard by Iran's actions, including the seizure of the hostages." Ibid. One might well think that knowledge of the history of clientelistic relations would be useful to great power diplomats and politicians, but it would be utopian to think that the State Department would introduce an appropriate training program.



There is no need here to expand upon the great power-patrons' superiority over the countries dependent on them. What is more interesting are the rules of the game played by clients in the two systems. The USSR, which was in a permanent subsistence crisis,<sup>1028</sup> neither intended nor was able to supply its satellites with what these societies needed – food, capital and effective economic advice. It supplied them with whatever resources it had its disposal that strengthened its strategic presence, especially armaments. Moreover, it organized at its own cost the training of personnel (military, political and ideological). The balance of this exchange of goods was usually positive for the satellite state – that is, mainly for the cP – given that it would be difficult to point to a single case where this relationship helped increase the welfare of a satellite country's population. It is characteristic that the USSR did not develop systems of social care and medical services in the Third World countries dependent on the Soviet Union. Economic and especially military considerations demanded the creation of "joint enterprises" to exploit the client's strategic resources, such as uranium ore or other strategic metals, and to use the satellite country's technological potential for the development of industry inside the USSR.

The Western powers had similar problems, especially strategic ones, but since they functioned in a market economy and parliamentary democracy, they usually employed different methods. But not always. The fate of the Iranian prime minister, Mosaddegh, or the Chilean leader Salvador Allende, both of whom were overthrown with the help of the CIA, shows that even a justified Cold War is not always a fair game. The political fates of countries in Central America show that the issue is extremely complicated. Much can also be said about France's patronal strategy toward its former colonies, especially to the political elites to whom the French handed over power and whom they sometimes support with their prestige and even through military intervention.<sup>1029</sup> That having been said, I would like to warn the reader against interpreting these relations in a one-sided, "clientelistic" way. During the Cold War, the West intervened mainly when it was afraid of growing Soviet influence in the Third World; once this danger receded, many

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1028 I used the term "crisis" by way of analogy with the pre-industrial *crises de subsistance*, though because it was, in the Soviet system, a constant and – as it were – systemic problem, it is difficult to call it a crisis *sensu stricto*.

1029 Such support cannot be unconditional: even with handfuls of sapphires (for President Giscard d'Estaing), "Emperor" Bokassa did not receive permanent support after he ignored the norms of Western decency and drew the attention of the world press onto himself.

other motives, including the pressure of world public opinion, played an equally strong role as did traditional clientelistic relations.

What is most interesting in this context is the role of the **cP** – that is, the ruling circles in the satellite (or generally poorer and dependent) country. The experiences of the second half of the twentieth century indicate that, when tensions are high between the great powers, a dictator or oligarch in a satellite country may aspire to the role of “the tail wagging the dog” (if I may employ an English-language expression). He will no doubt try to negotiate conditions, sometimes having in mind mainly the ruling group, sometimes also those whom he rules, in order to improve the internal situation. The patron-great power cannot lose face (not to mention jeopardize strategic interests) and thus must make concessions. Within just such a framework one can interpret Soviet-Cuban relations. But however close relations between the power elites of the two states of a dyad are, they are always complex. If conditions are favorable – in the case of Soviet clients, geographical distance played an important role – the rulers of a client country could take bold risks, which led to a kind of interdependence of the two partners.

To abandon a client in need is often risky not only in terms of the patron’s prestige but also (quite concretely and in the short-run) in terms of its chances of winning over new satellites, which means that even recalcitrant satellites must be helped. It is not always possible to remove an inconvenient client (a so-called **cP**) and replace it with a more obedient one; its “disloyalty” must be taken into account and he must be granted a certain margin of freedom. I have used quotation marks because that term reflects the patron’s point of view. The *raison d’état* (whatever that means in such a relationship; the interests of the ruling group) makes it necessary for the client to look after its own interests, which sometimes means it must find a new patron. In Cold War conditions, in which the two world powers lived in a state of coexistence, it was sometimes possible for a client to choose between them. But even when no such option existed, the boundaries of freedom were sometimes wide.

This leads me once again to the tragedy that was the war in Vietnam. Successive dictators of South Vietnam did not lose sight of these problems even at the dramatic moment of invasion from the North. When the Kennedy administration was highly dissatisfied with the despotic rule of the Ngo Dinh family, aid was cut off, though not for long. This is how David Bell, head of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), explained the situation, to Kennedy’s great surprise: “It’s an automatic policy. We do it whenever we have differences with a

client government.”<sup>1030</sup> No matter who sits in the Oval Office, this mechanism is still in operation, currently in a fully open way.<sup>1031</sup>

The intricacies of clientelistic systems appear to have been particularly strong in relations between Washington and Saigon. We have already discussed relations among the Americans themselves.<sup>1032</sup> What posed a greater danger was the fact that, in defending themselves against the North, commanders of the Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN) seemed to be thinking above all within the confines of their own political game, around which they gathered armed “followings.”<sup>1033</sup> In their journals American officials, who were usually advisors to Vietnamese unit commanders at various levels, expressed their frustration, even despair, regarding this situation.

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1030 Halberstam 1993, 283. It is worth presenting the context as described by this well-informed author: “... David Bell [...] who was not regularly a high-level player, said rather casually that there was no point in talking about cutting off commodity aid [for South Vietnam], he had already cut it off. ‘You’ve done what?’ said a startled President of the United States. ‘Cut off commodity aid.’ Bell answered. ‘Who the hell told you to do that?’, asked the President, since this was no small action; it could easily bring down a government. ‘No one,’ said Bell. ‘It’s an automatic policy. We do it whenever we have differences with a client government.’ And so the President sat there shaking his head, looking at Bell and saying, ‘My God, do you know what you’ve done?’” Some people have thought that Bell must have gotten approval from someone in the State Department.

1031 The following is contained in an article from the *International Herald Tribune*, 22 November 2000: “U.S. Cools to Independent Montenegro,” by John Lancaster, Washington Post Service: “On a visit last month to the Montenegrin capital, Podgorica, the top U.S. envoy to the Balkans, James O’Brien, made it clear to Mr. Djukanovic that continued delivery of U.S. aid – to reach \$89 million this year – depended on his willingness to avoid ‘unilateral’ steps to break away from Serbia, a senior official said.” These two cases of a patron’s interference in the sphere of international relations are, however, not comparable: with regard to Djukanovic the Americans were carrying out the United Nations policy; there was no threat of a “domino effect” – that is, of the (re-)communization of the entire region – there was only the fear of a new stage of instability. What has remained is the routine of political pressure. However, the arguments put forward by the quasi-patron are understandable. Why would the United States finance another state’s policy if it thinks that this policy runs contrary to political stability in the region?

1032 See the above interlude entitled “The Best and the Brightest.”

1033 “[...] himself, Tran Van Don and Tran Van Kim, all respected and none of them commanding troops because they had followings of their own, and were thus considered dangerous by Nhu.” Halberstam 1993, 287.

We can also interpret in clientelist categories the rivalry between two communist powers in the Third World, namely between the USSR and China, even though these categories are quite different. Enver Hoxha in Albania switched patrons in perhaps the most spectacular way, but Kim Il-sung, who was created and trained by the Soviet intelligence services, also knew how to play to his advantage the conflict developing around and above him between the neighboring powers.

