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Patronage and party organization in Argentina : the emergence of the patronage-based network party

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Citation

Scherlis Perel, G. E. (2010, January 21). *Patronage and party organization in Argentina : the emergence of the patronage-based network party*. Retrieved from <https://hdl.handle.net/1887/14598>

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**PATRONAGE AND PARTY ORGANIZATION IN ARGENTINA:
THE EMERGENCE OF THE PATRONAGE-BASED NETWORK PARTY**

PROEFSCHRIFT

Ter verkrijging van

De graad van Doctor aan de Universiteit Leiden,
van Rector Magnificus Prof. Mr. P.F. van der Heijden,
volgens besluit van het College voor Promoties
te verdedigen op donderdag 21 januari 2010
klokke 15.00 uur

door

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geboren te Buenos Aires (Argentinië)
in 1974

Promotiecommissie

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PREFACE

Studies on party organizations in the last 15 years have consistently underlined a process of erosion of the linkages between parties and society and a concomitant strengthening of the linkages between parties and states. Scholars have shown that parties have tried to compensate for the sharp process of decline in their representative capacities by reinforcing their institutional and procedural roles. After being for decades primarily conceived as agents of political socialization and channels of expression of society, parties are now often described as state or semi-state institutions of government. Hence understanding what party organizations are presently requires, as Peter Mair has observed, paying “at least as much attention, if not more so, to the linkage between party and state as ... to the linkage between parties and civil society” (1997:139). This dissertation intends to take up Mair’s call in regards to the study of Argentine party organizations. Hence it is primarily concerned with examining the extent to which and modes by which parties penetrate state structures in Argentina.

In order to do so, this dissertation consists of an empirical study on the scope, the workings, and the rationale of party patronage in Argentina. It attempts to assess the degree to which parties effectively appoint people to public positions, who is in effect responsible for patronage within parties, what motivates parties to appoint in different sectors and at different levels of the state, and what criteria they follow to select the appointees. Because what party organizations are presently has so much to do with the modes in which they relate to state structures, the answers to those questions provide crucial insight into the nature and functioning of current party organizations in Argentina. Additionally, I also hope this study on party patronage in Argentina will contribute to the understanding of party organizational change more generally.

From a broader perspective, this research also intends to take up what Helmke and Levitsky (2006:2) defined as *Guillermo O'Donnell's call* to explain Latin American democracies by observing “the actual rules that are being followed” (O'Donnell:1996b:10). After two decades in which studies on new democracies focused on issues of institutional engineering and on the functioning of formal political institutions, there is now an increasing awareness of the importance of informal political institutions, those “rules and procedures that are created, communicated, and enforced outside the officially sanctioned channels” (Helmke and Levistky, 2006:1). I would like this research to be seen as a contribution that helps understand “what games are really being played” (O'Donnell, 1996a:43) in these new Latin American democratic regimes. In that sense, this work is intended to provide a comprehensive picture of the phenomenon of party patronage as a crucial informal institution of Argentine party politics. The long tradition of political manipulation of public bureaucracies that characterizes this country, along with the more recent process of party de-institutionalization, make a study on party organizations and patronage particularly relevant for the understanding of current Argentine party politics.

The main argument of this work is that patronage has become the primary resource employed in order to build contemporary party organizations in Argentina. I contend that Argentine party organizations are shaped and sustained on the basis of the capacity of an elected leader to get control over state offices. In fact, the research shows that contemporary parties are composed by networks of two types. On the one hand are networks dedicated to the management of the state on behalf of a political project. On the other hand are those networks aimed to mobilize voters on the basis of clientelistic exchanges. Party statutes notwithstanding, those two types of networks compose what I

call the “really existing party organizations”. Both of them are dependant on the distribution of patronage.

Viewed from another perspective, patronage has emerged as a fundamental resource for party leaders who seek autonomy to develop electoral strategies but at the same time need a loyal and competent organization to mobilize voters and to get tight control over the state machinery. Patronage is thus the indispensable resource to recruit and sustain the two types of networks which make up the only type of party organization that has proved successful in contemporary Argentina. I call that type of party organization the “patronage-based network party”.

Plan of the Book

The work is divided into eight chapters. The first one provides definitions of the main concepts, presents the theoretical framework of the dissertation, explains the relevance of a study about patronage and party organizations in Argentina, and outlines the main research puzzles.

Chapter 2 presents the approach adopted here to understand the phenomenon of party patronage in Argentina. It describes the four aspects, or faces, of patronage - the scope, the appointers, the motivations, and the criteria for selection - on the basis of which I measure and analyze the phenomenon. The chapter also explains why a study on party patronage in Argentina must cover both national and sub-national levels of the state. Lastly, it specifies the expectations of the research. Chapter 3 describes in detail the research design, including the selection of provincial cases. It also explains the methodology employed to measure the scope and assess the workings and rationale of party patronage. The core data for this dissertation is derived from a set of 125 semi-

structured interviews with experts on different sectors of the Argentine state, both at national and sub-national levels.

Chapter 4 and Chapter 5 present the data and the analysis on patronage at the national level. The former focuses on the scope of patronage, that is, how much parties appoint in nine different sectors and three different institutional types of the Argentine national state. The latter observes who effectively makes appointments, the motivations to appoint and the criteria for the selection of the appointees. Chapters 6 and 7 replicate the study at the level of the provincial states. Chapter 7 illustrates the findings with a detailed analysis of two party organizations in one specific province (PJ and UCR of Tucumán), and lastly compares the practice of party patronage at national and provincial levels. Overall Chapters 4 through 7 lead to a reassessment of the role and the importance of patronage in current Argentine party organizations. On the one hand, these chapters stress the increasing importance of patronage as a governmental resource, both for bringing new partners and allies into the governmental coalitions and for securing control over the state apparatus. At the same time, they show that patronage is the main resource through which elected leaders build and knit together the networks that compose their supportive party organizations.

Chapter 8 summarizes the main findings of the study, presenting the model of the patronage-based network party as the only type of party organization that has managed to adapt and thrive in a context of weak and fluid party identities. The model is illustrated with the most remarkable traits of the Front for Victory, the label adopted by the Peronist ruling coalition during the presidency led by Néstor Kirchner between 2003 and 2007. Appendixes I, II, III and IV provide additional information on different aspects of the research, such as state sectors' size and institutions (I), the model of the expert survey questionnaire utilized in the interviews (II), the positions in the different

sectors and institutional types of the national state (III), and a list of 194 analyzed senior appointed positions (IV). Appendix V contains the names and institutional affiliations of the experts interviewed for this dissertation.

I quote in English a good number of sources in Spanish. These include academic works, reports and articles from newspapers, legal documents, and statements from the interviews I conducted with experts. All translations from Spanish to English are mine.

Acknowledgements

The research which led to this book was made possible by the help and support of many individuals and institutions. First of all, I am indebted to the department of Political Science of Leiden University for providing me all the facilities and resources required for the task, and for its pleasant and stimulating academic environment. I am grateful to the whole staff which made me feel just like one more member of the department during all my stay in The Netherlands. Special words of gratitude go to Tereza Capelos, Oda van Craneburgh, Jan Erk, Aznake Kefale, Ruud Koole, Paul Niewenburg, Huib Pellikaan, Malehoko Tsohaedi, Hans Vollaard and Kavita Ziemann. Veerle van Doeveren, Marc Uriot and Tom Louwerse also helped me with the “samenvatting”, the translation of the summary of the dissertation into Dutch, for which I am deeply grateful. I want also to thank Marianne Boere, Alma Caubo, Ingrid van Heeringen-Göbbels, Danielle Gaalen-Lovink, Ana Rodríguez Polanco, Mariska Roos, Miranda Schouten, Tessa Thomas and Marielle van Es for their proficient and generous assistance, which by far exceeded their administrative duties.

Maria Spirova helped me to carry out and complete this work in multiple and different ways. She has been a permanent and solid source of advice, support and encouragement, for writing this thesis and everything else. In spite of the many moves and field-work periods, my “base of operations” for more than three years has been

room 5B09 of the department of Political Science of Leiden University. I have been very fortunate to share that office with wonderful colleagues and friends. In different ways, Imke Harbers, Hila Shtayer and Arturo Bureo had an active participation in the process of thinking and writing this dissertation.

I have spent a fruitful working period at the German Institute of Global and Area Studies in Hamburg thanks to the generosity of Mariana Llanos and Ana Maria Mustapic, and to the financial support of the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD). I have also benefited enormously from participating in the workshops on parties and patronage in Nicosia, Florence, and Leiden, together with a group of outstanding scholars. I want to thank the participants of those meetings for their helpful contributions to my understanding of this topic.

Lots of people contributed in one way or another to the process of conducting interviews. First among them I want to thank Miguel De Luca. This work would be a very different one had it not been for Miguel's permanent disposition to help. The research allowed me to visit cities and towns of Argentina which I had never visited before. In all of them I found people ready and keen to help. I can only name here a very few of them. Federico van Mameren, the chief of the editorial staff of La Gaceta, the main newspaper of Tucumán, made use of his powerful cell phone to open the doors of ministers, legislators, unionists, and journalists for me. Gastón Mutti, the director of the department of government at Universidad de Rosario, and Jorge Fernández, professor at the Universidad del Litoral, were crucial in developing exhaustive field work in the province of Santa Fe. The same applies to political scientist Maissa Havela (and her mother, provincial legislator Nuchi Lizarraga), and the lawyer Julio García in Chaco. Patricia Rea, sociologist at the Universidad de Santiago del Estero, was

responsible for most of the interviews I held in that province, a fascinating case which eventually could not be included in the dissertation.

I owe a permanent debt of gratitude to professors Mario Justo López and Isidoro Cheresky from Universidad de Buenos Aires for sharing with me their always enlightening reflections on and analyses of Argentine politics.

The Alban Programme of the European Commission supported my stay in the beautiful city of Leiden for three years. I also want to acknowledge financial support provided by the Netherlands Institute of Government for fieldwork carried out in Argentina and by the Leiden University Fund to attend conferences. I want to thank my good friend Demián Gresores, who generously designed the cover of this book.

My last and greatest thanks are for Inés, for standing by me and sharing every single day of this “Leiden experience”.

ABBREVIATIONS

AFIP: Agencia Federal de Ingresos Públicos (Tax Collection Agency)

CBA: City of Buenos Aires

CGT: Confederación General del Trabajo (Workers General Federation)

DA: Decentralized Agencies

EI: Executing Institutions

FA: Foreign Affairs

INDEC: National Institute of Statistics and Census

PJ: Partido Justicialista

PS: Partido Socialista

SINAPA: National System of Administrative Profession

UB: Unidad Básica

UCR: Unión Cívica Radical

CHAPTER 1

PARTY PATRONAGE AND PARTY ORGANIZATION

The movement of parties from civil society towards the state could continue to such an extent that parties become part of the state apparatus itself. It is our contention that this is precisely the direction in which the political parties in modern democracies have been heading over the past two decades
Richard Katz and Peter Mair (1995), pp. 14-15

1.1 Patronage as a Dimension of Party-State Relationships

As Richard Katz and Peter Mair note in their seminal work on the cartel party (1995), the overwhelming majority of the literature on party organizations across the twentieth century studied, classified, and intended to understand these institutions by focusing on their relationships with society. This perspective reflected the long-lasting dominance of a paradigm which set up a specific type of party – the one Duverger (1954) defined as the mass-party, or similarly the one Neumann called the party of democratic integration (1956) - as the yardstick of party organization in the age of universal suffrage. This notion entailed the idea of political parties as agents of social integration which emerged external to state structures in order to represent and express the interests of well-defined social groups. In this sense, parties were essentially seen as chains of transmission which went from society to the state, aggregating and expressing interests and demands of previously structured segments of society which in turn conceived of themselves in terms of collective groups. Under this perspective, party systems mirrored in the political system the shape and structural conflicts of the society in which they unfolded.

Given the dominance of this paradigm it is small wonder that parties were analyzed on the basis of the specific characteristics of their linkages with different groups of society. Mass parties, understood as outgrowths of their societies, were accordingly classified in reference to the social segment from which they stemmed and

which they subsequently represented, i.e., workers' parties, Christian parties, farmers' parties, people's parties, etc. (Kopecký and Mair, 2003:276).

The idea of parties as political by-products of social sectors has long been questioned by students of party organizations, who have called it an “objectivist superstition” (Sartori, 1968) and a “sociological prejudice” (Panebianco, 1988:3). But still, irrespective of that debate, in Western Europe and in many Latin American polities, most parties did emanate from society or, when that was not strictly the case, they quickly strived to develop strong and durable social roots.¹ Furthermore, they effectively performed a consistent representative function, which was the basis of their legitimacy (Mair, 1997:34; Di Tella, 2004; Roberts, 2002a).

However, strong empirical evidence concerning both established and new democracies proves that the last decades have witnessed a steady trend towards the loosening of ties between parties and civil society (Dalton and Wattenberg, 2000; Crotty, 2006; Webb and White, 2007). Structural social changes characterized by the erosion of stable collective identities and a secular process of individuation led parties to lose ground as channels of interest aggregation and vehicles of social integration. As societies have become more fluid, diversified and complex, it has become difficult to encapsulate them in permanent and stable political identities.

All in all, and for a myriad of factors that need not concern us in detail here, the role of parties as providers of powerful symbolic identities and agents of collective representation has been overall severely undermined. The decline in the levels of party identification and party membership, along with the disruption of the traditional patterns of electoral competition and the sharp rise in electoral volatility rates, are all indicators which highlight a new scenario of loose and contingent party–society relationships

¹ In the eyes of German legal scholar Georg Jellinek parties were purely social formations, as such excluded from the elements of a theory of the state (1980:184–186). In fact, parties seldom received special legal treatment, being observed by the legal studies as simple associations of citizens.

(Dalton, 2002; Cheresky, 2006; Webb and White, 2007). Simultaneously, in reaction to that process, parties gradually abandoned their aspirations to maintain pre-determined “natural constituencies” or “electorates of belonging”. For instance, the weakened role of class and religiosity in the determination of individual lifestyles, opportunities, and political identities was paralleled by the de-emphasis of class and religion in parties’ discourses (Roberts, 2002b). The adaptation of parties to societal shifts thus consisted of an explicit renouncement of their previous strong and perdurable representative linkages with specific segments of the society (the *classe gardée*) in order to attain weak and many times ephemeral linkages with much broader segments. These changes entailed the adoption of a universalistic approach which could appeal to the electorate at large, cutting across economic sectors, educational backgrounds and ideologies.² The phenomenon was originally reflected in Kirchheimer’s notion of the catch-all party (1966) and has since received a lot of attention in the specialized literature.

Now, while breaking stable ties with society, parties have turned to the state in order to secure their survival as organizations, both in terms of legitimacy and resources. With regards to legitimacy, and responding to the weakening of their representative role, parties sought to keep and strengthen their governmental functions. Recruiting leaders for public office and formulating public policy have been usually recognized among parties’ fundamental tasks. But if parties were legitimized to control public office and govern it was because of their standing as legitimate “channels of expression” to masses of people (Sartori, 1976:27-29; Mair, 1997:34). Now, having lost the capacity to appeal to large and consistent groups of citizens as their representatives, “... parties tend to present themselves to the voters as successful governors and

² Resembling the discourse of all workers’ parties around the world, the Argentine Socialist party proclaimed in its first electoral manifesto, in 1896, that “... the Socialist Worker Party does not intend to represent everybody’s interests, but those of the worker people.” (Spalding, 1970:167). The slogan of this same Socialist Party in the October 2007 Argentine presidential campaign (in which it was part of a broader coalition) was an all-embracing “We are ready for a better country.”

competent office-holders” (Kopecký and Mair, 2003:285). Parties relinquish their traditional representative functions but strengthen their role as governing agencies. As Peter Mair says, this process implies a mutual withdrawal: on the one hand citizens withdraw to private life showing indifference to politics and especially to party politics; on the other hand politicians and parties withdraw to governmental office, showing themselves to be professional and efficient managers of public affairs (2005). In fact, electoral competition between parties seems to hinge on their ability to manage public affairs and solve citizens’ problems better than the others (Katz and Mair, 1995:19).³ In this context citizens play the role of independent jurors, vetoing governments they do not approve and endorsing the ones which prove efficient (Rosanvallon, 2007:244; Kratsev, 2007).⁴

Parties also tighten their relationship with the state in terms of resources, compensating for their losses in mass-attachment through the state financial support. If parties cannot rely on members’ and affiliated organizations’ material contributions, they increasingly resort to state resources of different kinds. In so doing parties take advantage of their privileged position as law and policy-makers to grant themselves the conditions for their survival and reproduction. Hence the democratic state – with the executive and legislative branches controlled by elected party politicians - acknowledges parties as necessary and fundamental institutions, and guarantees them legal protection and privileges (in terms of for instance public funding, monopoly of electoral contestation, and powers for patronage). As long as material resources are

³ John Howard, then prime minister, put this notion in the most blatant terms in the context of the 2007 electoral campaign: “I believe that as we get closer to the election people will focus on one simple question – who is better able to manage this \$ 1.1tn economy” (The Guardian, 21 November 2007). Similar statements are often heard in Argentina.

⁴ Hanna Pitkin observes this phenomenon with skepticism for the subsistence and vitality of democracy: “Our governors have become a self-perpetuating elite that rules – or rather, administers – passive or privatized masses of people. We send them to take care of public affairs like hired experts, and they are professionals, entrenched in office and in party structures” (2004:339). Similarly, Dalton and Wattenberg believe that the strengthening of parties’ governing functions “cannot compensate” for the weakening of the representative ones (2000:270-5).

concerned, parties in established and new democracies are increasingly dependent on public funds and state support. In this way parties resemble a public utility, a service provided and financed by the state for the functioning of the democratic system (van Biezen, 2004).

Citizens distrust party politicians and party politics, and by and large do not show much interest in being part of their organizations, but still accept them as necessary evils for the functioning of democracy, the political system they (though sometimes reluctantly) prefer (Linz, 2002; Dalton and Weldon, 2005). And as Katz and Mair have noted, “since democratically contested elections, at least as currently understood, require political parties, the state also provides (or guarantees the provision of) political parties.” (1995:22)

As this process evolves, parties change “from being an element of the civil society to being part of the state apparatus” (Katz, 1990:146). In other words, parties become much more of semi-state governmental agencies than the societal organizations presupposed in the mass-party model. The trend is even more apparent in the case of new parties, which tend to be created from within state structures and are entrenched in the state from the very onset of their existence. Recalling Duverger (1954) classification on the creation of parties, many new parties, especially in new democracies, are “internally created” and voluntarily confined to a governmental existence, remaining as teams of leaders embedded into state structures (van Biezen, 2005). As a matter of fact the interpenetration between states and parties has gone so far that, as van Biezen and Kopecký suggest, nowadays the study of parties must be focused less on their relationships with society “which have become increasingly loose, contingent, and temporal”, and more on “their relationship with the state, which has assumed an

increased importance both in terms of legitimacy and organizational resources” (2007:237; see also Mair, 1997:139).

In light of these developments, two dimensions of party-states relationships have been studied at great length in the last years: party finance and public regulations over parties. Political parties cannot finance themselves on the basis of members’ fees or the sponsorship of affiliated institutions, nor do they find it convenient to do so. Therefore, they resort to raise public funding and subventions which, in many countries, have become the main source of parties’ material resources. Partially as a consequence of the previous factor, party activities, including matters of internal organization and methods of candidate selections, are likewise increasingly regulated by the state (Mair, 1997:142). State funding and state regulations have certainly entailed extraordinary changes in the relationship between parties and states, and have accordingly deserved a great deal of attention in contemporary literature.

There is however a third, at least as important but nonetheless much less explored dimension of the relationship between states and parties. It relates to the ability of parties to penetrate physically into the state structures by allocating state jobs or, as it will be defined here, parties’ capacity to deliver patronage.⁵ Insofar as parties are less civil society and more state or semi-state organizations (Katz and Mair, 1995:16), the degree and modes by which their structures entrench into (and overlap with) the state become a key element to understanding the format and nature of current party organizations.

The analysis of patronage as a critical component of the process of parties moving from society to the state has only recently received some theoretical attention in the literature (especially Kopecký and Mair, 2006). The modes by which this process

⁵ Jean Blondel and Maurizio Cotta refer to patronage as the “less well-known” dimension of party-government relations, “even if it is not the least important.” (1996:260)

has effectively impinged on the scope, the workings, and ultimately the rationale of party patronage have not so far been the subject of systematic empirical studies.⁶

That is particularly so in the context of Latin America, a region in which patronage has been considered *the most pervasive mode of party-society linkage* (Roberts, 2002a). In the specific case of Argentina, scholars have noted a long and established practice of misuse and colonization of the state (Rock, 2005). And yet, the transformation of parties' functions from representation to government and especially the consequent organizational movement from society to the state have received in this region no specific academic attention. Observing the actual rationale and workings of patronage in new or interrupted Latin American democracies is thus crucial to understanding the nature of current party organizations in this region.

The goal of this dissertation is thus twofold. First, it aims to contribute to the study of possible changes in the rationale of patronage in contemporary parties by focusing on the scope and uses of patronage in one case study – Argentina - from a comparative perspective. In so doing, the study also aims more specifically to shed light on the current nature of party organizations in Argentina in light of their relationships with the state.

The remainder of this opening chapter is divided in three parts. First I put forward a definition of party patronage, the fundamental concept I deal with throughout this dissertation. This definition offers a narrow conceptualization which presents the advantage of making it possible to disentangle the concept of patronage from other notions which are often used synonymously in the literature. Then I discuss a set of expectations on the development of party patronage in light of recent findings in the field of studies on party organizations. Those expectations point to a transformation in

⁶ The projects "Party Patronage in New democracies" directed by Petr Kopecký and "Party Patronage in Western Europe" coordinated by Peter Mair and Petr Kopecký are currently dealing with this issue.

the rationale of patronage from a mode of support-gathering to a mode of governing. The third part presents a first approach to the phenomenon of party patronage in Argentina, explaining the particularities and the relevance of the case study.

1.2 Disentangling Concepts⁷

Before going any further talking about patronage in current party-states relationships it seems necessary to put forward a clear definition of the concept. While clear concepts are always a requisite for good research, the requirement gets critical when it comes to a concept like patronage, which has generally been treated haphazardly in the literature. Indeed, the term patronage has - as happens so frequently in social sciences - suffered from conceptual stretching (Sartori, 1970), which has rendered it useless to identify specific political practices. In what follows I put forward a definition of the concept and disentangle it from other notions of state exploitation with which it is often equated and confused.

The study of patronage has normally been associated with the study of particularistic exchanges. The literature on political particularism draws a distinction between a traditional and a modern variety of patron-client relationships. The former characterizes economically backward and politically traditional settings. It consists of a pattern of exchanges in which a particular individual (a landlord or local notable) offers protection or access to certain goods and services that he/she controls to other individuals or groups (typically peasants) in exchange for their collective political allegiance. In that sense, political patron-client relationships are the political version of a widespread pattern of social exchanges typical of traditional societies, which had

⁷ This section by and large follows the arguments presented in Kopecký, Scherlis and Spirova (2008)

originally received more attention in anthropological and sociological studies (see Kitschelt and Wilkinson, 2007:3).

The process of modernization followed by political democratization ushered in substantial changes in patron-client relationships. These changes entailed the emergence of political parties as major intermediaries between state resources and societies. As Weingrod noted, the passage from traditional to mass democratic societies is “the stage where party patronage develops” (1968: 383). The traditional linkage, defined by a face-to-face contact managed by a powerful person, is replaced by exchanges in which an organization, the political party, becomes the broker between state goods and services on the one hand and the clients on the other. In this way, the political party performs the role of a ‘collective patron’ through the distribution of public resources (Hopkin 2006).⁸ The emergence of political party-directed patronage is thus associated with modernization and the expansion of state powers throughout the society.

Now, as clear as this distinction between notables and party-directed patronage can be, once we focus on modern party politics it becomes apparent that studies on the subject have long suffered from a high degree of conceptual vagueness and ambiguity (Landé, 1983; Piattoni, 2001:4; Stokes, 2009). This problem is particularly evident and troublesome in the use of the concepts of patronage and clientelism, which more often than not are indistinctly employed as generic labels to name all kind of forms of state exploitation and rent-seeking by political parties.⁹ It is likewise common for authors to

⁸ In this same vein, Graziano (1976) distinguishes between *clientelism of the notables* and *party directed patronage*.

⁹ A notable and illustrative recent example is to be found in the Handbook of Party Politics edited by Richard Katz and William Crotty. In the article titled ‘Party Patronage and Party Colonization of the State’, Wolfgang Müller uses the concept of patronage as a generic definition: ‘Party patronage is the use of public resources in particularistic and direct exchanges between clients and party politicians or party functionaries’. These goods and services provided by the politicians ‘cover a wide range,’ from packets of macaroni to subsidies, government contracts, tax reliefs, pork barrel legislation, and jobs in the public sector, the latter being ‘the most important patronage resource’ (pp. 189-190). In the same volume, some pages later Jonathan Hopkin attributes to clientelism an identical meaning, encompassing ‘from strictly partisan allocation of jobs ... to the selective distribution of bogus sickness pensions and a variety of

make use of these two concepts synonymously, as though they referred to one and the same phenomenon.¹⁰ It is equally frequent to find studies that do the opposite, mentioning one and the other as if they were referring to different phenomena but without offering any explanation of what differentiates one from the other.¹¹ Similarly, other concepts such as pork barrel politics or corruption are usually included as forms of either patronage or clientelism. This vague use of key terms has hindered the understanding of the specificity of all these different forms of state exploitation by political parties. Disentangling their meaning is therefore critical for a systematic study of party patronage. In the remainder of this section I draw from both classic and contemporary literature on the subject to put forward a clear distinction between these generally intertwined concepts.

Patronage

I follow Kopecký and Mair (2006) in defining and understanding party patronage as the power of a party to appoint people to positions in public and semi-public life, considering the scope of patronage to be the range of positions so distributed.¹² As table 1.1 shows, the key feature of this definition is that it limits patronage to the discretionary allocation of state positions by party politicians, irrespective of the characteristics of the appointee, the 'legality' of the decision, and the 'balance of power' between the parts. Although the goal pursued is not a defining feature of party patronage, the practice of

subsidies and development projects of questionable utility.'(410). These examples illustrate a widespread confusion in the literature. Among many others, patronage is the generic concept for every particularistic exchange in Shefter (1977); Kristinsson (1996); Warner (1997); Müller (2000); Gibson and Calvo (2000); and Benton (2007). Clientelism is used as the generic concept in Eisenstadt and Roniger (1984); Martz (1997); Kitschelt (2000); Hopkin and Mastropaolo (2001); and Taylor-Robinson (2006).

¹⁰ On occasions, scholars explicitly allege that these concepts are interchangeable (as Kitschelt and Wilkinson, 2007:7). In most cases, however, authors just use one or the other interchangeably without any clarification (for example Lemarchand and Legg, 1972; Gordin, 2002; Wang and Kurzman, 2007).

¹¹ For example Manzetti and Wilson (2007); Levitsky (2007); and Eaton (2004).

¹² The definition draws from Sorauf (1959); Wilson (1971); Piattoni (2001); and van Biezen and Kopecky (2007).

patronage has been typically associated with being a means to obtain or maintain political allegiance from activists and elites, and, albeit perhaps less commonly, to gain control over policy-making processes.¹³ The concept of patronage does not imply specific characteristics of the appointee but just that he/she agrees to work for the patron.

This definition does not suggest that party patronage necessarily excludes merit as a criterion for personnel selection. Nor does it imply that appointees are exclusively party members or party voters. A party may decide to appoint people on the basis of their skills or people without previous linkages with the ruling party, or both. Rather, this definition does suggest that patronage appointments are made 'without any encumbrance in terms of due process or transparency' (Denton and Flinders, 2006) or, in other words, that politicians have discretion to choose the criterion they consider fit to fill state positions. In that sense, it is worth mentioning that nepotism - understood as the appointment of friends and relatives to public jobs - is but one of the possible forms of patronage.

¹³ In that sense Müller (2006) distinguishes between power and service patronage.

Table 1.1: Forms of state exploitation

	PATRONAGE	CLIENTELISM	PORK BARREL	CORRUPTION
STATE RESOURCES	Jobs in public and semi-public sectors	Subsidies, jobs, loans, medicines, food, etc.	Funds + Legislation	Public decisions
PARTY GOALS	Control (of policy making and state institutions) - Political support	Electoral support	Electoral support	Financial resources
RECIPIENTS	Anybody (when friends and relatives: Nepotism)	Present or Potential Party Voters	People belonging to a specific constituency	Anybody (but typically economic firms)
LEGAL STATUS	Legal or Illegal	Legal or Illegal	Legal	Illegal
DEFINING QUESTION	Will you work for me?	Will you vote for me?	Do you live in my district?	Will you give me a kickback?

Clientelism

Party clientelism refers to exchanges between a political party and individuals, in which the former releases a benefit that the latter desires in order to secure their electoral support. These exchanges may include a wide variety of benefits, ranging from food and medicine to a pension or a low interest loan, and they can result from either a legal or illegal public decision. What matters in this definition, however, is not so much the state resource involved or the legal status of the practice, but the fact that there is a benefit which is divisible and targeted directly towards the client in order to gain his or her electoral allegiance. Clientelism generally implies an asymmetrical nature of the linkage, which takes place between actors of different status and power. Even when both sides accrue benefits and both may perceive the trade as mutually beneficial, the clientelistic linkage entails an element of inequality, which is preserved and reproduced by the nature of the exchange (Eisenstadt and Roniger, 1984; Müller, 1989:329;

Mainwaring, 1999: 177-180; Kitschelt, 2000).¹⁴ Consequently, clientelism is more likely to find fertile ground in the context of widespread urban and rural poverty and inequality than in the context of affluent societies (Stokes, 2009, Müller, 2007:255).

Pork Barrel

Pork barrel politics is normally subsumed as a sub-type of either clientelism or patronage. Yet, it is a distinct practice which connotes tactical allocation of government funds, usually in the form of legislation on public works projects, to favour specific constituencies (Lancaster and Paterson, 1990). Stokes (2009) distinguishes pork barrel from clientelism on the basis of their distributive criteria. While the distributive criterion of clientelism is: *did you (will you) vote me?*, the implicit criterion in the distribution of pork is: *do you live in my district?* In other words, while clientelism entails a benefit for particular individuals, pork barrel implies that a whole constituency is favoured by a public policy. Although the goal of both clientelism and pork barrel politics is to obtain the recipients' electoral support, they also differ in that the element of exploitation and inequality that characterizes the former is absent in the latter. That is probably the reason why these two practices are viewed differently in normative terms. Usually politicians who deliver goods and services on a clientelistic basis try to keep it as a 'secret matter' between them and the clients. In contrast, politicians who manage to pass pork barrel legislation are usually eager to present it as a political asset. The collective nature of the beneficiaries blurs somewhat the particularistic character of the practice of pork barrel. But pork barrel does always involve a particularistic exchange

¹⁴ Piattoni (2001) has contested this point. She suggests that democratization ushers in clients who are no longer *forced* to accept the clientelistic deal but rather *choose* to do so in order to gain privileged access to public resources. Likewise, Auyero (2001) sees clientelism as an endurable relationship in which strong elements of identity are usually involved. Yet, most authors agree in linking clientelistic exchanges to patterns of inequality, stressing the fact that control of scarce and vital resources enables politicians to command the political obedience of those dependent on their access to such resources. For example Taylor (2004:214) considers inequality to be the defining feature of clientelism.

insofar as it requires a deliberate decision to benefit a particular constituency – typically located in a distinct geographic area - in order to obtain its political support, regardless of the overall efficiency or convenience of the measure. As Aldrich (1995:30) describes it, pork barrel politics entails benefits that are provided to one or a few districts while costs are shared across the whole country.

Corruption

As shown in table 1.1, I understand party patronage as conceptually distinct not only from clientelism and pork barrel, but also from corruption. Corruption is another concept that is often used in connection with, and even instead of, various forms of state exploitation. However, due to its conceptual vagueness and empirical ambiguity, corruption is a slippery concept; here I define it as public decisions made by parties through which they illegally obtain financial resources. Typically, parties may favour firms by for example handing over the control of a public utility or permitting the development of an economic activity without the fulfilment of all legal requirements, demanding in exchange a bribe as a “contribution” for the governing party. Corrupt practices might include patronage appointments, in cases when these are done for the purpose of kickbacks or in exchange for bribes. However, not all (probably not most) patronage appointments are “corrupt” in the sense used here. Hence it is important to note that while many times the exercise of party patronage is largely perceived as illegitimate, a large number of appointments made by political parties in modern democracies are often quite overt and above board and need not be seen as corrupt (Weyland, 1998:108-109).¹⁵

¹⁵ In this same sense Nicolas van de Walle (2007:52) distinguishes between patronage, which “is often perfectly legal” and prebendalism, which “invariably entails practices in which important state agencies unambiguously subvert the rules of law”.

Patronage and Other Forms of State Exploitation

Defining patronage in terms of appointments as I do here helps to distinguish it but also to clarify its relation to clientelism, pork barrel, and corruption. In this regard, clientelism, pork barrel, and corruption are per definition more penetrating than party patronage, usually reaching larger numbers of people and covering wider ranges of exchanges. The point is, however, that patronage is the necessary condition for the emergence of the other three, since it is only due to their ability to control state positions that parties are able to manipulate state resources in the three ways outlined above. In other words, insofar as a party does not control state agencies it will hardly be in the position to develop large-scale clientelistic exchanges, to favour specific constituencies through the allocation of funds, or to make illegal use of public resources for private gains (Blondel, 2002:234; Kopecký, 2008:9).

Another important difference with which this dissertation is particularly concerned (and which is exposed in table 1.1) refers to the rationale and uses of these practices. In contrast to clientelism and pork barrel, which are essentially electoral tools used to deliver benefits in order to obtain the recipients' electoral allegiance, party patronage is not defined by a specific goal and, in fact, may serve a variety of ends. Patronage may surely work as a clientelistic exchange for political allegiance, and in fact that is the sense in which the concept has been most commonly employed.¹⁶ But patronage, as the literature has often noted, may very well also be aimed at other goals, and the notions of political support and control mentioned in table 1 may in fact refer to

¹⁶ That is why it is worth noting that while patronage and clientelism mean different things and refer to different practices, they are not mutually exclusive concepts and actually share an overlapping zone. Surely, discretionary appointments may be decided on a clientelistic criterion, and clientelism may be practised through the distribution of public jobs. But, as is obvious, clientelism may be (and in most cases is) exercised through other exchanges different from jobs, whereas patronage, as I defined it here, may be (and in most cases is) decided on other criteria rather than the clientelistic one. In sum, while these two concepts are not mutually exclusive and it is common to find cases which fall both in the patronage and clientelistic categories at the same time, it is my contention that they connote distinctive practices.

several specific goals. Strengthening the party organization by entrenching party networks into the state, favouring party fund-raising, forging intra-party agreements, or ensuring the implementation of public policies are some of the reasons, identified by the literature, why the parties allocate state jobs (Sorauf, 1959; Ware, 1996; Blondel and Cotta, 1996).

Political Parties as the Active Subject of Party Patronage

There is still another troublesome side of our definition of party patronage, which refers to the active subject of the action. When is it appropriate to say that patronage is indeed party patronage? Naturally, official decisions about state appointments are not made by parties as such but by state officials. But in the frame of this dissertation I am not interested in who signs the nomination decrees but in whether parties (or party politicians) are in reality involved in the nomination processes. The point is that in practice not every discretionary allocation of state positions is necessarily (as much of the literature tends to assume) a case of party patronage. Actually, party patronage suggests that the responsibility of the appointments lies with parties or party politicians more generally. Hence we consider party patronage to exist whenever the responsibility for the discretionary appointment lies with a party politician or with someone appointed by and responsible to a party politician. Paraphrasing Katz (1986:43) and his first requisite for party government, I consider patronage to be party patronage when decisions about appointments are effectively made by people chosen in elections conducted along party lines, or by individuals appointed by and responsible to such people.

For instance, if in a presidential system a president elected along party lines appoints a minister, and then that minister appoints a head of section, this last nomination is a case of party patronage. That is so irrespective of the party affiliation of

either the minister or the head of section and regardless of the goal involved in the nomination. But, by contrast, if a minister makes an agreement with, say, a think tank with no previous affiliation to the party, transferring the effective responsibility over the management of a quango to that think tank, I then only consider as party patronage the appointment made by the minister. I will not consider as party patronage appointments that take place within that agency, because they are out of the reach of party politicians and at the complete discretion of non-partisan actors. Nor will I count as cases of party patronage those in which for example trade unions have effective control over nomination processes in certain areas, which is indeed very common in different areas of the Argentine state, for example in the appointment of ambulance drivers and stretcher-bearers in provincial public hospitals.

While I acknowledge that this definition is not without problems and that it might usher in a variety of border cases in political systems with loosely institutionalized parties, it presents the advantage of allowing an inquiry on the presence of other modes of patronage which may take place in the field of the state. In fact, state structures usually are, especially in democratizing countries, conflictive arenas in which other actors apart from parties – such as bureaucrats, unions, and corporate sectors – play the games of patronage. Identifying the actual scope of party patronage, discussing the actual processes of appointments, and observing the relations between parties and other patrons in the sphere of the state, is particularly important in an era in which we witness an increasing breakdown of party boundaries (Katz and Mair, 1995:20-21), the loosening of their formal structures (Heidar and Sagle, 2003:221), and their increasing entrenchment in the state apparatus (van Biezen and Kopecký, 2007).

In sum, party patronage can be seen as a distinct phenomenon, clearly different from other concepts with which it has been frequently intertwined. It is defined mainly

by the subject of the action (the party or party politicians) and the practice of allocating public and semi-public jobs in a discretionary manner. As such, party patronage deserves, and becomes susceptible to, a separate study, distinct from the observation of various other forms of particularism and state exploitation. Such a study implies a focus on the practice of patronage, its scope and its rationale in the context of contemporary party politics. Resuming the thread of the first section, in the next one I discuss those aspects in light of the contemporary literature on party organizations.

1.3 Patronage in Contemporary Parties: From Linkage to Government?

Party patronage has been traditionally understood as a mode of linkage. Appointing people to state positions was normally regarded as a mechanism of reward to loyal party members or as an incentive to recruit potential supporters in a clientelistic mode. The question I want to discuss in this section is whether patronage must still be primarily regarded in that same way in light of the abovementioned transformations in the nature of contemporary party organizations. Or, putting the puzzle in other words, how has the rationale of patronage changed in the wake of those organizational changes.

Several scholars argue that in the present context parties are expected to use patronage more than ever before as the main incentive to recruit activists. The rise of patronage as a strategy to recruit members and activists is seen as the obvious consequence of the present characteristics of electoral competition. In the old world of the mass party incentives attracting voters and activists were similar, both based on collective incentives of ideology and values. Voters and activists only differed in their degree of commitment they assumed with the party. That is why voters and activists are described by Duverger as *concentric circles* surrounding the same partisan nucleus, only distinguishable by the intensity of their involvement and participation (1954:90-1).

But linkages between voters and parties, and linkages between activists and parties are now of a different nature. Current party–voter linkages are increasingly feeble and volatile. Parties pursue everybody’s votes and the continuous approval of the public which acts as an audience, reacting to party leaders’ performance through the mass media. Accordingly, parties take universalistic approaches which appeal to the electorate at large. Vote- and office-seeking parties – that is, all mainstream parties-require flexibility and a certain degree of vagueness in their standpoints. Hence the continuous ties that bound mass-parties to a following across time on the basis of an ideology were mostly replaced by feeble and many times ephemeral bonds which are now ad-hoc constructed for every election and motivated by particular issues. In fact, under the current conditions of electoral competition in which the electorate at large appears as a potential market for all of them, mainstream parties find it difficult to maintain a separate identity (Mair, 1997:139).

In such a context, the linkage party–activist cannot but become a particularistic one. As volunteer organizations, parties require incentives to attract members. If parties willing to win elections cannot sustain clear and consistent positions as representatives of specific groups, the recruitment of members must rely on resources different from ideology and values. As Müller (1989) suggests, when there are not ideological motivations and there is not a traditional sense of belonging either, patronage becomes a useful resource to deal with the issue of membership. Actually, Peters and Pierre contend that is the reason for the current process of politicization of civil services in Western democracies: “If there is a declining identification of the public with political parties then it may make sense for the parties to provide some tangible benefits for membership in the form of jobs; if parties cannot attract members with policy, they can at least offer jobs” (2004:287).

Nicolle Bolleyer has acutely described this equation: "... while as a consequence of vote-maximizing strategies party-voter linkages become less, party-member linkages become more particularistic." Insofar as the party must respond to the queries and demands of the public opinion at large, it can hardly be attractive to ideologically-driven activists, who in turn find "... available to themselves a range of more specific channels outside party which are considered more adequate to articulate political positions" (2006:1-10). All in all, identity or ideologically motivated activists turn out to be a nuisance for current party leaders, who require autonomy and flexibility to be electorally competitive (Katz, 1990; Roberts, 2002a). Hence parties would prefer patronage-driven memberships, which adapt much better to the shifting conditions of *audience democracy*.¹⁷ A rank and file recruited and mobilized by the supply of jobs does not make its loyalty contingent on the leadership's stances. In this way, patronage provides pragmatic leaders with a faithful membership, conserving at the same time the necessary leeway to define and modify goals and strategies in a pragmatic way (Schlesinger, 1984; Müller, 2006). All this suggests that the classic activist has not only been replaced by the mass media as the channel of transmission from the party to the electorate, as it is usually argued. In reality, the mere presence of the ideological activist turns discordant, almost incompatible, with the weakly representative nature of current parties. In sum, if the leadership needs autonomy to communicate with the audience but it still requires the existence of a supporting organization, parties are likely to have greater need for patronage than when they were organizations of mass integration. Thus patronage should be expected to be a necessary resource in order to sustain parties'

¹⁷ Audience democracy is a concept coined by Bernard Manin (1997). It refers to the existence of a de-aligned electorate which observes politics as a public which contemplates a show and decides its vote before every election in reaction to the images political leaders build on the basis of their performances in the mass media.

grass roots or, in Mair's terms, a party on the ground. Overall, this perspective reinforces the importance of patronage as a mode of support gathering.

Nevertheless, while on the one hand patronage is thought to be an increasingly important means for the recruitment of activists in an era of non-ideological parties, on the other hand the development of extended organizations on the ground is not a priority for current parties. As a matter of fact, empirical findings show consistently that most mainstream contemporary parties do not perceive a strong membership as necessary and that they very rarely – if ever - endeavour to develop mass organizations (Dalton and Wattenberg, 2000; van Biezen, 2003; Webb and White, 2007).

An extended party on the ground has not much to offer in terms of electioneering in the context of modern media-based party politics. When Maurice Duverger referred to the activists as those who performed “fundamental activities” for the mass parties it was because they were the ones “who regularly attend meetings, share in the spreading of the party's slogans, help to organize its propaganda, and prepare its electoral campaigns” (Duverger, 1954:110). Similarly, when V. O. Key Jr. thought about “the patronage system”, the usefulness of patronage for electioneering appeared manifest: “during campaigns –wrote Key – literature must be distributed, electors canvassed, meetings organized, voters brought to the polls, and other campaign chores done”. The appointment of party workers to public office was then a chief means to sustain those activities (Key, 1964:348).

But the importance Duverger and Key assigned to activists' tasks is not shared by current observers of party politics nor by, seemingly, current party leaders. Specialists on public opinion, political marketing and media, along with shady political operators, have replaced armies of activists in media-based political campaigns. The significant role of members' fees and contributions for party funding has been largely

outweighed by state subventions. And lastly, activists have been by and large marginalized from decision-making processes. As a result, enhancing contemporary party organizations rarely refers to enlarging their presence *on the ground*. In fact, as Katz anticipated two decades ago, parties have become organizations of leaders rather than of citizens (1990:146).