Fidel Castro's Cuba forces us to ask the question: what are such clients' tasks on an international, or rather global, scale. The overthrow of Batista's dictatorship in Cuba did not settle the matter given that Castro was not at first Moscow's man. As is well known, Cuba's role in the Cold War was determined by the attitude of the United States, which had lost a satellite and which, through its hostility to the new and socially radical regime on the island, pushed Fidel into the arms of Nikita Khrushchev. What remains a matter of a scholarly and political debate is the balance of the new relationship. Economically, this Caribbean alliance turned out to be unusually costly for the patron, even though the European satellite countries were forced to participate in the assistance program for the regime in Cuba (because leaders view political advantage in such participation as outweighing the financial loss). Cuba, in turn, took part in various armed conflicts in the Third World – in Latin America and Africa – where direct intervention would have been inconvenient or even impossible for the Soviets, for example in Angola and Ethiopia. Fidel Castro also took initiatives himself which would not have been tolerated had he been a less influential and independent client. He earned a solid political position for himself and great personal prestige on a world scale, drawing strength from widespread anti-Americanism. The Castro regime became a symbol of a small state challenging Big Brother. He was assisted by a variety of myths which have sparked the imagination of various groups around the world: the myth of Che Guevara (the lone guerilla fighter), the failed Bay of Pigs invasion, which – for some – discredited the U.S. government because of its ineptness and – for others – was just another glaring example of “Yankee imperialism.”

The rivalry for clients in Latin America, which until recently was quite intense, allows us to see the different ways in which patrons from the two opposing systems acted. But only one of them, namely the United States, has an abundance of non-military resources at its disposal: public and private capital and a group of people interested in philanthropic activity.

Applying to these circumstances (and to our contemporary situation) Charles Tilly's terminology, one could define the USSR as a typically coercion-intensive

state and the USA as a capital-intensive one,<sup>1034</sup> though none of that means that the United States does not use, or even avoids using, coercion. At the same time, one would have to take into account world opinion, not only within the United Nations. The United States is capable and even prone to establish ties with its clients by other means. Particularly in Latin America (the “banana republics”) the state apparatus works alongside huge enterprises that are equipped with resources comparable to those held by the state with which they are associated. The ideological, political and propaganda considerations of Western societies tell them to support the development of democratic structures, though how to accomplish such a task is not at all obvious given the weakness of democracy and the opaque situation in many of these unstable countries. It is easy to underestimate the changes that have taken place in the last half-century, in particular with regard to the role played by increasingly assertive journalists and newspaper editors and to the pressure (often mercurial) of public opinion, an indication of which is the case of Allende and Pinochet in Chile.

Different though their intentions were, the two superpowers-patrons (one democratic and one communist) backed client-dictators on a global scale in an attempt to ensure the stability of their dependent regimes as long as they remained certain of the loyalty of the local group in power and of the general profitability of the relationship. In the Third World the dictatorship-democracy alternative is usually rarer than a dictator-dictator rivalry. Liberal opinion does not always have a choice. The fate of Ghana, Liberia, the Congo, Nigeria and the Ivory Coast – to limit ourselves to this region – proves this clearly.

The case of the Romanian communist dictator Nicolae Ceaușescu indicates that yet another variant is possible.

### **3. The Dictator as Rebellious Client**

This satellite-state of the USSR, a direct neighbor of Big Brother surrounded by rather unfriendly vassal states (with which Romania had ethnic conflicts and long-standing territorial disputes), dared to disobey its patron. First, Romania under Ceaușescu demonstrated its independence: in the summer of 1968 it broke ranks with those joining the collective and spectacular condemnation (and then suppression) of a disobedient client, namely Czechoslovakia. Secondly, instead of the cult of the patron – the cult of the Soviet Union as a whole and that of the person of Leonid Brezhnev, which was binding on all Soviet satellites – Romania introduced an inten-

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1034 Tilly 1990.

sive cult of Ceaușescu (“the Genius of the Carpathians”) and demanded constant and mandatory delight with his actions as leader. These measures heightened the leader’s internal and especially international prestige, though the bombastic style of Ceaușescu’s propaganda eclipsed the imagination of foreign satirists (that having been said, one should not underestimate the cult of Kim Il-sung in the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea), all of which attracted a certain amount of material support from the West, which was interested in the USSR’s rebellious client. In the end, this support found its way into the hands of the ruling group; it did not lead to economic growth, and it did not cure what ailed the broader communist system.

We have already discussed the fact that the model proposed by Galtung also takes into account international institutions. Let us view the matter more broadly: given the existence of some 150 countries in the world that are closely linked economically, politically and culturally, and in light of businesses and corporations whose interests stretch across the territories of many countries and even across the entire globe, patron-client relations can now be much more complex than ever before. The new phenomenon here is the presence of international institutions, usually dominated by the richest countries. Oversight of the financial assistance they provide for charity or development is usually weak, which means that a large part of these funds goes straight into the pockets of those who rule these countries; using Galtung’s schema, it enriches **cP**.

But life, including international relations and the world economy, is often more complicated than schemas put forth to describe patron-client systems. Where in such schemes are we to place North Korea, whose dictator today is playing a game with Russia, America and China that is much more complex than the one played by Kim Il-sung?<sup>1035</sup> The North Korean dictator and his regime have a double stake: on the one hand, the weapons of mass destruction (ballistic missiles, nuclear and biological weapons) that he might possess and, on the other hand, the starvation of his subjects (**pP**). In this situation, the younger Kim may be both useful and dangerous, which affords him great bargaining power. He is thought to be unreliable, which paradoxically increases his power. In July 2000 he allowed President Putin to claim at the G8 summit in Okinawa that he had been successful in taming an unreliable partner (which made the Russian president more predictable for his Western partners).<sup>1036</sup> Soon afterwards the Korean gave Madeleine Albright the opportunity to achieve some success in talks that she badly needed after yet another breakdown in Israeli-Palestinian negotiations at Camp David. It is a riddle how differences between the **cP** and the **pP** will be settled in North Korea – in

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1035 Goncharov et al. 1994. I am writing this text in the year 2000.

1036 I draw a distinction here between “unreliable” and “unpredictable.”

other words, what people outside of the military and the nomenklatura will get out of this. One can only guess at what kind of relations will emerge if the mines are ever cleared and the barbed wire taken down from the 38th parallel. The fall of the Berlin Wall has removed such questions from the realm of political fiction.

Another case that is important in terms of world politics and economics – and one that complicates Galtung’s model – involves the family of former Russian president Boris Yeltsin and the growth of big business in Russia. It would be absurd to regard that country as a client of the United States or of the Group of 7 (G7), but the peculiar power structure that makes up the post-communist Russian state deserves attention in several respects in our current context of global clientelistic relationships. The method by which state power is interpreted as a kind of business, with all its logical consequences (one like I proposed in another work on the old Polish *Rzeczpospolita*<sup>1037</sup>), might be useful here as well. There is no doubt (especially after the recent findings of Swiss prosecutors) that there has been misappropriation of funds and resources on a massive scale both by the “oligarchs” (as the world press calls them) and by high state officials and their relatives (e.g. the family of President Yeltsin). But the fact is that those millions of dollars came largely from loans given by Western countries and international institutions – such, in any case, are the conclusions drawn from the investigation conducted by Swiss authorities. No one has given a solid estimate of how much Western financial support has been wasted in this way, but whatever the amount, it did not go to raising living standards for the common people or to the modernization (increased efficiency) of the Russian economy.<sup>1038</sup> The misappropriation of billions of dollars by leaders of even the most impoverished of countries no longer surprises (or even interests) anyone. We are overwhelmed by press reports about the billions that make up the estimated wealth of Tshombe and Mobutu in the Congo, Imelda Marcos of the Philippines, and Suharto of Indonesia. They find counterparts in dictators of small countries, who – in whatever ways possible – squeeze out great sums of money destined for deposit in secret Swiss bank accounts.

The great transformations of the late twentieth century – decolonization in Asia and Africa and de-communization mainly in Europe – placed the issue of dependency systems into a new political situation. What changed in terms of the forms of dependency? We have already talked about post-colonial relationships; how did clienteles function after the fall of communism?

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1037 Mączak 1989. See also above chapter entitled “The Old-Poland Clientele.”

1038 This text was written in the year 2000. I avoid here treatment of the broader aspects of the situation in Russia, like the rise of a legal market economy, to which the influx of resources undoubtedly has given new life.





## Chapter 13: Sketches of the Present Day: Clienteles after Communism

*In history, unlike biology, one must not ask too much of roots. They cannot explain everything. It is enough to understand how deep they go and what they have contributed.*

Moses Finley<sup>1039</sup>

This chapter, more than any of the others in this book, has the character of an essay, a set of reflections. I have not attempted to gather material that is by any stretch of the imagination “complete”; I base my comments mainly on press clippings, especially from the Polish daily *Gazeta Wyborcza*, articles which have given me a great deal of food for thought.<sup>1040</sup>

The media is constantly bringing us more information on this subject. The pace of political change in recent decades has opened up new possibilities for the development of informal forms of power, often representing a leap back into the past. This era is an open one, there is a constant flow of information. Which is why this chapter has a somewhat different character, one that highlights my personal doubts and raises questions.

### 1. Patrons and Clients in Poland after the PRL

*The fall of communism did not automatically eliminate clientelistic systems.*

Jacek Tarkowski<sup>1041</sup>

Once again, in a new context, it is appropriate to return to Polish issues. More than a decade has passed since the fall of the totalitarian systems of “real socialism,” and there is no doubt that, even though that system in Poland is now a thing of the past, some of its structures remain – social structures and thought structures. Jacek Tarkowski’s opinion, cited above, sounds today a bit too careful. And – if we truly intend to evaluate it – too optimistic. In the popular vocabulary used by critics of “real socialism” and methods used to eliminate it, the word “nomenklatura” has become common, by which is meant – almost

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1039 Finley 1968, “The Year One,” conclusion.

1040 Use of the internet has proven to be only moderately helpful; the keywords “patron” and “client” do not come up often.

1041 Tarkowski 1994, 58.

symbolically – the persistence of bonds between members of the old ruling apparatus. But what bonds? I tend to think that what is involved here are many horizontal arrangements, something similar to *kumoterstwo*/cronyism. What is more, one might argue that the systemic transformation since 1989, especially in its political-economic aspects, has benefited those in the economic apparatus more than it did those in the party apparatus. The latter was once the dominant group, at least formally, but often also in fact. The transformation deprived party officials of their *raison d'être*, and though (perhaps because) directors of various state enterprises in industry and trade, bank directors, and even presidents of large (pseudo-) housing cooperatives, were not as famous as their colleagues “from the apparatus,” they found themselves after 1989 in a most favorable position to benefit from “nomenklatural privatization” and the opportunity to set up new and fully private companies. Of course the above division is not entirely clear-cut: “real socialist” power elites were entangled in a complicated structure of arrangements. “Party,” “administration,” and “economy” were inseparable in terms of relationships that were as much personal as ideological. Biographical material leaves much to be desired, though without doubt it is possible to research statistically how shifts in personnel happened in reality. In the end, one might suppose – although such a thing cannot be tested – that during these times of storm and stress a kind of role reversal has taken place, one in which the director of an enterprise, the erstwhile executor of orders handed down from above (from, say, a party committee) now finds himself in the most auspicious situation of being able to offer assistance to his former boss.<sup>1042</sup>

The sphere in which clientelism has functioned in this era of transition from (“real”) socialism to capitalism appears to be unlimited and particularly colorful. The ancien régime of the PRL opened up broad fields of opportunity for clientelistic relationships on many levels. Jacek Tarkowski has discussed this issue; indeed, he considers it the old system’s “bread and butter.”<sup>1043</sup> But the fact is that – contrary to the situation in the pre-partition *Rzeczpospolita* – various types of dependency co-existed. Academics, oppositionist journalists, and the so-called man on the street perceived and criticized the “feudal” – or rather quasi-feudal – structure of the ruling group. There is no doubt that, after 1989, that situation changed in ways

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1042 One thing that came to mind clearly, though from a distant time, was a comparison with the reversal of a patron-client agreement between two participants in the English Revolution of the middle of the seventeenth century. In this case, the client, who during the civil war was “Number Two” in the Puritan camp, thus became protector of his pre-revolutionary provincial patron. Hutchinson 1973, 53.

1043 Tarkowski 1994.

that were far-reaching, even fundamental. I write “fundamental” because several macro-phenomena disappeared: the clientelistic relations between the state (and the ruling class)<sup>1044</sup> and Big Brother; the feudal-like nomenclatura; market shortages, which made up the foundation of mass relationships of dependency on a micro-scale. That having been said, the clientelistic relationship is persistent; it very easily rejuvenates itself and reappears in various forms.

Anyone who is interested could track these issues in the Polish press, though of course they are not served up in a direct way. In any case, sociological terminology often makes its way into the press and politics to increase dramatic effect or to finish off one’s political opponent with a powerful word. Below I quote from (and discuss) fragments from the press, mostly from *Gazeta Wyborcza*, though I proclaim no aspiration to paint a complete picture. What I want to do is point out how these issues manifest themselves in the press and political debate.

Near the beginning of this book I quoted Tadeusz Mazowiecki and his views on the durability of clientelistic systems. In that same year of 1995 (an election year) Jerzy Chłopecki, while analyzing Lech Wałęsa and Aleksander Kwaśniewski as political leaders, described the issues that Wałęsa had with his advisors:<sup>1045</sup>

The plebeian mentality is marked by a peculiar understanding of loyalty, one that identifies loyalty with subordination. The traditional folk model of family is based on a hierarchy of bonds of subordination that are buttressed by the principle of obedience.<sup>1046</sup> There is no place here for partnership, which would allow for the possibility of differences of opinion. The son should not have an opinion that differs from his father’s. This involves not just internal family relations, but also all relations among people. This model has space for faithful service in the patron’s shadow, but there is no space for loyal, effective advice. While most intellectuals (there are exceptions) do not like it when indisputable loyalty is required of them, the plebeian patron views every attempt at discussion as a sign of arrogance and betrayal.

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1044 As much as possible I avoid expressions like “power elite” or “ruling elite” because the word “elite” has positive connotations, and – quite apart from the author’s political views – the results of public opinion research (ultimately censored) in the last two decades of the PRL indicate that a high position in the party-government apparatus was not highly regarded. Parents with high positions in the party did not place their children in the party apparatus, but rather searched out positions in diplomacy and economics. Was this a premonition or fear of accusations that they were building a dynasty?

1045 J. Chłopecki, “Funkcjonariusz i trybun,” *Gazeta Wyborcza* (hereafter cited as *GW*), 18/19 November 1995, 19.

1046 For the Tarkowskis’ observations on the subject of amoral familism during the breakup of “real socialism” in Poland, see Tarkowski and Tarkowska, 1990.

In the summer of that same year Piotr Pacewicz discussed these issues in different tones:

Wachowski's position<sup>1047</sup> depended entirely on his personal connection with Wałęsa. He represented no group or even community. Everything he did affected both the president and himself.

Wachowski built around himself informal relationships that remained outside of public view. He surrounded himself with people who had a lot of money. He enjoyed meeting with generals. In the end it bore fruit in the "*akcja podpisów na rozkaz*" for Wałęsa. In polls Wachowski often led the list of most unpopular politicians.

He is going away like favorites always go away: believing until the very end that he will suddenly be saved.

Sometimes favorites take revenge, and maybe Wachowski too will tell journalists some juicy story.

He is going away, but he will continue to poison public life. The demoralizing observation will remain stuck in our memory that what counts in politics is not the support of voters, not competence, not even the people's affection, but rather contacts and relationships. And that one can play politics exclusively for one's own benefit.<sup>1048</sup>

Another manifestation of clientelism is a matter that we touched upon in connection with times long past, namely pressure applied on voters, which was conspicuous – even brutal – during the PRL, though in those days authorities were concerned mostly with forcing voters to make symbolic gestures and, in the PRL's last days, with showing opponents (and more apprehensive and potential oppositionists) that the regime could do anything it wanted with the mass of voters. Beginning in 1989 the votes were real. According to *Gazeta Wyborcza*,<sup>1049</sup> a former parliamentarian from the

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1047 Translator's note: Professor Mączak is referring here to Mieczysław Wachowski, a close friend of President Lech Wałęsa and, in 1990–1995, the president's chief of staff.