To recap, on the one hand scholars argue that patronage should be a crucial linkage mechanism to attract members and activists in times in which parties do not hold clear, consistent, and distinctive ideological positions. On the other hand, however, students of party organizations show that current parties are not interested in expanding the party on the ground by attracting more activists.

Patronage as a Governmental Resource

The fact that parties have removed the recruitment of large rank and files from their list of priorities does not mean that patronage has lost importance in the field of contemporary party politics. In fact, drawing from the recent literature on party organizations there are good reasons to think that the ability to appoint people to public positions is now at least as important as it has always been for parties. Those reasons, however, suggest a change in the main rationale of party patronage.

In the context of audience democracy parties no longer function as expressive-representative institutions but as the necessary agencies of government in democratic regimes (Bartolini and Mair, 2001; Dalton and Wattenberg, 2000:275-6). In the face of the processes of electoral de-alignment, parties' legitimacy and electoral success increasingly hinge on their status as efficient managers of public affairs rather than on their capacity to provide citizens with stable and consistent political identities. In electoral terms, competition between parties is not about which one represents more

people better but which one is perceived as the most competent administrator of public issues. Claiming to be the (present or potential) most efficient and experienced managers becomes political parties' key electoral concern, as well as the way in which they set themselves apart from their competitors. Hence the ability to show that the party is able to appoint officials who combine partisan loyalty with professional expertise becomes a major asset and a primary party goal.

But patronage might be more than a façade to show that parties are efficient managers; it can be a crucial governmental resource. It is arguable that parties have always seen the need to appoint in order to get control over state agencies and dominate policy-making decision processes while, at the same time, strengthening themselves in public office as networks of responsive and committed office-holders. Yet, the rising importance of patronage as a governmental resource has been noted by scholars on different countries (Sotiropoulos, 2004; Kristinsson, 2006; Meyer-Sahling, 2008) and has recently been highlighted from a theoretical perspective by Kopecký and Mair (2006). These authors argue that the changing nature and growing complexity of states have ushered in more dispersed and specialized governance structures. Processes of decentralization and delegation of powers and responsibilities reinforced those patterns. Hence staffing state and semi-state agencies with networks of qualified party adherents may be seen by party leaders as a necessary condition for the control of policy-making. According to Kopecký and Mair, "in this context, patronage not only looks different, but it also serves a different purpose. Rather than being a means by which networks of support are sustained or rewarded ... patronage becomes a mode of governing". The appointment of trustworthy officials at the various tiers of policy-making that characterize modern multi-level governance is the way in which parties can make their policies flow more effectively and be better informed, thereby enhancing their policy-

making capacity and reputation. Simultaneously, in so doing parties also cement and reinforce their organizations in public office. By embedding their networks in top state positions parties both get control over the process of policy design and implementation and consolidate themselves as networks of office-holding politicians. In sum, patronage becomes the mode by which parties adapt and reproduce themselves as “systems of cooperative policy-making” within state structures (Kopecký and Mair, 2006).

The hidden-professional described by Panebianco, that is, the activist to whom the party offers a state job so he can be “engaged in party politics in a full-time basis” (1988:234), spreading the party propaganda and canvassing for the party in the neighbourhoods, is in this scheme replaced by the actual partisan professional (or, following Panebianco, the “staff professional”). The former becomes a remnant of older times, fulfilling – paraphrasing Katz (1990) - vestigial functions. In contrast, the latter appears as a critical component of modern party organizations. The growing differentiation, complexity, and technicality of political competition and governance demand from parties more expertise and, accordingly, electoral success increasingly hinges on parties’ standing as efficient managers. The partisan professional serves the party by ensuring a critical asset, namely a faithful management of state agencies on behalf of the party. This partisan professional may not be a party member in the traditional sense and his commitment to the party can in fact be loose and contingent. Yet, the presence of this actor must be understood in a context in which, as noted below, party boundaries have become blurred and their traditional structures are falling apart. While mainstream parties marginalize their traditional rank and file (Katz and Mair, 2002), professionals sympathetic to the political projects of the elected leaders (who recruit them to fulfil governmental functions) might be a major component of current party organizations.

Likewise, patronage emerges as a critical instrument to get access to material resources. Current parties might be particularly interested in using patronage as a means to get access and control over state resources for their own benefit. In present contexts of capital-intensive campaigns, parties might try to take advantage of their control of state agencies to make use of their budgets for partisan purposes. Appointing the right people in the right places would be in such cases critical to developing those practices. As van Biezen has noted, the increasing interdependence between parties and state structures "... may create incentives for parties to make unauthorized use of public assets and to extract state resources through public office-holding positions" (2004:717). The control of state institutions is in this sense not aimed to steer the course of public policies but is the necessary stepping stone for corrupted forms of fund-raising.

While the transformations in party organizations entail significant changes in the rationale of patronage, they have also impinged on the structure of patronage distribution (on the person or organ who is in effect responsible for appointments) and on the criteria followed by parties to select the appointees. It is generally acknowledged that the transformation of parties from representative to governmental agencies has reinforced the role and the position of *the public-office* to the detriment of the party bureaucratic bodies, or the party *in central office* (Katz and Mair, 2002). It is therefore expected that the party in public office, rather than the formal structures of the party organizations, will get more responsibilities in the allocation of this government-oriented type of patronage. The conventional conception of patronage suggested that once the party took office it used state jobs to reward party members, especially those who had been active in the electoral campaign. Because of the current decline in party membership and also because of the special skills required for the successful management of public offices, "parties in both old and new democracies seem

increasingly willing to look beyond their immediate organizational confines when searching for suitable candidates and nominees” (Mair, 2003:8). Rather than rewarding party members, party leaders seem to be interested in obtaining “responsive competence” (Suleiman, 2003:215) for which the party might not be the most appropriate or even a possible source.

To sum up, recent developments in the field of party organizations suggest that parties might be paying less heed to the use of patronage in the traditional style, as a means to develop, maintain, and reward large grassroots organizations on the ground. Instead, given the dominant patterns of inter-party competition, current party organizations might be more interested in using patronage to cement their organizations as networks of office-holding managers and politicians and as a means to get control over state resources with partisan goals. In that context, the party in public office appears as the best situated centre for the distribution of patronage whereas previous party affiliation dwindles as the major criterion for appointments. Actually, I expect those developments to be visible in the Argentine case. It is my expectation that politicians use patronage more for governmental goals than to fortify a rank and file; I also expect office-holding politicians, especially the executive elected leaders (president and governors), to be the main appointers; and I expect political appointees to be selected less on the basis of their previous party affiliation and more on the basis of their personal linkages and professional qualifications and backgrounds.

The next section introduces the main characteristics of the contemporary Argentine party organizations, discusses the potential applicability of the previous theoretical developments to this case, and introduces the main puzzles of this dissertation.

1.4 Parties, States and Society in Argentina

Although frequently mentioned among recently democratized countries, Argentina is better described as a case of “interrupted democracy” (Lupu and Stokes, 2007). The country had its first *polyarchical* experience between 1912 and 1930 (Dahl, 1971:132-135), which led Huntington to include it as part of the first wave of democratization (1991:16-17). From then until 1983 Argentina went through various, albeit always unstable, periods of democracy and semi-democracy. These periods gave rise to and indeed were closely associated with the presence of political parties which, up until the 1980s, exhibited relatively strong social anchoring.

Argentina’s major political parties did not follow the typical Western European pattern of party formation, in the Lipset and Rokkan sense of political by-products of segments of the society expressing their interests in the political system. Like many of their Latin American counterparts, these parties shared a *catch-allist* (Dix, 1989), and *caudillista* (Di Tella, 2004) origin, presenting themselves as the legitimate representatives of the national interest, beyond and above internal social divisions (McGuire, 1995; Manzetti, 1993:83). In addition, these parties initially relied on state resources to build mass-organizations in a top-down manner (Leiras, 2007:47). Actually, as far as party-state relations are concerned, Argentina fits Martin Shefter’s (1977) hypotheses about the development of mass patronage. Because enfranchisement took place in this country between 1912 and 1916, before state bureaucracies had been professionalized, it was easy for the emerging mass parties to take advantage of the weakness of state structures for their own purposes.¹⁸ In their origins and conformation as mass organizations, Argentine parties made an extensive use of patronage.

¹⁸ Shefter points to the timing of enfranchisement relative to the consolidation of a professional and autonomous state bureaucracy to assess whether or not parties resort to patronage to mobilize a popular base. Shefter’s main contention is, in short, that if an independent bureaucracy is established and

However, it is equally accepted that major Argentine parties established and developed strong linkages with specific social sectors. The Radical Civic Union (Unión Cívica Radical, hereinafter also UCR) has usually been understood as the political expression of a broad middle-class citizenship, which identified the party as the champion of civil rights and democratic institutions. The Peronist Party (officially Partido Justicialista, hereinafter also PJ) has been mostly regarded as a labour-based party, which organized and represented working class or popular sectors who identified Juan Perón and the movement he founded with the cause of social justice. From a historical perspective, and regardless of their founders' goals, each of these parties has been considered to be the vehicle by which middle and working classes were integrated through successive waves into the Argentine political life (Snow, 1969; Levitsky, 2003:41; Di Tella, 2004).¹⁹ Irrespective of their origins, UCR and PJ developed strong societal identities and large followings which persisted over long periods during which no state resources were available, and during which they suffered proscription and harsh persecutions (Lupu and Stokes, 2007).

In sum, on the one hand these two parties did have “clientelistic origins” (Calvo and Murillo, 2004:743), and the two of them took advantage of (and contributed to) the fragility and lack of professionalization of state bureaucracies in order to colonize and exploit them (for the case of UCR see Rock, 1975; for Peronism, see Waldmann, 1981). On the other hand, however, both UCR and PJ built powerful linkages with different sectors of Argentine society which persisted in the absence of any material exchange, and survived as powerful political identities.²⁰

consolidated before party competition enfranchises male universal suffrage, politicians will not have at their disposal the state structure to build their parties and capture electoral clienteles.

¹⁹ Di Tella (2004:189-195) classifies the Peronist Party as the prototype of a “Working-Class Populist Party” whereas he includes the UCR in the category of “Middle-class Centrist Parties”.

²⁰ This suggests, as Eisenstadt and Roniger (1984) argue, that the distribution of a particularistic benefit (such as jobs during first UCR governments, or a wide range of social benefits in Perón times) can well

The institutional instability that characterized the period 1955-1983 intensified the weakness of the state bureaucracy, which became vulnerable to the colonization and rent-seeking of a myriad of corporate entities and interest groups – armed forces, trade unions, industrial and agricultural syndicates and – during the short periods in which they were not banned - political parties (O'Donnell 1978; Romero 2002; Rock, 2005; Levitsky and Murillo, 2005). The cycles of military coups and semi-democratic governments led to high levels of bureaucratic rotation and politicization of the administration (Abal Medina and Nejamkis, 2002; Bambaci et al, 2007:164-5).

At the societal level, however, there was a remarkable resilience of the Radical and Peronist political identities throughout that period. Unlike many other third wave democracies in which democratization ushered in the emergence of new parties, in Argentina the restoration of democracy in 1983 brought the resurgence of those same parties that had dominated the electoral arena during the 20 century. And in contrast to most new parties in new democracies, which tended to develop weak linkages with civil society (van Biezen, 2005), both UCR and PJ exhibited by 1983-4, after seven years of proscription and repression, impressively robust social rootedness (Cavarozzi, 1986; Lupu and Stokes, 2007). In the context of the 1983 presidential race, when it was clear that parties had little to offer in terms of material resources, millions of people attended UCR and PJ rallies all across the national territory. In a country inhabited by 30 million people, three million became affiliated with the PJ and one million with the UCR over the course of the electoral campaign (Manzetti, 1993:137).²¹ Political parties in general enjoyed then high levels of legitimacy, being positively evaluated by an astonishing 84

create a durable feeling of identity and belonging. If that is the case, the distinction between programmatic and clientelistic linkages is not as clear-cut as it is generally (e.g. Kitschelt, 2000) proposed.

²¹ By March 1983, this was more than 7 months before elections, official data registered 2,966,472 new affiliations, of which 1,489,565 were to the PJ, 617,251 to the UCR, and the remainder to a multiplicity of small parties. See *El Bimestre Político y Económico*, 2:8, p. 67, quoted in Mustapic (2009)

per cent of the electorate by 1984 (Catterberg, 1991:56). With regard to organized interest associations, PJ kept a strong grip over the labour movement, which Peronists called the *backbone* of Peronism (McGuire, 1997), whereas the UCR dominated the powerful student organizations all over the country as well as lots of professional – especially lawyers – associations (Toer, 1988; Persello, 2007). With the restoration of democracy the two parties rapidly recreated a large array of local base grassroots offices in every town and neighbourhood across the country –Unidades Básicas (UBs) in the case of PJ, Committees in the case of UCR - which served as the centres for local party activities. According to Kenneth Roberts, the PJ and the UCR maintained “encapsulating” linkages with important sectors of the society, meaning that they provided those sectors with enduring political identities and opportunities for continuous political participation (Roberts, 2002a). Up until the late 1990s, the strong linkages between parties and society in Argentina were taken as a given by experts on Latin American politics. Although the manipulation of state resources with partisan ends remained as a widely acknowledged and continuous practice, by 1999 Argentine parties were still considered among those - exceptional in the Latin American context - which maintained powerful identity linkages with society, and whose structures could not be controlled from the state (Mainwaring, 1999:187; Mercado Gasca, 1997). In sum, all throughout the 1980s and early 1990s these two major parties sustained well-developed networks of activists across the country and relatively stable electoral support, on the basis of their respective strong roots in society (Levitsky, 2005:71).

Party Organizations and Patronage in Contemporary Argentina

With regard to the relations between parties, society and the state it is possible to argue that Argentina has followed a quite similar process to that described by the general

literature on party organizations. Consistent with the aforementioned global trend, strong political identities started to thaw and shares of voters responding to party loyalty became increasingly volatile during the 1990s (Cheresky, 2006; Szusterman, 2007). Popular trust in parties suffered from a continuous decline, falling from that 84% of the initial years of democracy to a meagre 15% in 1999, only to plummet to 4% in 2001, the lowest rate in Latin America at that moment (Levitsky and Murillo, 2008:22). The rupture in parties-society linkages became manifest in all its intensity in the last quarter of 2001. In the October legislative elections, almost fifty percent of the citizens opted for what the media called an “anger vote”, casting blank and null votes or failing to vote at all.²² Two months later, on December 19 and 20, 2001, a massive civil rebellion against the entire political class led to the resignation of President De la Rúa. Neighbourhood assemblies and movements of the unemployed [*piqueteros*] took to the squares and the streets of the main cities with a unified slogan that called to get rid of every politician: *Que se vayan todos!* For some months “Argentina teetered on the brink of anarchy” (Levitsky and Murillo, 2003:151) while politicians were harassed on streets and suffered from demonstrations in front of their offices and homes. The future of the traditionally dominant parties was then questioned and prestigious scholars foresaw a “second democratic transition”, which would usher in a wholesale rearrangement of the party system (Torre, 2003).

By 2008, at the time of writing, it is clear that the party system has not suffered a total collapse in the, for example, Venezuelan style. The PJ, albeit not without deep internal crisis, managed to overcome the crisis and consolidate as the dominant political force of the country. In 2003 and in 2007 it won the presidency, retained a solid majority in Congress, and obtained more than 60 per cent of the provincial

²² 24% of voters cast blank and null votes, which usually oscillate between 2 and 6%, while there was some 24.5% of abstention, well above the average of 10 to 15% in a country in which voting is still legally compulsory.

governorships.²³ That persistent electoral strength of the PJ has helped the re-equilibration of Argentine democracy in the wake of a crisis that many had seen as terminal for the fate of traditional parties (Levtisky, 2005:86).

Nevertheless, and although scholars still dispute the exact degree and consequences of the 2001-2002 political crisis, there seems to be little quarrel on the deep transformations which took place in the last decade in the dominant patterns of linkages between parties and society. Electoral volatility in elections for the chamber of deputies grew from 17.7% in the period 1985-1999 to 32.9% in the period 2001-2005 (Leiras, 2006:xvi). Those “encapsulating” bonds referred to by Roberts were replaced by ephemeral, volatile, and fragile linkages built on the basis of marketing techniques in the mass media. Argentine parties, including PJ, have clearly lost the strong representative functions they had historically performed. The gap between them and society was not filled in spite of economic recovery and the circumstantial popularity of any given political leader.²⁴ However, it seems clear that the levels of distrust, disenchantment and disaffection of citizens with parties proved to be persistent features which lingered well beyond the aforementioned re-equilibration of the political system.

In accordance with the general trends described in the first section of this chapter, the debacle of parties as representative entities seems to have given rise to their increasing entrenchment within state structures. As Juan Carlos Torre observed, while parties cut linkages with society and became powerless to attract volunteer activism, they resorted to their ability to use state resources in order to sustain and reproduce their organizational structures (2005:172). In other words, following a pattern which Peter

²³ The ruthless internal struggle of the party made it impossible to choose a single presidential candidate for 2003. Hence three different Peronist candidates contested the elections. Once Néstor Kirchner was elected as president, the vast majority of the branches of the Peronist party united behind the new boss.

²⁴ Regrettably, party membership's figures are of little help to measure popular support. Party members do not pay fees and registers are never cleansed. This makes it possible to have members who have not had any kind of connection to the party for many years. In addition, party leaders have various incentives to maintain the numbers inflated (Mustapic, 2002).

Mair (1997) identified for Western European countries, parties in Argentina appear to have transformed their organizations by cementing their linkages to the state in order to adapt to the new scenario and survive.

In sum, Argentine parties have endured and its party system has remained more stable than many foresaw between 2002 and 2003. However, the linkages between parties, society and the state have changed, and so has the nature of Argentine party organizations. Naturally, the use of state jobs and state resources for partisan reasons cannot be seen as a new phenomenon in the context of Argentine politics. But what in reality appears as totally new is the seeming total dependence of party organizations on state jobs and state resources more generally. Parties which had survived state repression and persecution and emerged as legitimate channels of representation of Argentine society seem to have become, twenty years later, state-dependent organizations. In a context in which only 7 per cent of citizens express a minimum feeling of identity with a party (Mustapic, 2009), Argentine party organizations have seemingly become state agencies, whose subsistence fundamentally depend on state resources (Scherlis, 2004; Cheresky, 2006).

1.5 Conclusion

All in all, it is widely accepted that in Argentina – as in most Western democracies, old and new – the representative linkages between parties and society have become feeble and volatile. It is similarly acknowledged that state resources have become more important for the functioning and reproduction of party organizations. And yet, to the best of my knowledge, these processes have not been followed by systematic studies on the extent, the uses, the workings, and, most importantly, the actual rationale of party patronage in the context of current Argentine politics.

Those authors who have focused on the party system at the national level have paid little attention to the issue. They have mainly emphasized that, in the face of the disruption of the relatively stable two-party system pattern of competition which had lingered from 1983 to 2001, party-society linkages have become contingent and mostly built on the basis of personalistic leaders who communicate with a de-aligned electorate through the mass media. These studies argue that it is political leaders rather than parties who structure the political system. Accordingly, party organizations themselves would have gone through transformations similar to but sharper than those described in the previous section for parties in general: ideological convergence, marginalization of ideologically-motivated bases, replacement of activists by a professionalized political marketing and advertising machinery, and concentration of organizational resources in charismatic leaders (Novaro, 2000; Szusterman, 2007). In this scenario parties appear, at most, as institutional devices for the sustainability of candidates (Cheresky, 2007) or, to use Farrell and Webb's terms – campaign organizations (2000). All those changes might suggest that the rationale of patronage in Argentina should have changed in the sense discussed in the previous section, being used less as a mode of linkage and more as a mode of government.

However, at the same time Argentine politics is often characterized by its high degree of particularism, including party clientelism and party patronage (for a comparative perspective see Jones, 2005). Studies concerning the practice of political particularism, especially at the sub-national level, have emphasized the persistent – or even rising - importance of patronage as a mode of linkage between politicians and society. However, authors do not agree in the specific rationale of patronage. For example, some studies point to the significance of patronage as an electoral tool which parties use to attract voters in a traditional sense (Calvo and Murillo, 2004; Remmer,

2007). Others refer to patronage as an organizational tool, important to sustain and fuel partisan networks on the ground (Mustapic, 2002; Jones and Hwang, 2005; De Luca et al, 2006). In addition, a recent study explicitly denies that patronage fulfils a significant role for general elections, but affirms it is a critical resource for internal party elections (Kemahlioglu, 2006). Lastly, in his influential studies on the Peronist party, Steven Levitsky (2003; 2007) has described patronage as a rising practice on the basis of which the PJ managed to conserve mass support in times in which it embraced and implemented neo-liberal policies. Levitsky argues that in a context in which the best electoral strategy was the adoption of pro-market reforms which implied a turnabout in its historical stances, the PJ changed its traditional encapsulating and programmatic linkages with the organized working classes and popular sectors of the Argentine society for clientelistic linkages.²⁵ In any case, the notion that parties employ jobs and other state resources as a mechanism to gain political support is usually taken for granted by both scholars, pundits, and the public in general.

Interestingly, what becomes apparent in the previously mentioned studies is that none of them has specifically focused on assessing the actual rationale of patronage in contemporary Argentine party organizations. In spite of the importance much of this recent literature assigns to patronage practices, fundamental questions with regard to the uses and workings of patronage have remained so far unexplored. What are the goals of politicians in appointing people to state jobs? Who is in reality responsible for allocating public positions? What are the criteria followed by politicians to appoint individuals at different sectors of the state? How far do they actually reach into the state? These have so far been questions whose answers have been either neglected or, more commonly, simply taken for granted. Particularly, the possible changes in the uses

²⁵ Kenneth Roberts (2002a) presents the same argument in a more general mode for the whole Latin American region: neo-liberal policies and state retreat have favoured particularistic linkages between parties and society.

of patronage resulting from the radical changes in the patterns of party competition and party organization have received almost no attention in the field of studies on Argentine politics.

In fact, as different experts note (for instance Andeweg, 2000:130; Wolinetz, 2006), despite recent developments in that direction, these issues seem to remain uncharted territory in the field of comparative studies on party organizations in general. How much and where parties make appointments, who in practice is responsible for appointments, why parties appoint people and whom they appoint will accordingly be the questions which will guide this research.

In answering these questions, this dissertation has a two-fold goal. On the one hand, it attempts to contribute to the understanding of the nature of current party organizations in Argentina. If parties effectively are more of semi-state organizations, observing the goals they pursue at times of making appointments, along with the structure patronage distribution and the criteria followed to select the appointees, should reveal much of the essence of these organizations. On the other hand, it seeks more broadly to offer a contribution to the study of patronage as a dimension of party – state relationships in contemporary politics.

The next chapter operationalizes the concept of party patronage and presents my own approach to study the phenomenon in Argentina.

CHAPTER 2

CONCEPTS AND EXPECTATIONS

In the real world, there is no way to measure amounts of patronage
Barbara Geddes (1994), p. 105

It is more difficult to establish who is in control of the processes of distribution (of patronage)
Jean Blondel and Maurizio Cotta (1996), p. 260

Under usual conditions, therefore, patronage fills many roles
Frank Sorauf (1959), p. 123

The nature of the political criteria being employed when the public service is being politicized may vary
B. Guy Peters and Jon Pierre (2004), p. 2

This chapter specifies the concepts and presents the approach through which this research, which specifically aims to understand the practice of party patronage in Argentina, has been conducted. In the first part, I put forward the four aspects of the phenomenon of party patronage which, in my perspective, must be observed. I also review previous contributions to the understanding of each of those four aspects and stress the main gaps this study aims to fill. In the second, I discuss the need to include an analysis of national and sub-national levels of government. The chapter concludes by discussing the relationship between different types of party organizations and the practice of patronage and, on that basis, presenting the general expectations of this research.

2.1 The Four Faces of Party Patronage

The study of patronage in Argentina, broadly defined, is clearly not a new undertaking. Especially since, in the mid 1990s, Guillermo O'Donnell called to incorporate informal institutions into the study of Latin American and Argentine politics (1993; 1996a;

1996b), phenomena such as patronage and clientelism have received increasing attention from political scientists.¹ Although this literature offers important insights into the politics of particularism, enormous gaps are still to be filled if we are to understand “what games are really being played” (O’Donnell, 1996a:43) in regards to party patronage. In my perspective, six problems stand out.

First, the ambiguous and careless use of concepts noted in chapter 1 is manifest in studies on Argentina. Patronage and clientelism especially are most often used in the literature as interchangeable concepts without any clear distinction and, to my knowledge, there has not been an effort to disentangle those different notions. The second problem refers to the modes of measuring the phenomenon. Although party patronage is generally assumed to be a widespread and pervasive practice, documenting its real amount or scope has been largely neglected or calculated by problematic proxy measures. Third, who is in effect responsible for the distribution of patronage remains an unexplored subject; scholars generally assume that the allocation of jobs is totally centralized in the hands of executive authorities (the president and governors). The fourth problem refers to the absence of research on the motivations which lead parties to distribute jobs. In this regard, it is notable that different scholars have taken for granted different goals (votes, activism, corruption, control of state bureaucracies, rewarding friends) while the issue itself has not been the object of theoretical discussions and empirical analyses. The same occurs with the criteria utilized to appoint people to state positions. In most cases authors simply assume that patronage is delivered to party members or supporters but, again, little or no research has been conducted on that point. Finally, the sixth problem refers to the level of analysis. Scholars have chosen to study either the national or the sub-national level, but there are no comprehensive and

¹ Gibson and Calvo (2000); Remmer and Wibbels (2000); Levitsky (2003) and (2007); Calvo and Murillo (2004); Brusco et al. (2004) and (2005); Stokes (2005); De Luca et al (2006); Weitz Schapiro (2006); Remmer (2007), to list but some of the most remarkable.

comparative analyses on the practice and uses of patronage at both the national and sub-national levels.

The first problem, conceptual vagueness, was discussed in chapter 1, where I presented a classification of forms of state-exploitation and a conceptual definition of party patronage which I will use throughout this dissertation. Points 2 to 6 suggest the need for an in-depth empirical study of party patronage in Argentina which pays heed to the different aspects of party patronage at both national and provincial levels. I discuss the way in which I will deal with all five of these different problems in the following paragraphs.

The Scope of Party Patronage: How Much do Parties Appoint?

Understanding the presence and incidence of party patronage requires assessing its scope throughout the political system. A good number of studies have intended to tackle the issue of the extent of patronage by using proxy measures. Actually, that is the case of the majority of recent studies about party patronage in Argentina. For example, Gordin (2002) measures patronage as the percentage of total expenditures allocated by the central government and a set of ministries to personnel spending. Variations in the rate of public spending on personnel are taken as variations in party patronage. In a similar conceptual vein, Brusco et al. (2005) use municipal spending on personnel, whereas Remmer and Wibbels (2000) and Remmer (2007) use provincial spending on personnel. Gibson and Calvo (2000) and Calvo and Murillo (2004) in turn measure patronage using the absolute number of positions at the provincial-level. All these studies assume that because Argentina lacks a stable civil service, every state job or every state salary involves party patronage. Subsequently, variations in the number of public jobs or in public spending on salaries are equated to variations in the levels of

patronage. These studies take their proxies as “hard data” and usually make use of the data to focus on the correlation between patronage and other variables, typically electoral results.

The problem with those proxies is that they do not really reflect the real extent of patronage practices as what they measure is different aspects of employment in the state administration. They focus on how many people are employed or how much money is spent on salaries, naturally relevant figures for a comparative study of the public administration (Peters, 1990:13), but figures that might have a very loose linkage to the actual ability and likelihood of parties to appoint. Those studies tend to overlook institutional and legal constraints that may limit the ability of parties to fill state agencies with partisans. Even in cases in which such constraints are weak, as possibly in Argentina, many other actors apart from parties can have access to the allocation of public jobs, such as trade unions, state bureaucrats, lobbies, etc. Besides, they generally neglect a diversity of other factors – apart from parties’ will – which may affect the level of public employment or the power of parties to appoint, such as financial crises, economic growth, quality of state services, geographic conditions (as density of population), etc.²

Actually, figures of public employment or public spending on personnel may be deceptive indicators to measure personnel turnover and appointments in general. Those figures might remain stable or even shrink in a context in which ruling parties fire employees recruited by their predecessors and discretionally replace them with new personnel (see for instance Meyer-Sahling, 2008:28). Even the opposite case is possible, and figures of public employment might increase without appointments. For example,

² A case in point is that of Argentine 5 Patagonian provinces. The fact that these provinces have the largest shares of public employment of the country is – in principle - better explained by the existence of relatively satisfactory state services in a context of inconvenient geographic conditions (harsh climate, vast territories) than by the existence of patronage-oriented parties and patronage-ridden political systems.

the bulk of public employment growth in the Argentine national state during the period analyzed in this dissertation, 2003-2007, was due to the transfer of a few companies (mainly the Post and Waters) to the sphere of the state. Although in those cases only a very small number of senior positions were appointed, all the personnel became public employees, thereby raising the official figures substantially. In any case it is doubtless that variations in the levels of public employment or spending are poor and potentially misleading indicators of the real extent and scope of party patronage. At least as far as the Argentine case is concerned, as Marcelo Leiras points out, however intense the practice of patronage is, "... decisions with regard to public employment motivated by partisan considerations are a low proportion of the total number of decisions on public employment policies" (2007:79).

A less obvious but equally fundamental problem of studies exclusively based on proxies hinges on the authenticity of the data they use. By assuming the validity of official registers those studies neglect the fact, widely acknowledged by students of Argentine public administration, that those numbers are unreliable, to say the least. In particular, scholars of public administration agree that it is impossible to assess the actual number of people hired through temporary contracts, which involves the large majority of new jobs in national and sub-national administrations over the last fifteen years (Vaca et al, 1997; Bambaci et al, 2007:169-175; Oszlak, 1994; Iacoviello et al, 2003). Figures provided by official entities are erratic and contradictory, and the numbers published by different official agencies expose grotesque dissimilarities.³ In the case of the provinces, following official records – what most studies do - is an obviously misleading track. For example, while the budget of the province of Santa Fe in 2007 referred to 100,676 employees, several reliable experts and senior bureaucrats

³ For example, compare those provided for 2002 by the National Institute of Public Administration (INAP), in Zeller and Rivkin (2003) with those of the National Institute of Statistics and Census (INDEC, 2007)

estimated the real number, including internships and temporary contracts, to be around 130,000. In August 2008 the same provincial governor referred, in a public speech, to 120,000⁴. The secretary of planning of the province of Tucumán told me that the actual number of provincial employees in 2007 was around 70,000, far from the 55,000 officially registered by the provincial government. In Chaco, the 2007 budget – the latest figures available – declares 43,842 employees, but the main newspaper of the province estimates the actual number in between 60 and 70 thousand.⁵ In the case of the City of Buenos Aires, by the end of 2007 the government acknowledged that it was unable to determine its real number of employees and organized a census to obtain that data (the results of the census have not been released as of the end of 2008).

In any case, it seems that – recalling Sartori (1970) – recent studies on party patronage in Argentina have excessively focused on the “*how much*” questions, neglecting the “*what*” previous matters. Studies on party patronage based on the counting of public jobs or public spending reminds us of the drunk looking for the keys under the street light because that is where he can see best. They have focused on the “methodologically most tractable” (Shapiro, 2002:597), counting how many public jobs supposedly exist and how much money is allegedly spent in salaries, but they have hardly taken up O’Donnell’s call to understand “the actual rules that are being followed” (1996b:10) in the field of party patronage.

My goal in this regard is, by contrast, to get as close as possible to the actual scope of party patronage. Rather than the number of public jobs or the money spent on salaries, I try to assess where, how far, and how deep parties reach into state structures truly controlling the allocation of jobs. This notion, which basically draws from Kopecký, Scherlis and Spirova (2008), first implies a distinction between the formal

⁴ “Una oferta que viene marchando”, *La Capital* (Rosario), August 10, 2008.

⁵ “Servidores Públicos”, *Diario Norte*, (Resistencia), October 19, 2007.

powers of political parties to appoint and their actual use of this opportunity. The actual scope of patronage involves three different dimensions: the range, the depth, and the quantity or proportion. Irrespective of the figures of public employment, I want to establish the range of these practices. Is patronage evenly spread across the whole state apparatus or, in contrast, do parties appoint more in certain areas of the state than in others? Studying the range of patronage thus means observing practices of patronage in different sectors and institutions of the state. Moreover, I want to find out how deep parties reach into state structures (Strom, 2000:200). In that sense, I try to establish whether, in different sectors and institutions, parties nominate and control only senior ranks of government, if they also appoint mid-level positions, or if they reach down to the bottom level of technical and service personnel. Lastly, the third variable used to assess the scope of party patronage relates to its relative quantity. Parties might appoint employees in two sectors of the three levels mentioned but still in very different proportions. In that sense, it makes a difference whether parties appoint only a few, most, or all the employees in a specific area. Differences in the proportion of patronage might help explain differences in other respects, including the rationale of patronage. In sum, gauging the scope of party patronage in a given state requires, from my perspective, measuring it along three sub-dimensions, the range, the depth, and the quantity or proportion.

The Distribution of Patronage: Who Appoints?

The second aspect of party patronage necessary to an understanding of the actual practice and its linkage party organizations refers to the control of the allocation of positions. To my knowledge, this issue has not received scholarly attention in the Argentine context. In the perspective of those studies which have measured party

patronage through proxies, “politicians” are generally assumed to be rational units making decisions about the public sector size motivated by the utility that they – acting as strategic units - obtain from the distribution of jobs. Subsequently, variations in the number of public jobs or in public spending on personnel are automatically attributed to parties’ decisions as if they were monolithic actors. However, the literature on party organizations widely acknowledges that party organizations are miniature political systems (Eldersveld, 1964:1) which normally encompass different political groups, strata and bodies in competitive and conflictive interaction. Hence the control of patronage resources might turn out to be more complex than what has usually been suggested.⁶

In the framework of this research the question about the control of patronage is split up in two. First, I want to know what part, or what face of the party actually controls the allocation of jobs: is it the party as a bureaucratic structure (the party *in central office*) or is it those party members who hold public office? For example, studies on patronage in countries as different as Belgium and Chile have shown that party organizations are, as such, the major players of the game, while government officials simply ratify decisions made by the parties’ central offices (De Winter et al, 1996:172-3; Angell, 2007:299). Conversely, in countries such as France and the United States, it is the elected executives themselves (presidents and prime ministers) who chiefly decide appointments (Morel, 1996; Katz, 1996). In Mair’s terms, this question refers to whether and to what extent it is the party in public office or the party in central office in charge of patronage resources (Mair, 1997).⁷

⁶ The problem is explicitly acknowledged by Jean Blondel and Maurizio Cotta (1996:260), but these authors do not offer any answer to the problem.

⁷ It could be argued that the autonomy of the government against the ruling party tends to be larger in presidential than in parliamentary system. However, in countries as Chile or Uruguay the party in central office seems to have a strong influence in appointments.

Second, the question about the patronage control structure refers to the centralization or fragmentation in the distribution of patronage. The allocation of jobs may be centralized in an agency, a group, or a person, who decides upon the positions at the disposal of the party. It is only in that case that it makes sense to speak of a political party as a unity making a strategic use of patronage, or to argue that the party as such benefits from the use of patronage. Political appointments, however, might not be centralized in the hands of the party as a unitary actor. Many times, as V. O. Key Jr. notes, parties consist of “dispersed and loosely linked centers of power”, and it is precisely by observing the process of distribution of jobs that the “... internal skeleton of the party becomes starkly apparent” (1964:350). Indeed, different experts on patronage have underlined the significance of patronage in “... affecting the power distribution within the party” (Müller, 2000:154; also Johnston, 1979:386). The structure of patronage control might have a decisive influence on the internal balance of power within the party and on the structure of the organization. As Wolfinger suggests (1972:375-6), in patronage-ridden parties multiple and evenly distributed sources of patronage should usher in organizational fragmentation, whereas by contrast, a centralized control of resources entails a centralized organization.

Motivations and Uses of Party Patronage: Why do Parties Appoint?

Understanding party patronage entails identifying parties’ motivations to appoint—that is, with what purposes patronage is employed by parties and politicians. As Eschenburg notes (1961, as quoted by Meyer-Sahling, 2008:27), it is in the intention of the appointing authority that we can find the ultimate essence of patronage. Observing what parties want to achieve by appointing state positions also helps clarify the scope of appointments in different political settings. For instance, if patronage is thought of as an

electoral tool, its scope will surely tend to be higher than if it is utilized to recruit and co-opt expert managers to run state agencies. Yet, systematic studies on the uses of patronage in contemporary party politics are rare, and the motives with which politicians appoint are usually taken as assumptions (De Winter, 2006). In the perspective of the abovementioned quantitative studies on the Argentine case, patronage is overwhelmingly assumed to be a form of support-gathering. As Brusco et al (2005) note, most studies take off from the assumption that patronage is aimed at gaining votes. “Politicians” are seen as strategic actors who allocate jobs and spending on personnel “... according to their perception of partisan returns” in terms of votes (Calvo and Murillo, 2004:754). However, it is evident that, as Sorauf argues, “... patronage fills many roles” (1959:123; also Johnston, 1979). Several recent studies on other aspects of Argentine politics have emphasized the important role of patronage as an organizational resource. While observing other phenomena - such as legislative behaviour (Mustapic, 2002; Jones, 2002; Jones and Hwang, 2005) or methods of candidate-selection (De Luca et al, 2002 and 2006) - some scholars have underlined the importance of patronage in sustaining partisan networks on the ground. Leiras (2007:78 and 112) and Jones (2008) have referred to the significance of patronage in financing factional politics. By appointing loyalists at state agencies politicians manage to get control over state budgets. Lastly, in his landmark studies on Peronism, Steven Levitsky alludes to patronage as the key resource which made it possible for the PJ to retain political allegiance *on the ground* in the wake of the decline of the labour movement and the weakening of ideological appeals. Moreover, Levitsky argues that the PJ went through a successful transformation “... from a de facto labour party into a predominantly patronage-based party” (2003:107). But, precisely because Levitsky is focused on the way in which the Peronist Party managed to maintain its presence on the ground – and

not specifically on how patronage works-, his studies only observe how patronage serves that goal, neglecting other possible uses of public positions. Finally, Levitsky does not clearly disentangle the provision of jobs from the supply of other goods and services, generally using alternatively the notions of patronage and clientelism as generic concepts.

All in all, patronage has been so far observed as a form of linkage, developed by strategically oriented parties, always interested in developing more and larger patronage-based networks of supporters. However, as was argued in the initial chapter, patronage may stem from different motivations and serve a variety of goals. A first distinction found in the literature is that between power and service (or subaltern) patronage (Müller, 1989 and 2006). This binary classification adopts the level of the appointed position as the criterion of distinction, while suggesting at the same time that each level corresponds to a different particular goal. Appointments at the bottom of the state apparatus are distributed as a mode of vote or support gathering. Appointments at the top of the state are aimed to control the direction of state agencies and the management of public policies. This distinction between service and power patronage highlights a significant difference between two different goals of party patronage which, as we have seen, have generally been neglected in the context of Argentine studies. Yet, that distinction falls short in grasping the actual variety and complexity of the uses involved in the practice of patronage. By founding the classification on the level of the positions, it equates the political responsibility implicated in the job with the goal of the job-giver. However, the motivations cannot always be drawn from the level of the position; nor can the uses of patronage be reduced to the notions of reward and control.

Alternatively, from a supply-side perspective (looking at the goals pursued by job-givers), and drawing from several previous attempts to establish *principles of*

allocation of patronage (Johnston, 1979), I suggest classifying the motivations of patronage in three different types: Electoral, Organizational, and Governmental.⁸

Electoral Support

Patronage may seek to attain and conserve electoral support. This idea encompasses both those cases in which the positions are offered as an incentive to vote for the party, and those in which they function as a payoff for those who have proved loyal voters, in both general and intra-party elections. In times of the cadre or elite party, in the early phases of democratization, the distribution of state jobs was a common mode of getting votes (for instance Ellis, 1979). Until the Pendleton civil service reform Act was passed in 1883, several hundreds of thousands of federal jobs were distributed politically in the United States, with strong impacts on elections (Weber, 1994:345; Scott, 2006). Patronage continued to be effective in local elections in that country for several decades up until the 1960s (Rakove, 1975:111). Likewise, Yablon (2003) describes how the distribution of jobs functioned as the main electoral tool used by political notables in the city of Buenos Aires during the second half of the 19th century.

Most specialists who have discussed the issue generally agree that in contemporary mass democracies it is unlikely that patronage fulfils an electoral strategy for general elections; however high the number of public employees, it seems unlikely that it can secure an electoral advantage in a general election (Gump, 1971; Müller, 1989; Piattoni, 2001; Hopkin, 2006). Even in a country like Brazil, with a long tradition in the clientelistic use of state resources, the distribution of public jobs is not seen nowadays as an effective strategy for general elections (1999:189). Yet, as noted above,

⁸ I mainly draw this distinction from the different uses of patronage described in Sorauf (1969); Gump (1971); Johnston (1979); Katz (1996), and other works which are opportunely quoted.

a number of studies on Argentina insist on assuming the distribution of jobs to be an electoral strategy.

Organizational Resource

The distribution of jobs may also be targeted to strengthen and cement the party as an organization. As Alan Ware notes, government is an obvious resource for strengthening the party itself, allowing the placement of “party supporters in administrative or quasi-administrative positions over which the government has influence” (1996:349). Organizational patronage can fulfil three specific goals: securing the cohesion of the party, helping fund-raising activities, and maintaining networks of activists.

Party Cohesion and Discipline: The distribution of mid and top level positions in government is many times critical in order to boost intra-party cooperation, “wielding the differing blocs within the party into a unified whole” (Sorauf, 1969). A wise distribution of public positions is part of the strategy to keep a party unified, knitting together the various - often loose and heterogeneous – factions and groups that comprise a party organization (Key, 1964:367).⁹ Hence it is customary that parties’ dominant coalitions reserve some important positions in government for other party factions.

Party Fund-raising: Appointments can be a significant source of fund-raising for the party when the appointees are compelled to contribute a percentage of their salaries in return for the appointment. It is an established norm in many parties that a fixed share of the salaries of those who get their jobs due to their party affiliation is destined to the party budget. More informally, it is not uncommon for a functionary who has the power to appoint to finance his/her political group activities by getting a percentage of the employees’ wages (Weber, 1994:346; Sorauf, 1969; Ware, 1996:299). In countries

⁹ The Italian DCI before “mani pulite” and Japanese LDP constitute prominent examples of these practices (Leonardi and Wertman, 1989; Park, 2001). It is also typical in African parties, where party factions often involve ethnic components (van de Walle, 2007).

where bureaucratic systems of control are weak, certain appointments may also be directly related to the control of state resources with partisan goals. For example, a secretariat of public works, which makes decisions concerning public works' contracts not subject to strict and enforceable regulations, might be such a post. Naturally, ruling parties will be especially interested in controlling that office through trustworthy partisans.

Networks of Activists: Low-skill jobs may be distributed at the bottom of the state in order to create and keep active partisan networks of activists. Indeed, jobs as a prominent material incentive for political participation among low-rank activists – “jobs for the boys” in the American tradition - has been the form of patronage on which scholars of party organizations and patronage have mainly focused. As Max Weber noted, if politics were to be a democratic activity involving masses of people beyond the aristocrats and notables, thousands of people should live not only for but also from politics (also Key, 1964:366). In that sense patronage makes it possible to sustain the armies of activists “... necessary to induce the canvassing of neighbourhoods, mailing and telephoning, campaigning and electioneering, and other activities” which characterize mass politics (Sorauf, 1969:385).