1048 *GW*, 26/27 July 1995.

1049 G. Lubińska (Kraków), "Sądecka załoga wyborcza," *GW*, 21 September 1993. The case fits more general application in statements made by John Robert Meyer on the subject of countries that have emerged from communist domination: "Often in these countries the atmosphere of clientelism is very much alive – citizens believe that state firms, especially large firms, guarantee jobs." Here the patron is the head of a state company (e.g. a single-person operation under the state treasury), a local activist with influence in the government or "somewhere high up," or the company itself: someone or something appears to ensure employment. "Demonopolizacja głupcze!" a conversation with John R. Meyer, economist and lecturer at Yale and Harvard, *Wprost*, 12 August 2001, 20. R. A. Ziemkiewicz ("Demokracja ludowa," *ibid.*, 31) writes about the alternatives that Poland faces: democracy or "post-enslavement

PZPR and (in 1993) a candidate on the PSL list,<sup>1050</sup> a man who headed up a joint-stock company in Kraków called PBS Budostal (with 1,400 employees), brought into the city, on the day of elections to the Sejm and Senate, several hundred employees from the Sądeckie region (Krościenko, Szczawnica) with documents allowing them to cast their votes outside of their places of residence. Some of them were aggressive toward the journalist (“Jewess!” and “Down with Jews!”), “but,” she wrote, “privately some of them told me that the boss-parliamentarian would not allow the company to die.”

Here we see employees whose relationship with the boss is one of dependency, subordination (in France that would be a *patron!*), which brings to mind the pressure exerted on English tenants, for whom a vote cast according to the patron’s demand was, in a sense, an additional aspect of their tenancy and a concrete sign of their loyalty to that patron. At the same time, under changed conditions the dependent relationship with the director-employer has turned out to be somehow durable.<sup>1051</sup>

Another case comes from a report on an aviation training ground in Pomorze, in northwest Poland.<sup>1052</sup> It is worth devoting considerable space to this example because it is an especially colorful anecdote that outlines the folklore surrounding post-socialist clienteles and highlights features that are, at the same time, clearly Sarmatian.

The training grounds in Nadarzyce exists – *praesens historicum*; the events described here take place in 1996 – in a peculiar symbiosis with the nearby village: farmers and their children earn money by collecting scrap metal, mainly spent military shells. “Since the Russians left and trade in them [the military shells] came to an end, the training ground with the red flag has taken on greater significance, as has its commander.”

He is the lord and ruler of the area – a farmer who lives on the edge of the village is speaking about Colonel Bętkowski. Every once in a while civilian trucks with scrap metal drive out of the grounds. A couple years ago he gave to his favorites from the vil-

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clientelism.” The context indicates that what is involved here is the stupidity of voters. Such an argument is interesting, but too radical.

1050 Translator’s note: As mentioned above, the acronym PZPR refers to the Polska Zjednoczona Partia Robotnicza (Polish United Workers’ Party), effectively the Communist Party under the PRL. PSL refers to the Polskie Stronnictwo Ludowe (Polish People’s Party), an agrarian party with a long history in Poland.

1051 Compare an example from America: workers employed to build the interstate highway in Pennsylvania make contributions to the party and thus express their gratitude for the work. Sorauf 1956.

1052 M. Fabjański and P. P. Gadzinowski, “Czar poligonu,” *GW*, 20 August 1996. Some of the names given in the report were changed.

lage tank engines for free. [...] The commander gave the engines to friends or people who were having a hard time making ends meet. Once he met a man from the village collecting spent shells and he gave him a hundred thousand old Polish zloties<sup>1053</sup> so the man wouldn't enter the training grounds again. He drank up the money and two days later he was back on the training grounds.

Colonel Bętkowski made the entire region dependent on him – claims Piotr Wojtiuk, a bar owner in the village [Nadarzyce], and the *soltys* [village administrator, Stefan] Hałuszko cannot praise the commander enough: – Colonel Bętkowski is a good person, he doesn't chase our cattle off he runways.

Colonel B. is a bootlegger who opened up his own canteen selling alcohol without a license, etc. The mayor of Jastrowie complained to the military police in Wałcz:

“I sent a letter to the military police in Wałcz, but they are dependent on the colonel. He allows politicians and officials to hunt and fish illegally,” says Wojtiuk. Stanisław Soliwoda, a staff sergeant, claims that poaching on the training grounds is widespread: “Today I saw a soldier throwing fishing nets into the lake. When Bętkowski was my commander I also had to do that.” Soliwoda decided to speak because he is waiting for retirement in another unit, under another commander.

But Nowak [Major Nowak, the division press office in Piła] urges us not to demonize Bętkowski: “He's been sitting there too long, no one should be a commander in such a position in the forest for more than three years, it's a breeding ground for crime.” In Nowak's opinion, every commander of such a unit becomes authoritarian over time. “It is unavoidable, when the same people everyday make decisions about the lives of hundreds of people.” On 31 August 1996 Colonel B. will retire.

The colonel is famous among people in the village. One resident of Nadarzyce says: “He doesn't act better than us. He often comes to the bar for a beer. He knows everyone and everyone knows him. If someone listens to him, it can pay off. For example maybe he'll find work on the training grounds.”

The colonel refused to talk with the journalist and did not respond to questions sent to him by fax.

Based on this report it is difficult to say much about the personality of Colonel Bętkowski. But the report does describe a certain characteristic phenomenon that we know all too well in a different landscape. One could say (to travesty Lenin) that clientelism revives itself day after day, hour after hour, on a mass scale. In Pomorze we had a colonel who monopolized *resources*: the peasants living in the area are poor, as is the soil there, so the main source of immediate money are

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1053 Translator's note: It is difficult to accurately convert this amount into today's Polish currency (the “old” zloty was replaced by the “new” zloty in 1995), let alone into – say – American dollars, but it represents roughly a couple dollars.

those “shells” – the object of universal desire, a kind of return from an agriculture to a gathering society? We read that the colonel often goes to the village bar for a beer. “He knows everyone and everyone knows him. If someone listens to him, it can pay off.” He maintains neighborly relations on a *personal* level. Only with neighbors? Such a situation fulfills the conditions for a client of a *wealthy and powerful neighbor*.

This “lord and ruler of the area,” who has “made the entire region dependent on him,” certainly appears to play this role (the story about the spent shell collector to whom he gave a hundred thousand; engines for those who were having “a hard time making ends meet”). But his position is marked out not so much by his relationships with the local farmers but by the relationships he has established within the military and, to be sure, among local dignitaries. “He allows politicians and officials to hunt and fish illegally” – this is the accusation made by the bar owner, who no doubt loses more from the colonel’s illegal canteen than he earns from the colonel drinking beer with the locals. I consider Nowak’s comment about a breeding ground for crime to be justified, though 3 years is probably not necessary to avoid supervision, to sell military property (so-called recyclable materials), or to allow (or turn a blind eye to) illegal hunting.

One should not attempt to identify the colonel’s position with that of the old Polish magnates because he did not enjoy the right of ownership (though, to a large extent, the magnate in the old *Rzeczpospolita* based his wealth, power and influence on the leasing of royal lands).<sup>1054</sup> To keep his system running the lord of the training grounds had to maintain good relations with influential people, particularly with his immediate superior. One would think that power over the training grounds was for him, within this community, a serious and highly-valued asset.