Instrument of Government

Appointments may also be thought of as a fundamental government resource. This category encompasses two major specific goals.

Control of State Institutions: Party patronage may be used to pursue the control of crucial areas of government in order to secure the implementation of policies along the lines preferred by the party. This is what Müller means when he refers to “power patronage”, as opposed to “service patronage” (2006). A party concerned with the

implementation of its program will surely try to appoint the proper and trustworthy personnel to be sure that the program is realized. Patronage in this sense is not conceived as an exchange for support but as a requisite to guarantee the very existence of party government (Kopecký and Mair, 2006). In Rose's terms, party government requires that "... the number of partisans nominated for office should be large enough to permit partisans to become involved in many aspects of government" (1974:382). For example, Parrado Díez affirms that when the Spanish Socialist Party took office in 1982 it carried out a massive replacement of top cadres of the administration, not to reward or compensate activists, but as a necessary measure "... in order to implement their programme" (2004:253). Actually, the possibility of partisan appointments has often been justified appealing to democratic principles. The argument suggests that because only political parties are responsive to the electorate it is to the benefit of democratization to let parties appoint as much as they need in order to control the management of public policies (Müller, 2000:146-7).

The control of state institutions through appointments may also be understood in a broader sense, not just in the sense of implementing a party platform but also taking over state institutions and putting them in the service of a political party. As Blondel (2002:234-5) notes, ruling parties may try to "... invade or even take over the state" in order to be able to undertake shady deals and illegal practices at their political convenience. A common example is that of ruling parties staffing the public media with partisans and propagandists in order to offer a biased pro-government standpoint, as was the case in post-authoritarian Greece (Papatheodorou and Machin, 2003).

Political Support/Informal Coalitions-Cooptation: Patronage also works as a governmental resource when ruling parties decide to appoint to gain the adherence of other parties or interest groups, thereby reinforcing the governmental coalition. As Key

points out, many pressure groups are interested in having a presence at different state agencies: “The airlines have an interest in the members of the Civil Aeronautics Board; the natural gas and power corporations are not indifferent to the membership of the Federal Power Commission”, etc. Governing parties may negotiate appointments with these corporate entities in order to obtain their political backing (Key, 1964:333). Likewise, it is common that Latin American governments, even those led by left-wing parties, surrender the management of the financial sector to think-tanks or foundations in order to gain the support of the financial establishment.¹⁰ These appointments seek the creation of informal coalitions, clearly different from formal coalitions of government. In the latter, the partners are political parties which reach an agreement ushering in a shared government (the agreement is either previous or posterior to the elections). Conversely, in these informal coalitions the partners are a ruling party (or a coalition of parties) from an already created government on the one hand and corporatist groups, individual leaders, party factions, NGOs, or interest associations on the other. This is why many times there is a thin line between cases of informal coalitions and co-option. Especially in the context of non-institutionalized party systems it is common that the government offers the direction of an area of government to leaders of opposition parties and of civil society organizations. In many of these cases, what starts out as an informal coalition, in which the ruling party opens up the doors of the administration to extra-party allies, ends in a clear case of co-option.¹¹ Table 2.1 summarizes the different uses of patronage described above.

¹⁰ An obvious case in point is that of Brazilian President “Lula”, who hastened to eliminate the fears the establishment had about his Workers Party by appointing former president of global banking for FleetBoston Bank Henrique Meirelles as the president of the Central Bank of Brazil. Similarly, President Menem in Argentina, who was feared by the elites because of his traditional Peronist-populist mode of campaigning, handed the management of the financial sector to people linked to different private financial holdings (Schamis, 2002)

¹¹ For example Fatton (1986:73) describes how the ruling UPS eliminated opposition in Senegal through the incorporation into its government of individual political leaders from different parties. The practice

Table 2.1: Parties' motivations to exercise patronage

Type of Patronage	Specific Goal of the "Patron"	Typical Position Involved
Electoral	Votes	Bottom level
Organizational	Cohesion and Discipline	Top and mid-level
	Fund-Raising	Top, mid and bottom
	Activism /Partisan Networks	Bottom level
Governmental	Control over decision-making processes	Top, mid and bottom level
	Informal Coalition / Cooption	Top, mid and bottom level

Firstly, on the basis of the pursued goal, I distinguish between three different types of political appointments: electoral, organizational, and governmental. Electoral patronage unfolds only through low-qualified jobs, at the bottom of the public administration, whereas the two others, organizational and governmental patronage, involve positions at any level of the state. Patronage as an organizational instrument entails positions at the bottom when it seeks the construction and maintenance of a traditional-style rank and file. It involves senior and mid-level positions when it seeks to keep cohesion and discipline within the party structure. Likewise, both top and mid-level positions are allocated when patronage is aimed at the control of agencies particularly sensitive to (legal or illegal) fund-raising. A more traditional form of fund-raising, i.e. the payment of a percentage of the appointees' wages, involves positions at any level of the state. Finally, patronage as a governmental resource includes two major cases, both of which involve top, mid, and bottom level personnel; first, appointments which pursue the control of processes of policy-making and implementation; and second, appointments aimed at gaining political support for the government through

has also been pointed out as typical of weak democracies or "liberalized autocracies" in the Arab world (Brumberg, 2002).

informal coalitions, which range from the incorporation of other groups and leaders to the co-option and neutralization of opponents.

By putting forward this classification I do not claim that every appointment matches just one of these types. It is expected that the same appointment can serve more than one of the goals simultaneously. For instance, fund-raising through deductions of appointees' salaries seems to be an accessorial goal which usually complements a more decisive one. Accordingly, no attempt will be made in this study to identify a single factor driving each appointment. Instead, what I aim to assess is the relative presence and significance of these different motivations.¹²

The Appointees: Who is Appointed?

The last (but definitely not least) aspect of patronage that will be analyzed concerns the fifth problem noted above and focuses on the criteria parties use to select appointees. As Peters and Pierre have recently noted, "The nature of the political criteria being employed when the public service is being politicized may vary" (2004:2).

The issue has received little attention from specialists on Argentine politics, who tend to assume that patronage benefits party members and supporters. The notable exception in this regard is Barbara Geddes' "Politicians' Dilemma" (1994), where the importance of identifying the different criteria followed in making appointments is recognized. Analyzing the professional and political background of ministers and other top-level officials, Geddes constructs an index (The Appointment Strategy Index) which compares the extent to which South American presidents have used competence rather than partisanship or personal loyalty as the basis for selecting important members of the executive from 1945 to 1993. With regard to Argentina, the study concludes that –

¹² For a similar approach but restricted to senior positions see Kristinsson (2006).

exactly as in the other countries analyzed – presidents have had very different attitudes, ranging from very high partisan criteria (Juan Perón, 1946-1955; Isabel Peron, 1974-1976; Arturo Illia, 1963-1966) to strong opposition to partisan criteria (Arturo Frondizi, 1958-1962; Carlos Menem, 1989-). Despite the value of the index in terms of its deep contextual basis and usefulness in comparison across countries, it only covers the top echelons of the state administration, ignoring other substantial arenas for patronage practices and the mechanisms and the motivations by which parties penetrate state structures. Most fundamentally, I depart from Geddes' distinction between partisan and professional appointments. Geddes assumes that only the appointment of partisans involves a political criterion and may therefore be seen as patronage, whereas the appointment of professionals does not. In contrast, I assume that all discretionary allocations of positions – particularly at the top level - are equally political, irrespective of the personal background or profile of the appointee. In other words, I contend that the decision to appoint a well-qualified secretary of agriculture does not make this appointment less political (or less partisan) than the appointment of a neophyte cousin or a party-faction leader. I assume that all discretionary appointments decided by party politicians entail patronage, and I also argue that, in order to understand how patronage works, it is important to identify the dominant criteria parties follow to appoint. I suggest that for analytical purposes we consider four different, although not mutually exclusive, possible dominant criteria: party membership, expertise, ideological affinity, and personal linkage. I briefly outline each of them.

Party Membership: Studies on patronage have usually assumed that being a party member or party supporter is the natural requisite for the appointment. Party elites would occupy senior positions of government whereas the rank and file would be compensated through bottom level jobs. All in all, party membership is seen as the

obvious criterion parties follow to select appointees, mainly because it signals political trustworthiness and loyalty (Manow and Wettengel, 2006). Yet, the literature on party government has shown that the actual *partyiness* of a government may be variable (Katz, 1986:42-46; Blondel and Cotta, 1996) whereas recent studies have shown the decrease of *partyiness* in cabinets, a trend particularly visible in cases of weakly institutionalized party systems (Strom, 2000; Blondel et al, 2007). As Peter Mair notes, the decline in the levels of party membership and increasing complexity of government have led parties “to look beyond their immediate organizational confines when searching for suitable candidates and nominees” (2003:8). The traditional pattern of recruitment, according to which elected party leaders appoint party elites with the aim of control and party activists with the aim of reward, might be being replaced by a different one.

Expertise: Parties might search for highly qualified appointees if they are concerned with securing an efficient government. As noted in chapter 1, the growing complexity of policy-making in a trans-national environment as well as the increasing heed voters pay to governmental competence can lead parties to prioritize the recruitment of experts in different fields of the administration. In that context, parties could find themselves in trouble to fill exclusively with their partisans those state positions for which a high level of expertise is required. Resorting to independent experts could therefore be an increasingly used means to fill in state positions.

Ideological Affinity: Because of the problems parties can face to fill available state positions with sufficiently qualified members, or simply with members, ideological affinity might act as a substitute for party membership as a signal of shared standpoints and community of goals. We might think that this pattern is most likely to be present in cases of weakly institutionalized or recently created parties, many of which are created from within state structures and develop almost no large memberships (van Biezen,

2005). But ideological affinity might also be a predominant criterion when parties in government are committed to specific programmes not necessarily shared by the whole of their party organizations. To take a known example, Peters and Pierre (2004:2) note that in the Thatcher era commitment to a program of radical reform of the public sector was indeed more important than Conservative party membership in selecting appointees.

Personal Linkage: This criterion may also be important in cases of non-institutionalized parties in which decisions about appointments rely on office-holders themselves rather than the party. If parties have no extended party membership and they are not concerned with ideology, politicians' personal linkages could be more important as a criterion than the others. Also, as Geddes notes, recruitments on the basis of personal linkages might provide elected leaders with more certitude on the loyalty of the appointee and more room for manoeuvre than party-based appointments (1994:147).

These four criteria to appoint are not mutually exclusive. On occasions, they can perfectly reinforce one another to make for a suitable appointee. For example, a certain degree of expertise which guarantees competence might be a complementary requirement to the personal linkage which guarantees responsiveness. In other cases, ideological affinity might work as the defining criterion which makes it possible to make a selection from the various candidates who have the required skills.

In sum, I want to assess the scope of patronage by identifying the actual range, depth, and proportion of appointments decided by parties. I also want to establish who appoints, observing whether it is the party as a formal bureaucratic organization or "the party in public office" which is responsible of those appointments, and whether patronage is a centralized or a fragmented practice. Most fundamentally, I want to establish the rationale of party patronage, identifying the dominant motivations which

lead parties to appoint. And, finally, I will try to determine and assess the criteria adopted by parties to select the appointees.

2.2 Two Levels of Analysis: Patronage at National and Sub-national Level

Argentina is a federal presidential republic composed of 24 provinces.¹³ The provinces enact their own Constitutions and determine their own institutions of government, without intervention of the federal government. They elect their governors, legislators, and other provincial officers according to their own electoral systems, electoral cycles, and party laws.

In practice, this institutional design has ushered in what Gibson and Suárez Cao defined as a federalized party system: “In addition to the national party system, which is organized for the capture of national offices, a federalized party system contains subnational party systems organized for the capture of subnational offices” (Gibson and Suarez Cao, 2007:27). On the one hand, the institutional axis of the national political system is the presidency, which is elected on the basis of one national district. The need to compete for the political system’s major prize forces Argentine parties to integrate national organizations or electoral coalitions (Leiras, 2007). The formation of a national government also requires a national organization or a national coalition. In sum, Argentine politics and Argentine parties have an obvious national dimension, which naturally correlates with the importance of the presidential office and the national state. Hence observing appointments at this level is undoubtedly crucial to see how parties organize at the national level. On the other hand, it is widely acknowledged that the real locus of Argentine party politics is the province. As several scholars have put it, Argentine party organizations are fundamentally provincially-based (De Luca et al,

¹³ In strict terms, they are 23 provinces and 1 autonomous district, the Autonomous City of Buenos Aires.

2002; Jones and Hwang, 2005; Leiras, 2007:177). While in general terms, “federalism gives incentives for parties to organize and compete at the state level” (Jones and Mainwaring, 2003:159) electoral federalism is particularly strong in Argentina (Calvo and Abal Medina, 2001; Calvo and Escolar, 2005). The Argentine institutional design makes the presidential elections the only effectively national ones, whereas the remaining electoral competitions are organized at the sub-national level. That includes not only provincial governors - the most important institutional position in the political system below the presidency (Spiller and Tommasi, 2008:91) – but also national and provincial deputies and senators. As a consequence, parties are organized on a provincial basis. Actually, it has been common in recent years to describe Argentine national parties as leagues or confederations of provincial organizations (Benton, 2002; Levitsky and Murillo, 2003; Jones and Hwang, 2005).

The economic and administrative decentralization implemented in the 1990s boosted the *territorialization* and *provincialization* of Argentine party politics (Eaton, 2004; Calvo and Escolar, 2005; Harbers, 2009). With regard to public employment, table 2.2 shows that the 24 sub-national governments were by 2005 responsible for more than 1.5 million jobs whereas the federal state had by the same time approximately 474.000 employees.

Table 2.2: Public jobs at national and sub-national levels, 2005

Nation	24 Provinces
474.569*	1.527.741 **

*Author’s figures, elaborated on the basis of data from the Ministry of Economy and the National Institute of Statistics (INDEC)

**National Direction of Fiscal Coordination, Ministry of Economy

In addition, provincial governments enjoy a large degree of autonomy in executing public policies and running their own services (which means hiring employees) in the education, health, police, judiciary, and legislative sectors. Importantly, the ability of provincial governors to appoint people and control extensive public budgets has been pointed out as a reason for the provincial-centred nature of Argentine party organizations (Gibson and Calvo, 2000; De Luca, 2008).

Because the vast majority of state employees work for the provincial governments and because the province is the actual locus of party organizations, observing appointments at this level is necessary in order to understand the relation between patronage and party organizations in Argentina.

In sum, Argentina's 24 provincial party systems coexist and are in permanent interaction with the national party system (Malamud and De Luca, 2005).¹⁴ Party organizations are initially integrated and generally operate at the sub-national level, but they have powerful incentives to integrate national coalitions every time the presidency is disputed and, naturally, every time they need to form a national government. This means that both national and sub-national arenas must be observed if we want to grasp the actual workings of patronage in Argentine politics. Studies on this subject have so far focused only on one level of state jobs.¹⁵ This research seeks to integrate a comparative study of patronage at national and provincial levels. Its first part (chapters 4 and 5) constitutes a case study of the national Argentine state, entailing an in-depth observation and detailed description of patronage practices at the federal level. The second (chapters 6 and 7) essentially replicates the study at the provincial level and compares the practice of patronage at national and sub-national levels.

¹⁴ It is in this same sense that Katz and Kolodny (1994) describe the United States as having fifty-two party systems (albeit in this case the authors separate the national party system in two, a presidential party system and a Congressional party system).

¹⁵ Most at the provincial level. For example Remmer (2007); Calvo and Murillo (2004); Gibson and Calvo (2000), but others have been conducted at the national level, as Gordin (2002) and Ferraro (2006).

2.3 Party Organizations and Patronage: Expectations of the Research

Although the literature on party organizations has only marginally dealt with the practice of party patronage, for analytical purposes we can think of three different ideal types of party organizations clearly differing in the four aspects of patronage presented here. As table 2.3 shows, in the context of the cadre (or notables) party, patronage is dominated by the public office (more precisely by the notables), it is an important electoral resource in the frame of restricted democracies, and appointments are done on the basis of personal linkages (but, eventually, appointments end up creating the political ties).

Table 2.3: Patronage and models of party organization

	Cadre Party	Mass Party	Cartel Party
Appointers	Notables in Public Office	Central Office	Public Office
Motivations	Electoral	Organizational	Governmental
Appointees	Personal Linkages	Party Affiliation	Personal Linkage Expertise

Mass parties, in contrast, suppose a central office which controls the distribution of patronage and which prioritizes the use of patronage for organizational goals, helping to sustain networks of activists on the ground and maintaining the cohesion of the party by distributing positions among different factions or tendencies. In the context of mass parties, appointees are primarily party members. Lastly, contemporary parties (either we opt for Panebianco's professional-electoral model or Katz and Mair's cartel) concentrate patronage powers in the hands of the party in public office, have fundamentally governmental goals related to policy-making and control of state institutions more

generally, and select appointees on the basis of a combination of expertise and personal linkages.

In regards to the Argentine case, I expect to find a complex scenario in which new elements, corresponding to the model of the cartel party, coexist with traditional ones. First, the scope of political appointments has always been considered to be broad in this country, which never developed bureaucratic autonomy and whose state has historically been subject to political colonization (Rock, 2005; Ferraro, 2006). As a matter of fact, there is a strong tendency among political scientists to present the whole Argentine state apparatus as colonized by parties (Calvo and Murillo, 2004; Remmer, 2007). However, I expect to find variations in the reach of party patronage across the Argentine state. It is my expectation that strategic political decisions intended to improve the performance of a few sensitive areas of the state have led to the professionalization of parts of the Argentine state bureaucracy, especially at the national level. In addition, I expect other actors apart from parties to take part in “patronage games”, participating in the process of appointing people to state positions.

I also expect the party in public office to be the dominant face in the processes of distribution of patronage. Actually, the central offices of Argentine parties, especially in the case of the PJ, have usually been subordinated to those party politicians who hold public positions. Yet, it is my expectation in this regard that the personalization of electoral competition and the de-institutionalization of parties (Scherlis, 2008a) have led to the strengthening of executive elected leaders (president and governors) at times of appointing state personnel, to the detriment of the parties’ bureaucratic structures. Moreover, I expect the patronage powers of the party in public office to be decisive in strengthening that face of the party to the detriment of an autonomous party in central office.

In terms of motivations, according to the changes in the patterns of party competition described in chapter 1, I expect patronage to be increasingly motivated by the need to get tight control over bureaucratic structures to dominate complex processes of policy-making. Surely, patronage is still employed as an incentive to obtain political allegiance and, particularly at the provincial level, to recruit and maintain networks of activists. As Andrés Malamud says, "... in provinces in which forty per cent of the population is poor and the income is extremely unequal, political demands will look more like those of clients than like those of citizens" (Malamud, 2008:163). It is to be expected that ruling parties in the provinces make use of state jobs in a clientelistic manner. But it is also my expectation that parties at the national level will be less interested in using jobs to form large patronage networks on the ground and more interested in controlling the state machinery so as to dominate the process of policy-making and implementation and the financial and organizational resources involved in that process. Besides, I expect that in a context of party fragmentation and de-institutionalization, the ability to appoint people to state positions works as a mechanism to forge governmental coalitions.

Lastly, with regard to the criteria for the selection of the appointees, I expect to find that party affiliation is, as a result of the process of party de-institutionalization, a declining factor. In contrast, I expect to see that personal linkages and expertise emerge as increasingly important criteria. At this point my expectations differ with regard to national and sub-national levels. Partisanship is expected to be meaningless at the national level, but still of some importance in some provinces, where the process of party de-institutionalization is relatively less visible (Malamud and De Luca, 2005; Calvo and Escobar, 2005) and where party organizations may still conserve adherents and members which constitute a reservoir of potential appointees. All in all, however,

the general expectation in this regard is that “responsive competence” (Suleiman, 2003:215), understood as a combination of personal trust and expertise, has become the common denominator for appointments.

Having now defined the lines along which party patronage will be observed and the expectations with which the research starts, I describe in the next chapter the specific methodology employed in this dissertation to study party patronage in Argentina.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND MEASURES

Measurement of what?, we cannot measure unless we know first what it is that we are measuring. Nor can the degrees of something tell us what a thing is (....) We cannot measure before conceptualizing
Giovanni Sartori (1970), pp. 1038-40

Research on patronage in Argentina to date has failed to provide for a methodology that allows the assessment of the actual scope of patronage at the different tiers in which Argentine political parties operate – national and sub-national- in a comparative perspective, and which could also be useful for cross country comparisons. Most importantly, crucial aspects of the workings of patronage have been by and large neglected so far. Who is responsible within parties for patronage practices, why they make appointments in different sectors and institutions, and who the appointees are, are all matters that have generally been overlooked. More specifically, how recent transformations in the patterns of electoral competition have affected the rationale and workings of patronage and how patronage has in turn affected the patterns of party organization and electoral competition have been equally neglected issues. In sum, in spite of the importance assigned by the literature to this practice, no systematic comparative studies have been conducted to measure the actual scope and assess the rationale and workings of party patronage. In this chapter I explain the methods I use and the steps I take to conduct this research.

3.1 Research Methods

My approach combines the study of formal regulations on public employment and political appointments, analyses of career paths, secondary literature, figures of public

sector sizes, and, fundamentally, a data set of 125 interviews.¹ Actually, the bulk of my data stems from face -to -face semi-structured interviews with experts familiar with patronage practices in different policy areas and different sets of state institutions in the Argentine national public administration and four Argentine provinces. The interviews were conducted during 2006 and 2007 with, scholars, NGO sector people, senior and mid -level bureaucrats, both current and former, journalists, union leaders and politicians.

The selection of expert interviews as the main source of information has been determined, as suggested by Dexter (1970:13), by the complexity of the research issue. Experts' interviews may be an appropriate research strategy in the field of comparative politics, providing an invaluable wealth of details and insider information (Peabody et al, 1990). Yet, relying on elite interviews for data collection is of course not without its problems, mainly because the objectivity of the respondent in reporting data might pose challenges for the validity of the research. There is no doubt that respondents inject their own experience, ideas, and value judgments into their responses. In addition, some of them may have selective memory of what has happened in the past, making their judgements problematic. To verify and validate the information received, it can be compared for consistency with data reported by other respondents, or with information available through primary and secondary sources. In addition, a good understanding of the position of the respondent in the political or administrative system, or party hierarchy, and their political experience allows the researcher to better estimate the level of unreliability and implausibility of the information. In the present case, all of these steps were taken. Information obtained through interviews was validated by other sources (primary and secondary) and every effort was made to ensure familiarity with

¹ Appendix 5 lists the names of the interviewees and their institutional affiliation.

the interviewees by collecting background information and consulting with other experts and researchers.

I acknowledge that data collected through expert interviews could fall under the category of “soft” data. The obvious reply to the allegation that soft data is not scientific enough is that the understanding of this complex and by and large covert phenomenon cannot be undertaken by the use of hard data. As we have seen, proxy indicators cannot capture by themselves the complexity of patronage appointments, and very often they simply miss the object of the study. Actually, as one of the most reputable experts on the subject has put it, when studying patronage practices the real “... alternative to using soft data is not to study patronage at all (Müller, 2000:141).”² In what follows I outline the empirical inquiry in some detail, first for the national level and then for the provinces.

3.2 Party Patronage at the National Level

As the first step of operationalizing the concept of patronage, I design a model of the Argentine state which makes it susceptible of cross-country comparison. At this stage I mostly follow the model developed by Kopecky, Scherlis and Spirova (2008). We borrow from B. Guy Peters’s (1988) comparative work on public administration. Peters argues that to compare the public administration sectors across countries, one can use several approaches, including comparing the size of the public administration in different settings, comparing public administration according to different policy-areas, and comparing different organizational structures of the administration. I have chosen to combine these approaches by, firstly, breaking the state down into several policy areas. The state can of course be divided into a nearly infinite number of policy areas.

² Interestingly, Kitschelt and Wilkinson (2007:327-29) have recently suggested that expert surveys-based studies might constitute a suitable alternative for comparative studies of citizen-politicians relations.

However, for comparative and analytical purposes, I have chosen to include only what can be considered the classic state sectors plus the legislative branch, in this case the National Congress. This yields the following nine categories of state areas³:

- **Culture and Education**
- **Economy**
- **Finance**
- **Foreign Affairs**
- **Judiciary**
- **Media**
- **Military and Police**
- **National Congress**
- **Welfare**

The use of policy areas as the first criterion of distinction - a model also followed by De Winter (2006) and Gwiazda (2008) among others - permits an in-depth observation of patronage practices and is based on the hypothesis that parties appoint with different purposes and on a different scale in different areas. For instance, in a country like Argentina many people would assume that there is a different use of patronage in the sector of foreign affairs than in, say, the welfare sector. Gauging the workings and rationale of appointments in different sectors might shed light on variations and nuances so far overlooked by studies in this field, which take the state as a monolithic unit.

As a second step I further sub-divide each policy area into different types of institutions. The first advantage is that in so doing I expand the area of analysis beyond the core of civil service, which has usually been the object of studies on patronage and

³ My selection of areas slightly differs from that of Kopecký, Scherlis and Spirova (2008). I include the National Congress and leave the regional and local administrations aside since this sector is subject to a separate analysis.

public administration. Just as every policy area is expected to present different traits, so are different institutional types. Institutions that provide for goods and services, such as state-owned companies, state-run media, schools, and courts (which I label executing institutions-EI) encompass a large proportion of public employees, control important budgets, and perform significant functions, all of which make them worthy of attention they have not received so far with regard to political appointments. At the same time, the contemporary literature on public administration stresses the importance of new forms of governance in which power is delegated from the core executive to an ever increasing number of regulatory agencies and other non-departmental institutions that are responsible for the formulation, implementation, and regulation of public policy (Peters and Pierre, 2004:6). This process has also been noted in reference to the Argentine case (Spiller and Tommasi, 2007). Therefore, it is to be expected that parties and politicians will try to exert influence on the form and composition of these bodies. Consequently, I include in my generic model of the state three different types of institutions:

- Ministerial Departments - MD
- Non-Departmental Agencies and Commissions - DA⁴
- Executing Institutions -EI

The Congress and Judiciary sectors are not divisible into these three institutional categories and therefore they are treated as executing institutions, having only one institutional type. Hence my design makes for a total of 23 state areas, which will be my basic units of analysis. Each unit represents one of the three institutional sub-areas of the nine policy areas, except Judiciary and Congress (see Appendix 1 for a detailed list of institutions).

⁴ Because in Argentina most of these institutions are known as “Decentralized Agencies” I will use that concept interchangeably with Non-departmental agencies and commissions.

Mapping out the Opportunity for Patronage Practices

Having defined the policy areas and their institutional representations, I take each group of institutions within each policy sector to be a unit of analysis. For instance, if I am investigating the Economy sector, I conduct the analysis for each of the three groups of institutions within it—first, the ministries involved in the management of the Argentine economy (Economy and Federal Planning); second, the non- departmental agencies and commissions located in the economic field (mostly regulatory bodies); and third, the executing institutions (mainly state-owned companies). As the second step, I use the legal framework of the state (i.e. appointment procedures) to determine whether parties have formal and prescribed powers to “reach” these institutions, i.e. to appoint people to positions in these institutions. I measure the ability parties have to reach state institutions along three dimensions: range, depth, and quantity. To measure the range of opportunity for patronage, I analyze whether political parties are allowed to appoint, and in the case that they are, whether this is so in only a few, in most, or in all institutions of the sector (Q1a). I record answers on a scale of 0 (not allowed), 1 (only a few), 2 (most) and 3 (all). To measure the depth of the opportunity for patronage (Q1b) I observe whether parties are allowed to appoint at the top managerial level (1), at the middle administrative level (2), or at the level of technical and service personnel (3). It is important to distinguish between these three levels, because the legal situation for each level might be different, and because appointments at the different levels might serve different purposes and thus reflect different motivations. To measure the quantity of patronage I try to assess whether parties are entitled to appoint up to one third of the positions of the sector (1), between one and two thirds (2), or more than two thirds (3). This third dimension highlights possible differences between sectors in which the legal framework permits party appointments at a similar range and depth but on a different

scale. Although the answers to this first question are initially drawn from legal documents, I test the results with experts.

Mapping Out the Practice of Patronage

Experts' interviews are the main source to examine the actual situation of patronage based on the four aspects referred to in the previous chapter: the scope, the appointers, the motivations, and the selection criteria. Question 2 aims to assess the actual scope of party patronage in Argentina, and is divided into three different parts, according to the three different dimensions involved. The first part (Q2a) refers to the range of patronage and asks respondents whether political parties appoint in only a few, in most, or in all institutions of the sector. As in question 1a, I record answers on a scale of 0 (no appointments), 1 (only a few), 2 (most) and 3 (all). To measure the depth of the practice of patronage (Q2b) I ask whether parties appoint only at the top managerial level (1), or if they also reach the middle level (2), or go down to the technical and service personnel (3). The third part of the question (Q2c) refers to the quantity or proportion of patronage appointments in the sector and its institutional areas. In other words, I try to find out whether patronage appointments cover only a few - up to one third - (1), many - between one and two thirds - (2), or more than two thirds of the positions in the sector (3). Like the question about patronage opportunities, the question about the actual proportion of patronage aims to differentiate among those sectors which patronage reaches with similar range and depth but in dissimilar degrees. In other words, it is intended to account for the possible differences between patronage-ridden sectors, in which most employees are appointed through patronage, and others in which parties appoint positions of all kinds and at all levels but in a small proportion.

The remaining questions of my questionnaire focus less on the state and more on parties and party politicians. All of them ask respondents about the nature of patronage practices as they relate to the whole policy area.⁵ Question 3 is open-ended and asks about the responsibility in making patronage appointments within the party. This question asks to the interviewees who the actual *patron* is in the sector (the parties' chairmen or office-holders?) and whether this responsibility is centralized in one agency/person or if it is fragmented among various political actors.

Question 4 tries to get to the motivations behind party patronage by asking why politicians actually carry out patronage appointments in each sector. I present my interviewees with the six possible motivations presented in chapter 2 and ask about the relevance of each of them. Do politicians appoint because they want to improve their electoral chances by having large clienteles? Do they make appointments to reward loyal party activists or members in order to keep partisan networks? to keep cohesion and discipline among party factions? for fund-raising reasons? because they want to control the sector? to forge informal coalitions co-opting political groups and leaders? I do not see these motivations as mutually exclusive and thus do not push the experts to pick only one or a few of them. Instead, I try to assess the actual relevance of every motivation by assigning different values accordingly. With that purpose I ask the interviewees whether each one of these six motivations is always or almost always the dominant motivation in the sector (4 points); if it is important in many cases (3); if it is common but mostly secondary (2); if it is possible but marginal (1); or if it is not present (0). Hence in one and the same sector we can find that all six motivations are

⁵ In following this sequence I stick to Peabody et al suggestion on interviewing elites: "Start with the simple and factual, and then move to the more interpretive or judgmental questions." (1990: 453)

present, but that one is considered to be “the dominant motivation”, while others are “common but secondary”, “marginal”, etc.

Question 5 seeks information about the criteria followed to select the appointees in every sector. I ask about the four possible conditions presented above. Are appointees in each respective state sector chosen because of their party affiliation, because of their qualifications and expertise, because of ideological affinity, or due to their personal linkage with the nominators? As in Q.4, I ask to the interviewees whether each of these characteristics is always a necessary condition to be appointed (4); if it is important in many cases (3); if it is common but mostly secondary (2); if it is possible but marginal (1); or if it is just not present (0).

At this point, I also carry out a separate analysis for top positions. Although I am interested in general patterns and trends regarding the relations between parties and the state, criteria to appoint senior positions could differ from those followed to appoint technical personnel. For instance, one might expect the appointment of the undersecretary of health programs to follow different parameters than the appointment of ambulance-drivers. I thus collect data on the 194 most senior appointed positions of the Argentine state in order to focus on the criteria to appoint “at the top”. This analysis is based on an extensive search of press reports combined with specific questions added to expert interviews and *ad hoc* inquiries. I try to establish the defining selection criterion (from among the four possible criteria discussed) for each one of the 194 most senior positions. Because in many cases two criteria appear to have equal importance and because the goal is to grasp how different criteria are actually taken into account, I assign up to two factors for each appointment when that is considered necessary.

All in all, questions 4 and 5 and the analysis of career paths are expected to provide a clear picture of the reasons why politicians appoint and whom they select for

positions in different sectors, all of which should help in the assessment of the rationale for patronage practices. In all cases I encourage the interviewees to elaborate on their answer – about the appointers, the motivations, and the appointees- beyond the mere selection of an option.

Question 6 is also open-ended and concerns the changes in practices of patronage over time. This study aims to provide a picture of the period 2003-2007, that is, the years of Peronist Néstor Kirchner's administration. Many features described will therefore refer to this period and to the Peronist Party. But I also want to know more about changes over time which might be related to, and thereby might shed light on, alternations of parties in power, major events (e.g. institutional reform, economic downturn, parties' de-institutionalization; etc.), and general trends in the use of party patronage. As the final step in the interview process I leave time for some additional clarifications and comments either I or the experts might have (Q7).⁶

Aggregating the Data from Expert Surveys

I have divided the state into nine policy areas, seven of which are divided into three institutional sub-areas. I record answers from a minimum of 5 interviewees for each of the 23 units for questions 2a, 2b, and 2c, and for each of the 9 policy sectors for questions 3-7. I then compose several measures from this information. Firstly, answers to questions 1a, 1b, and 1c allow me to compare the extent of patronage opportunities across different policy areas of the Argentine state. The combination of these answers will provide for a composite measure of patronage opportunity in the Argentina state.

⁶ Appendix 2 presents the model of the Expert Survey Questionnaire.

Second, based on all answers to questions 2a, 2b, and 2c, I will calculate a mean score for each of the three measures (range, depth, and quantity) for each policy area. This will give me scores for the range, depth, and quantity of patronage practices in each of these policy sectors and thus allow me to compare different policy areas within the state. I also create a composite measure reflecting the reach of patronage practices, by taking the average of the responses for each institutional type and adding them up for each policy sector and for the whole country. Because the possible answers for the scope of patronage (both the opportunity and the actual scope) always range from 0 to 3, averages would be in that range as well. To simplify, the results are presented in a range from 0.0 to 1, which is obtained by dividing the averages by 3.

Answers to questions 3 through 6 will provide the basis for several key outputs of the study, referred to in the evaluation of the major puzzles presented in chapter 1. Answers to question 4 make scores available for the relative importance of different motivations in different sectors. I create a composite measure of the motivations in each policy sector by taking the average of the responses. The means resulting from the scores of all policy sectors express the relative importance of the different motivations to appoint in the Argentine state.

Answers to question 5 make it possible to calculate the relative importance of different requisites for appointments in different policy sectors. For every sector I will create a composite measure for each of the possible requirements by taking the average of the answers. The means resulting from the scores of all policy sectors reflect the relative importance of the different requirements for being appointed in the Argentine state. Because every motivation to appoint and every criterion of selection receives an evaluation from 0 to 4 in every sector, the obtained averages are divided by that same number and presented in a range between 0 and 1. For example, in the case of a

motivation to appoint, a score between 0.01 and 0.25 suggests that it is possibly present but overall a marginal motivation, a score between 0.25 and 0.5 implies that the motivation is common but secondary, a score between 0.5 and 0.75 suggests that it is important in many cases, and a score above 0.75 represents that it is always or almost always the dominant motivation for appointments in the sector.

In sum, answers from experts' interviews make it possible to create composite measures on the actual scope, motivations, and requisites for being appointed, both in individual sectors of the Argentine state and in the Argentine state at large.

3.3 Party Patronage at the Provinces

After studying party patronage at the national level, the following stage of this project focuses on party patronage in the sub-national arena. With this aim my approach essentially consists of replicating the study conducted at the national level in a sample of provinces. As was explained in chapter 2, every Argentine province makes a party system for itself. Hence while the first part of this research (chapters 4 and 5) constitutes a case study of party patronage in Argentina at the national level, in the second part (chapters 6 and 7) I present a study of four Argentine provinces in comparative perspective. As a result, I can also compare patronage in national and sub-national settings. Before describing the methodology employed, it is important to underscore the relevance of the provincial cases selected for the sample.

The Selection of the Cases

The selection of the four provinces is aimed to encompass a representative sample in which the most potentially influential factors affecting patronage practices in Argentina

are taken into account. In that sense, the sample encompasses provinces with different levels of socio-economic development and with different ruling parties.

Socio-economic development along with economic dependence of citizens on the state are often pointed out as affecting the patterns of linkages between parties and society. The “developmentalist” hypothesis, as Kitschelt has called it (2000), suggests that the higher the level of modernization and economic development the less extended patronage practices as a clientelistic exchange are. In less developed societies state jobs are usually an attractive (often the only) source of living and therefore a powerful tool to obtain citizens’ political allegiance. In contrast, modernization and affluence imply the existence of alternative sources of income, which make citizens less dependent on state jobs. In other words, less developed socio-economic settings should correlate positively with more extensive patronage practices employed as an exchange for electoral or political support, whereas developed societies should exhibit more limited patronage practices, chiefly oriented toward governmental goals.⁷

As table 3.1 shows, Argentine provinces exhibit enormous disparities in terms of socio-economic development. It is normal to differentiate between a group of modernized or metropolitan and another group of traditional, peripheral, or less developed Argentine provinces (Gibson and Calvo, 2000; Cao and Estes, 2001; Spiller et al, 2007). In this regard, I have chosen to observe two of the most developed districts of the country, the Autonomous City of Buenos Aires (hereinafter also CBA) and Santa Fe, and two of the less developed ones, Chaco and Tucumán. This selection should make it possible to observe whether socio-economic conditions impinge on the scope and uses of patronage.

⁷ In a book on politicization of the civil services, Peters and Pierre just assume that “in the industrialized democracies” politicization “implies attempts to control policy and implementation, rather than just supply jobs to party members or members of a family or clique”, as would be the case in underdeveloped countries (2004:2).

Table 3.1: Index of Human Development: Argentine provinces, 2004*

Argentine Provinces	Index of Human Development
1.City of Buenos Aires	0,892
2.Tierra del Fuego	0,854
3. Santa Cruz	0,843
4.Córdoba	0,831
5.Santa Fe	0,821
5.La Pampa	0,821
7.Mendoza	0,82
7.Buenos Aires	0,82
9.Chubut	0,819
10. Neuquén	0,817
11. Río Negro	0,81
12. La Rioja	0,804
13. San Luis	0,801
13. Entre Ríos	0,801
15. Catamarca	0,799
16. San Juan	0,798
17. Salta	0,792
18. Tucumán	0,79
19. Santiago	0,774
20. Misiones	0,772
20. Jujuy	0,772
20. Corrientes	0,772
23. Formosa	0,764
24. Chaco	0,755
Total Argentina	0,826

*Selected provinces in bold

Source: Ministerio de salud y medio ambiente (Ministry of Health) (2004)

A more agency-oriented explanation refers to strategic choices of parties as the main factor to account for the occurrence of these practices. In reference to the Argentine case, recent studies have suggested that one of the parties, the PJ, is more prone to using patronage extensively as a clientelistic exchange than the others (Levitsky, 2007; Calvo and Murillo 2004). The hypothesis suggests that because the Peronist party finds its core constituency among the uneducated and poor, their leaders find it more profitable to resort to patronage as an exchange than other parties whose core constituency is less dependent on state jobs. If that is the case, we should expect to find a more extensive use of patronage as a vote- or support-gathering tool whenever the Peronist party is in power than in those cases in which other parties rule. The study

covers two cases in which the PJ has been the ruling party for at least the last two periods – Santa Fe and Tucumán - and two in which parties other than the PJ have governed for at least the last 12 years – City of Buenos Aires and Chaco.

The four selected cases were chosen with the aim of controlling for those two factors: socio-economic development and partisanship. In the next paragraphs I present the most basic characteristics of each one of the four cases.

Tucumán: Traditional Society and Peronist Dominance

The province of Tucumán has been governed continuously by the Peronist party since the restoration of democracy in 1983 with the exception of one interregnum (1995-1999) in which it was ruled by a provincial party, Fuerza Republicana (FR). Peronist Governor José Alperovich was elected governor in 2003 obtaining 44.4% against 25% of a heterogeneous front led by an independent politician. In 2007 Alperovich won gained re-election with an unprecedented 78% of the vote. This, along with the PJ's absolute majority in the legislature (with 43 out of 49 seats) ensured Peronist dominance in the province of Tucumán for at least four more years. In socio-economic terms, Tucumán has in the last decades consistently been among the poorest provinces of the country. As shown in table 3.1, by 2000 it ranked 18th (of a total of 24 provinces) in the national index of human development.

Chaco: Traditional Society without Peronist Dominance

From 1983 to 1991 Chaco was ruled by the Peronist party. A provincial party, Partido Acción Chaqueña (PACH), won the 1991 elections and ran the province until 1995. From then until 2007, the UCR was the governing party. Angel Rozas was governor for two periods, from 1995 to 2003, after which – because a third re-election was forbidden

by the provincial Constitution - he was succeeded by Roy Nikisch (2003-2007). Given that the UCR won three consecutive gubernatorial elections (and three more mid-term ones), it is clear that Chaco is not dominated by the Peronist party. In socio-economic terms, Chaco presents one of the worst situations in the country, oscillating between the last and the penultimate position in all measurements of socio-economic indicators.

Santa Fe: Economic Development with Peronist Dominance

Santa Fe is one of the six cases of Argentine provinces that have been ruled by Peronist governments since the restoration of democracy, from 1983 to 2007. As it is the only province of the country in which no re-election of the governor is allowed, two different Peronist leaders alternated power during the last four terms. Carlos Reutemann was the governor two times (1991-1995 and 1999-2003), as was Jorge Obeid (1995-1999 and 2003-2007). On a socio-economic level, Santa Fe stands out as one of the most modernized provinces of the country. It contains Argentina's second largest city, Rosario, and a dynamic agriculture sector. Accordingly, it has consistently ranked among the five provinces with the highest scores of human development. Santa Fe presents the opposite case to Chaco. While in the latter a non-Peronist party governs a low-income traditional province, in the former the PJ rules over a prosperous district.

City of Buenos Aires: Economic Development without Peronism

The Autonomous City of Buenos Aires was only declared an autonomous district in 1996. Since then, it has been ruled by different political forces, but not the Peronist Party. In fact, this district is known for its historical reluctance to embrace Peronism, even in times in which that party dominated the rest of the country. In 2000 the Alianza between UCR and the centre-left Frepaso led Aníbal Ibarra to become the governor

(according to the local constitution, the ‘chief of government’). One year later the Alianza broke up at the national level and Frepaso virtually disappeared as a political force. Yet, Ibarra managed to survive politically by forging alliances with various small political groups. In 2003 he was re-elected, running for a provincial party of his own creation, Fuerza Porteña, which kept Ibarra’s centre-left ideological profile. In 2006 - as a consequence of a discotheque fire which left a toll of 184 deaths - Ibarra was impeached and replaced by his deputy governor Jorge Telerman. During the process of impeachment Telerman, broke with Ibarra and forged a new governing coalition with some of the political groups that had supported his predecessor, but without any clear partisan allegiance. In any case, it is safe to say that the Peronist Party has not ruled this district. In turn, CBA is by far the most developed district of the country, exhibiting indicators of socio-economic development that resemble those of developed countries. A comparison with our two cases of poor provinces shows that the GDP per capita of CBA is 6.8 times that of Chaco and 5.4 times that of Tucumán.

These four selected cases together provide a balanced sample of the whole of the country, including two modernized provinces and two more traditional and less-developed ones. In each of those two groups there is a province which has been governed by the PJ for at least the past two terms and another one which has not. In that sense, the sample makes it possible to analyze the phenomenon of patronage in Argentine provinces while at the same time observing the possible relevance of the two aforementioned factors in terms of the scope and uses of party patronage in Argentina.

Overall, as exposed in table 3.2, the selection of cases includes one case of each one of the four possible combinations of categories: Tucumán, a province which has been ruled by the PJ for the last decade and is one of the least-developed of the country; Chaco, which combines high levels of poverty with a non-Peronist government (the

ruling party has been the UCR for the last 12 years); Santa Fe, which is among the most modernized and developed provinces and has been governed by the Peronists since 1983, and the Autonomous City of Buenos Aires, which is the most modernized and developed district of the country and has not had Peronist rule.⁸

Table 3.2 Selected provinces: socio-economic conditions and ruling party

Province	Socioeconomic	Ruling Party
Tucumán	Traditional	PJ
Chaco	Traditional	Non-PJ
Santa Fe	Modernized	PJ
CBA	Modernized	Non-PJ

Although the group of 4 provinces is taken as a representative sample, collected data will also allow for a comparison across them, shedding light on whether and to what extent the mentioned factors – socio-economic development and partisanship-impact the scope and rationale of patronage in Argentine provinces.

Lastly, it is important to note that the ratio of public employment to population in these four provinces together is overall very similar to the ratio registered for the 24 Argentine provinces. Table 3.3 shows that by 2004, CBA, Chaco, Santa Fe and Tucumán together constituted 21.7% of the Argentine population, while their public administrations encompassed a similar 22.5% of the total provincial employment of the country.

⁸ The specific traits of each of these four cases will be discussed in more detail in chapter 5

Table 3.3: Provincial public employees and population in selected provinces

	Provincial Public Employees	Population	Employees (% of population)
Four selected provinces	310,762	8,588,489	21.77
Total Argentina	1,427,215	38,226,051	22.46

Source: National Direction of Fiscal Coordination, Ministry of Economy

State Sectors

As I did with the analysis of the national state, also in this case I start by mapping out the provincial public sectors. At this level, however, I concentrate my exploration in four types of institutions which, together, are expected to provide a clear sample of the situation. The institutional types are:

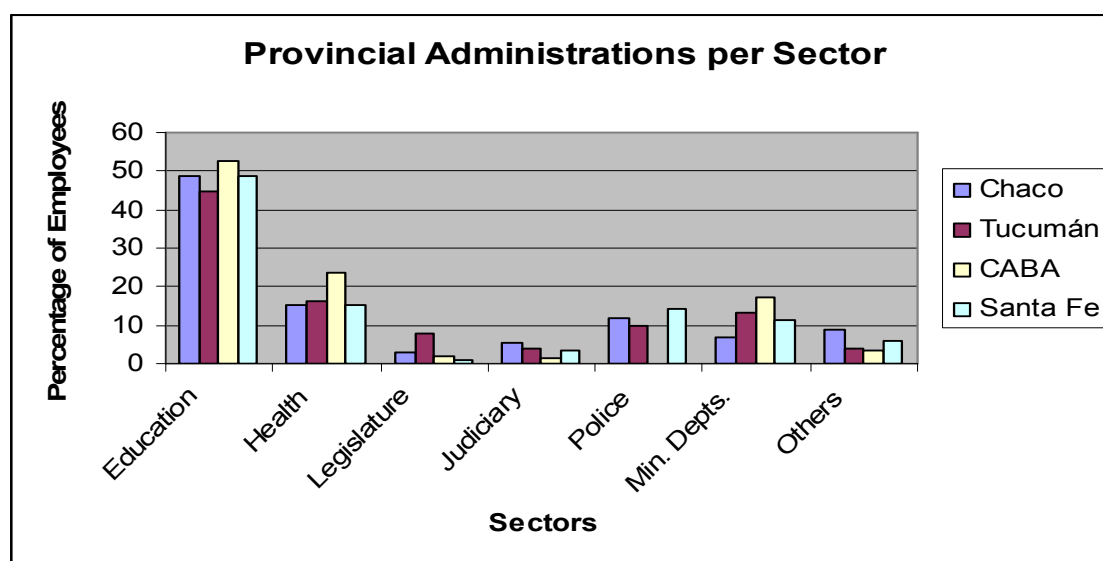
- **Ministries**
- **Schools**
- **Legislatures**
- **Health**

Because provincial states have very different structures from national ones, a study at this level must also involve different institutional criteria of distinction. Naturally, this makes the comparison between national and sub-national level less parsimonious, but structural conditions make it impossible to apply the same model for national and sub-national levels of governments. For instance, provincial public administrations do not include Foreign Services, nor have they military forces (in the case of the City of Buenos Aires there are no police forces either). On occasion they do not have media sectors or they have only a departmental secretariat of press. In addition, in clear contrast to the national state, all sub-national governments have very large

teaching and health staffs, which compound in all cases far more than 50 per cent of the provincial employees.

Hence to study provincial administrations I focus on four types of institutions particularly relevant for the understanding of sub-national state structures: Education (or more precisely, teaching staffs), health, ministerial departments, and legislatures. As shown in figure 3.1, education is the largest sector of the four provincial states (52.7% of the employees in CBA, 48.91 in Santa Fe, 48.47% in Chaco, and 44.68 in Tucumán). It is, at the same time, the one expected to be the freest from patronage practices (Rivas, 2004).

Figure 3.1: Distribution of Jobs across Sectors of Provincial States



Source: Own elaboration on the basis of 2004 Provincial Budgets as published in the provincial official websites

Health is, in all cases, the second largest sector (23.6% in CBA, 16.43 in Tucumán, 15.2 in Santa Fe, and 15.18 in Chaco). Legislatures are also important to be observed. Their size is relatively small (7.69% in Tucumán, 2.94% in Chaco, 1.79 in CBA and 1.03 in Santa Fe), but they are commonly thought as the locus of patronage. Lastly, ministerial departments include a significant percentage of these provinces'

personnel (17.12% in CBA, 13.24% in Tucumán, 11.29% in Santa Fe, and 7.11% in Chaco), and they are particularly important as the institutions where political decisions are made and implemented. Together, these four sectors encompass a considerable majority of the provincial employees (95.21 in CBA, 82.04% in Tucumán, 76.43% in Santa Fe, and 73.7% in Chaco) and provide a representative sample of provincial public institutions.

In studying these four categories I cover the vast majority of provincial public employees. Remarkably, this classification includes both the sector which - in principle and according to the literature and press reports - is expected to be more open to patronage practices, i.e. the legislature, and the one which on the same basis is expected to have higher levels of protection, i.e. education (for example Rivas, 2004).

Methodology

Experts' interviews are also the main source of data here, and the questionnaire essentially replicates that of the national level. The only difference is that instead of including the institutional types in the questions about the reach and depth I ask the interviewees more generally whether decentralized agencies exhibit particularly different traits than those of the ministries. Experts' interviews make it possible to gain insight into the scope, the structure of control, and the motivations of patronage as well into the characteristics of the appointees in every one of the four cases.

The data obtained from interviews will usher in similar composite measures to those of the national level. I first measure the opportunity parties have to appoint according to provincial legal systems. Questions 1a, 1b, and 1c permit a comparison of the extent of patronage opportunity across sectors in each province and across provinces. The combination of these answers will provide for a composite measure of

patronage opportunity in the provinces. The rest of the questions refer to the actual practice of patronage. Based on all answers to questions 2a, 2b, and 2c, I will calculate a mean score for each of the three aspects of the actual scope of patronage (range, depth, and quantity) for each policy area in every province, which will allow for a comparison across provinces. Finally, answers to questions 3 through 6 will provide measures and the basis for the analysis of the structure of control (who appoints), motivations (why they appoint), and characteristics of the appointees (who is appointed) in each of the studied provinces and in each of the analyzed policy sectors.

All in all, the data and the answers more generally will allow for a well-informed comparison of the scope, the appointers, the motivations, and the selection criteria of party patronage between sub-national and national parties.

3.4 Conclusion

This project, based on the theoretical and methodological perspectives outlined in this and the previous two chapters, constitutes the first systematic empirical study of party patronage in Argentina which goes beyond the number of jobs and amount of money spent in salaries. As such, it runs through a by and large uncharted territory and has few real references for comparison. In these circumstances, the study expects to attain a comprehensive understanding of the practice of party patronage in Argentina.

It encompasses a conceptual analysis of the phenomenon and extensive empirical research mostly based on a large set of expert interviews on the extent to which political parties make use of political appointments and the motivations that lead them to appoint. The empirical research also sheds light on the people appointed by parties and on the linkages between nominators and appointees. In so doing, this research hopes to make a substantial contribution to the study of political parties as

organizations in Argentina, and to the study of party patronage and its impact on party organizations in a more general and comparative sense. In the line of the argument put forward in chapter 1, by observing the practice of patronage, as well as its connection with other forms of state exploitation, this research aims to shed light on the internal dynamics of Argentine parties' organizations, both at the national and provincial level.

More specifically, the research aims to measure the extent of the opportunity and actual scope of party patronage, at the national and provincial levels. It aims also to offer an in-depth description of the structure of patronage control, specifying who is responsible for patronage appointments at national and provincial levels in comparative perspective. In addition, it will present, in comparative perspective, quantitative measures and in-depth analyses of the motivations of political parties to make appointments in the public administration and of the main criteria followed by parties to appoint people to state positions, in different areas and at different levels, both at national and provincial administrations. The study will also provide an analysis of the criteria followed by the ruling party to appoint the most senior 194 positions of the Argentine national state during Kirchner administration. Lastly, the research is intended to identify possible changes in the characteristics of patronage practices over the last 25 years.

In the next chapter I start with the observation of patronage practices in Argentina by presenting the results and analysis of the scope of party patronage at the national level.

CHAPTER 4

PARTY PATRONAGE AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL: OPPORTUNITIES AND SCOPE

*All its inhabitants are equal before the law, and admissible to
employment without any other requirement than their ability*
Constitution of the Argentine Nation, Section 16

In the last three decades party organizations have changed their centre of gravity, moving from society to the state. This change has taken place in such a way that it is in the study of their relations with state structures that we can best understand what party organizations actually are (Mair, 1997:139). The extent to which, the modes in which, and the motivations with which parties penetrate state structures via appointments are crucial dimensions to gauge this relationship. In this and the next chapters I focus on the relations between parties and the national public sector in Argentina. In this chapter 4 I analyze the national state structures in order to discuss the results of my empirical analysis on the scope of patronage practices.

Studies on public administration have usually underlined the weakness, lack of autonomy, high politicization, and low performance of Argentine state bureaucracies (Oszlak, 1994; Rauch and Evans, 1999; Iacoviello et al, 2003; Spiller and Tommasi, 2007). The same notion of a professional civil service has been recently characterized as a “very precarious idea” in light of contemporary Argentine history (Ferraro, 2006). It is on the basis of those assertions that political scientists tend to equate the number of state jobs to cases of party patronage, assuming the total control of parties over all state agencies.¹ By doing so, they have neglected the crucial issue of the actual scope of party patronage. In fact, as explained in chapter 1, there are good reasons to think that current

¹ See for instance Gibson and Calvo, 2000; Remmer and Wibbels, 2000; Calvo and Murillo, 2004; Remmer, 2007

parties are either unable to or uninterested in pursuing the mass-style patronage which characterized mass parties' politics. In any case, a clear understanding of party patronage requires a focused observation of the phenomenon. Accordingly, this chapter attempts to establish to what extent state structures are effectively filled through party patronage. As explained in chapter 2, the scope of patronage is analyzed through three dimensions, namely the range of sectors and institutions effectively reached, the depth of patronage appointments, and the quantity, meaning the proportion of jobs effectively appointed by parties in different sectors. The analysis covers not only ministerial departments (as most studies usually do) but also a wide range of non-departmental agencies and commissions (usually known in Argentina as decentralized agencies) and institutions which provide goods and services to the population (which I call executing institutions). The results, as is explained at length in chapter 3, are primarily obtained from interviews with experts on different areas of the Argentine state. The values assigned to the range, depth and quantity of patronage by the different experts are aggregated in composite measures, which are contrasted with specialized literature. Lastly, the study focuses on the period 2003-2007, the term of Peronist President Néstor Kirchner, although I try to assess and highlight whether the practices discussed indicate regular patterns.

The chapter proceeds as follows. The first section presents basic characteristics of the Argentine national administration. In the second, I describe the powers granted to parties by the legal system to appoint, which was defined in chapter 2 as the opportunities for party patronage. The third and longest part of the chapter analyzes the actual scope of party patronage, describing the range, the depth, and the quantity or proportion of party appointments across the nine policy areas and different institutional types discussed in chapter 3. In the conclusion I summarize the findings and suggest

four main explanatory factors which account for the scope of patronage in the Argentine state.

4.1 The Argentine National Bureaucracy

By 2005 approximately 474,600 people were employed by the Argentine national state.² Figures of public employment had shown very slight fluctuations between 1960 and 1989, oscillating between 850,000 and 1.1 million employees (Orlansky, 1989). Over the course of the next decade, the size of the national state shrunk strikingly due to fiscal adjustment, privatization of public companies, and decentralization policies. In this last regard, education and health - two of the biggest state sectors - were transferred from federal to provincial administrations. According to López and Zeller (2006), the national public administration dwindled between 1989 and 2001 from 874,182 agents to 289,237 (excluding the Congress, the Judiciary, and university personnel), remained stable in the following years and showed a tendency to grow starting in 2003.

These 474,600 public employees are distributed among the three branches of power. As illustrated by table 4.1, the largest share, 91.9%, corresponds to institutions under the orbit of executive power, which includes the presidential office, the chief of the ministerial cabinet's office, ten ministries, 82 decentralized agencies, and a small set of state-owned companies. The Judiciary, including the Supreme Court, Lower Tribunals, and the Council of Magistracy, has 5.4% of the state employees, whereas the remaining 2.6% of jobs belong to the Legislative Power, which comprises a Chamber of

² As explained in chapter 2, information about public employment in Argentina is fuzzy. A simple comparison across official sources shows that official figures are inconsistent. Figures provided by the Ministry of Economy differ largely from those of the National Institute of Statistics and Census (INDEC), which in turn publishes contradictory information, providing different numbers in different links of its website. Hence I choose to use the figures published by INDEC which, in my discretionary opinion, make more sense, assuming that they constitute approximate data, and with the aim of illustrating the relative size of different levels (national, provincial), sectors, and institutions.

Senators, a Chamber of Deputies and a few other smaller institutions such as the Auditing Office and the Ombudsman.

Table 4.1: Size of the Argentine state by branch of government

Branch of Government	Employees 2005
Executive	443,171 (93.38%)
Legislative	10,243 (2.16%)
Judiciary	21,155 (4.47%)
Total	474,569 (100%)

Source: Own elaboration on the basis of figures provided by Ministry of Economy, Ministry of Education, and INDEC websites.

Because the research is organized in terms of policy sectors and institutional types, it is important to know the number of jobs involved in each one of them. Table 4.2 shows the distribution of jobs in the nine policy sectors and institutional types.

Table 4.2: Employees per sector and institutional type³

SECTOR	MINISTERIAL DEPTS	NDACs	EXECUTING AGENCIES	TOTAL
CONGRESS			10,200	10,200
CULTURE & EDUCATION	3,680	450	94,770	98,900
ECONOMY	8,250	14,550	26,400	49,200
FINANCE	370	21,300	19,200	40,870
FA	2,350	150	1,300	3,800
JUDICIARY			21,200	21,200
MEDIA	350	650	2,400	3,400
SECURITY	4,100	4,300	203,700	212,100
WELFARE	8,300	1,100	25,500	34,900
TOTAL	27,400 (7%)	42,500 (11%)	404,670 (82%)	474,570 (100%)

Source: Own elaboration on the basis of figures provided by Ministry of Economy, Ministry of Education, and INDEC websites.

Security (which includes military and police forces) is by far the largest sector, with 212,000 employees. Culture and Education is the second largest with 98,900, mostly due to the more than 85,000 employees of national universities.⁴ Those two sectors together make for more than 65 per cent of the total of national state employees.

Media and Foreign Affairs, by contrast, are the smallest, with 3,400 and 3,805 employees respectively. The other sectors range from 49,200 (Economy) to 13,150

³ The figures of the table are rounded. Rather than providing the exact number the table is aimed to give an idea of the relative size of different sectors and institutional types.

⁴ The personnel of national universities encompass both teaching and non-teaching staffs. For the teaching staff I included all those professors and instructors with “exclusive” and “semi-exclusive” positions and did not include those with “simple” positions.

(Culture) employees. Appendix 1 shows the detailed composition of policy sectors and institutional types in terms of state agencies and number of personnel.

4.2 The Opportunities for Party Patronage at the National State

Argentine National Constitution establishes *ability* as the principle for access to public employment. Innumerable laws and decrees have historically regulated this constitutional principle by requiring open contests and exams to join state institutions. Particularly since the restoration of democracy, in 1983, public sector reform has repeatedly been on the political agenda and several attempts have been made to professionalize the national civil service. Yet, all those projects and regulations have consistently failed, converting Argentina into what Oscar Oszlak called *a graveyard of projects of administrative reform* (1999). The reformist attempts encompassed diverse projects ranging from the creation of highly qualified elite corps to articulate the relationship between political authorities and permanent staffs – such as the Government Administrators Corps (*Cuerpo de Administradores Gubernamentales*) initiated in 1984 shortly after the restoration of democracy, and the State Economists Corps (*Cuerpo de Economistas del Estado*) created in 1995 - to the establishment of a full-fledged professional civil service career, as was intended with the SINAPA reform in the early 1990s. Although all of these projects were announced as the cornerstone of a new and professional management of the state, they all eventually lost political support and were discontinued or simply forgotten.⁵ Consequently, Argentine governing parties are allowed to reach, although in different modes and to different extents, all the institutional sectors of all of our nine policy areas.

⁵ For a brief summary of the latest attempts to professionalize the civil service, see Spiller and Tommasi (2007:177-181). The public debate on the need to professionalize the public administration continues. To take an example, during 2007 the most read newspaper of the country, *Clarín*, published a series of articles on the issue written by some of the most reputable experts on public administration in Argentina.

In principle, civil service regulations do exist. The National System of Administrative Profession, SINAPA⁶, formally establishes that access to and promotion in the public administration is conducted through strict competitive examinations. According to the SINAPA regulations, only top positions (the so called “superior political authorities”) are discretionally appointed. Ministers, secretaries, and undersecretaries in the ministries, as well as directors and presidents of the vast majority of non-departmental – or decentralized – agencies and state-owned companies, are in that sense political appointments. Each one of these authorities is in turn entitled to set up their own cabinet staffs of “superior advisers”, for which they get a variable amount of money to distribute as they consider fit.⁷ Below those superior authorities and their cabinets, every employee from national and general-directors at the top to the last auxiliary employee at the bottom should be hired and promoted on the basis of exams and qualifications (Abal Medina and Nejamkis, 2002). Some decentralized agencies have their own similar regulations: Appointments for top positions (directors or presidents, usually fulfilling certain conditions such as having a university degree in the field) and examinations for the rest.⁸

Nevertheless, those regulations overlap with and are in practice bypassed by other legal instruments entitling political authorities to reach mid and bottom levels of almost all ministries and many decentralized agencies (for a description of top, mid and bottom positions for the different institutional types see Appendix 3). As had usually been the case with other reforms, the loophole emerged along with the law. In 1990,

⁶ Decree of the Executive power 993/1991.

⁷ Every superior authority has discretion to decide how to spend this money. Ferraro (2006), based on the public expenditures on this item calculates an average of five employees per every superior authority. My interviews suggest that that number is in general terms correct.

⁸ State personnel are regulated by 56 different regimes of employment, with many agencies having their own specific regulations (i.e., tax collection agency-DGI, national scientific commission-CONICET, Gas Regulatory Agency-ENARGAS, etc.). Other norms regulate the labour conditions of public employees across different agencies, chiefly based on the nature of the activity (i.e. medical doctors of public hospitals). López and Zeller (2006).

almost simultaneously with the implementation of the SINAPA reform, the government enacted decree 435/90 which, alleging financial restrictions, “froze” all vacancies in the public administration. The measure aimed to limit public spending by preventing the recruitment of new permanent personnel for ministries and decentralized agencies. However, the same decree issued that “the executive power can authorize exception in case appointments are necessary to maintain essential services for the population”. Political authorities have made since then an abusive use of that prerogative. By 1995 temporary contracts had expanded throughout the state, which eventually led authorities to regularize the discretionary incorporation of temporary personnel.⁹ In this way ministers and authorities of decentralized agencies were legally entitled to appoint temporary personnel through different contractual forms (for that reason, temporary employees are known as *contratados*) at any level and at their discretion. As a matter of fact, discretionary hiring through temporary contracts became the regular mechanism to incorporate personnel.¹⁰

In sum, on the one hand, the legal system establishes the prohibition of incorporating permanent staff into the state but through a merit-based system of examinations. But on the other hand, the same legal system sets up a mechanism of exception to make discretionary appointments. In practice, the exception has become the rule. Political authorities in charge of state agencies should in principle resort to the civil service procedures to fill new vacancies, but in reality they have no legal constraints other than the available budget to skip those procedures and hire the persons they prefer, offering them fixed terms contracts. In light of this reality, students of

⁹ Decree 92/95, in 2001 slightly modified and substituted by decree 1184

¹⁰ This legal saga was the unanimous and invariable answer of the interviewees to the question about the legal powers of parties to appoint. It is interesting to note that the practice of hiring state personnel discretionally through temporary contracts is present in many other countries, including Western Europeans ones. See for example De Winter (2006) on Belgium.

Argentine public administration agree on the complete failure of the SINAPA civil service reform project (Bonifacio, 1995; Iacoviello et al, 2003; Ferraro, 2006).

All in all, the current legal scheme suggests that party politicians hardly need to violate any regulations to appoint in most areas of the public administration. Having the power to do so, political authorities have preferred to enact exceptional regulations to sidestep legal constraints in order to nominate even in those institutions and areas which are otherwise protected from discretionary appointments. By resorting to temporary contracts, parties are able to reach all across the national state.

Legal Restrictions to Political Appointments

However, saying that parties do not face legal constraints on appointments in the Argentine state at all is visibly wrong. As table 4.3 shows, the extent of the limitations on appointments differs across policy sectors and institutional types. The table exposes the composite figures of the range, depth, and quantity of the opportunity for patronage as it emerges from formal regulations in nine policy sectors of the national state. We can see that parties can reach all institutions and levels with almost no legal constraints in the Welfare and Media sectors. Similarly, parties do not face legal restrictions to appoint in Congress. The statute for the Congress' Personnel (Law 24,600) does not establish any kind of contest or exam to appoint permanent staff, leaving the selection of personnel in the hands of Congressional authorities.¹¹

¹¹ According to the National Constitution, the vice-president of the country is the president of the Senate. Apart from that, both chambers choose their own authorities amongst - and by the vote of - their members. Chambers' authorities dominate the selection of personnel.

Table 4.3: Opportunity for party patronage in selected sectors of the state

	Ministerial Departments	Decentralized Agencies	Executing Institutions	Mean Sector
Congress			1	1
Media	1	1	1	1
Welfare	1	1	1	1
Economy	1	0.6	1	0.87
Education	1	0.89	0.68	0.85
Security	1	0.89	0.55	0.81
Finance	1	0.55	0.55	0.7
F. Affairs	0.55	1	0.33	0.63
Judiciary			0.33	0.33
Mean Institutional Type	0.93	0.85	0.75	0.81

Based on author's interviews (see chapter 3)

But legal restrictions do exist in all the other sectors of the state. For example, the 40 National Universities are autonomous institutions whose budgets are provided by the state but whose authorities and personnel are selected and hired according to the rules established by the universities themselves. The National Scientific Commission (CONICET) – also included in our Culture & Education sector - has a professional career only accessible through open examinations. Similarly, several agencies of the Economy sector have professional bureaucratic systems, such as the National Institute of Industrial Technology (INTI), the National Statistics Office (INDEC), and the National Commission for Atomic Energy (CONEA), among others. Specific regulations constrain political appointments at the top of a group of agencies which control the provision of public utilities by privatized companies (gas, electricity, transport, waters, and communications regulatory agencies). In these cases, the minister of the area

(Federal Planning) is empowered to select the members of the board but only from among a group of experts previously pre-selected through open contests.

The opportunity for patronage is lower in the executing institutions of the security area. The president is empowered by the Constitution (section 99:13) to appoint the chiefs of the three armed forces and all police forces, which he does with the consent of the Senate and by selecting from among those who fulfil specific requirements of experience and conditions of merit. But parties are excluded from nominations in the low ranks of the security forces. It must be said that in purely numerical terms that sole limitation involves more than 50 per cent of the total jobs of the national public sector. A few decentralized agencies in this sector (for example the Scientific Research Institute for Defence – CITEFA) also have clear restrictions on the discretionary appointment of personnel.

Likewise, decentralized and executive financial agencies, such as the Central Bank, the Audit Office–SIGEN, and the Tax Collection Agency-DGI, also have legal regulations to prevent patronage at mid and bottom levels. Political appointments are even more restricted in the Foreign Service area. Law 20,957/1975 establishes open and competitive exams as the mechanism to integrate the Diplomatic Corps, while decree 337/1995 limits the number of ambassadors every president is allowed to appoint to 25 (out of a total of 78 embassies and 7 permanent missions as of 2005).

Legal constraints are particularly restrictive in the Judiciary. Parties' powers to make appointments in this sector are limited to the highest level and even these appointments are subject to strict regulations. The president nominates Supreme Court judges with the consent of the Senate, whereas the rest of the judges – while also appointed by the president with the consent of the Senate – must first go through a selection process in which the Council of Magistracy pre-selects three candidates from

the aspirants. Politicians make for 4 out of the 7 members of the Council of the Magistracy¹², but the candidates are selected by way of open and clearly regulated contests. Naturally, aspirants to judges must fulfil several professional requirements in terms of qualifications and experience. Politicians have no legal powers to appoint in courts beneath the position of judge.

Patronage powers not only differ across sectors but also across the three institutional types. A review of the legal regulations on the powers of parties to appoint suggests quite ample opportunities to reach the ministries (due to the “exceptional” temporary contracts), still ample but relatively more restricted opportunities to reach decentralized agencies (DA), and less opportunity to reach executing institutions (EI), especially in the areas of finance, security and FA (in both cases due to specific laws and regulations restricting appointments in many agencies).

Finally, and in addition to specific regulations, another implicit legal restriction on party patronage arises from the stability granted to public employees by the Constitution and the law. The Argentine national bureaucracy cannot be characterized as a professional civil service. However, because public employees enjoy tenure and cannot be fired once they obtain a permanent position, Argentine national bureaucracy cannot be seen as a spoils system either. Instead, as Orlansky (1989:19-20) has noted, the prevailing model can be characterized as mixed. Every new government enjoys a large degree of discretion to appoint and promote personnel in most sectors and institutions, but ruling parties cannot dismiss the existing staff. This last feature entails practical (i.e. fiscal) limitations to incorporate large amounts of new personnel.

¹² The composition of the Council was modified in 2006, granting politicians (congressmen and representatives of the executive power) an absolute majority of 4 members out of a total of 7. The original composition assigned to politicians 6 out of a total of 13 members. The legal process of judicial appointments is described in detail in Llanos and Figueroa Schibber (2008).

In sum, parties have ample prerogatives to reach across sectors and institutions. Interestingly enough, there is not a single institution in the Argentine state out of the reach of political authorities. Yet, parties also face important legal restrictions in an array of institutions in several sectors, especially at mid and bottom levels of the judiciary, foreign affairs, security, and finance sectors. Although the dearth of a stable civil service career is an unquestionable reality, a myriad of regulations impose different sorts of limitations on patronage appointments. Most studies have so far concentrated on the ministerial bureaucracies to point out the absence of real legal barriers to political appointments. But ministerial employees constitute only 7 per cent of the Argentine state. In reality, an observation of the whole Argentine national state suggests that, due to a multiplicity of constraints, the vast majority of positions in the Argentine state are legally out of the scope of parties' powers to appoint.

4.3 The Scope of Party Patronage at the National State

There are no sectors of the Argentine national state free from the reach of parties. Nonetheless, as table 4.4 shows, parties reach different sectors, institutional types, and levels of the state differently. Interestingly, in almost all cases the actual scope is lower than the formal one (the exceptions are Congress and the Judiciary, in which formal and actual powers coincide).

Table 4.4: Scope of patronage per sector and institutional type¹³

	Ministerial Departments	NDACs	Executing Institutions	Mean Sector
Congress			1	1
Media	1	0,82	0,93	0,92
Welfare	0,94	0,83	0,72	0,83
Economy	0,85	0,61	0,7	0,72
Education	0,84	0,75	0,55	0,71
Finance	0,66	0,63	0,63	0,64
Security	0,73	0,6	0,55	0,63
F. Affairs	0,76	0	0,4	0,39
Judiciary			0,33	0,33
Mean Institutional Type	0,82	0,6	0,64	0,68

* Based on author's interviews

In what follows I present the results with regard to the actual scope of party patronage. Four findings stand out in this regard: 1) parties appoint almost all senior state positions, using the opportunities provided by the law and circumventing the restrictions imposed by the legal system when they consider it necessary; 2) parties generally reach evenly across institutional types, but slightly more in ministries than in decentralized and executive agencies; 3) although parties reach all state sectors, the scope of patronage varies substantially across them; 4) as comes out from the three previous findings, parties are far from having a monopoly over appointments in the Argentine state. Parties do reach all sectors and almost all institutions, but, following

¹³ The figures express here composite measures which result from the combination of values of the range, depth, and quantity of party patronage in nine different sectors and three different policy areas of the Argentine state, as they were perceived by the interviewed experts (again, see chapter 3 for the detailed explanation of the composition of the figures).

the definition put forward in chapter 1, only in a few sectors are the majority of appointments cases of party patronage. Remarkably, other actors, such as trade unions and bureaucrats, are also important appointers at different areas of the state.

Parties Appoint almost All Senior Positions

Parties appoint all senior positions in almost all state institutions, including ministries, decentralized agencies and executing institutions of all sectors. In most cases, nominations at the top level are established and accepted by law. In some others, politicians circumvent ordinary legislation to appoint.

In accordance with the law, parties appoint all superior political authorities in the ministries (by 2006, 11 ministers, 48 secretaries and 89 undersecretaries), and their respective cabinets of advisors, almost all directors and presidents of 82 decentralized agencies and commissions, the judges of the Supreme Court (whenever there is a vacancy), the superior administrative authorities of both chambers of Congress, the commandants of all armed forces, presidents and boards of publicly owned companies, and 25 ambassadors.¹⁴

Remarkably, parties bypass or circumvent legal constraints to appoint other top positions which are legally beyond their reach or, in strict terms, to which they have restrained access. Actually, in most cases parties transform constrained powers into full powers through *ad hoc* devices of dubious legality.¹⁵ A case in point is the direction of the Broadcasting Commission (CoMFeR), the agency “responsible for regulating, and monitoring the installation and functioning of television and radio stations in the

¹⁴ The number of legally permitted political appointments of top positions might roughly be estimated in around 1,600, including advisers.

¹⁵ The concept of constrained patronage powers is taken from Denton and Flinders (2006), who use it in reference to those cases in which the ability to appoint exists but is limited by legal requirements.

country”.¹⁶ According to the regulation issued by the last military government, CoMFeR is run by a board comprised of members of the three armed forces. Although the law was naturally seen as obsolete with the advent of democracy, none of the administrations since 1983 has attempted to change it. Instead, alleging its inapplicability, all presidents have issued decrees by which they discretionally nominated a delegate of the executive power to run the agency (who, in turn, controls other appointments at the top of the agency). Something similar occurs with the national TV station - Channel 7 - which has always been run by a delegate of the executive power (*interventor*). Likewise, all presidents have claimed situations of emergency in order to directly appoint the board of the largest national healthcare agency, the National Institute of Social Services for Pensioners (PAMI), sidestepping the legal proceedings which demand the constitution of a board with participation of the affiliate representatives.

Remarkably, parties have circumvented the law to nominate senior positions at the regulatory agencies of public utilities (gas, electricity, communications, transport, etc.). These agencies must be run by boards selected by the executive power on the basis of previous examinations, and applicants are required to fulfil very specific qualifications. Yet, once again, presidents have preferred to allege “situations of exception” and lack of time to undergo the selection process in order to cover these key positions through decrees. For example, although law 24,076/1992 establishes that the members of the board of the Gas Regulatory Agency, ENARGAS, must be experts on the area selected through examinations, during the Kirchner administration the directors of the board were politicians closely related to the president and to the minister of

¹⁶ Definition provided by CoMFeR. See www.comfer.gov.ar

federal planning, and all were directly appointed by a presidential decree.¹⁷ When, in the wake of reliable allegations of corruption, the president of the board was forced to resign, President Kirchner issued another decree appointing another politician he trusted, even when the decision was openly criticized by the national media.¹⁸

Ruling parties also force and often bypass legal constraints to manipulate the appointment of judges, turning constrained powers into pure patronage powers. Lifetime tenure for Supreme Court justices has been consistently violated by different means (threats of impeachments have been historically common) and under different arguments in recent Argentine history (Helmke, 2002; Spiller and Tommasi, 2007:122-155).¹⁹ Legal constraints are more openly, albeit less visibly, circumvented when politicians manipulate results of open contests to select lower courts judges in order to pick their favourite candidates. Legally, the president is entitled to opt for the candidate he prefers among a list of three applicants submitted by the Council of Magistracy. This system provides politicians (the president or, more commonly, the minister of justice), with a limited degree of discretion.²⁰ However, according to all interviewees in this field, negotiations between political councillors and political pressures from the Ministry of Justice often end in grotesque manipulation of the composition of the threesomes. While that has been the case since the Council of Magistracy was established in 1999 (Roth, 2007), experts agree that evaluations have become particularly irregular since 2003. Irregularities especially involve appointments of *federal criminal, economic criminal and contentious- administrative judges*, precisely

¹⁷ The NGO ACIJ (Civic Association for Equality and Justice) denounced and sued the government in relation to those appointments in 2003. Author's interview with Verónica Tarzia, ACIJ's lawyer, 10.09.2007. See also "Sin control en los entes reguladores", *La Nación*, February 19, 2007.

¹⁸ See "Investigación por coimas: pese a las críticas, la designación sería por decreto", *Clarín*, May 18, 2007; and "Un ente autárquico que desde 2003 se maneja por decreto", *La Nación*, May 22, 2007.

¹⁹ The average tenure of Argentine Supreme Court Justices between 1960 and 1990 was 4.4 years (Henisz, 2000).

²⁰ Interestingly, politicians have paid no heed to the rankings set up by the Council, choosing the candidate they prefer regardless of the position occupied by each of them in the exams. While that is perfectly legal, it might be pointed as unfair (Rusconi, 2008).

those who deal with cases of corruption, drug-trafficking, smuggling, and economic demands against the state.

National universities constitute a *sui generis* case. The legal autonomy of these institutions has been respected by political authorities since the restoration of democracy²¹; they have followed their own procedures to select their authorities, in which the Ministry of Education has no direct participation. Yet, those procedures through which universities' authorities are elected include the election of representatives of professors, students, and graduates. The elections to choose representatives are actually run by associations of the three groups (professors, students, graduates) which many times are linked to political parties. Accordingly, faculties and universities' authorities are often clearly linked to political parties. That is why experts interviewed asserted that in reality parties do appoint at universities.²²

There is a small set of cases in which parties relinquish their legal rights to appoint senior positions. For example, although he/she is officially appointed by the minister of foreign affairs, the president of the National Commission for Space Activities (CoNAE) has remained the same since its creation in 1994. In the area of culture, while every new government has made extensive use of its right to replace the direction of most executive agencies (National Library, National Theatre, Fine Arts Museum, etc.), there are some agencies whose directors have kept their places throughout different administrations (National Orchestra, National Museum of Decorative Arts, National Folklore Ballet). It is needless to say that none of these institutions have budgets of great magnitude and that politicians do not consider any of

²¹ In contrast, the autonomy of the universities has been systematically violated by military governments. The government led by Juan Perón (1946-55 and 1973-4) also violated the universities autonomy, designing their political authorities.

²² For example, from 1983 to 2001 the University of Buenos Aires was dominated by groups closely linked to the UCR. The university dean, Oscar Schuberoff, was a UCR politician and it was openly known that many UCR activists were then appointed at administrative positions in the university.

them to be particularly relevant to their political projects. Accordingly, insofar as the heads of these institutions do not irritate political authorities they may – and often do – keep their jobs. Naturally, they are all well aware that they will be replaced as soon as they create a problem for their political superiors.

In sum, although parties reach positions at all levels of state structures, it is remarkable that parties appoint almost all senior state positions, in many cases violating legal restrictions.

Parties Appoint throughout the State, but Ministries are the Loci of Party Patronage

As table 4.5 shows, parties have greater reach in ministerial departments than in the rest of the state. Parties reach all ministries (range), and usually appoint top, mid, and bottom level employees (depth) in all of them. Furthermore, on average, parties are responsible for between half and two thirds of the appointments in ministerial departments (proportion).

Table 4.5: Scope of patronage per institutional type

Scope of Patronage	Ministries	NDACs	Executing Institutions
Range	1	0.85	0.86
Depth	0.84	0.59	0.64
Quantity	0.64	0.6	0.46
Mean	0.83	0.68	0.65

Based on author's interviews

Every change of government entails a sweep of all senior ministerial positions: ministers, secretaries, undersecretaries, and their respective cabinets of advisers. Most

times, turnovers also entail the arrival of new mid-level officials. According to experts, mid-level positions in the ministries constitute a key zone which politicians strive to control. The fact that many of these mid-level officials, such as national directors or general-directors, obtain tenure from within the framework of the civil service regulations (SINAPA) is not a signal of non-political appointments. Indeed, most times the SINAPA exams constitute a mere façade to regularize the appointment of political appointees. It is frequent that new political authorities force the displacement of mid-level civil servants to replace them with new employees, who are then regularized through manipulated contests. When they cannot simply replace the national and general-directors, political authorities may alternatively assign the real functions of management to political appointees – even when they hold temporary contracts - marginalizing the civil service staff, which is confined to unsubstantial tasks (Minsky, 2001; Ferraro, 2006). These are established practices in ministries such as Social Development, Health, Federal Planning, Interior, Justice, Education, and secretariats such as Media, Culture, Sports, and Environmental Resources. In partial contrast, in areas such as Foreign Affairs and Finance most mid-level positions are occupied and effectively exercised by functionaries who have reached the position by climbing up the civil service career (in FA by members of the Diplomatic Corps).

It is worth noting that the functioning of most ministries is based on the development of programs, a format which emerged at the beginning of the 1990s as a new method to organize ministerial bureaucracies. Instead of working with permanent and stable bureaucracies, programs are created to achieve specific targets for which they require specialized personnel. The notion of programs as a new strategy for public administration was inspired by the school of new public management (NPM) and was theoretically supported and many times financed by multinational organizations (Inter-

American Development Bank, World Bank, United Nations Development Program) with the supposed goal of providing more flexible and adaptable tools to attain specific policy goals. What indeed happens is that every time a new government assumes power, irrespective of whether it belongs to the same political party or not, programs are replaced, and with them the managers and coordinators in charge. Although sometimes programs include minimal restrictions to incorporate bottom level personnel (typically, demanding a selection between at least three aspirants), in practice they provide political authorities with substantial room to contract new employees (López and Zeller, 2006:8).²³ By the mid-1990s there were more than 60 programs functioning in the orbit of the executive power, meaning that while on the one hand the permanent personnel had been “frozen” and no new vacancies were created, different “rings” of parallel bureaucracies had emerged in all ministries.²⁴

The use of temporary jobs to hire new personnel has created a manifest difference between the permanent staff and the *contratados*.²⁵ The former enjoy tenure and get their promotions mainly on the basis of their seniority, all of which generates few incentives to invest in their own training and to be responsive to principals who are inexorably doomed to change in the near future. The *contratados*, by contrast, must show they are responsive and useful to their political patrons, so as to get their short term contracts extended periodically (usually every six months) and, if possible, to get a permanent position whenever it is available. In practice, the day-to-day work of most ministries (foreign affairs being the clear exception) is run by the *contratados*, whereas

²³ In that regard, a well established practice consists of asking the appointee to bring two additional curriculum vitae, which of course must show lower qualifications than the one of the applicant. The “trick” is known by both the applicant and the employer, and functions – as so many other practices – to “cover formalities”.

²⁴ Author’s interview with Fernando Jaime, Coordinator of the Undersecretariat of Public Employment. Buenos Aires, April 26, 2007. See also Iacoviello and Zuvanic (2002:14).

²⁵ As noted in chapter 2, the real amount of *contratados* is not registered by any reliable source. Yet, it is clear that they outnumber the permanent staff in several ministries (clearly in Social Development) and secretariats. See Spiller and Tommasi (2007:172-3).

the permanent staff – usually less qualified - is generally confined to the least important tasks (Ferraro, 2006; Spiller and Tommasi, 2007:169-175).²⁶

With regard to the scale of appointments at ministries, it seems important to note that unlike what happens with senior and mid-level positions, the majority of the technical and service personnel are not replaced with every change of government. That is obviously the case of the permanent personnel, whose positions are protected by the constitution. But to a large extent, and in contrast to usual assumptions (for example Spiller and Tommasi, 2007:174) it also applies to the *contratados*. Although every time new authorities assume power in a ministry they might decide not to extend the job-contracts of the temporary personnel, the majority of the *contratados* actually manage to “survive” turnovers. New authorities do bring some (sometimes many) new people to undertake sensitive tasks and do not extend the contracts of those more obviously linked to the previous political authorities or clearly identified as activists. But in general, the bulk of the *contratados* with bottom level jobs are not replaced. Cases of massive replacements in an agency may still exist (especially in the welfare sector), but they are more the exception than the rule. In contrast, it is common that the *contratados* try to adapt and please the new authorities, irrespective of how they were originally appointed. Furthermore, the temporary personnel that fulfil skilled tasks usually keep their positions regardless of the change of political authorities. In that sense, it is doubtless that – even though many of them got their positions through a political connection - the large majority of personnel are much more concerned with keeping their jobs than with any party loyalty. As a senior bureaucrat explains,

²⁶ In general terms, the relation between political authorities and the permanent staff is one of mutual distrust. The employee knows that the political functionary is a fleeting presence and has little incentives to cooperate. The political authority expects little good from the permanent staff and, therefore, tries to rely as much as possible on “his people”.