Clientelistic relationships within the military represent a great question mark, in part because people rarely speak openly about them. But the 1994 meeting in Drawsko between heads of the Polish military and President Wałęsa would indicate that there is a foundation for believing that they exist. One could argue that such a foundation is more solid today than under the PZPR because, since 1989, political measures designed to ensure that no clientelistic arrangements develop independent of the Politburo and Secretariat have disappeared.<sup>1055</sup>

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1054 Mączak (1994) 2000.

1055 Such arrangements nonetheless emerged during times of factional division within the PZPR, for example one involving Mieczysław Moczar, who exploited the formal structures of the Związek Bojowników o Wolność i Demokrację (Society of Fighters for Freedom and Democracy, ZBoWiD).

Having raised the above thesis, one should describe it more precisely in the following way: Clientelism rejuvenates itself and proliferates in the kind of political and legal chaos that has, as a rule, marked post-communist countries of, say, Eastern Europe (East Germany avoided such a fate because it was incorporated into the structures of the Federal Republic). Relationships are emerging that are a parody of earlier, time-honored versions. Public resources continue to be the main material for such relationships, resources that are usually misappropriated indirectly and often in roundabout ways, as was no doubt true in the still unsolved case of the business called Art B, whose owners were patrons-benefactors of the city of Cieszyn and the surrounding area.

It is not an easy matter to evaluate these matters today. It is easy to condemn them, but what is the alternative? Are “post-communist” societies truly prepared culturally to take on the status of a civic society, to support a *Rechtsstaat*, in a developed market economy? How durable are such clientelistic relationships and how susceptible are they to change? Today they seem to be like a tumor that is resistant to any kind of treatment. And what’s more, who is supposed to carry out that treatment, and at whose cost? Based on whose initiative? Neither post-communists nor anti-communists are bothered by such questions. Is it perhaps true that clientelism/*kumoterstwo* play a kind of mitigating role in the face of poorly formulated laws, a rapidly growing bureaucracy, and the ruthless nature of the fiscal apparatus? I would prefer not to believe in such an idea, but such an alternative cannot be rejected *a limine*. The balance of profits and losses (whose losses?) that result from clientelism on a micro-scale and in public (and “privatized”) life seems to be more difficult in this context than in the peasant societies of Latin America and the tribal societies of Tropical Africa.

Perhaps, in the end, this mechanism is self-perpetuating. Whenever certain personal and collective relationships extort from the state particular concessions or privileges, then the treasury of an ever-more indebted state must apply pressure on others, who in turn search – wherever they can – for influential friends and ways to alleviate their circumstances.

But it is important to point out, having admitted to ourselves the existence of clientelistic phenomena, that as the term CLIENTELISM enters the publicist’s vocabulary, we tend to use such terminology very broadly. There are examples that I will name using details that conform to the basic definition presented in the introduction to this book: X is a client of Y, who fixed something for X, in exchange for which X attempts to fix votes, to collect information, etc. But political life in Poland is usually presented in this way:



What we are dealing with is a closed system of personal interests, loyalties and connections, along with its clientele in the media and economy, one that is made up of parties that define themselves as left and right, their origins being among the post-communists and the Solidarity movement. This system exists and gains strength at the cost of the majority of citizens and their participation in the democratic process and its separation from, and its isolation from, the democratic, electoral mandate.

These motifs return later in the same commentary:

[...] the closed character of Polish democracy strengthens phenomena that typify an oligarchy, namely corruption, clientelism, the theft of public resources by transferring them into the private sphere, and – more broadly – political capitalism. [...] Polish democracy depends on its oligarchical [...] political elites, their clients, and their ties with old arrangements from the PRL.<sup>1056</sup>

Reading this passage we get an image of a closed political class beneath which, in the political hierarchy, we find clients, rather more clients of *oligarchs* than of particular patrons, which are not mentioned. As in the case of the First Republic, I do not see here a useful application for the term “oligarch,” which assumes harmonious actions on the part of decision-makers; it is not possible to associate this term with today’s governmental-parliamentary milieu. The concept of a collective, mass clientele also has no application here because of the lack of a charismatic figure.

## 2. Russia: Market Variations and the Spluttering of Clients

If one takes a broader view of these issues by overstepping for a moment the boundaries of clientelistic systems, certain striking comparisons emerge from post-communist economic and political conditions with feudalism on the one hand, and with relationships associated with the noble democracy on the other.

First I want to return to the military aspects of “late socialism,” specifically to statements made by the Russian general Pavel Grachev to the weekly *Ogoniok* in 1996:

On all levels of the command, from the regiment level on up, I have my people, my protégés [...] When rumors began to surface in March about my dismissal, all the commanders in the five branches of the military declared themselves prepared to leave with me. All of my deputies as well – except for the civilian Andrzej Kokoszyn. The commanders in military circles roared and to the very bottom they spluttered.<sup>1057</sup>

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1056 M.A. Cichocki, “Demokracja z ograniczonym uczestnictwem,” *Rzeczpospolita*, 28–29 June 2001, A5.

1057 Quoted in *GW*, 26 June 1996: Russia. “Wymiatanie generałów.” Łomanowski’s correspondence from Moscow.

One did not need to check this;<sup>1058</sup> the spluttering was not heard.

But what is significant here is the high commander's awareness, his understanding of the range of his authority, of the parallel structures of dependency in the military services, of the importance of personal bonds. General Grachev's statement is incomparable in its excellence. But I would argue that the matters I am talking about here do not represent a simple continuation of the communist system. To be sure, those who benefit from them are, to a large degree, members of the old *nomenklatura*. But the deciding factor is the state of administrative and legal chaos, the lack of experience among personnel, the instability. In post-Soviet conditions (in Russia and the other republics) it is often emphasized – I think justifiably – that this region lacks democratic traditions.

In their official doctrine, communist regimes assume that human nature is weak, that it tends in some natural way toward capitalism, which explains measures to repress all manifestations of an uncontrolled consumer economy. After the monopoly on power was broken in the late 1980s, the explosion in small-trade enterprises showed how great market pressures were (and how large underground trade had been, which lost its reason for existence). The hole left by the communist *ancien régime* was filled by arrangements and agreements of various kinds, many of which were clientelistic in nature. Below is a fragment from an interview on this subject with a Russian opposition politician:

[EK]: What does it mean to organize an election?

[MK]: To manipulate elections on the edge of the law. And yet they can also be falsified. In Russia the "patronage" system is far more developed than we imagine. The boss and local authorities – local both on the *oblast* level and in entire republics – have the power to direct the opinion of citizens and "their people." [...]

[EK:] If democracy would work, then Europe and the world could breathe easily.

[MK:] That's another illusion. In Russia there is no democracy in the Western European sense. Even real democrats, entering a bureaucrat's office, blend in with the bureaucratic ethos insanely quickly. [...] This society has a different system of governance. Here everyone has some sort of lord above him. They create an entire pyramid of dependencies and relationships, clans, spheres of influence. One cannot call it a mafia, but at the same time these are not legal structures.

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1058 The inaccuracy of Grachev's predictions by no means precludes the probability of the existence of such arrangements in the Russian military. When the absolute head of the military is a civilian – the head of state – the *esprit de corps* and the officer's political ambitions express themselves in informal relationships, though at different levels of the hierarchy.

[EK:] Rather feudal.