“Every *contratado* usually has a political patron, someone who pushed and helped obtain the contract, and normally the *contratado* is responsive to his political boss. But if the patron loses influence or cannot guarantee the extension of the contract, the *contratado* will generally look for another boss to get his contract extended or, whenever it is possible, get a permanent position.”²⁷

For example, in December 2001, the last month of the “Alianza” government led by Fernando De la Rúa, there were 16,515 officially registered *contratados*. By July 2002, six months after the assumption of Peronist President Eduardo Duhalde, the number had suffered a very slight drop to 15,800.²⁸ Although it is certain that a few hundred *contratados* linked to the parties of the Alianza (UCR and Frepaso) must have lost their jobs and that some others linked to PJ must have taken their places through new contracts, there is no doubt that a big proportion of the *contratados* remained the same.²⁹

Every few years groups of those employees who have been working as temporary personnel for some time are tenured through “exceptional” decrees enacted by the appropriate minister or by the chief of the ministerial cabinet. These “passages to the permanent staff” (*pases a planta*), as these measures are known in the jargon, are usually negotiated between the unions and office-holding politicians and it is as a result of the compromises reached by them that the list of employees to be tenured is drafted. In that sense, the clear-cut distinction between temporary personnel as politically appointed versus the permanent staff as non-politically appointed must not be overstated. It is certainly reasonable to assume that those who depend on the good will of their political patron to extend a job contract will be more responsive to political

²⁷ Author’s interview with Marisa Bechara, August 4, 2006

²⁸ Ministry of Economy: <http://www2.mecon.gov.ar/hacienda/ocupacion/link10200207.htm>

²⁹ Indeed, even when it would be legally possible, it is hardly imaginable in the context of the Argentine state a replacement of 16,000 *contratados* in the wake of a change of government. Although the number of *contratados* is unknown, by 2007 they were no less than 30,000. The replacement of all those *contratados* would imply an authentic spoils system.

pressures than those whose positions are life-time tenured. Actually, it is generally accepted that once they get permanent positions employees tend to abandon their original loyalties and are not subject to any kind of political pressures. Yet, the *contratados* are not all appointed because of their manifest partisan commitment, nor are the permanent staff professional bureaucrats who got their positions without political connections. In reality, since 1990 almost all employees have been hired first as temporary personnel in order to, at some point, get a permanent position. On that note it seems interesting to note that the successive incorporation of *contratados* along with the periodical passages to the staff have produced the accumulation of quite recognizable “geological layers” of employees in every ministry, each layer having its origin in the period of a different political authority (Dalbosco, 2003: 110).³⁰

Parties also appoint in decentralized agencies. There are even a few DA completely colonized by parties, particularly in the Welfare sector. Moreover, the practice of discretionary appointments through temporary jobs is by and large extended to most of these institutions. However, many DA (especially in areas such as security, finance, economy, and FA) have more autonomous, stable and professionalized bureaucracies than the ministries. To take an example, while some departments of the Ministry of Economy, such as the secretariat of commerce or the Secretariat of Industry, are highly politicized, most of the DA of the same sector enjoy a much higher degree of bureaucratic autonomy. It is noteworthy that, as shown by table 4.5, in almost every sector the depth and the proportion of party patronage are slightly lower in decentralized agencies than in ministries.

³⁰ The notion of geological layers is widespread among Argentine public employees to refer to the waves of employees incorporated by different administrations. Those appointed in the 80s are generally recognized as UCR sympathizers, and those who were incorporated in the 1990s as Peronists, but that “historical” identification has no practical effects since permanent employees very rarely maintain the political linkage which helped them get the job.

Executing institutions appear – albeit by a very slight margin - to be the least open to patronage of our three institutional types. Parties do not appoint at the bottom level of security agencies (police and armed forces) or embassies. However, the difference between executing institutions and the other institutional types does not hinge so much on the range or depth of the appointments but rather on the relatively low proportion of patronage registered in these institutions. In effect, in addition to the cases of security and foreign affairs, parties appoint only some (up to one third) of the bottom level positions in financial, economic, and cultural executing agencies. In a few cases, as in that of financial institutions, that is due to the existence of more professional institutions. In some others, typically state-owned companies, the main reason is the presence of other forms of patronage in which parties play no or a very limited role.³¹

Overall, it is apparent that the findings on the institutional location of party patronage in the Argentine state contrast with recent assumptions of the literature about the displacement of the practice of patronage from ministerial departments. The literature on public administration has emphasized that parties attempt to elude the restrictions imposed by civil service legislation by appointing more in decentralized agencies and quangos, which at the same time have gained importance in processes of policy-making (Peters and Pierre, 2004). As it emerges from the previous paragraphs, those assumptions do not apply to the Argentine state. Surely because they have by and large managed to sidestep legal restrictions and because ministries are still the locus where most substantial policies are decided, parties appoint at the core of the administration more than they do in other institutional types. Instead, it seems that, as political scientist Alberto Föhrig said, “The further you get from the minister, the more

³¹ In addition, the importance of state-owned companies as sources of patronage was drastically affected by the process of privatizations implemented in the 1990s. By 2000 state owned companies employed only 10 per cent of the personnel they did in 1960 (López and Zeller, 2006).

chances you have to find lower levels of politicization.”³² And yet, disparities across institutional types are less significant than those across policy sectors.

Parties Reach Differently at Different Sectors

Parties do not reach all policy sectors equally. Actually, the data in this regard highlights the existence of substantial differences from one sector to another. As shown by the aggregate figures in table 4.4, the National Congress is at the top of the list. In principle, deputies and senators each appoint a limited number of advisors. But political authorities in both chambers also appoint administrative personnel at all levels, both in the chambers and in the different agencies which function in the orbit of the Congress. Only shorthand typists, a very small share of the Congress’ personnel, are selected through contests. Media comes second in the ranking. This sector exhibits very feeble bureaucracies in its ministerial departments, regulatory agency, and executing institutions. Amongst the latter, the national press agency (TÉLAM) and the public TV channel in particular are pointed out by interviewees as institutions in which politicians control all top and mid level positions while they – as also happens in Congress - negotiate nominations at the bottom with the unions. Welfare stands out as another patronage-ridden sector. In particular, the Ministry of Social development and decentralized agencies in its orbit are known for their weak, unstable, and politicized bureaucracies as well as for the frequent incorporation of party activists at the bottom level. Some offices of this sector are completely colonized by parties.

At the other extreme, Judiciary and Foreign Affairs appear to be the least permeable sectors to party patronage. Parties do not have any participation in the appointment of bottom and mid-level personnel in the courts, which – as far as the

³² Author’s interview, August 28, 2006.

nomination of personnel is concerned – function as an autonomous branch of state. That autonomy accounts for the low rate of patronage in the sector despite the decisive role of parties in the appointment of judges. Parties do reach the different levels of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Yet, FA is the only ministry in which most mid- and bottom level positions are occupied by members of a professional bureaucracy (the Diplomatic Corps). Presidents have consistently abided by the legal limitation of 25 politically appointed ambassadors. The absence of party patronage in its sole decentralized agency, the Commission for Space Activities³³, probably renders an exaggeratedly low figure for the whole sector. Yet, FA is generally acknowledged as the most professionalized area of the Argentine state.

Security and Finance also exhibit comparatively low figures of party patronage. The case of security is mainly explained by the existence of professional military and police forces, strong enough to prevent parties from appointing at bottom and mid levels (although it must be added that bottom level positions of the military and police have become extremely unattractive and generally available with no need for political connections). Finance stands out as the most even sector, with relatively strong bureaucracies in all of its three institutional types. Parties do appoint senior positions in this sector as much as they do in any other. But in this case it is the strength of the financial techno-bureaucracy (to a large extent attributable to its professional association, ASAP - Argentine Association of Budget) that prevents politicians from reaching most mid and bottom level positions in this sector. Only recently, while this research was in process, politicians appointed mid-level positions in the financial

³³ CONAE, the commission for state activities, is a small agency with 155 employees, which has kept the same director and managers since its creation in 1994. In the words of someone who has worked there for all this time, “it is an agency that does not bother and in which the government is not interested.” Author’s interview, June 23, 2007.

ministerial departments and executing institutions.³⁴ Lastly, Economy combines some highly politicized ministerial departments, quite professionalized decentralized agencies, and state-owned companies in which patronage is high but, as is explained in the next section, parties are not the main patrons, hardly reaching beyond top positions.

The different reach of parties across sectors is mainly explained by the strength and autonomy historically developed by the diverse state bureaucracies. It is known that permanent rotation of authorities and lack of long-term principals has affected most Argentine bureaucracies, rendering them permeable to political appointments. In that context, a few institutions constitute remarkable exceptions. For instance, the autonomy of the Foreign Service was granted in 1826 and its bureaucracy has historically been strong enough to pose a barrier to political invasion of the sector. The Diplomatic Corps were professional structures prior to the emergence of mass democracy, and managed to maintain their professional structures out of the reach of parties.

Other sectors and institutions have gained variable degrees of bureaucratic autonomy on the basis of the functions they fulfil and the expertise required for their management. As Barbara Geddes suggests, the implementation of reforms which bring bureaucratic competency to previously patronage-ridden agencies depends on whether those reforms can serve the immediate political interests of the politicians who have the power to initiate them (Geddes, 1994:14). For example, the administration of the financial sector demands a degree of expertise which cannot be found in the ranks of Argentine party organizations (Camou, 2007). Because this area is very important for the fate of any government, parties have decided to accept a strategy of professionalization of the sector, prioritizing good performance over particularistic rent-

³⁴ Between 2006 and 2007 five national directors were replaced in the Secretariats of Treasury and Finance, including the Director of the National Budget Office who had occupied that position for more than 10 years. All consulted experts underlined this phenomenon as an unprecedented “invasion” of the sector.

seeking (for the case of the deliberate professionalization of the tax collection agency in the early 1990s see Eaton, 2003).³⁵ In that context, financial experts have constituted a techno-bureaucracy which dominates mid and bottom level positions of the sector (Uña, 2007). The same has occurred with a few institutions of the Economy sector, whose efficient and professionalized management have been recognized as a requisite for a good administration. A remarkable case in point is the National Institute of Statistics – INDEC, which has historically enjoyed a large degree of bureaucratic autonomy. When at the end of 2006 the government decided to remove a few professional mid-level bureaucrats who did not comply with political orders and replaced them by political appointees, the personnel of the agency initiated a widespread protest against the measure. The resistance of the bureaucracy led to a long conflict (still ongoing at the time of writing) which put the autonomy of INDEC at the top of the public agenda.

The national Congress and sectors such as Media and Welfare offer the opposite examples. They have traditionally been subject to party patronage and their politicization is taken for granted by both the employees and the public. The need to professionalize them was never seriously considered nor is it seen as electorally convenient. Institutions such as the Ministry of Social Development and the public media have always served parties' political goals, in one case as a source of rent-seeking and clientelism, in the other as an instrument for propaganda, and parties never perceived the need to (nor were they forced to) professionalize their bureaucracies.

Patronage is not Monopoly of Parties

There are a variety of alternatives to being appointed by a party politician in order to get a state position. As already mentioned, some decentralized agencies and executing

³⁵ In words of Kent Eaton “A Peronist majority in Congress shared with the President the view that improving tax collection was critical in the party’s attempt to defend fiscal stability and win elections.” (2003:58)

institutions have their own meritocratic systems for the recruitment of personnel which work in a reasonably professional way. In agencies from different sectors and sizes, such as the taxation agency AFIP, the Central Bank, the National Commission of Atomic Energy, the National Institute of Industrial Technology, the National Commission of Scientific and Technological Research, and the Armed Forces, among others, the personnel is recruited according to previously established competitive procedures. A few of them are, in the terms of Spiller and Tommasi, “islands of bureaucratic excellence” (2008:103).

However, it is remarkable that lower figures of party patronage do not always indicate transparent and merit-based personnel selection processes. In many cases, those figures reflect the presence of other actors which dominate the distribution of patronage, sharing that role with party politicians or even displacing them as the main appointers. In that regard, it is arguable that the absence of professional state bureaucracies only partially brings about party patronage. Trade unions are decisive patronage “players” at the bottom level of many ministries, in media institutions such as the TV channel and TELAM, and in state-owned companies. It is important to note that the unions of state personnel operate as corporatist entities with their own specific interests, appointing their own people and pushing for their own agendas, with autonomy from political parties. Surely, it is common for unions to mobilize their “clients” for one party or another in times of internal or general elections and, in fact, parties’ work-forces for electoral campaigns is many times provided by unions.³⁶ Yet, as far as appointments are concerned all interviewees referred to unions and party functionaries as clearly distinguishable and in general competitive patrons.

³⁶ The biggest union of state personnel, UPCN – Union of the National Civil Personnel -, maintains fluid linkages with factions of the Peronist Party. The second in importance, ATE – Association of State Workers – has no clear party affiliation (although it may well contribute to different parties in different elections).

Judges dominate the process of personnel recruitment in the judiciary with large degrees of discretion. In the case of the Federal Police, recruitments and promotions are said to be subject to frequent discretionary decisions of the chief officers, without any involvement of party politicians (Gorgal, 2002). In addition, some techno-bureaucracies have managed to control mid-level positions at some institutions and are in practice the ones who recruit the technical personnel. One case is that of the abovementioned ASAP, the association of financial experts which has a strong influence in financial ministerial departments. Among others, examples of institutions controlled by techno-bureaucracies are the secretariat of Agriculture (in the Ministry of Economy) and the National Commission of University Evaluation (in the orbit of the Ministry of Education). In those institutions parties have little or no direct involvement in the appointment of personnel, which is by and large controlled by those strong techno-bureaucracies.

As we shall see in the next chapter, the same mid-level bureaucrats quite often form their working-teams with autonomy from political authorities. Typically, general-directors and coordinators in less professionalized ministries - as Education, Justice, Labour or Health – recruit by themselves the employees who work in their programs. The appointments (discretionally) decided by these coordinators and directors, themselves frequently recruited on non-partisan grounds, can hardly be deemed as cases of party patronage. That is why, following the definition put forward in chapter 1, a large proportion of the appointments which make up the parallel bureaucracies of *contratados* do not constitute in my perspective cases of party patronage, even when they are discretionally decided.

Lastly, another significant proportion of state-jobs are appointed via nepotism, in which party politicians may have no direct involvement. Children and relatives of the

employees have priority – actual if not legal - to get bottom-level jobs in most state institutions³⁷, especially in state owned companies. The appointment of friends and acquaintances of employees are widespread practices as well. Whenever a state agency is searching for personnel, it is quite common for the employees to bring their relatives and friends to fill those vacancies, usually taking some experience and qualifications into consideration.

In formal terms every appointment can be attributed to the ruling party, since (except in the judiciary) it must eventually be ratified by an authority appointed by someone elected along party lines (the chief of the ministerial cabinet, a minister, a director of a decentralized agency, a president of a state-owned company, Congress' political authorities, etc.). Moreover, it can be argued that decisions concerning the budgets to be spent on salaries across the state are political decisions made by the governing parties. Yet, when assessing the actual scope of party patronage it seems important to see who actually recruits the personnel and decides appointments. In that sense, different actors other than parties take part in the allocation of state jobs.

4.4 Conclusion

It is doubtless that the “Argentine state lacks bureaucratic autonomy” (Levtisky, 2007:213), and that “the absence of civil service rules allows the discretionary use of public employment” (Calvo and Murillo, 2004:744). In that context, party patronage is in all probability the most significant mode by which bureaucratic autonomy is impeded and public employment is discretionally distributed, involving all the most senior positions, a large majority of mid-level ministerial positions, many mid-level positions at decentralized agencies, and a sizeable proportion of technical and service personnel

³⁷ Being myself a son of a mid-level employee of the Ministry of Economy without any political involvement it was taken as given in the family that, as soon as I obtained my degree in Law, I would have the option to get a position in the ministry. The practice was confirmed by interviewees.

in many institutions of several areas of the Argentine state. In line with Martin Shefter's explanation of the different developments of patronage (1977) in Western countries, it is arguable that when democracy was restored in Argentina in 1983 parties found it easy to take advantage of the fragility of weak state bureaucracies to employ their own followers. Parties did not face then a strong constituency for bureaucratic autonomy, nor did they find the incentives that – according to Geddes – might have led them to promote the professionalization of state bureaucracies. However, it is clearly wrong to view parties as responsible for most appointments in all areas and institutions of the Argentine state. Actually, of all state jobs that are periodically created at different levels of the state, a large proportion (the majority, if we take security forces and judiciary personnel into account) are appointed with no direct participation of party politicians.

Rather than by any legal restriction, the relatively limited role of parties is explained by four main factors. First, revisiting Shefter's approach, it is arguable that although state bureaucracies were not autonomous and professionalized in general, there were a few long-standing professionalized agencies whose autonomy did predate the advent of democracy (typically the Diplomatic Corps) and which were strong enough to resist attempts at politicization. Second, parties did find it electorally convenient to professionalize a few areas and agencies. As Geddes notes, securing good management of certain areas may be seen by politicians as strategically convenient, even when they must resign patronage powers.³⁸ That has been the case with financial institutions. Parties have maintained political control over the agencies through the appointment of the most senior positions, but they have accepted the professionalization of the sector. Third, in the field of state structures there are powerful corporatist entities which

38 And fifty years earlier V. O. Key Jr., who underlines that it is bad politics for a party to apply the patronage system to those departments and agencies in which expertise is required. In Key's terms, there is a "recognition by political leaders that it is not to their interest to use a certain class of positions to reward party workers" (Key, 1964:357).

successfully withstand partisan encroachment and compete with parties as important appointers in different areas (typically trade unions but also techno-bureaucracies). And fourth, probably the most interesting from our perspective, current parties seem scarcely interested and organizationally incapable of reaching down to the bottom of many state agencies.

Remarkably, as the comparison presented in table 4.6 between the measures of the appointment opportunities and those of the actual scope of patronage shows, parties do not appoint as much as they are entitled to, especially at the bottom levels of the state.

Table 4.6: Opportunity and actual scope of party patronage

Sector	Opportunity for Party Patronage	Actual Scope of Party Patronage
Congress	1	1
Media	1	0.92
Welfare	1	0.83
Economy	0.87	0.72
Education	0.85	0.71
Security	0.81	0.64
Finance	0.7	0.63
Foreign Affairs	0.63	0.39
Judiciary	0.33	0.33
Mean	0.81	0.68

While parties have settled the legal conditions to appoint all bottom level personnel at the ministries and most decentralized agencies, keeping the right to intervene and appoint whenever they see fit, in practice the majority of those appointments are not parties' responsibility. It is particularly interesting to note that party politicians tend to delegate to non-partisan mid-level office-holders the recruitment of a large share of state employees which, in principle, could be directly appointed by them. In that context, a large amount of appointments are decided on the basis of acquaintances, family relationships, and friendship by the bureaucrats. In contrast, politicians do show the utmost concern in appointing most senior and mid-level positions, even when that is not legally allowed or they have to sidestep ordinary regulations. Irrespective of legal constraints it is apparent that parties are specifically concerned with appointments at the top and middle echelons, whereas they are generally less interested in - or less able to fill with political appointees - the bottom ranks of the administration. Because this issue directly relates to the goals that motivate party appointments, I will discuss it in more detail in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 5

PARTY PATRONAGE AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL: APPOINTERS, MOTIVATIONS AND APPOINTEES

It seems almost indispensable that many persons devote their time to party work. What men shall devote their time to this work? Without the inducement of public jobs and other perquisites, the formation of party organization becomes difficult.

V. O. Key Jr. (1964), p. 367

In this chapter I turn the focus from the public administration as the place where appointments take place to parties themselves as the players of patronage games. As was suggested in chapter 2, understanding party patronage requires observing who is in practice responsible for appointments, what the motivations are, and what criteria parties follow to appoint. Naturally, all this is not without important difficulties. If, as Müller puts it, patronage belongs to the realm of covert politics (Müller, 2000:141) in this chapter I deal with its darkest side. Hence experts' interviews are once again the main source. In this case, the results are contrasted through multiple interviews with scholars, bureaucrats, and political leaders and activists. I also make use of related literature and, when they are consistent, press reports.

The chapter proceeds in three main parts. In the first one I discuss the question of who appoints (or the structure of control and distribution of patronage), underlining the concentration of patronage powers in the presidential office. In the second, I analyze the relative importance of the different motivations which lead parties to appoint, highlighting the importance of patronage for the control of resources and policies and the minor relevance of patronage as a direct mode to sustain a party organization on the ground. Then, I present the results concerning the criteria used by parties to choose the appointees, noting that personal linkages, and to a lesser extent expertise, have replaced

pre-existent party affiliations as the dominant criteria to appoint. In the conclusion I attempt to summarize the rationale and the role of patronage in the organization of contemporary Argentine parties at the national level.

5.1 The Appointers

As explained in chapter 2, I analyze this dimension of patronage in terms of two related aspects. First, I am interested in knowing to what extent the different faces of the party are involved in patronage. More precisely, I want to know whether and to what extent the group that holds public office and the party as a bureaucratic organization independent from government control the distribution of patronage and what that says about the relationship between party and government. Second, I want to assess whether patronage is the prerogative of a single actor or if by contrast, patronage is a dispersed resource controlled by different contending partisan actors.

The main findings in this regard can be summarized in the two following statements: 1) Patronage is entirely decided by office-holders; the party in central office does not play any role in deciding appointments in any sector or at any level of the state. Moreover, using the terms of Jean Blondel (2000), the control of patronage by the public office makes the party organization dependent on government; and 2) the pattern of appointments is centralized at the top by the president, while it is extremely fragmented among an array of office-holders - albeit almost always those who are faithful to and under the umbrella of the president - at mid and bottom levels.

The President as the Major Appointer

In the process of distribution of patronage the party organs which constitute the party in central office are simply non-actors. Actually, the bureaucratic organizational structures

of major Argentine parties are largely inoperative and powerless. That holds especially true for the PJ, the party which by 2009 has held the presidency for 18 of the last 20 years. The highest national formal authority of the PJ, the National Council, does not hold any power whatsoever and is but “an empty shell” (Levitsky, 2003:75).¹ In contrast, party patronage at all levels is a prerogative of office-holding politicians.

In that context the president is the actual major player at the national level, appointing top level positions in all sectors and thereby indirectly controlling nominations at lower levels as well. The Argentine institutional design confers comparatively strong powers on the president, including patronage powers (Negretto, 2004).² Unlike what happens in the American system, the Argentine president does not need any kind of participation of Congress to nominate (and remove whenever he/she considers fit) cabinet ministers, the chief of the ministerial cabinet, or any secretaries and undersecretaries under the orbit of the presidency. Following a constitutional mandate, the president is the head of the public administration. The president also selects and appoints – albeit in this case with the consent of the Senate - the chiefs of staff of all the armed and security forces, political ambassadors, and Justices of the Supreme Court.³

Although all decentralized agencies and state-owned companies are officially under the authority of a minister or a state secretary, the president usually appoints directors, presidents, and board members in all of those institutions where he/she considers it important to do so. That is usually the case with financial institutions such as the Central Bank, the National Bank, the Tax Collection Office (AFIP), with

¹ In fact, between 2003 and 2007 the party had no authorities at all. Positions at the National Council simply expired and were not renewed.

² Indeed, Argentina has been called the “homeland” of hyper-presidentialism (Nino, 1992)

³ Given the requirement of the Senate’s consent, the two main political parties, PJ and UCR, used to negotiate these nominations. Since Kirchner had a comfortable majority in the Senate he could appoint ambassadors, military chiefs, and Justices of his own preference with very little or no concessions to rival parties.

economic institutions such as the regulatory agencies of public utilities (gas, energy, communications, etc.) and state-owned companies, and with media institutions, such as the public TV station, the Broadcasting National Commission, and the state news agency (Télam). The president always conserves the power to veto an appointment decided by another political authority and to demand the resignation of any appointee, at any level. Remarkably, every time an issue related to a nomination is exposed by the media, it is expected to be a decision of the president, regardless of the level and the sector involved.⁴ Of course, for many of these decisions the president takes the advice of - and delegates responsibility to - his close aides, and it is apparent that some presidents get more directly involved in the selection of the second lines of government than others. But in any case it is always clear that the president is responsible for all top level appointments and that, accordingly, all top level officials are beholden to the president.

Some of the presidential aides frequently try to expand their own influence by suggesting more of “their people” for appointments at top positions across the administration. In that sense, state structures are frequent arenas of disputes between different wings of the government, in which the appointment of senior positions becomes the bone of contention. But in any case all those rival players recognize the primacy of the president and their competition is, to a large extent, a dispute to gain presidential support. For example, between 2003 and 2007 the majority of the Argentine federal administration came under the influence of two broad groups: *Albertismo* - as it was called in the political jargon, the group dominated by the Chief of the Ministerial Cabinet Alberto Fernández- and *The Penguins* – as were called those who came from

⁴ As happened, for example, with the resignation of the deputy director of the National Library in 2006, who quit amidst sharp criticisms against his superior; or more recently, in March 2008, with the dispute between the director of customs and his direct superior, the director of the Federal Agency of Public Revenues-AFIP. These public disputes between political functionaries are eventually settled by the president.

the Patagonian province of Santa Cruz with Kirchner and whose strong-men were Minister of Federal Planning Julio De Vido and state secretaries of the presidential office Oscar Parrilli and Carlos Zannini. But although these two groups held a continuous and fierce internal struggle to increase their respective influence over more areas and institutions, the two of them always deferred to the unquestionable leadership of the president, who remained the ultimate referee of their disputes.⁵

The effective patronage powers of every office-holder also depend on a presidential decision. The formal organizational chart of the government says very little about the real powers of each minister – or for that matter, of a secretary, an undersecretary, or a director of a decentralized agency - to control other senior and mid-level positions. Although officially every minister is responsible for appointing the rest of top positions in his area, in practice that is seldom the case and has actually been particularly exceptional during the latest administrations.⁶ In most cases the president intervenes, choosing a number of state secretaries and undersecretaries in every ministry, as well as numerous top positions in decentralized and executive agencies. Likewise, it is common for the president to alter the official hierarchies by assigning to a functionary powers to control appointments in other offices which, in principle, are the responsibility of another official. For instance, despite clear regulations, there are no established patterns to determine whether an undersecretary in any given ministry will

⁵ The notion of *Albertistas* and *Penguins* as two competing broad wings of the government trying to get control over more state institutions has been a voiced secret during all Kirchner's term (see for example: "Alberto Fernández vs. Julio De Vido", *Perfil*, August 19, 2007). It was also confirmed by several interviewees who belonged to both groups.

⁶ There are two situations in which a minister can dominate his sector. One is when his own standing (mainly based on personal prestige and public ratings of approval) makes him strong enough to exclude presidential nominations from the area. The second occurs when the president is absolutely confident of the loyalty of the minister. During Kirchner's term, the former was the case of Minister of Economy Roberto Lavagna from 2003 to 2005. Lavagna had been appointed by the previous president Eduardo Duhalde and enjoyed enormous prestige of his own. Maintaining him as minister had been one of Kirchner's fundamental electoral pledges to win the presidency in 2003. But as soon as Kirchner found it possible, he got rid of that minister. The latter was the case of Minister of Social Development Alicia Kirchner (the sister of the president).

be appointed by his immediate superior (the secretary of the area), by the minister, by the chief of the ministerial cabinet, or by the president himself. The dearth of clear rules in this regard makes these matters a frequent source of internal struggles between different wings of the government and, more often, between different functionaries of the same area. Disputes over who in effect appoints functionaries in the ministries and other institutions are part of the usual affairs in the public administration. But in any case it is the president who eventually decides how much and where every functionary appoints. For example, while, as mentioned in the previous footnote, the Minister of Social Development Alicia Kirchner constituted one of those exceptional cases in which a minister is entitled to control the selection of secretaries, undersecretaries and most directors of her ministry, Minister of Economy Felisa Micelli had to deal with a fragmented structure in which secretaries, undersecretaries, and directors of her ministry were selected by – and therefore reported to - the chief of the ministerial cabinet, the minister of federal planning, and by her own subordinate, the secretary of commerce.⁷

The direct involvement of the president and his aides in the appointment of many second and third lines of government mainly results from the way in which the president creates his supportive coalition. As will be discussed in greater detail below, lacking an institutionalized supportive party and in a context in which national elections are essentially won by presidential candidates on the basis of media-based campaigns, many senior and mid level positions are allocated among an array of different political groups and personalities of different origins as a means to create and sustain the presidential coalition of support. Moreover, and precisely because their supportive coalition is based on the allocation of state positions, presidents are reluctant to tolerate

⁷ As a consequence, most policy sectors, and even many institutions, display non-integrated structures. Senior and mid level office-holders rarely make for a unified team; they are appointed by, and therefore defer to, different authorities. Experts on public administration obviously point to this lack of integration as a problem for the efficient management of state structures.

the emergence of powerful ministers and thus tend to limit ministers' ability to dominate institutional and material resources. That explains why ministers have recently had only partial powers to appoint in their sectors and why, in contrast, many senior and mid-level positions are directly appointed by the president.

In the case of Néstor Kirchner a myriad of party factions, NGOs, unions, social movements, academic networks, think tanks, and independent personalities were recruited – many times through one of the two abovementioned wings of the administration (*Albertistas* and *Penguins*) - to fill senior and mid-level positions across the state. The obvious consequence was that an array of personalities, party factions' leaders, NGO activists, unionists, leaders of social movements, and networks of technocrats and professionals of different kinds dominated the recruitment of personnel in the institutions and departments under their control, all of which ushered in a fragmented pattern of control of patronage at the bottom levels.

Informal and Fragmented Patterns of Mid and Bottom Levels

State structures are allotted by the president and his aides among a multiplicity of political groups, reflecting governmental coalitions and co-options in different sectors and at different levels.⁸ Completely informal rules dominate in this field and the effective patronage powers of each functionary are usually the result of disputes which are eventually decided by the most senior political authorities.

The patterns of recruitment at mid and bottom levels are also completely informal, depending on the different powers held by different functionaries. At the lowest level, however, it is common that every office-holder recruits the people that will work under his or her directives. In that sense, undersecretaries and directors are in

⁸ The idea of distribution of pieces of the public administration as similar to allotting pieces of land was suggested by Avelino Tamargo, an advisor of the minister of justice between 2003 and 2005, and by 2008 legislator in the City of Buenos Aires. Author's interview, September 3, 2007.

practice responsible for the majority of the incorporations of personnel at the ministries, whereas managers and directors appoint personnel at decentralized and executive agencies. For example, a program coordinator at a ministry usually has the chance to select the staff that will work under his directives. In this regard, the most senior officials, such as ministers and secretaries, let alone the president, rarely recruit and appoint bottom level personnel by themselves. While these politicians have an enormous interest in the people who dominate other top and sometimes mid-level positions, they generally pay little or no attention to the recruitment of technical and service personnel.

It seems important to note that personalized and fragmented patterns of recruitment also prevail in Congress. Indeed, in most cases every elected deputy and senator, rather than a party caucus, appoints “their” own people, who therefore work for and defer to that individual senator or deputy rather than to the party as a collective entity. Although deputies and senators who hold positions of authority in the chambers and the main parliamentary blocs have powers to distribute extra nominations - which help sustain the unity of the blocs (Leiras, 2007:109) – the effective selection of the appointee is a decision made individually by every deputy and senator. As for the bulk of the administrative personnel of Congress, the power to staff them also lies with the chambers’ authorities. Usually the president of each chamber appoints the administrative secretaries (the highest positions of the administrative staff) and, through them, controls appointments and promotions of the rest of the personnel. When the opposition has a strong parliamentary group, its leaders appoint the second or third administrative positions and may therefore negotiate other appointments at lower levels. In this regard, Congress is the only sector in the national state in which some kind of

consensual – or negotiated - patronage exists.⁹ In any case, as argued in chapter 4, senators' and deputies' political staffs are relatively small – between 5 and 20 employees each; even counting the rest of the agencies in the orbit of Congress, patronage powers of the legislative branch are incomparable to those of the presidential office.¹⁰

To sum up, party patronage decisions are made by office-holders without any interference of an externally organized party structure. The president is the major decision-maker on appointments across the administration, especially at senior levels. Under the umbrella of the president and almost always deferring to his/her leadership, multiple nominators with different degrees of influence – mainly depending on the presidential will - recruit mid and bottom level positions.

In principle, one would think that a presidential system favours the concentration of patronage powers in the presidential hands. Yet, in practice, presidential systems – and also parliamentary systems - largely differ in the extent to which the chief of the government himself or the ruling parties decide over appointments. For instance, in Argentina's neighbouring presidential systems of Chile and Uruguay, powerful party organizations usually decide upon the appointment of ministers, vice-ministers and secretaries. Barbara Geddes says that how much the president himself can appoint or whether he has to resign patronage powers to other actors largely depends on his relative strength with regard to his party or supportive coalition. A president whose leadership is undisputed will have more patronage powers than one whose leadership is

⁹ In addition to negotiations about the administrative personnel of both chambers, party blocs also bargain on positions at the other agencies that are in the Congress' orbit. For example, the opposition usually appoints personnel at different levels of the General Audit Office (AGN). As already mentioned, consensual patronage might also exist in the appointment and promotion of ambassadors and judges, for which the president needs the consent of the senate.

¹⁰ This balance of patronage powers between the president and Congress is illustrative of the relative strength of the two branches of power in Argentina at the national level. It is apparent that the case implies a striking difference to the United States, where, in words of Katz, "... the patronage resources available to Congress probably exceed those of the government" (1996:221).

fragile (Geddes, 1994:153). The remarkable point is that in current Argentine politics it is the same nature of electoral competition which tends to concentrate patronage powers in the presidential hands. As the presidential office is increasingly disputed between personalities rather than between party labels (Cheresky, 2006; Scherlis, 2008a), and elections tend to legitimize a president rather than a party to run the country (O'Donnell, 1994), the president is the one responsible for government formation. It might be argued that because Néstor Kirchner reached the presidency with a particularly slim supportive coalition he did not have to resign patronage powers in favour of other strong partisan actors (i.e. provincial governors). However, the centralization of patronage powers in the presidential office seems to be a far reaching phenomenon of Argentine politics, mostly attributable to the personalization of the electoral process.¹¹ Having discussed who appoints, the next section discusses the leading motivations for party patronage in the Argentine national state.

5.2 Motivations for Party Patronage

In chapter 2, I classified politicians' motives to appoint in three different groups and six specific goals. Governmental patronage takes place when appointments are aimed to control state agencies and when they function as means for coalition-making or co-optation. Organizational patronage occurs when politicians use state jobs to maintain the party's organizational cohesion, to sustain partisan networks on the ground, and to finance the party organization. Finally, patronage can also work as an electoral tool when it is intended to gain votes (from the people who get the jobs and from their households.)

¹¹ In fact, while Cristina Kirchner did benefit from the explicit and active support of the majority of the PJ provincial governors for her election in 2007, the centralization of patronage powers at the national level during her mandate much resembles that of her husband's administration.

Following the previous classification, the results of my research - as they are summarized in table 5.1 - show that patronage is fundamentally used as a mode of government.¹²

Table 5.1: Parties' motives to appoint at the national level

	Governmental		Organizational			Electoral
	Control	Coalition	Cohesion & Discipline	Activism	Fund Raising	Votes
Finance	1	0.7	0.15	0	0	0
Media	1	0.37	0.31	0.25	0.43	0
Culture	1	0.62	0.31	0.37	0.06	0
Congress	0.55	0.5	0.5	0.6	0.5	0
Economy	1	0.55	0.35	0.3	0.35	0
Security	1	0.4	0.2	0	0.25	0
FA	1	0.65	0.35	0.4	0.25	0
Social	0.87	0.62	0.44	0.69	0.44	0
Judiciary	1	0.6	0.3	0.05	0.3	0
Total	0.94	0.56	0.32	0.3	0.34	0

Based on author's interviews

Control over institutional and material resources is *always or almost always* the dominant motive to appoint, whereas the formation of informal coalitions or the co-option of groups and personalities constitute very important reasons as well. In contrast, organizational motivations (recruiting and sustaining partisan networks on the ground,

¹² Experts in the different areas were consulted as to whether each one of these 6 motivations is “always or almost always the dominant motivation to appoint”, “important in many cases”, “common but mostly secondary”, “possible but marginal”, or “non-existent”. See chapter 3 and Appendix 2: Expert Survey Questionnaire.

maintaining the cohesion of a pre-existent party organization, and fund-raising) are by and large *secondary* motives to appoint. Lastly, and irrespective of the possible electoral consequences of state employment policies, office-holders do not allocate state-jobs in the Argentine national state to win votes.

Governmental Patronage: Control as the Dominant Motivation

In principle, patronage for control refers to nominations which seek to dominate the process of policy formulation and implementation. From a principal – agent perspective, elected party politicians (principals) use the power to appoint to ensure that the policies they decide and the orders they send will be carried out without distortions by those who must effectively implement them (agents) (Huber, 2000). But control of state institutions may also be understood in a broader sense, as the will to put institutions to the service of a political project, even resorting to illegal practices when that is required (Blondel, 2002:234-5). As exposed in table 5.1, control in these two complementary senses is the undisputable main motivation to appoint people to state positions in Argentina at the federal level. In eight of our nine sectors (Congress is the exception) interviewees saw control as being *always or almost always the dominant motivation to appoint*.

Patronage as control has generally been related to top level appointments (for example Müller, 2006; Sotiropoulos, 2004). The literature on party government emphasizes that governing parties need to control a number of top governmental positions to make sure their policies are implemented (Rose, 1974; Andeweg, 2000; Key, 1964:699). Indeed, that is also the case in Argentina, where all interviewees consistently confirmed that the president, as the main nominator, appoints top positions with the aim of controlling state sectors and institutions. This notion of control is

strongly related to compliance with presidential orders or to, as politicians in Argentina use to say, loyalty to the “The Project”. Ministers, state secretaries, directors of decentralized agencies, presidents of state-owned companies, and advisors must all guarantee blind obedience to the boss.

Control is the dominant motivation when the president appoints senior positions, be it an ambassador at a key embassy, the director of the national TV station, the secretary of commerce, the director of the national social security agency, or any other. In some cases control is not only the dominant but also the unique motivation, which explains why only some positions are reached by parties in a particular institution. But remarkably, and in contrast to the conventional wisdom, control in the Argentine state is by no means restricted to top level positions. Indeed, control in a broad sense is the main motivation for appointments at mid and bottom levels in the majority of sectors as well. The secretary in a ministerial department who appoints a new program coordinator in the ministry is typically motivated by the intention to make sure that his orders will be complied with and his authority will not be questioned. Similarly, control is what the new director of a decentralized agency or a recently selected president of a state-owned company pursues when he removes the managers or the heads of section to hire others he personally trusts. Likewise, at a lower level, control over management is what generally matters, for example when coordinators in the ministries recruit their working-teams, or when managers hire assistants or technical personnel.

In the same way that, at the very top, the president appoints in search of obedience and loyalty from senior authorities, every official seeks to appoint his subordinates in order to control the area for which he is responsible. This pattern owes much to the perennially high levels of rotation and instability of Argentine bureaucracies. The pattern can be illustrated by drawing a contrast with the

Scandinavian cases. For instance, in Denmark a professionalized civil service has also proved extremely efficient in carrying out the political programs of elected political executives. According to Christensen, the ability to adapt to and serve loyally every new democratically elected government – whatever its political colour – by pursuing its political goals, has prevented parties’ attempts to take over managerial positions (Christensen, 2006). In telling contrast, in most institutions of the Argentine state, every time a new authority assumes political responsibility over an agency he tends to distrust the personnel he finds there. The mistrust is either based on the idea that the employees were appointed by previous politicians and therefore are not loyal to the new “project”, or that they are bureaucrats and are thus unmotivated to serve the new principal. In both cases, political authorities simply think they can not rely on the faithfulness of those employees (Ferraro, 2006; Spiller and Tommasi, 2007). It is uncommon that a new state secretary or undersecretary, for instance, accepts to maintain a general-director previously appointed.¹³ The new appointed director will in turn try to incorporate some people she can personally trust to undertake the sensitive day-to-day responsibilities.

Irrespective of the differences that may exist between one administration and the other, or between different ministries or agencies, “working with your own people” is the only way the administration has ever functioned. As a senior adviser, member of the Governmental Administrators Corps puts it,

“It is just like that, that is the natural and widely accepted way to run the state. Every one who comes brings their own people and teams. No functionary will trust people who were hired by his predecessor.”¹⁴

¹³ Yet, as seen in chapter 4, this does happen at Foreign Affairs and at the financial ministerial departments, where higher levels of professionalism and bureaucratic autonomy help to lessen the distrust of politicians towards the personnel.

¹⁴ Author’s interview with Marisa Bechara, June 8, 2006.

Every political authority requires loyalty, and the easiest way to secure loyalty in a context of unstable and transient state bureaucracies is, naturally, by appointing the personnel. As was suggested for the Eastern European context, feeble bureaucracies in the context of competitive political systems pave the way for cycles in which no new officials rely on the personnel hired by their predecessor (Meyer-Sahling, 2008; Kopecký and Scherlis, 2008). Appointing is therefore the way to make sure that their decisions will be complied with and not sabotaged.

It is important to note that the aim of control does not generally mean that the government pursues the implementation of a clear-cut program. As a matter of fact, Argentine parties rarely assume power with specific policy goals for each sector. As a recent book on public policy in Latin America suggests, in Argentina - as in the region in general - policies are mostly shaped by and subordinated to politics (Stein and Tommasi, 2008). In such a context, appointments at state institutions essentially seek to seize control over institutional and economic resources and to secure the responsiveness of every state agency and its human and material resources to the presidential project. In those circumstances, control over policy-making often appears to overlap with corrupted, or at least dubiously legal, activities and decisions to favour the government political project.

This kind of control for goals other than the implementation of a party platform is best exemplified by sectors such as Media and Welfare. For instance, it is normal that the public TV station, the national radio, and the state news agency adopt marked pro-government positions, no matter what party is in power. That requires total control over the institutions, including authorities, journalists, producers, etc. According to Guillermo Mastrini, director of the Department of Social Communications at the University of Buenos Aires, “in the media sector there is a total fusion and confusion

between the party in government and the state.” To take an example, it is common for every new director of the news agency (Telam) to hire mid and bottom level personnel, from section editors to ordinary journalists, to be sure that every report will only express what the government wants to see published.¹⁵ Less visible but much more significant than the contents of the public media is the way in which the Secretariat of Media manages the relationship between the government and private media corporations, a critical issue which in Argentina is characterized by informal deals behind the scenes. The national government distributes significant amounts of money for “public advertisement”, which is discretionally allocated according to the editorial line expressed by each media corporation. Given that this revenue constitutes an important – sometimes the main - income for newspapers and radio and TV stations, state money has functioned as a powerful tool to influence media editorial lines and to buy off individual journalists. In this regard, a report from Open Society Institute (2008) has referred to “manipulation of advertising resources for political reasons”, entailing “non-traditional threats to freedom of expression”, and “financial censorship”. The relations between governments and media corporations also involve the concession of benefits for collateral but sometimes more profitable businesses, such as the provision of cable television and internet services, or other economic affairs in which these firms are involved. Besides, the Secretariat of Media has also served as the private commercial agency for the ruling party, using its budget, personnel, and equipment to organize and spread the electoral propaganda of the governing party for the presidential elections of October 2007. Naturally, the realization of all these actions – and for many more concerning the media sector see the well-documented book by María O’Donnell (2007)

¹⁵ According to journalist Jorge Lanata, the director of TELAM during Kirchner administration hired more than 130 employees (the agency had around 500) and “focused on taking total control over the editorial staff” (“¿Por qué hablamos de bicentenario?”, *Crítica de la Argentina*, May 25, 2008).

- requires a government that effectively controls the whole sector through functionaries that are obedient to the chain of command.¹⁶

Control of the different areas of the Ministry of Social Development is decisive for setting up large-scale pro-governmental clientelistic networks. This ministry controls vast amounts of resources which are allocated through programs that, in most cases, reach the beneficiaries through the participation of local mayors, neighbourhood organizations, NGOs, or just partisan brokers. The control of top and mid positions in the ministry makes it possible for the official who delivers the benefits to choose the “proper” intermediary and to decide the appropriate allocation of funds. In practice, that entails political deals with the organizations and institutions that receive the benefits to distribute them to the people.¹⁷ Some of these deals are important for the opportune mobilization of networks of activists and votes.¹⁸ Some others are aimed to gain the allegiance of established institutions, as for example when a union is entitled to carry out (and thus to administrate the budget of) a labour-training program in a poor neighbourhood. In this last regard, as a sociologist who worked in the sector explained to me, the concession of these programs to unions (especially because they provide the unions with money they then use as they consider fit) is a typical means to knit political agreements with these organizations while, at the same time, the official in charge receives as a kickback a percentage of the budget of the program.¹⁹ The discretionary and

¹⁶ In addition to media manipulation for governmental purposes, the money for media buying is often destined to favour friends and front men of the political authorities. As explained in chapter 1, I am not interested in analyzing corruption, but it is worth pointing out that corruption requires patronage as a necessary precondition.

¹⁷ Many times, the intermediary organizations are just facades of partisan organizations which benefit from the social plan. Most times however, they are local groups and NGOs which are co-opted by the benefits they receive thanks to the discretionary decision of the office-holder.

¹⁸ In the last years it has become widespread to fund networks of soup kitchens in slums, which entail agreements between office-holders and neighbourhood leaders who run the soup kitchens. In exchange for the daily supply of food that secures their leadership in the neighbourhood, these leaders operate as political brokers for the office-holders’ group in times of elections, mobilizing people to rallies and ballot boxes.

¹⁹ Author’s interview with Fernando Sciarrotta, July 4, 2007.

spurious utilization of these programs makes a ministry like Social Development a good launching pad for office-holders willing to develop a political career in districts prone to clientelistic practices.²⁰

In reality, even when Welfare and Media institutions exhibit extreme cases in which patronage serves as the necessary launching pad for corrupted actions, appointments aimed to control and utilize state agencies occur all across the state. For example, the Tax Collection Agency is regarded as one the most professionalized institutions of the Argentine state and its autonomy has been allegedly preserved and reinforced in recent years (Spiller and Tommasi, 2008:103). Yet, it is equally acknowledged that national presidents do maintain control over the most senior positions of the agency and make use of it for political reasons, typically by ordering discretionary inspections to harass (or, conversely, to turn a blind eye to) particular persons, companies, or sectors. Naturally, that requires that the directors of the agency comply with the presidential orders.

That control is the main goal of party appointments and that control may refer to manipulation in any state institution has been proven in recent years by the case of the National Statistics Office (INDEC). The government decided to take direct control over the long-standing autonomous and prestigious INDEC in order to manipulate inflation data “so that they appear more favourable than real figures (largely by altering the composition of the consumer price index-CPI).”²¹ The conflict began in the last trimester of 2006 when a section head refused to submit to the secretary of commerce

²⁰ Interestingly, in 2007 four secretaries and undersecretaries of the ministry (of a total of 9) ran for mayors of different municipalities of the province of Buenos Aires, three of them characterized by high levels of poverty and strong presence of social programs. See “Alicia en el País de las Margaritas”, *Página 12*, August 17, 2006. The massive distribution of state resources in a clientelistic manner was denounced and some of them are still in 2008 under legal inquiry. See, for instance, “Clientelismo: Acusaron a dos funcionarios de Alicia Kirchner”, *La Nación*, August 27, 2008.

²¹ “Cristina’s Challenges”, *The Economist*, October 26, 2007. Also “Hocus-Pocus: Argentina’s Way with Sums”, *The Economist*, June 12, 2008; and Levitsky and Murillo (2008:25).

confidential information on her work on the CPI (the submission would have entailed a violation of the law of statistical secret 17622/1968). In an unprecedented decision, the secretary of commerce – backed by President Kirchner- replaced that mid-level official with an employee from the Ministry of Economy without any background in the INDEC. That measure triggered a series of forced resignations in the agency (first, the immediate superior of the replaced employee, shortly afterwards the director of the institution, and eventually more than 20 qualified functionaries). Many of the INDEC employees protested the political intervention and initiated a campaign for the autonomy of the agency, but the whole institution was soon dismantled and literally occupied by more than 100 new employees who deferred to the secretary of commerce.²² To sum up, the president decided to reach deep into a highly respected and professionalized institution as soon as it determined that the goal - in this case to control the official figures of inflation, poverty, and unemployment – was worth the intervention.

The case of INDEC has stood out as a shocking example of party patronage aimed to control an agency through dubious proceedings and with illegitimate goals. In that sense, it is apparent that such a grotesque intervention in a professionalized agency has few precedents in democratic times. But all in all the case reflects well the relationship between party politicians and state structures in Argentina. Political authorities pursue the control of state institutions and that is, in all sectors except for Congress, the primary motivation to appoint. In many agencies control does not require “deep” patronage but this kind of brutal intervention may occur when the government considers it necessary.

²² See “Denuncian que el INDEC está totalmente desmantelado”, *La Nación*, January 14, 2008.

Lastly, it is remarkable that appointments for control have been likewise used to control the highest echelons of those institutions formally meant to control governmental actions, such as the Anti-Corruption Office, and the Internal and External Auditing Offices (SIGEN and AGN). For example, the SIGEN, the agency that exercises internal control of the executive power, is known for a relatively professionalized and workable bureaucracy. Yet, governments appoint loyal functionaries to the highest positions in order to effectively control the reports and inquiries carried out by the agency.²³

In this respect it seems worth noting that Argentina is consistently considered to be among the most corrupt countries in Latin America. In the 2008 Corruption Perception Index of Transparency International, Argentina is at the position 14 out of 20 Latin American countries and 109 of 180 countries of the world. Argentina scores 2.9 points, much closer to the last of the list (Somalia, 1 point) than to countries as Uruguay or Chile (position 23, 6.9 points), and well behind the other middle-income neighbour, Brazil (3.5 points, position 80).²⁴

Coalition Formation/Coooption

Party patronage may also be seen as a mode of government when it refers to gaining political support through the incorporation of different political actors (party factions, interest associations, NGOs, individual politicians, etc.). I call this second sub-type of governmental patronage “informal coalition/co-option” (see chapter 2). The “control” and “coalition formation” sub-types of patronage are of course not mutually exclusive, and in fact one would not expect the president, as the major appointer, to resign control

²³ Kirchner appointed as chair of SIGEN a very close friend of the chief of cabinet, whereas the minister of federal planning's wife was appointed deputy chair. See “Inédita crisis en el control al gobierno”, *La Nación*, November 16, 2008.

²⁴ See http://www.transparency.org/news_room/in_focus/2008/cpi2008/cpi_2008_table

of policy-making when she decides to enlarge the supportive coalition. Yet the distinction seems valid, because these two sub-types refer to different specific goals. In the case of control, the appointee is selected because he ensures compliance with the nominator's orders. Coalition formation, in turn, does not suppose loss of control, but the appointment is primarily aimed at bringing a new actor into the presidential coalition.

In that sense, all Argentine governments must be understood in terms of transient presidential coalitions. The composition of the presidential coalition of support is expressed through the nominations at top and mid-level positions. In principle, the formation of the government reflects the political basis of support which accompanied the presidential candidacy. However, all Argentine presidents since the restoration of democracy have attempted to enlarge their original coalitions of government by making use of their patronage powers and taking advantage of the dearth of a professionalized civil service. What is more interesting from the perspective of this study is that there is a visible trend towards an increasing importance of appointments in different sectors and levels as the mode of bringing into the government numerous groups and politicians who had not supported the electoral ticket of the president. In other words, patronage turns out to be the mode by which the presidential coalition of government is effectively created. As mentioned above, inasmuch as elections are increasingly disputed between persons rather than parties, elected presidents enjoy increasing opportunities (or – flipside of the coin - suffer from a growing need) to knit informal coalitions in order to run the state apparatus. Barbara Geddes notes that elected leaders can seek autonomy from their parties by appointing people from outside the party themselves (1994:147-8). Yet, rather than gaining autonomy from the party, what actually happens in Argentina is that appointments help the president to forge informal coalitions through which they

shift the equilibrium of powers within their own parties, strengthening new actors and displacing others. The allocation of public positions and the consequent management of resources restructure and renew party elites. In the context of the de-institutionalization of the traditional party organizations (Scherlis, 2008a), the allocation of state offices (and their respective state budgets) to diverse political and social actors has become the primary way in which the presidential group constitutes and gives shape to both the government and party staffs.

Interestingly, as it is shown in table 5.1, patronage for coalition reaches all sectors quite evenly without exception although different sectors are more conducive to certain types of coalitions than others. A few examples from Kirchner's administration help illustrate this argument. Movements of the unemployed (*piqueteros*) have become a significant actor in Argentine politics since the mid-1990s, blocking roads and holding periodical protests against local and national authorities (Auyero, 2005). While some of these groups identified themselves with left-wing parties, many others maintained their autonomy from political parties in general (Svampa and Pereyra, 2003). President Kirchner was very successful in incorporating most of the latter and even some of the former into his government. The coalition with (or co-option of) unemployed movements was reflected in appointments in different areas: a few *piquetero* leaders were appointed to top positions in the welfare and economic sectors.²⁵ In addition, some others were appointed to less visible positions, as coordinators of ministerial programs or simple advisors, but with access to institutional and material resources.

Human rights movements and the main worker federation – CGT, were also incorporated into the government although none of them had supported Kirchner as a

²⁵ Luis D'Elia, leader of the Federation for Land and Housing-FTV and the most famous *piquetero*, was appointed as undersecretary of social habitat at the Ministry of Federal Planning. Jorge Ceballos, leader of the *Libres del Sur* movement, was appointed undersecretary of popular education and organization at the Ministry of Social Development. It is remarkable that these two offices were *ad hoc* created to incorporate these groups to the government.

presidential candidate in 2003 (in fact, the CGT leader had explicitly supported another presidential candidate). In the case of human rights activists, appointments were not surprisingly concentrated in the secretariat of human rights, which was in practice taken over by human rights organizations. The alliance with the CGT was also crystallized in appointments in different sectors. In this case – most likely because of the poor social standing of the trade-unionists - appointments were confined to less visible positions, albeit just as significant in terms of policy making and material resources.²⁶

Kirchner also offered some positions to politicians from other parties, taking advantage of party organizations' fragmentation and the devaluation of party labels to co-opt politicians through appointments. ARI, the opposition party led by Elisa Carrió, was probably the most affected in this regard, suffering the co-option of some of its most important political figures. But Kirchner also co-opted Socialist, Radical and a few minor centre-left parties' political figures, appointing them to different top and mid-level positions. In so doing, the government both enlarged its base of support and weakened its political opponents.

The same occurred in the case of the coalition with (or co-option of) some individual personalities linked to civil society organizations. The most visible example during Kirchner's government was the appointment of the leader of an environmental NGO as secretary of environment and natural resources.²⁷ Another paradigmatic case is that of Martha Oyhanarte, founder of *Poder Ciudadano* (Citizen Power), a well-known

²⁶ Persons from the CGT are in charge of undersecretaries at the Ministry of Federal Planning: the undersecretariat of ports and the undersecretariat of transport. In addition, a person close to the CGT leader is the manager of the administration of special programs at the Ministry of Health, a mid level position that administers large amount of resources of the health system.

²⁷ The environmental issue had gained importance because of a persistent crisis that had unfolded around the installation of a pulp mill on the Uruguayan side of the border which, according to environmental activists, would pollute the river. In that context the government appointed Romina Picolotti, leader of an environmentalist NGO and one of the most visible faces of the protest, as secretary of environment.

NGO dedicated to monitoring governmental activities and denouncing corruption.²⁸ Oyhanarte was appointed by President Kirchner to be in charge of an office specially created for her (“Under-secretariat for Institutional Reform and Democratic Strengthening”), after which she adopted a low profile, turned a blind eye to all corruption scandals, and disappeared from the political scene in the following years.²⁹

Appointments to specific positions are also a means to maintain good linkages with economic sectors and corporations. For instance, it is customary that all governments appoint as general-director of private education a person proposed by the Catholic Church, the institution that runs the largest share of private schools in the country. Presidents frequently appoint to the Secretariat of Industry people with close ties to the industrialists’ interest association, Union Industrial Argentina (UIA). The same occurs with the Agriculture sector, where the interest associations (Sociedad Rural, Federación Agraria) usually have a strong presence. Sometimes these coalitions involve mid level positions, such as program coordinators, which may implicate only a few jobs but also a significant amount of resources. For instance, Federación Agraria obtained control of the “Agriculture Social Program” of the Ministry of Economy, a plan that assists 40,000 farmers all over the country.³⁰ On occasion, the coalitions with the industrial and agriculture sectors involve not only their interest associations but specific companies and corporations as well. For example, a close aide of the owner of one of the most important oil producers of the country (Aceitera General Deheza) has been since 2006 the vice-president (and in practice the strong man) of the National Office of Agriculture Commerce, the agency that distributes state subsidies to agriculture producers.

²⁸ Poder Ciudadano, the local branch of Transparency International, was pointed out by Peruzzotti and Smulovitz (2005) as one of the main institutions to promote “societal accountability” in Argentina.

²⁹ According to an interviewee who works in the same area, Oyhanarte changed her allegations of corruption for “tennis mornings and frequent trips to Europe to ‘discuss’ future institutional reforms.”

³⁰ “Las vaquitas ajenas, los votos propios”, *Página 12*, November 1, 2007

Nominations at different levels are also used to create and maintain good ties with several strong bureaucratic corps. In the two most professionalized areas of the state, Foreign Affairs and Finance, the management of the agencies requires the allegiance of the permanent staff. For instance, governments normally seek to keep good relations with the Diplomatic Corps by appointing some of its prominent members as directors-general, undersecretaries, and even secretaries at the ministry.

A “peaceful governance” of many state institutions (as diverse as the national library, the Congress, or the state TV station) demands agreements with the unions of state personnel which let them control appointments at the bottom level. The strength of unions as appointers is still stronger in several state-owned companies. In the recently nationalized water company AYSA an agreement between the Minister of Federal Planning and the union of state personnel led the lawyer of the union to the presidency of the company. In a fluid political system such as the Argentine one, coalition/cooption for political support also involves personalities without previous political backgrounds. It has been common in last two decades to appoint popular personalities, usually from sports and show-business circles, in order to exhibit them as government supporters.³¹

Indeed, the same organizational chart of the public administration is to a large extent a dependent variable determined by the incorporation of new partners to the government. This pattern explains the permanent variation in the number of secretaries and undersecretaries in the ministries, which are many times specifically created to accommodate a new ally in the governmental coalition (Spiller and Tommasi, 2007).

In addition to the most visible appointments, the high scores of patronage as coalition and co-option which emerge from experts interviews are largely explained by

³¹ A recent case is that of football referee Horacio Elizondo, who in “Germany 2006 World Cup” became the first person ever to referee the inaugural and final match of that tournament. His performance, along with the poor one of the national football team, made Elizondo a hero for the (predominantly football-fan) Argentine public. Shortly after the world cup, the government offered him the ad hoc created position of “Coordinator of Sports Programs”.

a multiplicity of micro-coalitions and co-options taking place all across middle levels of most sectors and institutions. It may be a network of experts in security from a university recruited for the Ministry of defence, an NGO specialized in consumers' rights called to run the commission of consumers' defence, a tiny social movement with some experience in volunteering in marginal neighbourhoods that is put in charge of a program at the Ministry of Social Development; and so on. A large range of networks originally unrelated or with very loose ties to a party are in that way incorporated to the government.

Organizational Patronage: the Party as a Web of Governmental Networks

It is a conventional idea that patronage is an obvious way of strengthening party organization (for example Ware, 1996:349). The idea assumes that there is a pre-existent party organization and that patronage serves to enhance it. However, a first approach based on the collected data suggests that patronage is by and large irrelevant as an organizational resource in Argentina at the national level. The distribution of public jobs is only marginally utilized to sustain a large group of activists, it is not the instrument used to hold the different factions of the organization together, and it is of little relevance to financing a party organization. The concentration of powers in the presidential office and the absence of a pre-existent party organization as an actor in the formation of the government in principle suggest the irrelevance of patronage as an organizational resource. Accordingly, as illustrated in table 5.1, the three sub-types of organizational patronage (cohesion and discipline, the maintenance of activism, and fund-raising) all rank far below the "governmental" sub-types.

Cohesion and Discipline

The distribution of quotas of the state among the different factions of a ruling party in order to keep their unity used to be quite important in Argentina during the first years of democratic rule, when national candidacies were supported by highly nationalized organizations (Jones and Mainwaring, 2003) and relatively institutionalized parties (Mainwaring and Scully, 1995).³² By contrast, my results for the period 2003-2007 suggest that appointments were hardly used to maintain the unity of the Peronist Party in the Kirchner governmental coalition. Currently the Peronist Party, like all major Argentine parties, is made up of a collection of provincial branches, each of which can be seen as a different unit of a national federation of provincial factions (Levitsky and Murillo, 2003; Leiras, 2007:97). Although in the very beginning of his term Kirchner did employ his patronage powers to maintain the allegiance of the most powerful provincial branch of the party - that of the Province of Buenos Aires - the distribution of offices to integrate the provincial branches of the party into the national government was by and large a marginal practice. The allegiance of the PJ provincial branches was – as much as that of the other parties' provincial governors- secured through other mechanisms, especially pork barrel transfers and subsidies (I develop this point in chapter 8). But the provincial sections of the Peronist Party remained excluded from the composition and management of the national government. The same pattern continues during the administration led by Cristina Fernández de Kirchner, despite the fact that her candidacy was explicitly supported by almost all the Peronist provincial bosses.

³² An apparent example is that of Alfonsín government (1983-1989). Studies show that President Alfonsín obtained the support of the multiple factions of his party, the UCR, through a policy of distribution of shares of power. Ministries, decentralized agencies, and even the then five state-owned media channels, were allocated in a sustained equilibrium between factions. See De Riz and Feldman (1991) and Botto (1997).

Activism

Appointing a group of people to public jobs is the natural way in which party politicians maintain their own group of political assistants and close aides, the “political operators” or what different interviewees defined as “the hard nucleus” of the politician’s political group. Although to variable degrees, every office-holding politician in each sector of the state has the chance to provide a few jobs – usually as cabinet staff - for those people. While usually not very significant in numbers, aides and operators are responsible for much of the functioning of party organizations, organizing the politicians’ political agendas and managing their relations with other political and social actors. Public jobs are important in order to maintain that hard nucleus close and loyal to the politician. However, the building and conservation of partisan networks on the ground are not important motives to appoint in the overwhelming majority of institutions of the Argentine national state.

All in all, the utilization of patronage to sustain the old-style partisan networks on the ground is of little importance, except for the sectors of Welfare and Congress. Congress is, by definition, the place where activists are employed. It is customary that those activists who have had an active participation in the campaign are hired once the politician is elected. In this way the politician rewards the political allegiance while he/she seeks to preserve the political group that helped them to achieve the seat. The comparatively high level of patronage for party activism correlates positively with the very low level of proficiency required for the recruitment of legislators’ staffs of advisors (see table 5.4 below) and more generally with the “amateurism” and deficient capabilities of the Argentine Congress (Jones et al, 2002; Spiller and Tommasi, 2008:83-89). It is common that legislators employ people that serve as full-time activists, often remaining in their provinces working for the local party organization.

Nonetheless, as already noted, Congress' patronage powers are limited, and positions at the disposal of a national deputy or national senator are clearly insufficient to build and maintain by themselves a sizeable political structure. At most, the jobs that an individual legislator can distribute may help in containing small networks of activists that, by using other resources, could develop a partisan structure on the ground. Actually, if a congressman is able to sustain a large network of activists, it will hardly be by providing jobs in Congress but by using other prerogatives granted by their position.³³ While it is still possible to hear stories about legislators who during the 1990s managed to appoint large groups of employees at the Congress' Library or the Print so as to create significant clienteles, the practice seems to have significantly dwindled.³⁴

Welfare is the other sector in which patronage for party activism is relatively high. Not surprisingly, just like Congress this is a sector characterized by a high scope of patronage (see chapter 4, Table 4.4) and consistently low levels of professionalism (this chapter, table 5.4 below, and Bertranou, et al, 2004). In addition to the abovementioned practice of setting up coalitions with local groups and brokers, it is common for functionaries of the Ministry of Social Development to turn to party activists to develop social assistance programs, which require the presence of people in the neighbourhoods in face- to- face contact with the needy. Hiring activists thus serves a two-fold goal: while it makes it possible to sustain a political group on the ground, it also allows for the politically biased administration of social assistance programs, which are generally implemented in a clientelistic style (Weitz Shapiro, 2006; Spiller and Tommasi, 2008:93; Levitsky, 2007). Yet, similarly to what occurs in Congress, if

³³ Congressmen have at their disposal a variable number of scholarships and pensions which they allocate discretionally.

³⁴ Interviewees in general coincide in affirming that the discretionary use of public resources by national legislators was severely restrained after the political protests of 2001-2002.

relatively large partisan networks are to be developed, state jobs are usually scant and certainly not the most efficient option. Actually, networks of activism are rarely fuelled by state jobs at the national level but rather by social assistance plans and other particularistic exchanges.

The explanations for the little relevance of state jobs in the formation of extended networks on the ground may be summarized in the following four points. First, hiring large groups of activists without the minimal qualifications is in the majority of sectors conducive to clashes with the state bureaucracies and unions. Second, the number of people a minister (or for that matter, a secretary or a director), is allowed to hire is usually limited by budget constraints which, save for rare exceptions, do not make it possible to sustain important political structures. Third, public jobs are too expensive and rigid to exchange for lowly qualified party activism.³⁵ And last but definitely not least, senior and mid-level office-holding politicians in the different sectors of the national state structures have few incentives to develop networks of activists. In chapter 7 we shall see that networks of activists are still of some importance for electoral politics at sub-national and local levels. That is not the case for the vast majority of political functionaries at the national level. For top level political functionaries, demonstrating efficient management of their sectors, having access to the mass media, and establishing linkages with interest groups and corporations is much more important than developing a network on the ground. Irrespective of whether they have the chance to do so or not, developing large networks of activists on the ground is

³⁵ My interviews confirm that recruiting an unskilled workforce for campaigning does not require distributing jobs. As political scientist and advisor in the Ministry of Economy Rosana Echarri says, “You do not give a job in the ministry to these guys. That would be a waste of money. You give them an allowance from time to time, without any regular basis. Perhaps they come and say they need some money to pay the rent, and you help them, and that is how you maintain the UB open and have some workforce to put up posters or whatever.”

clearly not the mode in which most senior and mid-level officials at the national state do politics.

Fund-raising

The practice of deducting a percentage of the appointee's salary for the politician responsible for the appointment, a custom described in the literature of American machines and common in many other polities, is widespread in the Argentine state. In fact, it is exceptional to find cases in which the political appointee is not forced to renounce part of his or her salary to the appointer. This practice is part of the "uses and customs" (*usos y costumbres*) in the public sector, but is not regarded by experts as an important reason why parties appoint.

Yet, even if patronage as fund-raising is not a leading motivation to appoint, it must not be overlooked that patronage is a necessary requisite for other means of party fund-raising. Scholars on Argentine party organization agree that state budgets are the main source of funding for political activities (De Luca et al, 2006; Leiras, 2007:81,112). The manipulation of state budgets for partisan reasons requires the control and domination of state agencies. According to a researcher of the National Institute for Public Administration-INAP, "there is a strong tradition of using the public administration resources and budgets to finance political activities."³⁶ Be it for the next national election campaign, to support an allied provincial politician, to buy off a journalist, to promote the candidacy of an office-holding politician in the next party primaries, to finance a group of activists in the university or the neighbourhood, or for any other political reason, the use of state agencies' budgets for partisan purposes is rife

³⁶ Author's interview with Andrea López, August 22, 2006.

all across the state, and particularly in sectors such as Economy, Media, Welfare and in Congress.

On a small scale, the most ordinary activities such as the acquisition of office equipment and furniture, or the outsourcing of activities such as the cleaning or the catering of the agency quite often involve – according to the interviewees – shady agreements with the purveyors which provide extra funding for the functionaries. On a larger scale, to take examples from the Economy sector, decisions such as the adjudication of public works contracts, the allocation of subsidies to agriculture producers, the deals with public utility companies, the licenses to fishing and mining investors, among many others, are all matters that involve large amounts of money and over which ruling elites keep tight control. All of those activities have been objects of credible allegations of corruption during Kirchner's presidency (and during previous ones), in many cases giving rise to judicial inquiries. Minister of Federal Planning Julio De Vido and Secretary of Transport Ricardo Jaime, along with some of their aides, have been in that context repeatedly pointed by interviewees journalists and members of political circles as two of the main “treasurers” of the *Kirchnerista* government.³⁷

The money collected by office-holders does not feed an established party organization but rather the coffers of office-holding politicians themselves.³⁸ On the one hand, a myriad of functionaries use state resources extracted from the agencies they control for their own political purposes. All major political actors tacitly accept that whoever controls a state agency is allowed to make use of its human, institutional and

³⁷ A well-known case of a politician close to De Vido who was also involved in a “fund-raising” scandal is that of Claudio Uberti. This functionary, officially the director of the agency that controls the private companies which administrate national highways, was part of the group found with non-declared bags containing US \$800,000 from the Venezuelan government, allegedly destined to finance Cristina Kirchner's electoral campaign. The case is being judged in Miami, where there have been new revelations about other bags containing higher amounts. See also Cabot and Olivera (2008).

³⁸ The only exception found during my research is that of employees of the UCR, PS, and ARI (legislators in both chambers), who must contribute a percentage of their salaries to the party organization coffers.

material resources to promote their own political objectives (Leiras, 2007:81).³⁹ Yet, the bulk of resources from shady deals go to the coffers of the presidential group. Indeed, the infrastructure of illegal political finance at the national level is highly centralized in the presidential office (usually through a few key presidential aides). As Minister of Interior during Carlos Menem's presidency, José Luis Manzano (1989-1993) once admitted, corruption on big scale is corruption for the "Crown".⁴⁰

Electoral Patronage

In all 45 interviews conducted for the national state, the question about the use of jobs in the Argentine national state as a resource for votes received exactly the same response: getting the vote of the employees (and potentially of their households) is not a motive to appoint. The ruling party might decide on specific policies to capture public employees' allegiance and votes, such as inviting them to political talks, seminars, and the like. It can also use diverse coercive methods to force them into political participation, such as threatening them with dismissals. But all of these practices – except perhaps for invitations to rallies in the Welfare sector - are extremely unusual in the context of the national administration and, in any case, constitute another matter I do not cover at this point. In short, patronage at the national level is definitely not planned as a mode of vote-gathering.

³⁹ This political use of state agencies' resources may range from the subtle organization of a seminar or a symposium on a particular subject, through which the functionary attempts to knit ties with civil society organizations, to the more blatant printing and distribution of political propaganda, or paying journalists to praise their performance as functionaries.

⁴⁰ Manzano admitted that, as a minister, he had made illegal use of state resources, but that it was a "steal for the Crown". The phrase was used by journalist Horacio Verbitsky for the title of a best-seller book (1992) in which many cases of steals for the presidential political project are described in detail.

5.3 The Criteria for the Selection of Appointees

In the classic conception of party government, party membership tends to be the obvious criterion for the selection of appointees, mostly because it signals political trustworthiness and loyalty (Manow and Wettengel, 2006). In case studies about countries like for example Colombia or the pre-*mani pulite* Italy, party membership appears as the most common requisite for getting a patronage appointment (Martz, 1997; Chubb, 1982). Yet, elected political authorities may rely on diverse criteria to appoint. As Katz noted, the effective *partyness* of a government is usually a matter of degree (Katz, 1986:22-42).

Up until 2001, pre-existing and reasonably institutionalized parties were the basis upon which Argentine presidential coalitions were structured. Presidents used to appoint partisan ministers who in turn turned to other party members to fill the available positions in their sectors. A clear example is that of the Alfonsín government, in which ministers and functionaries belonging to different factions of the party incorporated activists and members who were part of their respective factions into the state (Respuela, 1990; Botto, 1997). Even when the appointment of a few extra-partisan functionaries was common in many Argentine governments, during the 1980s and 1990s, party patronage was mostly employed to appoint people from the ruling parties.

In that regard, my results show that in recent years party membership has been replaced by personal loyalty as the chief condition for being appointed across all sectors. The party – primarily the president's provincial branch – is still important at the highest echelons of the state. Indeed, Kirchner did rely on members of his Peronist faction (the PJ from Santa Cruz) to cover some of the most important positions of government (Spiller and Tommasi, 2008:105).

Yet, in a careful analysis of career paths for the 194 most senior positions of the state in 2006, I found that even with regard to the most senior positions of government, party membership comes third after personal linkage and professional background as the dominant criterion to appoint.⁴¹ As table 5.2 shows, of those 194 top positions, affiliation with a party appears as at least one of the two defining factors in 70 cases⁴², against 85 cases in which personal linkage is a dominant motivation, 81 in which professional qualifications were taken into account, and 25 in which ideological affinity functioned as a defining condition.

Table 5.2: Defining appointing criteria at the top level*

	N. of appointed positions
Personal	85
Professional qualifications	81
Party membership	70
Ideological affinity	25

Based on author's interviews and press reports

Interestingly, if we include all patronage positions across the Argentine state, following the methodology specified in chapter 3,⁴³ party appears as the least important factor of our possible four, and, in terms of sectors, its presence is overall confined to

⁴¹ The 194 top positions include 11 ministers, 50 state secretaries, 76 state undersecretaries, 6 ambassadors, 6 chiefs of armed and security forces, 40 presidents and directors of decentralized agencies and state-owned companies, and 5 other functionaries in charge of important state programs. For a detailed description of the 194 positions see Appendix 5.

⁴² As explained in chapter 3, in the analysis of motivations for appointments at the top of the state, the criteria are not mutually exclusive. While I tried to identify a single defining factor whenever it was possible, in many cases I considered up to two different criteria for the same position.

⁴³ Experts in the different areas were consulted as to whether each one of these factors is “always a necessary condition to be appointed”, if it is “important in many cases”, if it is “common but mostly secondary”, if it is “possible but marginal”, or if it is just a “non-present criterion”. See chapter 3 and Appendix 3: Expert Survey Questionnaire.

Congress and Welfare. Actually, as shown in table 5.3, in most sectors of the national state, party membership is of marginal or no importance. Personal loyalty, by contrast, is by far the most important condition for appointments at all levels and across all sectors, appearing in all sectors as “always or almost always” the most influential factor for appointments. The president, as the key appointer of top positions, selects people on the basis of personal trust and many times takes into account ideological affinity and expertise. As for the vast majority of appointments which take place at the lower levels, they are mostly decided by mid-level officials, also on the basis of personal linkages.

Table 5.3: Criteria to appoint at the national state

Sectors	Professional	Party	Ideology	Personal
Congress	0.4	0.68	0.6	0.95
Finance	1	0.2	0.65	0.95
Media	0.37	0.31	0.82	0.94
Culture	0.62	0.07	0.74	0.94
Economy	0.65	0.35	0.65	1
Security	0.74	0.2	0.73	0.9
FA	0.68	0.45	0.71	0.85
Welfare	0.37	0.69	0.81	0.87
Judiciary	0.82	0.2	0.6	0.9
Mean	0.63	0.5	0.7	0.92

*Based on author's interviews

Party affiliation is still important for the nomination of the most senior positions. However, below the highest level of government, appointments are rarely linked to any

party membership. Most interviewees agree with the perspective of the expert on public administration Mercedes Iacoviello, who asserts that “from undersecretaries downwards, whom everyone appoints has little to do with a party and much more with acquaintances, and networks of affinities”.⁴⁴ Undersecretaries and mid-level officials (such as program coordinators or managers) search for people they can trust and, in many cases, who have the necessary skills. What they look for is, in the words of Ezra Suleiman, “responsive competence” (Suleiman, 2003:215). In that sense, the usual mechanism to recruit new employees involves hiring acquaintances, or people recommended by an acquaintance, who can also exhibit some professional qualifications. Entire programs in ministries such as Health, Education, Labour, or Justice, are in practice run by young professionals (sociologists, social workers, public administrators, lawyers, etc.) whom the coordinator met in the university, an NGO, or a research centre (rather than in a committee or a *unidad básica*).

Ideological affinity also appears as an important factor which seems to replace party affiliation in sectors such as culture & education, security, the judiciary, media, and FA, especially at mid-level positions. For instance, interviewees agree that a necessary requisite for being appointed at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs during the Kirchner government was to have a background related to positions favourable to Latin American integration, in contrast to the “carnal relations” with the United States which characterized the Menem administration. Similarly, a profile related to certain progressive pedagogical schools was a requisite at the Ministry of Education, which led to the somewhat paradoxical exclusion of those experts who had been related to the Menem and Duhalde Peronist administrations and the incorporation of many experts who had collaborated with the UCR-Alianza government.

⁴⁴ Author’s interview, July 28, 2006. Interestingly, Scott Mainwaring refers to a similar pattern for Brazil (1999:184): “partisanship in the narrow sense is weak in Brazil. There is a politicization of the bureaucracy, but more according to personal than partisan loyalty.”

Professional qualifications are necessary in the financial sector and important in the Judiciary, Culture & Education, Security, and Economy sectors. In fact, many times the control of these areas is linked to their efficient management. Every minister wants loyal people, but in many cases they also need loyal people who can do an efficient job. Ministers, secretaries, and directors of NDACs are essentially judged by their respective superiors on the basis of their achievements. As a program coordinator at the Ministry of Justice explains,

“Nowadays talking is not enough. This program has targets and I have to show the secretary that we achieve the targets. I have to show the figures, the tables. At the end of the year, I will be judged on the basis of the results I can show”⁴⁵

That is why a certain degree of expertise in the field is important in many cases. The combination of those two conditions is usually met through the appointment of professional acquaintances. Bringing in professionals that functionaries can trust – because they worked with them before at a university, because a friend recommended them, etc. - is just the common mode to fill vacancies in many ministerial departments and decentralized agencies in which qualified personnel are required.

That party affiliation has waned as a requisite for being appointed can be explained by four main related reasons. The first applies specifically to the Kirchner government, and refers to the slim coalition that originally supported him, together with Kirchner’s decision to keep the Peronist provincial bosses out of the government. Because almost none of the provincial branches of the Peronist party worked for Kirchner’s presidential campaign in the 2003 presidential race⁴⁶, these provincial branches were easily kept out of the national government afterwards. Even when the majority of the party provincial bosses swiftly accepted the leadership of the elected

⁴⁵ Author’s interview, August 8, 2006.

⁴⁶ Only Santa Cruz, Buenos Aires, and Jujuy (3 out of 24 districts) openly supported Kirchner. The rest of the provincial branches either supported other Peronist candidates or none.

president, Kirchner made the political decision to remain as autonomous as possible from the Peronist governors. However, this factor loses relevance when we note that although President Cristina Fernández de Kirchner did get the support of the provincial branches, she did not include them in the national government either.

A second factor refers to the heterogeneous ideologies and the bitter internal struggles which characterize the Peronist Party (although the same applies to the UCR). Because belonging to the Peronist party says little about ideology, when the appropriate ideological credentials are required for a particular position, party affiliation becomes meaningless as a criterion to select personnel. Because Peronist leaders have ruthlessly fought each other in the recent past, if “trust” is required, party membership beyond the faction is of no relevance either. Hence elected presidents rarely count on more than their own provincial factions to cover national state offices. This makes it difficult to cover all, or even the majority, of senior and mid-level positions with party members. According to a political functionary in the Kirchner administration,

“President Duhalde (2002-2003) was hardly able to reach up to undersecretaries with his own people; and Kirchner had much less than that. He had a little provincial bureaucracy which had been ruling the province of Santa Cruz, and he could do very little with that. That is why he had to recruit from other places.”

It is remarkable that of the 70 top positions (of the 194 analyzed) for which party membership was a decisive criterion, 28 (that is, 40%), including some of the most important offices, belong to members of the PJ of Santa Cruz, a province with 0.54% of the population of the country.⁴⁷

A third explanation points to the lack of qualified personnel in Argentine parties. Unlike their Chilean and Brazilian counterparts, Argentine political parties do not train

⁴⁷ For the rest, it is worth mentioning that there were 10 cases of the PJ from the Province of Buenos Aires, due to the initial alliance between Kirchner and Eduardo Duhalde, the leader of that provincial party branch; and 7 cases of the PJ of the City of Buenos, due to the co-option of the branch exercised through the chief of cabinet Alberto Fernández.

their members for the management of the state (Leiras, 2007; Camou, 2007). This long-standing feature has recently become a serious problem as the need to cover a wide range of state positions with qualified personnel has grown. In several areas, such as finance, security, or the judiciary, a certain level of required proficiency has become inevitable, and elected leaders find that their parties do not have experts to run them properly. To take an example, Kirchner appointed as Secretary of Security – a top position related to an extremely sensitive political issue – a reputable expert in the subject with no partisan affiliation. This expert in turn recruited people from his NGO specialized in urban security to run the secretariat. Had Kirchner wanted to appoint PJ members in that area, it would have been impossible for him to find a similarly specialized network, equally qualified to undertake the job. Insofar as in Argentina, as in many other countries, electoral competition has become much more of a judgement about the efficiency of the government than a dispute over the representativeness of parties (Katz and Mair, 1995:19; Scherlis, 2008b), appointing the right people in the right places has become a crucial aspect of party politics.

And four, because it is the president who wins the election rather than a party or a coalition of parties, it is the president himself who gives shape to the government and selects the authorities. Given the current patterns of electoral competition, characterized by extreme personalization in the context of media-based campaigns, there is little need to compensate or reward a party on the ground. All in all, party membership does not ensure the responsive competence sought by appointers.

I conclude this chapter advancing some ideas about how the results concerning the appointers, the motivations, and the conditions for party patronage explain the nature of party organizations at the national level.

5.4 Conclusion

In Argentina, party patronage at the national level is by and large a prerogative of the president, who makes extensive use of it to create a coalition of support and so dominate the state apparatus. As Katz puts it in reference to the American case, "... the more elections became personal contests, the less likely the elected official was to defer to party leaders" (1996:224). Because in Argentina the president himself (rather than a party) enjoys the legitimacy to govern the country, it is he who appoints office-holders at different levels and sectors.

Controlling state structures and strengthening the governing coalition with new actors are the main motives to appoint. At the same time, personal trust is the main requisite in order to be appointed, whereas ideological affinity and proficiency, usually as complementary requisites, are also important in many cases. Party belonging, in contrast, has become of little relevance as a criterion to select the appointees. As a consequence, the vast majority of state sectors are managed by a diversity of loosely connected networks, with different origins (rarely with previous ties to the party) but which guarantee loyalty to the nominator and, eventually, to the presidential project.

A relevant question at this point is whether this dominant pattern in the practice of patronage actually reflects the absence of party government in Argentina. My answer to that question is negative. It is one of the main contentions of this dissertation that appointing networks with loose previous party affiliation is the way in which elected leaders constitute party organizations. This introduces us to a discussion on the nature of current party organizations, a discussion which I will develop in more detail in chapter 8. It suffices now to recall that parties' organizational borders are becoming increasingly blurred, in Argentina and elsewhere. Determining who is and who is not part of parties' organizational structures is not an easy task, even in countries with

highly institutionalized parties (see for instance Katz and Mair, 1995:20-21 and Heidar and Saglie, 2003). In the case of weakly, or at least informally institutionalized parties, those borders are more fluid, changing, and therefore less recognizable.

Actually, when an Argentine presidential candidate wins elections and takes office, he/she attains the position along with a more or less reduced political group, typically a provincial faction. The members of that reduced political group occupy key top positions. But the president must afterwards recruit faithful office-holders and personnel who will run the government under his/her orders and work for his/her political project. If we maintain the traditional distinction between “the party” and “the government” as separate entities, the use of patronage hardly fulfils any organizational role in the context of Argentine politics at the national level. If we look at either the cohesion of party factions, at the development of partisan networks of activists on the ground, or at the financing of the party organization, we can not but conclude that patronage is not used to strengthen the party organization.

But my position departs from that conception. In my perspective the distinction between government and party as two separate entities has become obsolete in the Argentine context. Current *really existing* Argentine parties at the national level are constituted by networks of office-holders under the umbrella of the president. In that sense, it would be erroneous to view those office-holders as non-partisan managers or as independent experts. It is through these networks of public officials that all the important partisan functions are fulfilled. First, they undertake the main function on the basis of which parties are presently judged by the electorate-- that is, the management of public affairs, which they do on behalf of an elected political leader and his party. Second, they increasingly constitute the source of new leadership and the group from

which the most important party candidacies are recruited.⁴⁸ And third, appointed office-holders are the organizational nucleus of electoral campaigns, both in terms of fund-raising and canvassing. As a matter of fact, not only are all those functions fulfilled by networks of office-holders, but there is little, if anything, of a party organization beyond those networks of appointees. At the national level the party in public office is not just the dominant face of the party (as in the cartel party model suggested by Katz and Mair, 2002) but rather is by and large the only one.

Regardless of their expertise and political background, these office-holders are recruited and conserve their positions insofar as they guarantee fidelity to the presidential project. A program coordinator or a director of a decentralized agency appointed by a minister are, by the very nature of their functions, part of the political project of the presidential group, irrespective of whether they have ever registered as a member of a particular party. All in all, these appointees constitute the networks which make up the party, understood as a state agency of government. And given that the president controls the process of distribution of patronage, he/she is at the top of the web of networks of office-holders which, under his/her leadership, constitutes the party organization as a governmental agency. In that sense, Argentine parties at the national level are – like the American ones – empty vessels (Katz and Kolodny, 1994) which are filled every time a new president is elected. Accordingly, patronage is simultaneously a governmental resource as well as the mode in which the party – as a web of networks of office-holders - is created. From this perspective, patronage has become a key organizational resource.

⁴⁸ Although there are no systematic studies on this issue, it is increasingly common to see ministers and other officials without party backgrounds who, as a consequence of a successful performance, jump into electoral politics.

CHAPTER 6

PARTY PATRONAGE IN THE PROVINCES: OPPORTUNITIES AND SCOPE

Can you imagine a province in which public positions were filled selecting the most skilled? No, of course you do not imagine something like that, do you?
Diario Norte, Chaco, July 7, 2007, Humour Section

This chapter aims to assess how far parties reach into provincial state structures in Argentina, comparing the situation at provincial and national levels. As explained in chapter 2, the locus of Argentine party politics is the province and, accordingly, Argentine party organizations are –legally and practically - initially and fundamentally integrated at the provincial level. Presidential elections force parties to converge in a common national candidature and there is little doubt about the existence of a national party system. Yet, party organizations in Argentina, experts affirm, are “provincially-based” (Jones and Hwang, 2005; Spiller and Tommasi, 2007; Leiras, 2007:177; De Luca, 2008). At the same time, the vast majority of public jobs in Argentina are provincial employments. While the national state employs around 474,600 people, the 24 provinces together had, by 2005, more than 1.5 million jobs. Given the strength of Argentine federalism, both in electoral and fiscal terms, a study of party patronage in this country must necessarily observe the functioning of parties at the provincial tier. Actually, most studies on patronage so far have been focused at this level. However, as is the case with the national level, no studies have systematically observed how far parties actually reach into provincial state structures. Likewise, who is responsible for political appointments, the goals which lead parties to appoint, and the criteria followed by parties to select the appointees have so far been largely neglected or simply taken for

granted. This chapter deals with the first of those aspects of party patronage, the one I call “the scope”. As I did for the national level in chapter 4, I study the scope of party patronage in the provinces by observing the range, the depth, and the quantity or proportion of patronage in several areas of the provincial states. The main goal consists in assessing how much and how far parties reach into provincial state structures. The results, as explained in detail in chapter 3, are fundamentally drawn from experts’ interviews.

The structure of the chapter proceeds as follows. In the first section I present basic comparative figures on the size of the public administration in each of the four selected provinces and the four sectors which, in every province, were subject to analysis. The second section discusses the legal opportunities parties have to appoint in the provinces and compares them with the legal opportunities for patronage at the national level. In the third section I present the results on the actual scope of party patronage in the provinces. In the conclusion I summarize the main findings of the chapter and discuss the reasons for the similarities and differences between the scope of patronage in provincial and national states.