[MK:] Yes, but instead of land, as in the days of Charlemagne, the lord has simply a piece of the state – a piece of deciding power, a privilege for sale, exemptions from customs duties. [...] A similar system dominates the Asiatic republics. Slavery privatized.<sup>1059</sup>

It is easy for a system described in 1992 as “a transition from the feudalism of kolkhozes and state enterprises to early capitalism”<sup>1060</sup> to be, in its peripheries, “coercion-intensive,” indeed in a form that is brutally feudal, or one that is, in fact, slavery. The Polish journalist Leon Bójko anticipated the consequences of the protocol signed by the former Soviet republics in Almaty in 1991:

In Central Asia a feudal mode of production dominates on many levels. Communism – which itself was built on a feudal model – not only did not destroy that mode of production, it actually consolidated and conserved it. [...] The final displacement of communism by Islam seems to be only a matter of time, they consolidated the feudal economic system.<sup>1061</sup>

*Russkaja Mysl* discussed a concrete example:

A certain worker was employed in the construction of cowsheds around Pskov. His documents were taken; he was lent 300 rubles. He heard: “You will receive payment in my *Aul* “Aczaluki” in Chechen-Ingushetia. At that time you will help me finish my house, you will be my *kunak* [or “friend”]. I will cancel your debts and you will receive all the money you deserve. We will accept you according to the hospitality of the Caucasus.” First there was a common feast and then the worker was beaten. He fled to Ossetia, but the militia there did not want to inflame the matter. The authors claim that this is not an uncommon thing and that such “slaves” are often stigmatized.<sup>1062</sup>

At level of the state – namely a post-Soviet republic – such circumstances can have a comic, if not tragicomic, effect. For example, Kyrgyzstan<sup>1063</sup>: In October 1991 that republic’s deputies to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR left the council floor in protest against what they viewed as offensive statements made by Andrei Kozyrev (who was then foreign minister). They accused Kozyrev of calling deputies from

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1059 M. Karp, “Słabszy musi być twardy,” a discussion with Edward Krzemień, *GW*, 21 March 1996.

1060 Paweł Tabasznikas, Professor of Economics at the University of St. Petersburg. Quoted in K. Kruse, “Handeln ohne Plan,” *Die Zeit*, 31 January 1992, 13.

1061 J. Bójko (reporting from Moscow): “Wszystko jest przed nami,” *GW*, 10 October 1991.

1062 J. Kołoniczka and J. Nieganowa, quoted in *GW*, 17 January 1992, 8.

1063 “Czy Kirgizi są feudalami?” (according to the Russian news agency TASS), *GW*, 25 October 1991.

the central Asian republics “feudal lords.” Kozyrev responded during the evening session: “When talking about feudalism, what I had in mind was that privileges are an institution of vassal-like, feudal dependencies. In this sense we all live in feudalism and we must struggle against it. If my words offended anyone, I am sorry.”

If the press is to be believed, the division between the governing and the governed, which – taken in the context of early-modern Europe – appears to me to be most complicated, has the effect – at the intersection of tribal civilization and the Soviet nomenklatura – of being an extraordinary over-simplification. I am thinking here about the president of the Republic of Kalmykia, Kirsan Ilyumzhinov.<sup>1064</sup>

Doubts [among citizens of the republic] are not raised even when the leader of the Kalmykians practices nepotism: the name “Ilyumzhinov” appears among high officials suspiciously often. “People are divided into the governing and the governed,” a shop owner stated, “Kirsan belongs to the first group by birth, through his grandfather.”

At a press conference in Moscow the president “pointed out with pride that Ruslan Khasbulatov, criticizing Yeltsin’s attempts to increase the scope of his power, used the phrase ‘the kalmykia-zation of Russia.’” Granted this is too pretty to be true, but is it possible today to regard anything as impossible?

“Kirsan’s favorite metaphor is to call his country the ‘Kalmykian corporation.’” After an electoral victory he summoned his deputies and proposed: either war according to the Russian scenario or capitulation under honorable conditions. Included among those conditions was assistance – through former deputies – in the establishment of their own companies and promises of favorable loans.<sup>1065</sup>

Clientelism’s role in the system of governance of post-Soviet Russia has not yet been fully researched; allusions and anecdotes are more common than evidence from analytical studies. Tatiana Vorozheykina wants, from the perspective of patron-client relationships, to answer fundamental questions regarding the “mechanisms [that] have underlain the stability of Russian society as it endures the crisis of the transition period.”<sup>1066</sup> How deeply is clientelism rooted in political culture and the social consciousness? What sort of bonds and relationships have

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1064 W. Górecki, “Korporacja Kalmuca,” *Życie Warszawy*, 14–15 August 1993. Kalmykia is a republic that lies in the Volga region just north of the Caucasus Mountains. The Buddhist inhabitants of Kalmykia, settled there by Vasili IV of Russia (1609), were resettled in 1943. Those who survived that resettlement were allowed to return home under Khrushchev.

1065 See previous footnote.

1066 Tatiana Vorozheykina, “Clientelism and the Process of Political Democratization in Russia,” in Luis Roniger and Ayşe Güneş Ayata, eds., *Democracy, Clientelism, and Civil Society* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1994), 106.

emerged since the collapse of the old system? What role do the new institutions play? How stable are these institutions “and on what sort of foundation have they been constructed? How deep is the influence of the new regime on society, and how is the legitimacy of this influence generated?”<sup>1067</sup>

That is a very ambitious and simply fascinating set of questions. Going back to the years 1965–1985, Vorozheykina detects certain phenomena that are of a complex and often opposing nature. Such concepts as the “public interest,” “collectivist feelings” and “duty” persist only in a symbolic sense; cynicism and a “double standard” are “the only possible form of independent existence for some and the only possible path to upward career mobility for others.”<sup>1068</sup> Such facts are well known, but official ideology, though it long ago lost its power to mobilize people even as pure ritual, has continued to be an important factor in social integration. A majority of people have remained dependent on the state-run sector of the economy, and an image of the government as the embodiment of the public good and as the universal patron has developed in their consciousness. The progressive emergence of individualism has led to the rise of a civil society that has not yet had a market foundation, which helps explain why this phenomenon has largely been limited to the cultural sphere. Vorozheykina conceives the term “civil society” very broadly, namely in terms of those citizens who have been able to achieve a certain level of intellectual independence. In connection with this, she cites a tune by the Russian poet and folk singer Bulat Okudzhava; in Poland one could just as easily cite such a tune by Wojciech Młynarski: “*Róbmy swoje*” (Let’s do our own thing) – only together.<sup>1069</sup>

What does all this have to do with clientelism? Vorozheykina states the matter in a rather banal fashion.<sup>1070</sup> She emphasizes Khrushchev’s reforms, which led to segmentation of the governing system into parallel and rival structures. Competition between economic sectors grew sharper. In an administrative command system, in order for one to carry out orders, he needed to establish personal contacts and, in the everyday life of a significant part of the population, the lack of free market mechanisms encouraged the creation of ties that “were for the most part organized vertically around points of access to the state system of the distribution of resources,” including those that one might call “basic necessities.”

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1067 Ibid. Vorozheykina is a scholar at the Institute of World Economy and International Relations in the Russian Academy of Sciences.

1068 Ibid., 108.

1069 Ibid., 109.

1070 Ibid. She writes: “The creation of these elements of civil society converged with the increasing prominence of clientelistic relations.”

At the same time, the strengthening and broadening of clientelistic relations were eroding the old system from within. Clientelism became the means of the development of individual social relations and the channel for the introduction into them of private interests, in opposition to the universalistic “common good.” In this sense clientelistic relations were a form, albeit a highly distorted form, of civil society, developing within the state but gradually coming up from under the state’s shell.<sup>1071</sup>

This scientific style is supposed to explain a phenomenon that is rather simple from a human point of view, but we do not learn to what extent human ingenuity created arrangements that correspond to definitions of the patron-client relationship. That having been said, the observation seems to me useful and accurate, that while these practices were widely regarded as acceptable and necessary for “social survival,” the growing reality of patronage and corruption on all levels was widely condemned morally as contrary to the public good.

How did the connection develop between clientelistic relations in this system of governance and the principle of the *nomenklatura*? Vorozheykina writes that that *nomenklatura* established a relatively rigorous system of promotion, one that would limit a patron’s freedom to favor trusted clients.

The weak (at the beginning) resistance to reforms put up by the existing power structure can be explained by the fact that Gorbachev introduced those reforms through the party apparatus, and that the “administrative elite” did not see in them a danger to their power monopoly. Elections provided political “legitimacy,” which was necessary now in the face of the system’s “withering ideological foundations.”<sup>1072</sup>

During the process of democratization in the years 1988–1990, the *nomenklatura* and clientelistic networks, particularly on the highest levels, found themselves under intense social criticism. Many new people were brought into the system through elections, and not through the use of contacts; the entire system was significantly more “transparent.” And yet the lack of durable political support favored the rise of decision-makers in parliamentary groups based on personal loyalty or group solidarity, which lent them a patronal character. Group solidarity, a lack of expertise, corruption, and the mixing of government service with private enterprise, were phenomena that characterized how things worked at this level.

The new patron-client relations were created as an overgrowth atop the former *nomenklatura* system of clientelistic relations, which in general had been destroyed at its upper levels. At the middle and lower levels these relations quickly regenerated. In the absence of new party mechanisms, former clientelistic relations were inevitably used

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1071 Ibid., 110.

1072 Ibid., 112.

as the foundation for new structures. The old and new systems of clientelistic relations quickly fused, with access to public and private goods still largely the objects of clientelistic exchange. These goods included government jobs, housing, medical services, and economic resources.<sup>1073</sup>

In new conditions, namely “in the absence of civil society and a developed system of legal regulation [...], decentralization in Russia can build only on the strengthening of local personal ties.”<sup>1074</sup> Authoritarian mini-regimes emerged that functioned on the principle that they had at their disposal practically unlimited resources. Their dependence on higher authorities was most often weak, and they functioned according to personal arrangements that propagated countless bureaucratic agendas. The president (we are talking here of Yeltsin), as the self-appointed guarantor of democracy and economic reform who drew his personnel mainly according to the principle of personal loyalty, separated his authority from public oversight and, in so doing, opened it up to clientelistic practices.

Vorozheykina’s article offers an interpretation that is both logical and probable, but it is characteristically lacking in concrete detail. Probably only Ruslan Khasbulatov would be offended by it.<sup>1075</sup> Her work shares a certain similarity with articles by Jacek Tarkowski written before 1989: there was a lack of available field research at the time and the work seemed to be burdened by self-censorship.<sup>1076</sup> But it is not difficult to detect in the Russian’s work serious holes in her portrayal of the matters at hand. *Primo*, when she talks of the era of “collective leadership” under successive “first secretaries,” she does not refer to the questions that I discussed above: by what criteria did they select their clientelistic networks? What influence did the transfer of patrons from sector to sector, or from region to region, have on their composition? *Secundo*, the author seems to confuse two phenomena: clientelism and cronyism, which is a matter of error in method.<sup>1077</sup> Cronyism

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1073 Ibid., 113–115.

1074 Ibid., 115.

1075 “The practice of clientelistic exchange, approaching on occasion outright corruption, was strengthened by the personal actions of the former parliament’s chairman, Ruslan Khasbulatov, concentrating significant power in his hands. [...] an office is tainted by the actions of a specific personality (Khasbulatov as Supreme Soviet chairman).” Ibid., 117.

1076 Tarkowski 1981.

1077 As I mentioned above, communist propaganda of the 1950s disseminated the term *kumoterstwo*, much like the terms *chuligaństwo* (hooliganism) and *bumelanctwo* (loafing), within the language used by the press and the colloquial language of the intelligentsia.

is a bond between equals operating on the principle of “one hand washes the other.” It might involve two or significantly more people. In the USSR, where the system discouraged simple friendship between individuals, people were tied by interests, for example directors of enterprises that were cooperating, or were active, in the same branch, particularly when such cooperation was in some way under threat.<sup>1078</sup>

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1078 Shlapentokh 1984.



# Final Thoughts: On Reservations, and Values

*Co-existence among people should be regulated by norms that are recognized (it does not matter for what reasons) as objective, not by values. [...] Only when transformed into objective norms, legal norms, can values be the regulators of social life and its conflicts.*

Krzysztof Michalski<sup>1079</sup>

An author's experience teaches us that practically every reviewer, not to mention many of the students for whom a book was intended, skims only the book's first chapter and its conclusion, which explains why many American scholars include in their works a simplified summary. I appreciate the wisdom behind such a summary, which is often recommended by publishers and authors of textbooks aimed at students. But it is unsuitable for the material contained in this book. In these final reflections I will mainly raise doubts and discuss my reservations; the questions will multiply.

I thus wonder if any conclusions I might draw here could be proportional to the range of material from which I drew the cases discussed in my work. If the thesis I presented above regarding the diverse manifestations of informal power proves to be correct, the question arises: are the variations and examples presented here not just a drop in the bucket? Such doubts accompanied me particularly when I raised the topic of the Third World and as I was putting together press clippings: every issue of the *New York Times* (I went through only one year of the *NYT* systematically), the *New York Herald Tribune*, or the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* (during a stay in Germany) offered up at least several interesting pieces of information and commentary. But an incomparably greater number must have escaped my attention. It is no different when it comes to the academic literature; I filled desk drawers (and, later, folders on my computer hard drive) with bibliographic index cards significantly more quickly than I made progress on my reading list: was I always able to get my hands on the most important works? On another occasion I expressed my beliefs regarding the role of coincidence and accident even in academic research; here I would only add that what is most interesting is unexpected information found "by accident."

While collecting material from historical sources, monographs in various fields, the daily press and everyday life, I repeatedly asked myself whether what I am

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1079 "Polityka i wartości," *Rzeczpospolita* (+ Plus – Minus), 19–20 August 2000, D4.

dealing with here is a matter that is exceptionally diverse or – quite the reverse – one that is marked by tiresome uniformity. Can the *structure* of interpersonal bonds be separated from their *forms*? Are these forms only a matter of outward appearance, or do they play an essential role in the behavior of social actors? “Social actor” – here is a term that has given me pause for thought; I have not found good answers to several questions: should I depend on my own language as an historian? To what extent should I make use of the untranslatable vocabulary of a particular milieu being researched? Or, delving more deeply into the social scientists’ sphere of activity, should I bow to their professional and scientific jargon. The difficulties involved here, and the resulting consequences, are best reflected in the section above entitled “European Words in the African Bush.”

The above issues caused in me a deep and unyielding reluctance to formulate definitions, based on the tested conviction that in social life – and therefore in the humanities – there is no way to detect invariable elements, that precise definitions are most often not useful. Michael M. Postan put it nicely in his inaugural lecture at Cambridge with these valuable comments:

And at the cost of yet another repetition we must insist that the penalty of being sufficiently concrete to be real is the impossibility of being sufficiently abstract to be exact. And laws which are not exact, predictions which are not certain, generalizations which are not general, are truer when shown in a concrete instance or in one of their unique manifestations than they are when expressed in quasi-universal terms.<sup>1080</sup>

I am convinced that the colorful and sometimes simply anecdotal expression “lop-sided” friendship (as in “unequal” or, to use an old Polish term for “lame,” *chroma*) and the broad range of associated sentiments (from love, devotion and fidelity to conflict and hostility) burst the structures of theoretical definitions. The middle ground is sometimes very wide. Thus I devoted so little space to formal considerations and preferred to adopt the most simple definitions.

Readers who have followed all of the above arguments may ask themselves: in the end, how would I define the matter discussed in this book? A clear and absolute answer to that question is not easy because the matter is, in no way, a “social formation,” a ruling system, though – as a system – it is extremely widespread; it is present in countless civilizations and – depending on the social-cultural context – plays one role or another and, in various ways, colors that context. Debates on this topic conducted by scholars of the contemporary world, to the extent that they lead to simple generalizations, seem to me to be rather pointless, often without

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1080 Postan 1971, 32. See also the epigraph containing Postan’s reflections at the top of the above chapter entitled “Elements of Theory.”

substance. It is with the clientele like it is with grammar. I repeat: the beauty of the monotone nature of clientelism lies in its exceptions. I would like to say that the peculiarity and civilizational context of this phenomenon seem to me to be its very nature – and when investigating this topic in various cultural environments that are distant from each other in time, space and tradition, we are still confronted by forms, behaviors and terms that are familiar to us.