6.1 Basic Figures of Four Provincial Administrations

By 2004 these four provinces made for 21.7% of the Argentine population, while their public administrations encompassed a similar 22.5% of the total provincial employment of the country. As shown by table 6.1, their proportion of public employees, measured as a percentage over the total population of the provinces, is almost the same as the ratio for the 24 Argentine provinces together. Those numbers, showing that Chaco and Tucumán have slightly higher proportions of public employees, might suggest a positive

correlation between low levels of socio-economic development and high levels of public employment.

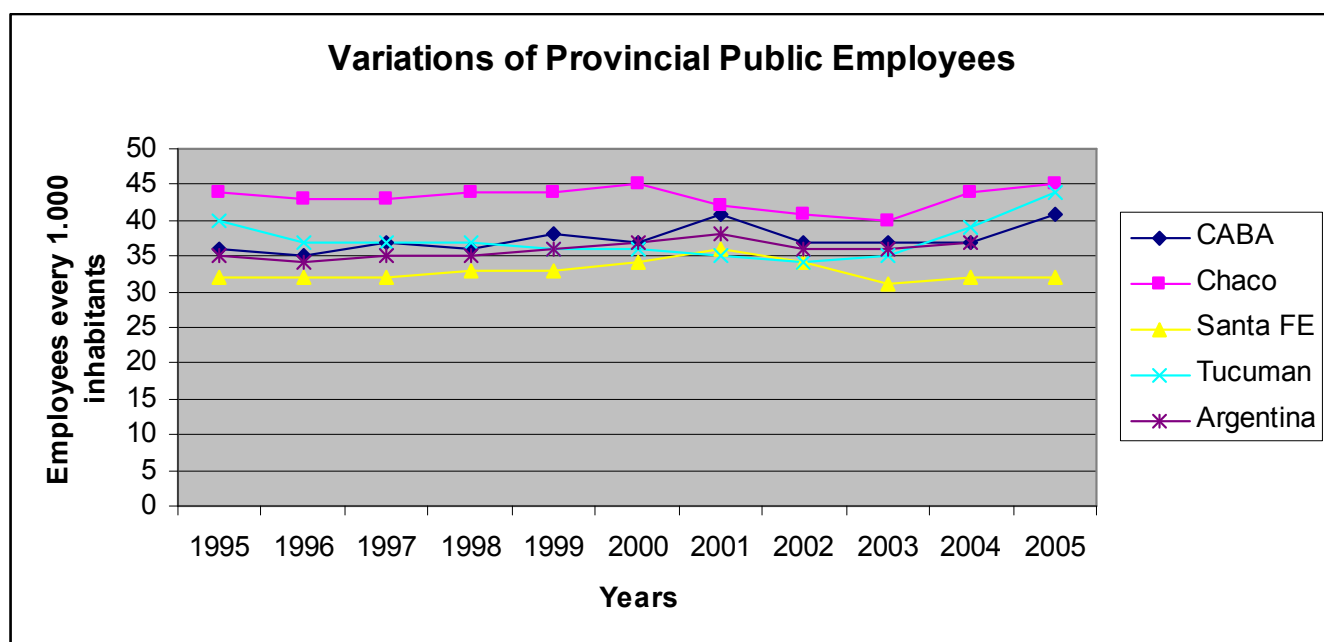
Table 6.1: Employment, population and employees in the provinces (2004)

PROVINCES	PUBLIC EMPLOYEES	INHABITANTS	EMPLOYEES OVER INHABITANTS (%)
CITY OF BUENOS AIRES	111.721	3.011.694	3,7
CHACO	44.689	1.016.209	4,4
SANTA FE	99.890	3.156.308	3,2
TUCUMAN	54.462	1.404.278	3,9
4 PROVINCES	310.762	8.588.489	3,6
TOTAL of ARGENTINE PROVINCES	1.427.215	38.226.051	3,7

Source: National Direction of Fiscal Coordination, Ministry of Economy

Yet, it is more interesting for our purposes to note that, as shown in graph 6.1, these proportions have remained stable for the last ten years. Actually, CBA is the district whose public sector has grown the most, whereas Santa Fe is the one with the most stable figures. Chaco and Tucumán reveal a very similar pattern of variations, decreasing in the years of fiscal crisis (2000-2002) and increasing in times of economic growth. Remarkably, as is demonstrated in figure 5.1, the average of the variations of the four provinces together is congruent with the average of the 24 Argentine provinces together.

Figure 6.1 Variations in public employment in selected provinces: 1995-2005



Source: National Direction of Employment and Salaries of the National Public Sector, Ministry of Economy,

I have already noted in chapter 2 how poor and problematic the numbers of jobs are in order to measure patronage. Yet, even then, it seems important to note that, according to official records, the patterns of public sector growth seem to present similar features at both national and provincial levels. The process of decentralization developed in the 1990s implied a massive transfer of jobs from the national to the provincial administrations (fundamentally in education and health sectors). In those years, as shown by Gibson and Calvo (2000), the national state shrunk dramatically while provincial public sectors increased their sizes. However, the figures for the years following the conclusion of that process show a striking similitude in the growth of the national and the provincial states. From 2000 to 2005, provincial jobs grew 12.3% (1,359,602 to 1,527,741) while during the same span national jobs augmented 12.7%, from 249,930 to 281,834.¹ In sum, the observation of the patterns of public sector

¹ Figures from the Ministry of Economy, "Dirección Nacional de Ocupación y Salarios del Sector Público Nacional". These figures include only the employees of the executive power, excluding the national universities.

growth reveals significant differences neither between provinces nor between provinces and the national state.

6.2 The Opportunity for Party Patronage in Argentine Provinces

In this section I first compare parties' legal powers to appoint in the four provinces and, secondly, I compare the general patterns identified in the provinces with those observed in chapter 4 for the national level.

The opportunity to appoint is very similar in the four provinces, with just a few minor differences. One common feature across the four provinces is that all of them prohibit party appointment of teaching staffs, which is the largest state sector in all cases (see chapter 3). Beadles, teachers, pedagogical and area coordinators, school secretaries, school directors and deputy directors, assistant supervisors and supervisors must all be selected and promoted through the “*Juntas de Calificación*” (qualification tribunals). Although every province has its own regulations for the *juntas* (which differ slightly in for example their composition or in the specific modes of evaluation), in all of them the appointment and promotion of the whole teaching staff hinges on a merit-based system.² As shown in table 6.2, there are not visible variations at ministries either.

² Because of the high levels of protection the educational systems have, and because politicians are not allowed to “enter into the classrooms”, the education sector has recently been called the “white maiden” of Argentine bureaucracies (Rivas, 2004).

Table 6.2: Opportunity for party patronage in selected provinces

	Ministries	Schools	Legislature	Health	Mean
CBA	1	0	1	0.55	0.64
CHACO	1	0	1	0.55	0.64
SANTA FE	1	0	0.77	0.33	0.52
TUCUMÁN	1	0	1	0.55	0.64
MEAN	1	0	0.94	0.5	0.61

Based on author's interviews with area experts

In principle, every province reserves the two first echelons of the ministries for political appointees: ministers, secretaries, and undersecretaries compound the first political level, while general-directors and deputy directors make for the second line of political functionaries.³ The four provinces' legal systems initially stipulate open contests to hire personnel below those political positions. Chaco and CBA demand public contests as the necessary mechanism to get a permanent public job, while in Tucumán and Santa Fe the law demands that the employee have "the skills required for the position", entitling the executive powers to organize public contests whenever they consider fit.⁴ A most recent decree (988/2004) regulates in detail the mechanisms for open contests in Tucumán, for those cases "in which the executive power decides that open contests are needed". Regardless of all those regulations, however, all provincial legal systems indeed allow parties to hire temporary personnel through the discretionary decisions of the executive power. In that regard, the four provinces went through quite similar processes to the one described for the national state. While in the wake of the

³ The titles of this second line are very much the same across provinces. The only remarkable difference is that the General-Director in CBA, Chaco and Tucumán is known as Provincial Director in Santa Fe. Santa Fe has a lower position of General-Director which is part of the permanent bureaucracy.

⁴ In Chaco, Law 2017 of 1976; in CBA, section 43 of the Constitution and Decree 986 of 2004; in Tucumán, Law 5473 of 1983; in Santa Fe, Law 8025 of 1979.

financial crisis of 1990-1991 provincial governments “froze” ministerial bureaucracies and prohibited the incorporation of new permanent personnel, they allowed the possibility of employing people via temporary contracts. In that way, governing parties acquired the right to reach as deep as they wanted in all ministries of the four provinces.

In the other two analyzed sectors, Santa Fe stands out as having a more restricted legal framework than the rest. All the provinces have laws which regulate the mechanisms of access and promotion for the professional personnel in the health sector. However, those regulations are more protective in Santa Fe, where law 9839/1986 establishes open contests even for Hospital Directors, a position that in the other cases is reserved for political appointees who must fulfil certain qualifications. Likewise, Santa Fe is the only case with forceful constraints for appointments in the legislatures. In all cases legislators are entitled to appoint advisers and a few top administrative positions, which are selected by the authorities of the legislatures. But in Tucumán, Chaco, and the City of Buenos Aires there are almost no legal constraints for the appointment of the rest of the administrative personnel, whose designation is the responsibility of the president of the legislature. In contrast, all permanent positions in both chambers of the legislative branch of Santa Fe must be selected, according to internal rules, through open examinations.

The analysis of the legal frameworks suggests that appointment powers granted to parties are similar for national and sub-national levels. The largest sector of provincial administrations, education, is legally out of the reach of parties, resembling the situation of military forces at the national level. Parties also face similar legal restrictions at national and provincial levels with regard to appointments at the ministries. In all cases there are legal provisions about competitive exams which are easily sidestepped by other legal loopholes which allow for the incorporation of

temporary personnel through fixed-term contracts. Similarly to what happens with the National Congress, parties have few or no legal constraints on appointments in the provincial legislatures (except for in the exceptional case of Santa Fe). The judiciary is another sector which, although not included in the results of this research, presents the same features at national and provincial levels. Politicians participate in the appointment of judges, but the law precludes them from reaching into judicial bureaucracies.

Perhaps the most remarkable difference between provinces and the national state hinges on the concept of superior political authorities at the ministries. As shown by table 6.3, national ministries have three levels of superior political authorities: the minister, the secretary, and the undersecretary. The position immediately below undersecretary, the general or national director, is the highest bureaucratic position. In the provinces, by contrast, that position is still a political one.

Table 6.3 Superior political authorities and highest civil service positions at national and provincial ministries

	National Ministries	Provincial Ministries
Superior Political Authorities (appointed)	1. Minister 2. Secretary 3. Undersecretary	1. Minister 2. Secretary 3. Undersecretary 4. General-Director
Civil Service Career	5. National or General Director 6. Head of Department	5. Head of Department 6. Head of Section

In legal terms this is an important difference, since this general (or national) director is the person in charge of the daily bureaucratic issues. Yet, as was explained in

chapter 4, that limitation, like many others, is in practice circumvented due to other legal loopholes which allow the discretionary incorporation of “temporary personnel”.

It is apparent that the professionalization of the civil service has received more attention at the national level than at the provincial one. In the former, the issue has long been subject to innumerable and continuous political debates, academic events, and even reform projects, most of which have failed to introduce the expected changes. Those discussions have been less visible in the provinces. Actually, it is notable that the proliferation of legislation on the subject at the national level contrasts with the little concern that the issue has raised in the provinces. As mentioned above, all the provinces did incorporate legal restrictions to party patronage at some point, and Santa Fe and CBA in particular have had in the last two decades different projects of administrative reform.⁵ The issue, however, has raised much less interest in the provinces than at the national level. And yet, the abundance of debates, reform projects, and even laws which characterized the issue at the national level has not brought about a real difference in the actual opportunity for patronage at national or provincial levels.

In sum, even when the different structures of the national and provincial states hinder a systematic comparison of their legal systems, it is possible to affirm that the legal situation with regards to appointments in the provinces is not substantially

⁵ In Santa Fe, the project of the Provincial Administrators attempted to create a body of expert bureaucrats who would function as a linkage between the politicians and the administrative bureaucracy. This project was launched in 1992, inspired by the model of the Governmental Administrators promoted at the national level in the 1980s (see chapter 4). The plan worked reasonably well for two years, during which a group of professionals were selected through open examinations and trained by qualified experts. Yet, with the change of governor, in 1995, the whole project was discontinued and the provincial administrators remained as qualified *contratados*, looking for new “patrons” every time the governor changed. CBA went further, enacting different laws and decrees which claimed to create a professionalized civil service. In 1991 Decree 3544 introduced the SIMUPA (system of administrative profession) which emulated the reform introduced one year earlier at the national level (SINAPA). Successive regulations modified the original system up to 2004, when Decree 986 established a new civil service professional career, also demanding open contests to be employed at the sub-national administration. In addition, CBA stands out among the four cases as the only one whose Constitution (enacted in 1996) establishes that access and promotion to the different areas of the public administration must be regulated by public contests (section 43). Yet, local laws do not actually enforce that principle which, therefore, cannot be counted as an actual prohibition to appoint.

different from the one at the national level. The largest sector, education, is by and large closed to party patronage in all the provinces (similar, for instance, to the case of the military at the national level). At the core of the public administration – the ministries – the legal framework is essentially the same as the national one: legal restrictions overlap and are in practice sidestepped by “exceptional” authorizations. Likewise, legal frameworks are the same for national and provincial judiciaries: appointed judges, but no powers to reach into the judicial bureaucracies, whereas the legislative branch is quite open to party appointments at national and provincial levels.

6.3 The Actual Scope of Party Patronage in Argentine Provinces

The study of provincial public administrations in Argentina has received significantly less attention than that of the national administration.⁶ Yet, most studies on party patronage generally assume that provincial states are patronage ridden and that ruling parties appoint as much as they want, as determined by their electoral strategies and fiscal possibilities. A detailed observation of the actual practices suggests a more nuanced picture.

In first place it is important to note that, as seen in table 6.4, minor differences aside, parties reach quite evenly across Argentine provinces. Although slightly lower figures in the most developed provinces might indicate that socio-economic development somewhat hinders parties’ domination of state structures (a point I discuss below), the numbers exhibited in table 6.4 demonstrate more similarities than differences across provinces.

⁶ Horacio Cao’s works constitute, to my knowledge, the main source for this subject. All these works are only published in Spanish.

Table 6.4: Scope of patronage in selected provinces

	Ministries	Legislature	Schools	Health	Mean
CBA	0.95	1	0	0.78	0.68
CHACO	1	1	0	0.79	0.7
SANTA FE	0.88	0.8	0	0.79	0.62
TUCUMÁN	1	1	0.22	0.78	0.75
MEAN	0.96	0.95	0.05	0.78	0.68

Based on author's interviews

Parties reach quite evenly across provincial ministries, using their legal powers to appoint top, mid- and bottom level positions. Open examinations are indeed extremely exceptional. Interestingly, by April 2005 the main newspaper of Tucumán published a celebratory article praising the provincial government for having initiated three processes of open examinations in the previous two years, something the article underlined as unprecedented.⁷ According to professor of Public Administration Raúl Degrossi, open examinations “were suspended in Santa Fe in 1987 and since then have been called in very exceptional cases”.⁸ In Chaco, none of my interviewees could recall an open contest being held in the public administration for the last decade. And lastly, in the City of Buenos Aires examinations for ministerial jobs also occur very rarely, organized by specific functionaries who need to recruit qualified employees, but not as a consistent public policy. In sum, in none of these provinces is there a merit-based system of access to the public administration; decisions about appointments are in

⁷ “El Estado comienza a modernizarse, pero la gente aún no advierte cambios”, *La Gaceta*, April 30, 2005. My interviewees confirmed that the initiative did not go any further.

⁸ “El empleo público en Santa Fe”, *El Litoral*, July 12, 2006

practice, in all four provinces and in spite of existing regulations, at the discretion of office-holders.

The mechanisms to incorporate personnel into the ministries, decentralized agencies, and also into public companies are by and large similar in the four cases and very much the same as the ones employed at the national level. Sub-national governments hire new employees by way of temporary jobs, scholarships and internships. From time to time, groups of those *contratados* are integrated into the permanent staffs due to ruling parties' decisions or, many times, due to informal agreements between governments and trade unions. The first step in the incorporation of personnel is in almost all cases realized through fixed-terms contracts. Getting one of those precarious forms of employment requires, as most people put it, "knowing someone inside" or "having a contact". This rule applies to jobs at any level of the four administrations, from the most qualified to the most simple; there must always be someone to "bring you in." For those who look for a public job, "knowing someone" is the first and foremost requisite.

Importantly, parties are not the only patrons in the sphere of the provincial public administrations. In fact, variations in the scope of party patronage in ministerial departments across provinces result less from alternative merit-based systems than from the strength of trade unions as competitive patrons in the ministerial bureaucracies. Unions of state personnel in all provinces have – as they do at the national level - their share of patronage powers, which functions as the most important constraint to party patronage. In Santa Fe and CBA experts estimate that around one third of positions at ministries are, in reality, decided by trade unionists, which explains the relatively low figures observed for those provinces in the scope of patronage at the ministries (table 6.5).

Table 6.5: Actual scope of party patronage at provincial ministerial departments

	Range	Depth	Quantity	Aggregate Measure
CBA	1	1	0.87	0.95
Chaco	1	1	1	1
Santa Fe	1	1	0.66	0.88
Tucumán	1	1	1	1

Based on author's interviews

Unions of state personnel are also important patronage players in the field of health. While parties appoint top health bureaucrats and hospital authorities, at the bottom level their patronage powers, while still important, are shared with the unions, which control a large proportion of those jobs, including stretcher-bearers, ambulance drivers, and nurses. In addition, while parties do reach top and bottom levels of the health systems, the incidence of party patronage at middle levels is much more limited. “Intra-medical politics”, medical associations or unions, or simply personal linkages, are more decisive than parties in the assignment of positions at the middle levels. Just as the judges and the “judicial family” dominate appointments and play the patronage games in the courts, medical associations and unions push for positions in the health system. For instance, the appointment of the head of paediatrics at a provincial public hospital is seldom decided on the basis of a public contest. Most likely, those involved in the decision will be the hospital director, the medical federation, or simply other professionals of the same institution.

It is worth mentioning at this point that there is no spoils system in any sector of any provincial administration. As said above, every new government replaces all top

level officials and their respective cabinets, but the “sweep” reaches until the level of general director. Permanent staffs – which numerically constitute the large majority of the administration - are legally protected and political authorities have by and large respected that limit. And as for the *contratados* at mid and bottom levels, replacements involve only a group of them and are more pronounced in some areas (typically welfare) than in others (for instance finance). In all cases those who were openly linked to a previous government will lose their jobs once the new authorities assume power, but those who work on administrative duties normally conserve their positions. As is the case at the national level, parties tend to create new jobs to undertake the more sensitive tasks but usually do not fire the existing employees, even when they have temporary contracts. As a former top bureaucrat of CBA said “...the private secretary will obviously be replaced but for most of the *contratados* it all depends on the functions they fulfil. The guy who knows what button must be pushed to make the machinery work will surely conserve his job.”⁹

Legislatures and schools deserve separate treatment. The former are the locus of party patronage, the institution where, by definition, activists are expected to be employed. In principle, every provincial legislator gets an amount of money to be distributed as she considers fit to employ personnel. In all provinces there is a basic amount which all legislators receive, to which legislators add different extras depending on the formal positions they hold (parliamentary caucus’ and committees’ chairmanships). Even when those rules remain the same across time, legislatures’ actual patronage powers largely depend on their political strength *vis a vis* the governor. When the executive power enjoys strong popular legitimacy and has a disciplined legislative majority, patronage powers of the legislature tend to be limited. By contrast, when the

⁹ Author’s interview with a former General-Director in CBA between 2004-2006, May 4, 2007

governor needs to negotiate political support with the legislators, patronage powers of the legislatures grow. That explains why the number of employees of the legislature of Tucumán grew “only” from 1,280 to 1,681 between 1999 and 2003, when Governor Miranda dominated a cohesive PJ parliamentary bloc, but skyrocketed to 4,031 in 2004 and grew to more than 7,000 by 2007), when Governor Alperovich had to negotiate the support of a hostile legislature, dominated by a different PJ faction. Likewise, patronage powers of the legislature of CBA have increased since 2000, when the executive power had to negotiate with a myriad of opponent parliamentary groups.¹⁰

Table 6.6: Size of the Legislatures of Selected Provinces – 2007

	Legislators	Employees 2007*
CBA	60	2,034
Chaco	32	994
Santa Fe	69 (50 deputies and 19 senators)	1,276
Tucumán	40**	Between 7,500 and 12,000 ¹¹

*Based on provincial budgets, published on the provinces official websites, except for Tucumán

** The constitutional reform of 2007 changed to 49 legislators

In 2007, a deputy in Santa Fe received an amount which made it possible for her to appoint between five and eight assistants and advisers; in Chaco the number ranged from six to 40; in CBA, it was not less than 12 but rarely more than 50. In contrast, in Tucumán the minimum per legislator was 80, while a member of the majority bloc

¹⁰ In telling contrast, for example, during the times of Carlos Juárez, the Peronist *caudillo* of Santiago del Estero whose rule has been characterized as sultanistic (Gervasoni, 2008) and authoritarian (Gibson, 2004) legislators had extremely limited powers to appoint, which never exceeded three advisers. Information based on several author’s interviews in the province of Santiago del Estero.

¹¹ There is no official data on the size of the legislature of Tucumán. The range emerges from the numbers acknowledged by the president of the legislature (See “Juri dejará cesantes a 5,000 empleados”, *La Gaceta*, September 19, 2007) and those suggested in interviews with the author by opposition legislators and experts.

could appoint between 200 and 300.¹² It is thus not surprising that, as revealed in table 6.6, the size of the legislative branch of Tucumán by 2007 more than doubled that of the rest of the legislatures together.

In sum, appointments in the provincial legislatures follow a similar pattern to those in the National Congress. Yet, Santa Fe being a probable exception, provincial legislators employ more people (and have many more resources to distribute) than national deputies or senators.

Finally, education constitutes the only sector which is by and large free from party patronage. The sector has been referred to as “the last fortress”, meaning that when politicians manage to appoint teaching personnel it will signify that the whole public sector has been taken over by patronage (Rivas, 2004:154). Among our cases, the educational sectors of CBA, Chaco and Santa Fe are by and large free from party patronage. Actually, in the four studied provinces the *Juntas de calificación* function correctly and both appointments and promotions are decided on the basis of the qualifications and merits established by the regulations. Yet, in the case of Tucumán parties sometimes do manipulate legal proceedings to appoint in this sector. Rather than a systematic practice, what actually occurs is that merit rankings are sometimes modified to favour a particular candidate.¹³ But these have so far been isolated cases, especially in the rural areas of the province.

Parties’ limited reach in this sector is generally attributed to the long-standing strength and political autonomy of the teaching unions. These unions usually have a dominant presence in the composition of the *Juntas* (which in most cases are elected by

¹² The variation across legislators largely results from their political status and, to use Sartori’s terms (1976), their blackmail/coalitional powers. All these numbers were referred by people with direct knowledge of the different legislatures, including legislators and advisers of the four provinces, and have a logical correlation with the size of the legislatures.

¹³ For example, that “Someone who is fourth in the list of the *Junta* may jump a few positions if she has the right connections in the ministry.” Author’s Interview with Teresa Ramallo, leader of the private teachers’ union, SADOP, July 11, 2007

the vote of the teachers, with minor participation of the province executive power) and therefore control the process of appointments and promotions. To a large extent, the legitimacy of the unions is founded on the good management of the *Juntas de Calificación*. In that sense, it is arguable that a strong *constituency for universalism* (Shefter, 1977) exists in this sector, both among teachers and unions as in the community at large, which repudiates parties' intervention in the selection of teachers.¹⁴ It is equally important to note that most teachers used to be national employees until the Federal Education Bill, in 1993, transferred the education systems to the provinces. The autonomy of the sector predates its inclusion into the provincial bureaucracies.

To conclude, it must be pointed out that even when parties dominate provincial state bureaucracies and appoint in almost all sectors and levels, less than half of the jobs created at the provincial level are effectively appointed by politicians. The educational sector alone, into which parties do not reach, contributes around half of the total provincial employees in each province. In addition, parties do not appoint employees in the judiciary. While they have aggressive policies to nominate judges that circumvent legal constraints, parties do not reach into the judicial bureaucracies. Likewise, as already noted, they have little influence on middle levels of professional personnel in the health sector. Actually, the frequent protests and strikes of provincial public employees, typically teachers and personnel from the health sector, suggest that using the number of provincial jobs as proxies for patronage do not capture the real picture.

¹⁴ Actually, all those linked in some way or another to the education system – what they call simply *the system* – repel the presence of partisan appointments in any area of the sector. The administrative personnel of ministries of education are usually also recruited from “the system”, and in most cases so are the political authorities. It is increasingly rare to find ministers of education without a background related to the educational system, which seems to be a necessary condition to keep good ties with the different actors that compound it.

6.4 Conclusion

To summarize, four main findings emerge from the research on the scope of party patronage in the provinces. First, the ruling party does not seem to have any effect on the scope of party patronage, while the level of socio-economic development seems to have a very minor impact. In Santa Fe, after 24 years of Peronist rule, the scope of patronage is clearly not larger than in City of Buenos Aires, where the PJ has never controlled the government. Likewise, the UCR government in Chaco has not made less use of patronage than the PJ provincial governments have. As for the socio-economic variable, we can observe that the two provinces with the lower levels of development are those in which parties reach more. To some extent that is due to other factors such as the presence of strong “union patronage” in CBA and Santa Fe, but it also seems plausible that the low socio-economic conditions of a province provide incentives to make use of jobs to develop clientelistic linkages. However, as far as my survey on the scope of patronage is concerned, those differences are not significant. Parties might use state jobs differently in different settings (I discuss this point in the next chapter) but they reach into state structures to similar degrees regardless of the level of modernization or development of the province.

Second, parties’ reach does not evenly extend to all provincial public sectors. Ministries and legislatures constitute the loci of party patronage in the provinces. Legislatures are the institutions in which most activists are appointed. Among the ministerial departments, even though political appointments reach them all at all levels, some areas are more prone to patronage than others. In that regard, ministries of social development (or social assistance) are pointed out by interviewees as patronage-ridden institutions, whereas financial departments tend to develop a higher degree of stability

and professionalism. By contrast, parties do not appoint at schools and only reach top positions in the judiciary.

Third, the number of jobs effectively appointed by parties is, as clearly noted, less than half of the total provincial jobs. Governing parties indirectly decide how many jobs can be created by deciding the public budget, but they are far from controlling the actual process of appointments in large sectors such as education, health, and judiciary. In other sectors, their patronage powers are shared with other actors, especially trade unions.

Fourth, the opportunities for patronage at the national and provincial levels are by and large similar. However, in spite of all the limitations noted above, parties reach deeper and to a greater extent in the provinces than in the national state. The greater reach of parties in the provinces, as it is summarized in table 6.7, is not chiefly explained by the range of patronage. Indeed, irrespective of minor differences, parties hardly reach the largest sectors in the two levels of government (security at the national level, education at the provincial level). The difference is, by contrast, explained by the depth and quantity (or proportion) of party patronage. That pattern is particularly visible in those areas in which national and sub-national states share similar institutions, such as ministerial departments.

Table 6.7: Actual scope of party patronage at national and provincial levels

	National	Provincial
Range	The majority of sectors, but some are more protected: FA, Finance, Security, Judiciary (existence of “islands of professionalism”)	All sectors but Education (No islands of professionalism)
Depth	All levels, but much less at the bottom	All levels (except Judiciary, only at the top)
Quantity	Parties effectively appoint less than 1/3 of newly created positions	Parties effectively appoint between 1/3 and half of newly created positions

As explained in chapter 4, at the national level there is an apparent gradual dilution of partisan presence at the lower echelons of ministries and decentralized agencies. Parties reach almost all top positions and most mid-level ones in the national state, but their reach is much more diffused at the bottom. Actually, it is common to let bureaucrats themselves dominate the recruiting process at the bottom. In most decentralized agencies and – albeit to a lesser degree – in many ministries of the national state, managers, section and department heads, and other mid-level officials with no partisan backgrounds decide on appointments of the personnel. That is something that seldom occurs in the provinces, where – in broad terms and with the exceptions mentioned above – parties still permeate almost every nook and cranny of the ministries and decentralized agencies. As most interviewees see it, nobody can get a job in the provincial public administration if they do not have connections to someone linked to the ruling party. In reality, having some “contact”, or “knowing someone” is generally a condition to get access to a public job in either national or sub-national states. The difference lies in the fact that the notion of “someone” is more restricted at

the provincial level. While at national ministries or decentralized agencies “someone” is often a mid-level bureaucrat without party affiliation, at the provincial level it more commonly refers to a person linked to the ruling party.

A remarkable difference between national and provincial states in that same sense is that the several “islands” of professionalism that exist in the national administration are much harder to find at the provincial level. Even when personal connections (or “knowing someone”) are the major requisites for state jobs, we have also observed that some agencies of the national state have developed strong professional capacities and, on occasion, important degrees of bureaucratic autonomy. That is hardly the case of any agency of the provincial states. An illustrative and easily comparable case is the one of the tax collection agencies. We noted in chapter 4 that political appointments reach only top positions of AFIP (the national tax collection office), an agency in which most employees are selected through open examinations and where promotions are decided on the basis of an established career system. In clear contrast, the provincial equivalents of AFIP (usually called “Dirección Provincial de Rentas”) are quite feeble, poorly trained, and permeable to patronage appointments at any level.¹⁵

Overall, parties in the provinces seem to exercise a tighter control over processes of recruiting and promotions in ministerial departments and decentralized agencies. In all cases, having a political patron is the necessary condition for entrance and promotion. Not only are provincial administrations relatively weaker and less professionalized than the national ones, but parties also have, in the provincial states, a more penetrating presence. The perception of the interviewees is that parties are effectively in charge of a larger proportion of appointments in provinces than in the

¹⁵ The comparison was suggested by Alicia Terada, provincial deputy in Chaco and former AFIP employee in the province of Chaco, in a personal interview (June 18, 2007) and afterwards confirmed by experts of the different provinces.

national state. Precisely because they reach little into the bottom levels and because they only reach the highest echelons in military, police, and judiciary institutions, it is estimated that parties participate in the process of appointments for less than one third of newly created jobs at the national level.. At the provincial level, even in spite of the exclusion of appointments of teachers and judiciary bureaucrats, interviewees still see parties appointing between a third and a half of the total of new jobs.

The different scope at national and provincial levels may be explained by two main arguments, one based on the notion of a constituency for bureaucratic autonomy, and the other on the existence of incentives to professionalize the state.

First, as noted in chapter 4, the establishment of a few professional bureaucracies at the national level predates democratization (understood as the enfranchisement of the adult male population in 1912-1916). According to Martin Shefter (1977), patronage is explained by the relative timing of democratization and bureaucratization. Where bureaucracies were professionalized before enfranchisement, parties do not have the option to use patronage to build a linkage with a popular base. Shefter's hypothesis can be refined to understand some aspects of the Argentine case. In this sense, rather than viewing the state as a monolithic unity, we can recognize that different state agencies have different features. For instance, in Argentina, the Foreign Service and the judiciary had established themselves as professional corps before democratization, which helps explain how they have historically managed to resist attempts of political penetration. Nothing comparable has occurred in the provincial states (except to some extent for the judiciary), where the whole bureaucratic apparatus has historically been dominated by parties. Historian Ana Virginia Persello (2007) describes how the first mass party in Argentine history, the UCR, easily took over provincial state bureaucracies in a more intensive fashion than the national state. The

weakness of provincial state bureaucracies was alternatively utilized by parties and trade unions during democratic times, and by the military and economic elites during military dictatorships. The educational sector was entirely transferred from the national to the provincial level due to a political decision in 1993, but its members and “consumers” remained the same. The capacities created to sustain its autonomy withstood or simply discouraged provincial politicians’ attempts to “patronize” the education system.

Second, the degree of bureaucratic autonomy is also explained, from a supply-driven perspective, by politicians’ incentives. Following Barbara Geddes, we noted in chapter 4 that the development of bureaucratic competency depends on whether it serves the career interests of the politicians who are in the position to initiate reforms and choose appointment strategies (Geddes, 1994:14). Geddes says that parties may choose a strategy of wholesale civil service reform but they could also prefer a strategy of compartmentalization. Compartmentalization occurs when politicians see it is important to prioritize professional competencies in certain key areas, while the rest of the state remains a source for patronage. While national presidents have faced diverse incentives to compartmentalize, and eventually professionalize some areas of the state (especially finance) the same has hardly occurred at the provincial level. Although in more modernized provinces the issue of bureaucratic professionalization is often raised by scholars and civil society organizations, ruling parties have not faced strong incentives to professionalize areas of the state. By contrast, and as we shall see in detail in the next chapter, parties in the provinces still have strong incentives to make massive use of appointments as a strategic tool for their political careers. As Geddes notes, the reason for a large-scale distribution of patronage and the construction of “patronage-based machines is that, regardless of their effect on the general welfare, they help

politicians in the struggle against other politicians” (1994:102) At the national level, we saw in chapter 5, parties have strong incentives to control top and mid-levels echelons of the state, mainly to get control over state material and organizational resources. Bottom level jobs, by contrast, are of little importance because they make little difference for political competition in the national arena. Quite often politicians of the national state are not interested in reaching down to the bottom levels of the state or are unable to do so (or a combination of both). Frequently they do not have the organizational capacity or the incentives to take responsibility for the appointment of technical personnel. On the contrary, controlling bottom level jobs is still, as we will observe in chapter 7, important for many politicians’ careers at the provincial level. A different pattern of party competition, including different kinds of linkages between parties and politicians, creates more incentives for provincial politicians to develop patronage-based followings and less incentive to professionalize state bureaucracies.

All this leads us to critical questions on the rationale and workings of party patronage and its real impact on the characteristics and functioning of Argentine parties in the provinces. Who, in effect, is responsible for the allocation of state jobs? What are the motivations to appoint? Who are the appointees, and what criteria do politicians follow to choose those people they appoint? Those questions are addressed in chapter 7.

CHAPTER 7

PATRONAGE IN THE PROVINCES: APPOINTERS, MOTIVATIONS AND APPOINTEES

In Tucumán today there is only one party. The state party
Federico van Mameren, chief of editorial staff, newspaper La
Gaceta, Tucumán. Author's interview

*The party has moved to the executive power. In reality, the
party now is the executive power*
Ricardo Dusset, UCR activist, Chaco. Author's interview

Who controls the distribution of patronage in the provincial states? What are the dominant motivations that lead provincial parties to allocate state jobs? Who are the appointees of provincial branches of Argentine parties? Are there differences between the rationale of patronage in the provinces and in the national state; and between different provinces? Lastly and most importantly, what do the scope, the structure, the uses and the selection criteria for patronage say about the nature of Argentine party organizations at the provincial level? These are the fundamental questions this chapter addresses.

Patronage has generally been assumed to be a mode of vote or support gathering employed by “parties” or “politicians”, whereas the appointees are assumed to be, by definition, party loyalists, relatives or cronies. In light of this research, and as already noted in chapter 5, it is apparent that those assumptions neglect dramatic changes in the features of current party organizations. This chapter puts forward the last empirical findings of this dissertation and analyzes the practice of party patronage in Argentine provinces.

In the first part of this chapter I present the results and the analysis of who distributes patronage resources, underlining the dominance of provincial governors and

the irrelevance of parties' formal organizations. The second part discusses the motives by which parties appoint people in sub-national states. This part casts light on the coexistence of both governmental and organizational motivations. The third part presents the results and the analysis concerning the appointees. I show that party membership is – unlike at the national level – relatively important, but similarly to the national case, it is being displaced by personal linkages and, to a lesser extent, expertise. The fourth section focuses on the ruling party, the PJ, and an opposition party, the UCR, in the province of Tucumán, so as to identify the aspects of patronage discussed more generally in previous sections and to cast light on the significance of patronage in the overall functioning of party organizations. The final section concludes summarizing the salient points.

7.1 The Appointers: The (Relative) Dominance of the Governor

Who controls the distribution of patronage in Argentine provincial parties is not a minor question. Because, as we will see in more detail below, parties are essentially integrated as organizations on the basis of patronage, determining who effectively controls it (or who appears to have the greatest chances to do so in the near future) constitutes the key to understanding the balance of power inside of party organizations.

In that sense, it is remarkable that the distribution of patronage in the Argentine provinces follows by and large the same dominant pattern as that at the national level. Public jobs are appointed by office-holding politicians, while the central office has no role at all in this game. In that context, the governor (as we saw in the case of the president) is the major centre for the distribution of patronage. The structure of control of patronage tends to be centralized at the top and more fragmented at the bottom levels. That fragmentation, however, generally occurs under the umbrella of the governor. In

other words, although every senior office-holder is usually a centre of distribution of patronage, those centres are generally beholden to the one at the top of the governmental pyramid, i.e. the governor.

The governor defines key positions at the ministries, decentralized agencies, state-owned companies, police forces, and judiciary. The appointment of all fundamental political positions is a non-disputable prerogative of the governor.¹ Ministers and secretaries, as well as boards of decentralized agencies, enjoy some room to choose their teams (advisers, undersecretaries, directors). Yet, like the president at the national level, provincial governors are always entitled to veto a name or impose another. In any case, it is unquestionable that the governor is responsible for political appointments at the top and often also at mid-levels of the state. At the bottom levels it is possible to find a myriad of centres of patronage (secretaries, undersecretaries, general-directors, presidents of state-owned companies, legislators, etc.), but most of them – except for legislators from the opposition – are ultimately beholden to the governor. In sum, the governor is the natural boss of the sub-national administration as much as the president is the leader of the national one, whereas other office-holding politicians enjoy different capacities to appoint.

This pattern remains the same regardless of what party is in government. Although the UCR has traditionally been deemed to have a more formally institutionalized structure than the PJ (for instance Malamud, 2009), the absence of a central office as a centre of patronage is a feature shared by both PJ and UCR governments. The same president of the UCR of Chaco acknowledged that “Governors

¹ In most cases, the governor has what in the jargon is known as the *mesa chica* (small table). This “table” is comprised of a reduced group of faithful aides (usually 2 or 3), who in turn hold important positions as ministers or leaders of the provincial legislature. It is on that table where the nomination of the most senior positions of the administration (as any other key political matter) is decided.

do not consult with the party.”² Irrespective of the party in power or economic situation, patronage is a prerogative of the “public office”, and the governor is the major centre of distribution of patronage.

Remarkably, turnovers between governors of the same party entail a sweep of top and mid-level political appointees as deep as the ones produced by turnovers between governors of different parties. Governors of the same party will probably negotiate and try to find a haven for outgoing officials.³ But in general terms, a change of governor implies a thorough replacement of ministers, secretaries, undersecretaries, general-directors and their respective cabinet staffs, and of all those employees directly linked to the previous governor, regardless of the fact that, formally, the same party remains in power. Just as it was explained for the case of national presidents, insofar as elections are increasingly disputed between candidates rather than by parties, it is the elected leader who is *de facto* entitled to form the government and recruit appointees.

That said it is important to note that even when the governor is the undisputed main appointer, he may consider it convenient – or even necessary - to share some patronage powers with other political leaders. In that sense, the model of “the governor as the only and exclusive party boss” often assumed by the literature (Jones and Hwang, 2005; Scherlis, 2008a) does not always describe accurately the actual structure of patronage distribution. Governors certainly constitute the fundamental centre of distribution of jobs in the provincial administration, but the effective use of their patronage powers is broadly determined by their levels of popular legitimacy and their relationship with their coalition of support. Provincial legislatures can also be important centres of distribution of patronage when weak governors require the support of other parties or rival factions of their own party. Indeed, as Cao and Rubins noted, patronage

² Author’s interview with Hugo Maldonado, president of the UCR-Chaco, July 4, 2006.

³ Usually transferring the political functionaries to the public administration permanent staffs to secure them a permanent salary, but in posts in which they do not hold political responsibilities.

powers of legislatures grow in inverse proportion to those of the governors (Cao and Rubins, 1996). Accordingly, the political weakness of governors usually results in strong blackmail powers of the legislatures, and consequently in the expansion of their patronage powers. The case of City of Buenos Aires, characterized by the fragility of the governor, presents an illustrative example in this regard. CBA's political system from 2000 to 2007 had an enormous degree of fragmentation. The district was the most affected by the anti-party tide of 2001-2002. Citizens rejected all those parties which had hitherto dominated the political system and no other parties managed to fill the vacuum. The party system became extremely fluid, with parties characterized by an episodic and ephemeral existence (Mauro, 2007). That degree of fragmentation was manifest in the legislature, which has been composed by a large and variable number of parliamentary groups. Fusions and splits between blocs occurred on a regular basis. The four parliamentary groups that had existed between 1997 and 2000 had turned into 21 by 2005, eight of which had only one member. In that context, neither Aníbal Ibarra (governor between 2000 and 2005) nor Jorge Telerman (2005-2007) had a supportive parliamentary group of their own. Instead, they always relied on – usually volatile – agreements with a few of those many parliamentary groups. Legislative support was thus continuously negotiated and, in that context, public jobs in the administration served as one of the most common means of payment. During those years it became a normal and continuous practice to negotiate temporary jobs (*contratos*) in the public administration in exchange for agreements with the legislators (exchanges reaching their peak every year at the time of the annual budget bill vote). The price of those exchanges fluctuates as if in a free market: the number of *contratos* that a legislator receives depends on the importance of her vote in a specific circumstances. Those *contratados* may be employed in any agency of the sub-national government, including ministries,

decentralized agencies, hospitals, etc. The legislator just makes up a list and sends it to the executive branch, which afterwards determines to which office those employees can be assigned. Similar practices take place in the rest of the provinces, their actual extent depending on the balance of power between governors and legislatures.⁴

To sum up, patronage in the provinces is fundamentally a prerogative of the party in public office and, chiefly of the governors. It is the governors, and not a central office, who control the allocation of jobs. Yet, the degree of the the governor's dominance is not fixed. Variations in governors' actual patronage powers lie in their political strength and legitimacy, as determined by the votes obtained in elections and popular approval ratings (which indicate the chances of winning future elections). If the governor has received a clear electoral victory based on his personal leadership and his legitimacy is unquestioned, his patronage powers will be undisputed. Yet, relatively weak governors often deem it convenient to share small portions of patronage with other political leaders in order to maintain their support. Quite often governors must concede variable amounts of patronage resources to both legislators of their own parties and opponents, in order to avoid situations of legislative gridlock.

In any case, it is remarkable that employees at any level and in any sector are directly chosen by office-holders themselves. Patronage, without any interference of a central office or a central committee, is an attribute of office-holding politicians. Appointees are beholden to the politicians who appoint them, and for politicians across levels and sectors, appointing is the mode – usually the only one - in which they create a political group. Appointees are usually directly beholden to the politician who provides them with a job or guarantees their job stability. Only indirectly, because their patron

⁴ The opposite example to CBA is a province like Santiago del Estero in the times of Governor Carlos Juárez (1983-2005), usually considered a semi-authoritarian regime (Gervasoni, 2008; Gibson, 2004). Immense patronage powers were then concentrated in the executive branch, and legislators hardly had the chance to appoint between 3 and 5 advisers.

orders it, are appointees also beholden to a party. And because employing people is the foremost means of recruitment for the party, it is not surprising that most times the party in public office – the government in the case of the ruling party, or legislators in the case of the opposition – ends up taking over or simply marginalizing and ignoring their completely ineffective central office. Alternative party factions can only emerge around the different centres of distribution of patronage.⁵

7.2 Motivations for Party Patronage in the Provinces

In chapter 5 I pointed out that most appointments in the context of the national public administration are aimed to secure control over the management of state institutions and their resources. The formation of informal coalitions and the co-option of groups and personalities also emerged as important motivations to appoint. By contrast, I noted that strengthening a pre-existent party organization by distributing jobs to its activists – motivations which used to be important in the 1980s and early 1990s – are not significant reasons for appointments at the national tier of the state. That is why I characterized patronage at the national level as a governmental resource or, in the terms of Kopecký and Mair (2006), a “mode of government”, but one which simultaneously gives rise to the party organization at the national level as a web of networks of office-holders under the leadership of the president.