From what perspective should one view these systems of unequal friendship? There are more perspectives than just the wealthy and powerful patron on the one hand, and the subordinate client on the other. Libanos mentioned a third and most interesting perspective, that of the state, which has sometimes been (and sometimes not) a patron's rival. The clientele dodges conditions set by Krzysztof Michalski (interpreting Max Weber), above all because it is not encompassed by legal norms. Most often it has been a form of co-existence conceived as “norms that are recognized [...] as objective.” Much like many things in politics and law, this particular type of contract lives “thanks to uncodified, not entirely known, and ambivalent customs, preferences, and imagery.”<sup>1081</sup> As a historian I am relieved to claim that I am not obligated – nor should I be – to give summary evaluations, because the matter in question here is like a chameleon, which – though it remains the same entity – takes on qualities (colors) that help it adapt to the environment in which it functions.

No doubt one could thus conceive the issue from a reverse perspective, by researching and classifying societies and systems of rule according to the role played in them by clientelistic systems. That having been said, it would be unreasonable to apply evaluative labels because values are always relative – that is, dependent on various criteria, which could be, for example, the *raison d'état* (the formal ruling structures); the effective resolution of local, “inter-personal” issues or the interests of this or that group or social stratum; or finally, some kind of “truth through faith,” a deep conviction that is not subject to rational reflection.<sup>1082</sup> Also included might well be the persistence of tradition and the colorful nature of cus-

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1081 K. Michalski, *op. cit.*

1082 In this context I understand the word “values” more broadly than we commonly do in our political-ideological-religious discourse. I assume that an opponent also adopts (confesses) *values*, though they might be antithetical. It is a point of view that is sometimes difficult to accept, but it is one that is logical. Is it not the case that the Bolsheviks at the Battle of Radzymin (1920) or the Japanese at Pearl Harbor had their own value system? They created those values, and they did so not only for needs associated with propaganda export.

tom as peculiar cultural values, or stability within the system of social inequality, the alternative to which is sometimes not democracy, but terrorism or genocide.

If one speaks from the perspective of political science, it is worth taking into consideration, in all cases, the following two elements: the intensity of the clientelism and the condition of the society (the direction of its development) in which it appears, because two alternative rules are at play. According to the first, clientelistic systems are a factor for mild change in social structures and for transformations in the ruling apparatus (an example being “bastard feudalism”). According to the second, clientelistic systems are a factor in a society’s stability. By way of clarification I might remind the reader of an extreme case, namely that of the symbiosis – lasting into the middle of the twentieth century – between the Hutu and the privileged Tutsi and subsequent events in Rwanda and Burundi.<sup>1083</sup> But extremely tragic cases distort the proper perspective. Stability takes place and persists on a level that benefits one party or the other. If one party begins to doubt such stability, then the system is threatened at its very center – with or without benefits for one or both partners.

When informal systems become dominant in a society marked by an ordered and formal legal system and a civil service, one that aspires to the status of *Rechtsstaat* (in the Weberian sense), indications are that a systemic crisis is imminent.<sup>1084</sup> But this is not the end of the story, because if we establish their wrongful existence in the ruling apparatus, how we assess this matter depends mainly on our opinion of the system as a whole. A system that we regard as dysfunctional

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1083 However, unsteady decisions and actions by the colonial administration and the Belgian Church were instrumental in increased tensions in relations between the two groups. For convincing arguments on this subject, see Lemarchand 1972, 111.

1084 I have not been able to check the following information, so I will pass it on to the reader in a footnote. According to *Wprost* (2 April 2001, R. Kamiński, “Paraliż państwa”), in the Polish Third Republic as many as 90,000 bureaucrats and functionaries are replaced when parliamentary elections are won by the opposition party, even though “according to the civil service law the number of ‘politically sensitive’ positions (in ministries, central offices and regional administration) is not to exceed 1,700 [...] Several months before the elections, that army of bureaucrats and functionaries were not busy working but rather preparing for themselves a ‘soft landing.’ A change in power thus means *de facto* paralysis of the state.” Great Britain and the United States have solved this problem constitutionally. It is worth remembering that in December 2001, under a piece of legislation proposed by SLD [the Sojusz Lewicy Demokratycznej, or Democratic Left Alliance, is the party of the former communists] and approved quickly by the Sejm, the creation of a civil service system was postponed to 31 December 2005.

will be soothed by clientelistic bonds, which give it a “human face.” If we identify with that system, we will tend to view such degeneration harshly, to highlight its connection with corruption. Let us remember that, in the end, one’s opinion depends on one’s “point of view,” which itself can be understood in many ways. Scholars and social critics alike are guided, more or less consciously, by “particularistic” motives; they are also the product of a certain culture, even if they are sometimes that culture’s rebellious child.

## 1. People and Animals

An author does not exist without the reader. Above, I expressed my skepticism toward book reviewers, but it is true that authors owe them a great deal for the fact that knowledge of their scholarly work among potential readers is born through reviews. Thus, with a passion for concise reading, I offer them the aphoristic thoughts of Ewa Szumańska written in 1986, which struck me at the time as poignant, but which are also worth remembering after the watershed year of 1989, particularly in the context of the above reflections as a whole:

Yesterday I bought myself a dog. Yesterday I bought myself a person.

After I bought him, he laid down at my feet and looked me in the eyes. After I bought him he sat across from me at the desk and did not look me in the eyes.

I paid for him dearly because he was a pedigree dog. I got him cheap because he was a cowardly human.

I will train him: I will teach him to come running whenever I call. I will train him: I will teach him to come running even when I do not call.

The more he loves me, the closer I will grow to him. The more desperately he hates me, the more I will despise him.<sup>1085</sup>

Could it be that the clientele was a subject even for Konrad Lorenz? I do not exclude the possibility, and though I expose myself (how unjust it would be!) to pedantry, I can point to the article “Les chimpanzés: un modèle animal de la relation clientélaire.”<sup>1086</sup>

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1085 Ewa Szumańska, “Zakupy,” *Tygodnik Powszechny*, 11 May 1986 (see also *Pięć Lat* [Warszawa: N.O.W., 1989], 89). Unlike most of Szumańska’s texts, this one was not touched by the censor’s red pencil.

1086 Servais 1993. The analogies discussed there do not appear to me particularly apt, though the sociology of animals indicates that the chief’s “entourage” exists not just among the wolves in *The Jungle Book*.

Returning to the unpleasant conclusion raised by the words of Ewa Szumańska, it is not misplaced to mention here the words of Nikolai Gogol: “What are you laughing at?”<sup>1087</sup>

In the end I convey, in baroque style, advice proffered by a man of great wisdom and experience, namely William Cecil Lord Burghley, Elizabeth I’s right hand man. He advises his son Robert, the later 1st Earl of Salisbury:

Be sure ever to keep some great man thy friend, but trouble him not for trifles, compliment him often, present him with many yet small gifts and of little charge, and if thou have cause to bestow any great gratuity, let it then be some such thing as may be daily in sight, for otherwise in this ambitious age thou mayest remain like a hop without pole, live in obscurity, and be made a football for every insulting companion to spurn at.”<sup>1088</sup>

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1087 Translator’s note: This question comes from Gogol’s play *The Inspector General* (1842), the answer being: “You are laughing at yourselves.”

1088 “Certain Precepts for the Well Ordering of a Man’s Life,” in *Advice* 1962, 12. To add some weight to these words, it is worth mentioning that the Cecils remained, until our times, one of the most influential families in Britain; indeed, until 1956 they had a decisive voice in the Conservative Party.

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