The provincial arena presents a more nuanced and complex pattern. Here, the significance of governmental goals is also notable. Control is “always or almost always” the dominant motivation to appoint in all provincial states (except sometimes in legislatures). Yet, the distribution of jobs for the strengthening of a pre-existent party

⁵ On a much smaller scale, the same pattern is replicated in the municipalities, mayors being the obvious bosses of the municipal administrations and councillors often playing an important role, especially for the opposition.

organization, and in particular for the maintenance of networks of activism on the ground, is important in the sub-national states. Hence patronage in the provinces is both a governmental and an organizational resource.

The Importance and Meanings of Control

As the figures presented in table 7.1 show, experts believe that in appointing people to public positions party politicians are fundamentally motivated by governmental goals. The control of state institutions and the formation of informal coalitions of government are also the dominant motivations to appoint in the provinces, as was the case at the national level.⁶

Table 7.1: Motivations for party patronage in selected provinces

	Governmental		Organizational			Electoral
	Control	Coalition	Cohesion & Discipline	Activism	Fund Raising	Votes
Ministries	0.84	0.57	0.39	0.4	0.5	0.07
Legislatures	0.52	0.27	0.4	0.82	0.66	0.12
Health	0.74	0.49	0.18	0.64	0.15	0.09
Mean	0.7	0.44	0.32	0.62	0.43	0.09

Based on author's interviews

Patronage powers are – except in legislatures - primarily targeted to secure the control of the state machinery. Control is crucial to securing the political stability of the governor and his political group. In that sense, the dominant motivation that leads governors and other office-holders to appoint personnel at different levels is to secure

⁶ Because patronage in the educational sector is almost non-existent, results presented here include only ministerial departments, legislatures and health.

that the institutional and material resources that compound the state machinery remain under the control of the political group in charge of the government.

Governors need to control the administration to develop their political projects, whatever those projects are. Officials are normally aware that there is no way of governing without control of the state apparatus. As professor Gustavo Badía puts it,

“That apparatus is never a neutral machine which complies with the orders of the political leadership. If governors do not dominate the bureaucracy, that bureaucracy will have their own goals and will be linked or even responsive to other political interests.”⁷

As happens at the national level, provincial political authorities do not trust the personnel they find once they take office. Either because those employees were appointed by a previous political authority, or because they have tenure and therefore have no incentives to collaborate with the new authorities, new political authorities tend to believe that those employees are unreliable. Hence every new political authority attempts to bring his or her own people to undertake the important matters for the time they are in charge. Starting with the governor and going down through the hierarchy of functionaries, all try to work with the people whom they trust. That is why every new government creates its own parallel and transient bureaucracies, which, coexisting with the much larger permanent staff, cover not only top and mid-level positions but also technical and service personnel.

A senior official of the Socialist Party of the CBA suggests an “*efficiency-based*” explanation for the rationale of patronage in blunt terms:

“If we could fill all the positions of the areas under our responsibility with our own people we would do it. Why? Because we believe that is the way to secure a good

⁷ Author’s interview with Gustavo Badía, Director of the Institute of Local Government at the Universidad de San Martín, Province of Buenos Aires, May 17, 2007. The perspective expressed by Badía is shared by the governor of the province of Santa Fe Jorge Obeid, who told me that “Taking and securing control over the bureaucracy is the main challenge a governor faces to govern the province.” Author’s interview, March 7, 2008.

management. That is the only way to be sure that when you call from one office to the other asking for something the one who responds knows what you want and you can be sure that she will comply with the order. If we could, from the last one to the first, following a clear political decision, we would fill all the areas under our responsibility with our people.”⁸

But appointers may have intentions other than the implementation of a party program or “the good management” of state resources. In the understanding of most provincial politicians, control of state bureaucracies refers to an appropriation of them for their own political goals. In that sense, the control of public budgets to finance political activities, to fuel party machines on the ground, to buy off journalists, or simply for private corruption, is quite often pointed out by interviewees as a primary motive to appoint. In any case, total control over state structures and financial resources at different levels is the main concern of political appointments. In this last regard, it is common that functionaries appoint those who, while assisting them loyally in the management of the area, also secure “a network of protection” for murky practices.⁹ For instance, it is normal for a new provincial secretary of public works to want to run the office with people who will turn a blind eye to the shady businesses which are usually established with private companies (typically the payment of overrated prices for public works).

In any case, whether the party is interested in implementing a particular set of policies, in using public resources for rent-seeking, or – most commonly - a mixture between them, what is clear is that the primary goal of appointments at different levels of the state is to gain absolute control of state institutions. In this sense, there is not much difference between national and provincial states. Provincial administrations are

⁸ Author’s interview with Aldo Gallotti, May 4, 2007. Gallotti occupied several positions in the CBA’s government between 2003 and 2007.

⁹ The concept of “network of protection” was suggested by Zuñilda Rodríguez, who worked for more than 30 years in the public administration of Tucumán. Author’s interview, July 10, 2007

by and large weaker and more malleable than the national ones, which allows for greater and deeper displacement of personnel and more discretion in the appointment of functionaries and advisers. Yet, the principal goal is by and large the same: to get broad and tight control over the state machinery.

Patronage for informal coalition or co-option: This motivation appears as an increasingly important reason for the appointment of senior and mid-level positions in the provinces, just as it does at the national level. The rising importance of patronage for coalition appears as a consequence of a process of de-institutionalization of parties and concentration of powers in the elected leaders. All in all, the results confirm that the importance of patronage as a governmental resource to create informal coalitions co-opting different political actors depends on the relationship between the elected leader and the ruling party. When the governor is a party insider, he is supported by a cohesive and strong party (or alliance), and the party system is well-structured in terms of government and opposition parties, patronage for informal coalition will be a marginal strategy. But one of the findings of this study is that the current trend towards the personalization of electoral contests and the extreme dependence of party organizations on state resources allows governors to use their patronage powers to reshape their coalitions of support, creating informal – and most likely transient - coalitions under their leadership.

Geddes notes that elected leaders may pursue autonomy from their original party organizations by appointing non partisans (1994:147-8). The findings of this research point in a different direction. Rather than “pursuing autonomy” from their parties, elected governors - like the president - use their patronage powers to co-opt different leaders, groups, and organizations (and thus to displace others), and so dominate the party organizations with the new allies, empowering new elites and restructuring the

power relations in the party. Patronage enables elected leaders to dominate and reshape that organization. As noted in chapter 5, this pattern describes the case of Néstor Kirchner and his relationship with the Peronist Party at the national level (as it describes previous PJ presidents, especially Menem). It also depicts the process through which many governors take total control over their party organizations, displacing the previous elites and establishing new ones through appointments at the highest echelons of the administration.

In some cases the process of de-institutionalization of parties has gone so far that the distribution of state positions turns into a necessary means by which an elected leader without an effective party can build a supportive coalition. As noted above, the enormous degree of fragmentation and the absence of cohesive political parties forced governors of CBA from 2000 to 2007 to seek support from different political groups and personalities. The allocation of jobs at different levels was then a straightforward strategy to bring many of these groups and figures into the governing coalition. The notable leap in the number of jobs in CBA during the governorship of Telerman is fundamentally explained by the incorporation of a multitude of different small parties, social movements, unions, and political organizations of different kinds into the government, in order to gain their political support. As a former undersecretary at the Telerman administration explains,

“It is very simple. Telerman created lots of positions because he needed political support, and the easiest way to get that support was by distributing offices. Wherever there was a director, he created a deputy director, who in turn brought with him his group of advisors, and so on.”¹⁰

¹⁰ Author’s interview with Juan I. Mareque, undersecretary at the Ministry of Decentralization during Telerman government. May 9, 2007.

While the available figures show that the public administration of CBA grew almost 10 per cent during these years, it is in the augmentation of the highest political authorities (ministers, secretaries, undersecretaries and general-directors) and cabinet staff that the governmental strategy based on “patronage for coalition” becomes more visible. As table 7.2 shows, from 2005 to 2007 the rise in those political positions clearly outnumbered the increase in personnel in general, revealing that in a context of political fragility the distribution of top and mid- level positions was massively utilized to forge a supportive coalition.¹¹

Table 7.2: Top political authorities and cabinet staff – CBA, 2005-2007

	2005	2006	2007	Variation %
Superior Authorities	345	398	473	+ 37.1
Cabinet Staffs	320	397	522	+ 63.1
Total Personnel	110,732	113,252	121,233	+ 9.81

Source: Annual budgets of the City of Buenos Aires

Appointments are often utilized to create informal agreements with corporatist entities and civil society organizations. For instance, in all four provinces governors reserve important positions in the Ministry of Education for people of the Catholic Church (typically the direction of private education, but in Tucumán and Santa Fe the name of the minister itself used to be negotiated between the government and the bishop). Teachers’ unions are also important actors which most governors try to keep

¹¹ Regrettably, in the case of Tucumán this information is only updated up to 2004. Still, the available information suggests a similar pattern. While the number of superior political authorities only varied from 65 to 71 between 2000 and 2003, it was augmented to 109 in the first year of Alperovich’s governorship.

happy; they do this in part by granting positions in the ministries of education. It is likewise common for governors to appoint people coming from industrial organizations of their provinces, or from other economic sectors which may be important in the region, such as agriculture or mining. Promoting some (carefully chosen) bureaucrats of the permanent staff to the second line of political positions (undersecretaries, general-directors) is also a frequent mode to co-opt experts and to gain legitimacy among the public bureaucracy.

In sum, regardless of variations across provinces, appointments motivated by the formation of informal coalitions of government and the co-option of other political actors are a common way in which governors build a supportive coalition of government and establish ties with different interest groups. Importantly for the goal of this research, the co-option of experts and technocrats has also become a mode in which the governor forms a team of loyal office-holders for the management of the province, the members of which may turn into important party actors if they show efficiency and loyalty. In other words, while appointments are initially aimed to create governmental teams under the leadership of the governor, they also create political linkages between the appointer and the appointee. By calling people in to run governmental offices, the governor gives shape to a web of networks of professionals who, by virtue of being appointed by him, become part of the governor's political group.

The Relevance of Organizational Patronage

According to the results exposed in table 7.1, sustaining the organization is a common – albeit secondary - motivation to appoint in the provinces. Legislatures appear to be the locus of organizational patronage. Activism is a dominant motivation there and fund-raising is seen as another common motivation to appoint. But activism and fund-raising

are also important motivations in ministries and the health sector. Appointments in ministries and legislatures are commonly (albeit secondarily) used to maintain the cohesion and discipline of different party factions or groups. Actually, it is at this point that patterns of patronage in the provinces differ from those we observed in the national state. While at the national level patronage is utilized to sustain a party organization only in a very marginal way, we observe that organizational goals are more important in the four provinces, though there are notable variations among them.

Internal Cohesion and Discipline: This motive had enormous importance in the recent past of Argentine provincial politics. In that sense, a particularly illustrative case is that of Santa Fe, where all experts referred to the functioning of what politicians, the press, and eventually the people in general called “the cooperative”. The label “cooperative” alluded precisely to the workings of the Peronist Party between 1983 and 1991, when the different internal factions, following an informally institutionalized practice, distributed the spoils of patronage among them. Whoever won the internal elections knew that the unity of these relatively autonomous and stable party factions was important both for the performance of the party in general elections and for the governability of the province as well. The workings of the “cooperative” reflected a traditional pattern of party organization under which the distribution of public positions among pre-existent factions worked as an important tool to keep a party unified. That pattern has faded away. Appointing to maintain the cohesiveness of a party organization is still common in some provinces, but it is not a fundamental motivation to appoint in current provincial politics and its importance is in decline.

Actually, there is a noteworthy trade-off between governmental patronage for coalition/co-option on one side and organizational patronage for cohesion and discipline on the other. The more governments are formed through recruiting and co-opting actors

from outside the ruling party, the less patronage positions will be employed in maintaining the unity of a pre-existent organization. As long as elections grant legitimacy to personal leaders, the need to pay tribute to other autonomous party factions lessens. Insofar as governors enjoy popular legitimacy, they either get the overwhelming support of their co-partisans or otherwise forge a new coalition of support, with autonomy from their original parties. Bringing new actors into the government is in those cases a common strategy.¹²

Patronage for cohesion has definitely not disappeared altogether. It is however notable that the current personalization of electoral processes and the consequent concentration of powers in elected leaders have diminished the price governors are willing to pay in order to maintain rival party factions under their wing. As it was discussed in chapter 6, it is the governors - and not party organizations - who appoint the functionaries. These elected leaders increasingly tend to use their patronage powers to dominate the formation of the government. In this regard, provincial politics tend to by and large replicate the pattern observed in chapter 5 for the national level, which seems to be on the rise as the mode of government formation. Elected rulers at every different level of government (national, provincial, municipal), rather than using appointments to sustain the cohesion of a solid pre-existent party organization, bring together different groups under their leadership by co-option or informal coalition.

Activism: As we can see in table 7.1, jobs are still important for provincial parties to sustain networks of activists. That is particularly manifest in legislatures, where activism is always or almost always the dominant motivation to appoint. Although to a

¹² For instance in Santa Fe the abovementioned pattern of “the cooperative” was broken by Governor Carlos Reutemann. A former F-1 racing pilot, Reutemann was a complete outsider to the PJ. Similarly to Alperovich in Tucumán, the PJ offered him the candidacy to avoid an electoral defeat. But since he was elected due to his own popularity, Reutemann gave virtually no positions to previous Peronist leaders in his government.

lesser degree, patronage for activism is also of some importance in the health sector and ministries.

In order to understand what kind of partisan networks are sustained through public jobs it is worth noting that, as the president of UCR in Tucumán put it, “today there remains very little – if anything at all – of the old volunteer activism.”¹³ Major Argentine parties do not attract activists through ideological, programmatic or identity incentives – as they clearly did two decades ago. Jorge Fernández, a long standing PJ leader of the province of Santa Fe summarizes a transformation noted by most of the interviewees:

“Up to 1986 or 1987 there was a high level of political mobilization. There were robust political organizations with a strong presence of volunteer activists. There were neighbourhood associations and unions linked to the parties. With very scarce resources you ran a campaign. You hardly had to pay for anything, because everything was done by volunteers; people even contributed with their own money. But now, nothing of that is left...”¹⁴

In accordance with a general hypothesis put forward in chapter 1, results from interviews suggest that parties, unable to attract activists on the basis of collective incentives, resort to the distribution of jobs to sustain their networks on the ground. But the reasoning followed in chapter 1 also suggested that networks on the ground would be less important and would tend to decrease in the context of current media-based politics and in the framework of non-representative parties. If party-society linkages are mostly “marketinized” (Roberts, 2002a) and electoral campaigns take place in the mass media, why then do provincial party organizations care about maintaining networks on the ground? What kinds of tasks do these networks on the ground perform?

¹³ Author’s interview with Mario Marigliano, president of the UCR-Tucumán, July 12, 2007.

¹⁴ Author’s interview with Jorge Fernández, vice-president of the PJ-Santa Fe, March 12, 2008.

The answer to the puzzle of the high scores of patronage for activism in Argentine provinces chiefly lies in the dual socio-political scenario present in all Argentine provinces. One important part of the Argentine society often displays post-industrial patterns of political behaviour. The vast middle class and important segments of the working class in the urban areas hold “marketing-based”, most times ephemeral and volatile, linkages with parties and candidates. In that sector of the society the vote is fundamentally determined in media-based campaigns and decided on the basis of an evaluation of the candidates’ potential abilities to be efficient managers of public affairs. To win the vote of that sector of the society there is little need for a party on the ground. Nevertheless, another big part of the society is constituted by informal workers, the unemployed, structural poor and poverty-stricken people. Many of these people, whose mere subsistence depends on the resources which the state provides in a clientelistic mode, tend to define their votes on the basis of particularistic exchanges of different kinds. Table 7.3 shows that the number of people living in conditions of extreme poverty represents an important share of the Argentine population, with a significant electoral impact.

Table 7.3: Poverty and indigence in selected provinces*

Province	Poverty %	Indigence %
CBA	14.7	4
Chaco	64.4	28,6
Santa Fe	37.6	14
Tucumán	52.4	18,1
Argentina	40.2	15

Source: INDEC, 2004

* Numbers of poor include indigents

Since this dual scenario exists all across the country, in all 24 provinces parties simultaneously resort to different linkage mechanisms, combining media-based appeals in urban and more modernized centres (which hardly require networks of activists) with clientelism and machine politics in those peripheral and low-income areas (Levitsky, 2007:211).

We can return now to discussing the kind of activists parties reward or recruit through jobs. In principle, exactly as it happens at the national level, appointing a group of people to public jobs is crucial to containing politicians' hard nucleus of assistants and political operators. But what actually explains the high figures for "activism" in the provinces and is much more significant in numerical terms, is that party politicians distribute state jobs in order to organize extensive electoral machines. Electoral machines perform two fundamental types of activities that most politicians in the provinces still need to undertake in order to be electorally competitive, for general elections but most decisively for intra-party elections. First, parties must be able to mobilize and transport thousands of people from their dwellings to the rallies and, on elections days, to the ballot boxes. Especially in poor areas and slums, people are collectively dragged to rallies and ballot boxes in buses, vans, and taxies hired by politicians. And second, parties must be able to deploy monitors to every ballot box in the province. This last task in particular requires the presence of thousands of committed loyalists, prepared to defend fiercely the votes for their party from potential fraud.¹⁵ In the absence of volunteer activism, those activities, like other peripheral ones,

¹⁵ The importance of electoral monitoring cannot be exaggerated. For instance, the director of the most important newspaper of Tucumán wrote that "fraud is an iron law in all those ballot boxes of the province where there are not monitors". Accordingly, there is no chance of electoral success in the province without "2,300 monitors which cover all the ballot boxes of the province" ("No quiere que le hagan sombre", *La Gaceta*, September 30, 2008). Provincial legislator Sebastián Cinquerrui stresses that in some areas "where you have no monitors you get 0 votes, that is how it is" ("Obras y clientelismo: dos claves para sumar votos", *La Nación*, April 12, 2009). The importance of monitoring is likewise underlined by the most insightful works on party primaries in Argentina (De Luca et al, 2002 and 2006).

such as painting graffiti or distributing propaganda, require the functioning of efficient electoral machines.

It is important to remark that electoral machines are not chiefly made up of public jobs. Certainly, temporary public employees are many times part of those machines, pressured by their patron politicians to take part in electoral activities. As noted in chapter 6, parties reach deep into provincial state structures and are responsible for a large proportion of the appointments not only at top and middle levels but also at the bottom of the state. Monitoring elections or attending party rallies is quite often a price that must be paid by those temporary employees-clients who have been appointed by a party politician, even when they have little or no previous connection to the party.¹⁶ Hundreds of employees who are hired through fixed-terms contracts to fulfil administrative or technical tasks at ministries, public hospitals, public companies, etc., and who normally perform those tasks, are also integrated into their patrons' electoral machines in times of electoral campaigns. These appointments are not motivated by the need to reward activists, nor are they thought to be a means to create a group of militants for the party. Rather, "assisting" the patron during electoral times is just part of the labour obligations of the appointees.

However, in any case, public jobs involve only a very limited proportion of the vast territorial networks which parties employ in their electoral games. The tens of thousands of people that take part in provincial machine politics, attending rallies and, most importantly, voting for the "appropriate" politicians in internal and general elections, are mostly induced by much cheaper and more flexible means than a public

It must be noted that in Argentina every party prints and presents its own ballot. Party monitors are crucial to ensure that the party ballots are not hidden or stolen from the ballot booths by other parties' monitors.

¹⁶ Verónica, a sociologist who was appointed at the Ministry of Social Development in Santa Fe, explains that "All those who are appointed by a politician have a heavy demand of loyalty to the guy who appointed them: from attending a meeting to participating in the campaign and monitoring elections. They invite you, and you may either go or not, but if you do not go, you lose protection, you will not be promoted to a permanent job, and you know that your job is at risk." Author's interview, March 11, 2008.

job. Actually, those vast networks on the ground are sustained on the basis of multiple forms of clientelistic exchanges, ranging from social assistance programs to any kind of goods and cash, and, most often, a variable combination of them (Auyero, 2001, Brusco et al, 2004).¹⁷ In fact, recent press reports on the distribution of goods in electoral times have referred to a broad range of elements, from plates and bricks for construction, fridges and electrical appliances of all kinds, to marijuana joints.¹⁸ In any case, for the vast majority of the people involved in those machines - the “clients” – a state job appears to be a distant, unreachable dream.

The control of public jobs is instead essential to organize the mechanisms and manipulate the resources in order to make those machines work. The functioning of those machines is related to (sometimes stable, sometimes more contingent) deals with unions, local clubs’ authorities, neighbourhoods associations, football clubs’ gangs of fans (*barras bravas*), and especially with local leaders in poor areas, who work as political brokers between the party and the clients. These brokers – usually known in Argentina as *punteros* – are, in essence, informal mediators between parties and the poor. In strict terms, rather than a plain middleman (as many times the literature suggests) the broker usually works as a problem-solving agent, replacing an absent state in providing solutions to people with scarce access to state goods and services in exchange for political support. Actually, in the context of the de-industrialization, state retrenchment, fiscal austerity, high unemployment, and massive impoverishment which characterized the implementation of neo-liberal reforms in Argentina in the 1990s, the distribution of goods and services through party brokers evolved into a widespread type

¹⁷ The most widespread form of clientelistic benefit is the bag of food. Indeed, the concept *bolsones* (big bags), which refers to the handouts containing basic foodstuffs, is generally employed in the provinces as the epitome of clientelism. Brusco et al (2004:67) note that campaign handouts are clearly more widespread than continuous social programs as a form of clientelism.

¹⁸ For examples of the first, see “Delegados y Clientelismo en la pelea por el control de la villa 31”, *Clarín*, November 22, 2008, for the second, see “Denuncia penal contra Kirchner por la entrega de electrodomésticos”, *La Nación*, October 11, 2005; for the latter, see “Un porro por un voto en la interna del PJ cordobés”, *Crítica de la Argentina*, November 21, 2008.

of linkage between parties and the poor. Many brokers are truly local leaders who run permanent services in slums, most typically soup kitchens and community centres, which function as the core of the social and political life of the neighbourhood (Auyero, 2001). Many brokers are effective authorities within their neighbourhoods, providing all kinds of imaginable services financed with state resources. These continuous clientelistic linkages constitute, as Kitschelt and Wilkinson put it, “ongoing networks of social relations” which require “an elaborate organizational structure” (2007:22-23). As part of that organizational structure, it is not uncommon that brokers themselves get state jobs, especially in provincial legislatures or municipal councils.¹⁹ In times of elections, brokers mobilize the electoral machines, dragging people to rallies and ballot boxes.

Clientelistic-based machines by themselves hardly make for electoral victories in any province, but they can make a decisive difference in a tight contest, especially in those districts with high levels of poverty.²⁰ Remarkably, regardless of the socio-economic conditions of the province, machine politics is decisive for intra-party politics. Electoral machines have a variable influence on general elections, but they are almost indispensable in cases of internal elections. Because the linkage between Argentine parties and their members has become completely particularistic, material resources and the skill to use them efficiently have become the decisive factor in internal elections. Efficiency, in that context, means spending as little as possible for as many people as possible, which in practice refers to clientelism for the very poor and needy. As De Luca et al note, the dearth of any programmatic and ideological

¹⁹ For example in Tucumán, where clientelism is particularly widespread, it is known that specific legislators offer in poor neighbourhoods free services such as plumbing, wedding parties, excursions for children, etc., all of which are provided through their brokers employed and paid by the legislature.

²⁰ The actual electoral impact of electoral machines has not been established. Scholars have tried measuring social assistance plans, but the real fact is that machines are mostly built on the basis of most basic handouts (as the *bolsones*) which are extremely difficult to measure. Impressionistic observations of several interviewees speak of an influence over between 25 and 35 per cent of the vote in Tucumán and Chaco, around 15 per cent in Santa Fe and five per cent in CBA.

components turns Argentine parties' internal elections into "naked battles of political machines" (2006:36), irrespective of the province in which those elections take place. Sustaining a sizeable electoral machine is thus a very common means to advance through the ranks of intra-party politics and to further a political career in the provincial branches of Argentine parties.

It is important to note that at the very top level, party leadership is generally and increasingly defined on the basis of popular approval ratings. Irrespective of the transformations in party organizations, parties "continue to be dependent politically on the electorate if they are to survive" (Andeweg, 2000:122). Strategic political actors' top priority is winning elections, and so the most important candidacies are usually decided without much regard for the machines.²¹ Because, as noted above, clientelism is not enough to win general elections, and because without electoral victories there is no access to patronage and clientelism, top candidacies are increasingly decided according to the real chances of the different candidates, as measured by opinion polls. Yet, below the very first level of leadership, the balance of power within provincial party structures and political careers more generally are regularly determined through machine politics. Hence how many clients a politician can mobilize through their electoral machine functions as a measure to define the actual political power of middle rank party leaders, and thus their status within the party. That is why municipal councillors, provincial legislators, and sometimes also ministerial officials try to appoint as much as they can and make use of state jobs and other material resources at their disposal to build their own machines.

To recap, appointing activists of different kinds is still important for provincial parties' politicians. On the one hand, office-holding politicians allocate some positions

²¹ Among our four analyzed provinces obvious cases are those of the complete outsiders, Carlos Reutemann in Santa Fe and José Alperovich in Tucumán, who without any party background were promoted as candidates for governor.

for their “hard nucleus” of collaborators and operators. These people get a public job, but in reality they are employed in order to have a full-time dedication to politics. On the other hand, most party politicians in the provinces try to develop their own electoral machines, for which they need access to state jobs so as to hire brokers and, if possible, directly control a good number of clients and significant budgets. The development of patronage-based electoral machines on the ground is a common mode in which party politicians in all Argentine provinces try to advance their political careers. Those machines play uneven roles in general elections – very important in Tucumán and Chaco, less in Santa Fe, and much less in CBA – but a decisive one in intra-party elections wherever they take place.²² And although no electoral machine can be built with public employees, the distribution of jobs is the necessary stepping stone for the development of those territorial networks. In other words, it is only by controlling state positions that it is possible to organize, administrate, and dedicate (deviate) material resources to the construction of electoral machines.

Fund-Raising: It is widely accepted that the fundamental source of financing for Argentine parties is the state. While provincial branches of the parties receive state subventions from the national state according to their electoral performances, the bulk of their funding in reality stems from the manipulation of public budgets and different forms of corruption which can only be perpetrated by controlling state agencies (De Luca et al, 2006). The use of the state infrastructure for the benefit of the ruling party is in that context a common practice which, at least to a certain extent, is tolerated by all partisan actors (Leiras, 2007:81). As explained above, the importance of control over governmental offices as the major motivation to appoint is to no small extent due to the

²² Measuring the real amount of public jobs involved in electoral machines is far beyond the possibilities of this work. Yet, it is apparent that numbers are higher in Tucumán and Chaco than in Santa Fe and CBA. For instance, while a large proportion of the more than 7,000 employees of the legislature of Tucumán are seen by interviewees as party brokers who mobilize clients in different regions of the province, the number of party brokers in CBA is generally seen as substantially lower.

financial advantages that control entails. In addition to the appropriation of state budgets and infrastructure, patronage is crucial for the financing of party organizations in the sense that in some way or the other, all the party actors, from leaders and operators to brokers and clients, are generally compensated with a material reward which is only possible due to the party control of state positions.²³ The importance of state resources and the uneven way in which government and opposition groups have access to those resources have created a notably unfair scenario, in which governing parties have a decisive advantage (Leiras, 2007:112).²⁴

All that said, in the framework of this research, as I defined it in chapter 2, appointments for fund-raising explicitly refer to the practice described in the literature by way of which appointers deduct a part of the appointee's income to finance party activities (for example Weber, 1994:246; Ware, 1996:299). In that sense, a contribution of around 10 per cent of the salary for the appointer is a quite extended practice across all provinces. Interviewees agree that all those who get their positions due to the "favour" of a party politician are forced to submit part of their salary. Most interviewees generally regard the practice, though widespread, as a secondary or marginal motivation to appoint.

Deductions of appointees' salaries are not an important source of fund-raising for a governor, who normally has many other resources available. Yet, the contributions taken from appointees' salaries are many times a crucial source of funding for individual politicians and party factions, especially for those parties which do not have direct control over the most substantial governmental coffers. For example, the leader of the PS in Chaco and provincial legislator Eduardo Siri acknowledges that

²³ In this sense, Key considers that patronage is in itself a mode of state funding: "the chief means of channelling public funds to party support is through the appointment of party workers to public office" (Key, 1964:348)

²⁴ In the definition of the legislator Pedro Sangenis, "doing politics without state resources in Tucumán is merely symbolic". Author's interview, July 20, 2007.

“Our participation in the ruling coalition of government is vital for the PS. From the salaries of our functionaries, our legislators, and employees we get the chance to finance our party centre, to assist our branches in the interior of the province, to “contain” a few *compañeros*. Our few positions at INSSEP and in the under-secretariat of economic planning make it possible to sustain our structure.”²⁵

As shown in table 7.1, the importance of patronage for fund-raising appears to be important in the legislatures. While discussing the structure of patronage in the provinces I pointed out that legislators negotiate positions in the administration in exchange for their vote or their attendance at the legislative sessions. It is interesting to note that in all provinces there is a practice in which appointed positions are in fact exclusively created to obtain the money from the appointees’ salaries. The legislator must find someone who agrees to be hired, but the agreement does not involve any kind of obligation for the appointee in terms of work. The appointee is registered on the official records as a *contratado* but he does not really develop any job. The money goes to the politician (usually the politician pays the appointee a small percentage of that money as a reward for being on the records). By using this mechanism, rather than a deduction from the salary of the appointee, jobs are specifically created in order to provide the politician with funding.

Electoral Patronage

More than with other motivations, there is great confusion as to whether jobs are used by Argentine politicians as exchanges for votes. Although the comparative literature on patronage generally argues that in the context of current mass democracies the allocation of jobs “cannot alone underpin a clientelistic electoral strategy” (Hopkin,

²⁵ Author’s interview, June 18, 2007. INSSEP is the social security agency of the province of Chaco, in which the Socialist Party has some top level functionaries.

2006:410; see also Piattoni, 2001:4), some scholars still insist that in Argentine provinces a straightforward correlation exists between state jobs and votes for the incumbent (Calvo and Murillo, 2004; Brusco et al, 2004; Remmer, 2007).

In reality, public employment policies surely have, especially in the poorest provinces, like Chaco and Tucumán, important electoral consequences. Decisions on appointments and salaries – like any other political decision - normally take electoral concerns into account. But more specifically, and following the classification put forward in chapter 2, experts believe that only marginally, and only in a few cases (the legislature in Tucumán is a case in point) do politicians distribute jobs motivated by the possibility of getting the vote of the appointee's household in exchange. Appointments very rarely take place as part of deliberate strategies to win elections. Naturally some decisions on public employment have a more direct impact on votes than others, as for example when governors raise salaries or approve massive transfers of *contratados* to the permanent staffs just before elections. But appointments *per se* are seldom aimed to win votes.

As noted above – and as has been shown by other scholars- vote buying is a widespread practice in the large poor areas of all Argentine provinces (Brusco et al, 2004; Auyero, 2001). Moreover, public jobs constitute a crucial resource for organizing, financing, running, and eventually mobilizing the extended electoral machines. Yet, politicians do not pay for votes with public jobs but with an array of more flexible and cheaper clientelistic benefits. While politicians naturally do expect that those people appointed by them will, in effect, vote for them, a public job is thought to be an overrated price to gain a single (or for that matter a family) vote. For example in Chaco alone by 2004 there were 44,689 public employees, whose average salary was \$ 1,291.8. At the same time, at least 112,540 people (that is more than 2.5 times the

number of employees) received social assistance plans of \$150, and many more received the well-known *bolsones* and other forms of clientelistic exchanges.²⁶ Paying for votes with jobs is an inefficient practice for provincial politicians. Public jobs are undoubtedly an attractive incentive for large sectors of the Argentine society, and it is probable that those who receive a job will be grateful to the appointer. But politicians expect much more from a job than a vote, for which they have other cheaper instruments at hand.

In sum, patronage is crucial both as a governmental and organizational resource in the provinces. Much like what happens at the national level, patronage is necessary to sustain the governmental networks which run the state agencies on behalf of the party under the leadership of the governor. Also similarly to the national level, patronage serves to keep together the “hard nucleus” of operators who assist and move around every party politician. But, unlike at the national level, the provincial branches make use of state jobs to organize, run, and mobilize extended electoral machines on the ground. Jobs serve the organization of machines in two main ways—first, through the appointment of brokers who, in turn, and using other state resources, mobilize larger numbers of clients/voters, and second, through the coercion of temporary personnel into participating in campaign activities and voting for the “appropriate” candidates. The clear-cut distinction between appointment for government and appointment for organization is thereby blurred. Many appointments, at all levels of government, are originally intended “for government”. Yet, the appointment itself creates a political linkage which demands and in fact entails prospective political support for the appointer from the appointee.

²⁶ The number of employees is taken from the Ministry of Economy, “Dirección Nacional de Ocupación y Salarios del Sector Público”. The number of social assistance plans corresponds only to those paid with funds of the national state (“jefes y jefas de hogar”) and is taken from the Ministry of Interior, “Provinfo”.

Overall, it seems important to note that patronage is the main resource through which current party organizations are integrated as such. Indeed, patronage is indispensable for the establishment and maintenance of the two different types of networks which make up current party organizations in the provinces. Those organizations are comprised of networks of office-holding managers, assistants, and political operators on the one hand, and territorial networks of brokers and clients on the other. Those networks would hardly exist in Argentine parties without the distribution of state jobs. In fact, as Leiras has recently noted, “there are no alternative modes of organizational coordination and integration outside state positions.” (2007:113).

In other words, paraphrasing Schattschneider’s phrase about the relationship between political parties and modern democracy, current party organizations in Argentine provinces are unthinkable save in terms of patronage. Political entrepreneurs can exist, survive, and probably thrive outside government, fundamentally appealing to the middle-class through the media. But those personalities are doomed to maintain personal – and generally very fragile – leadership. In sum, no party organization exists in Argentine provinces without access to state jobs.

7.3 The Criteria for the Selection of Appointees in the Provinces

Personal linkages are the most important criterion followed by parties to appoint in the provinces. As shown in table 7.4, personal linkage “is always or almost always”, the dominant motivation to appoint in all sectors and at all levels of sub-national state agencies, as much as it is in those at the national level. Starting with the governor and going down through the hierarchies of the provincial states, personal trust is the chief criterion to select appointees. The dominance of personal linkage as a criterion to appoint across provincial states should not be surprising at this stage of this dissertation.

Insofar as all office-holders are allowed to appoint “their own people”, it is normal that the personal relationship between the appointer and the appointee is the main factor for the selection.

Yet, it is interesting to observe that, in contrast to the situation at the national level, personal linkage is often related to a party identity. While interviewees evaluate party affiliation as the least relevant criterion for appointments at the national level (see chapter 5, table 5.4), this factor emerges, albeit far behind personal linkage, as a secondary but still common criterion in the provinces.

Table 7.4: Criteria to appoint in the provinces

	Ideological	Party	Personal	Professional
CBA	0.52	0.39	0.6	0.55
Chaco	0.34	0.71	1	0.35
Santa Fe	0.55	0.51	0.8	0.77
Tucumán	0.32	0.4	1	0.25
Mean	0.43	0.5	0.89	0.48

Based on author’s interviews

In principle, it is of course common that senior officials appoint as advisors and “operators” in their cabinet staffs those who have assisted them in the electoral campaign or, more generally, in their political careers. Party membership is in those cases a factor which usually comes along with personal linkage.²⁷

²⁷ In this regard there is an apparent difference between those governors who are insider party leaders, meaning those who have a background in the party organization and reached their positions of leadership by climbing the party ladder, and those outsiders whose careers were chiefly conducted outside the party. It is no wonder that in the cases of “party insiders” like Obeid in Santa Fe (PJ) and Nikisch in Chaco (UCR) party membership is more important than in the cases of governors without strong partisan backgrounds, as Alperovich in Tucumán, and Ibarra and Telerman in CBA. We expect a governor like

But party membership as a selection criterion is in many cases linked to a matter of traditional identities. For decades, parties in the provinces have been important channels of socialization, providing citizens with strong political identities. Parties like PJ, UCR, or Socialism truly fulfilled functions of social integration, establishing what Roberts (2002) calls encapsulating linkages. Although those linkages have been going through a rapid and sharp process of erosion, in provincial societies many people, and even families, are still seen as Peronist, or Radical, or Socialist, much more due to a family tradition and past activities than to any actual involvement in party politics. That pattern is particularly notable at the elites' level. That is why when political leaders search for professionals they can trust, or simply for people they can trust, those old identities may still play a role, most times a complementary one.

And still, the great majority of appointees are selected due to personal linkages which are often related to family, friendship, previous shared experiences, or recommendations from colleagues, and which, in principle, are hardly related to any party. Although party affiliation is more important in the provinces than at the national level, there is a clear common pattern between the two. That pattern points to patronage as a mode of party recruitment rather than as a mode of reward. The notion of recruiting through jobs is crucial to understanding the nature of current party organizations. Elected politicians do not recruit from within the party rank and file because there is little of a permanent party outside state structures before jobs are distributed. Even in the majority of those cases in which "party affiliation" is taken as a complementary motivation, it is not a pre-existent party organization but a social and historical

Nikisch, in Chaco, who has been a party member, activist, and leader since his early youth, to find people he can trust in the ranks of the party. In contrast, for someone like Alperovich, who was incorporated into PJ only two years before he was sworn in as governor, the party is not the obvious milieu from where to recruit faithful collaborators. Because the results exposed in table 6.6 specifically correspond to the period 2003-2007, we can expect some degree of variation in different periods, depending on the condition of the governor.

condition that matters. Indeed, it is the distribution of jobs which permits the existence and maintenance of an extended organization.

Remarkably, experts and professionals are basically recruited through the allocation of public offices. Especially in provinces like Santa Fe and CBA, where professionalism is an important criterion, but although to a lesser extent also in Chaco and Tucumán, professionals and bureaucrats without a clear party background are recruited to work in government. Parties do not have groups of experts which, once the party wins elections and assumes office, are called to run state agencies. On the contrary, it is the appointment itself which creates the partisan linkage. That is why, as the ex-governor of Santa Fe Jorge Obeid says,

“Below the position of minister there are not many party people. The party does not have the people to occupy those positions. In contrast, what many times happens is that professionals without partisan backgrounds end up being important politicians.”²⁸

Once appointed, and even when they still prefer to portray themselves as “neutral experts”, appointees at senior levels turn into political actors, and are seen as such by those who appoint them, by the state bureaucracies, by the other parties, and by the public in general. Actually, it is a dialectic process. Most jobs are in principle allocated on the basis of personal linkages and trust. But many of those appointees turn into partisan actors at the very moment in which they are designated. As political scientist and advisor of the Peronist parliamentary group in Santa Fe Pablo Barberis says,

“Those supposedly independent experts are in reality co-opted because, even when they are not party cadres or have no party history, they must assume total political loyalty to the governor. The governor and the minister assume that these persons will be 100 per

²⁸ Author's interview, March 7, 2008.

cent responsive to their orders. Once they accept the nomination, they are part of the governmental project.”²⁹

The case of directors of provincial hospitals illustrates that pattern. This position is most times assumed by medical doctors with certain qualifications; many times they are linked to the hospital and, moreover, they are often proposed by the medical federation or internal hospital commissions. Now, once a hospital director is appointed she becomes part of the political project of the governor. She knows her position depends on the good will of the highest political authorities, as does the possibility to get resources for the management of the hospital. Because of the position she occupies, she is seen as part of the government both by her superiors and by her subordinates. If she proves to be loyal and efficient in the eyes of the governor, she will be a perfect candidate for a ministerial position, or an electoral candidacy, in the near future. Likewise, when the administration changes she will be expected to resign as well. The point is that it is the very act of the appointment which, irrespective of other possible personal linkages, creates the political bond. Similarly, members of the permanent bureaucracies who are promoted to positions of undersecretary or general-director are *ipso facto* identified with the governor who appointed them, even when they had no previous relations with any party.

For administrative positions at lower levels, officials usually bring relatives, friends, acquaintances or, if they have the chance to appoint more people, acquaintances of acquaintances (at times demanding specific qualifications depending on the function). As explained in the previous section, appointees at the bottom level are usually expected to collaborate in campaign activities, attending rallies and monitoring elections. In that sense, they contribute to the formation of the party's territorial networks (or electoral machines), although their actual belonging to

²⁹ Author's interview, March 4, 2008.

any party organization is generally not clear. Most times, once they are tenured they distance themselves from politics, although they can choose to maintain a political profile so as to promote their bureaucratic careers.

All in all, the party is shaped as a web of networks linked through appointments or, at the level of clients, through other clientelistic benefits. All that the party does, from the management of state agencies to the organization of the electoral machines, is based on the ability to appoint and thereby get control of state structures and resources.

The next section aims to illustrate the role of patronage in the functioning of provincial parties by briefly describing the main features of two party organizations in Tucumán, the ruling PJ and one traditionally important opposition party, UCR.

7.4 Party Organizations and Patronage in a Province: The Case of Tucumán

In this section I describe some of the main characteristics of party organizations in the province of Tucumán. This province is the one in which some of the patterns identified in this and the previous chapter are most visible. While the ruling PJ tends to fuse its structures with the state machinery, opposition parties remain extremely dependent on the few state resources they can still obtain from their legislators. The absence of state resources creates a big obstacle for the functioning of the parties from the opposition.

The Peronist Party: It is difficult to establish the boundaries that separate the PJ from the state in Tucumán. In fact, as of 2007 the PJ in Tucumán was formed by the provincial and municipal state structures at their different levels. Accordingly, the party has a single undisputed boss, Governor José Alperovich. Alperovich had been a UCR provincial legislator specialized in financial affairs, when, amidst the deep economic crisis which affected the whole country in 2001, PJ Governor Julio Miranda offered him a position as finance minister for the province. Two years later, once the crisis had been

by and large overcome, Alperovich became the Peronist candidate for the governorship of Tucumán. José Alperovich did not obtain the candidacy through any internal election, nor had he an important supporting machine. Actually, he obtained the Peronist candidacy because he was the member of the cabinet with the best ratings of popular approval and, as such, the only one who, according to opinion polls, could keep the province in Peronist hands.³⁰ The outgoing elites of the party accepted this strategy reluctantly, while they, still in control of the state apparatus, managed to impose their choices for vice-governor and the majority of candidates for the legislature.

We can observe at this point the consolidation process of the new party organization model, based on the recruitment of networks from the top of the state. Once elected³¹, Alperovich appointed a cabinet in which only one minister - of government – had a recognized career in the Peronist Party. The rest of the ministerial positions and second lines of government were filled by persons from different political and professional backgrounds, including leaders of opposition parties (such as the minister of security, from Fuerza Republicana), reputed experts (such as the minister of education), celebrities (such as the secretary of tourism, a well-known tennis player), people linked to productive sectors (such as the minister of industry), relatives (such as his wife, the secretary of social policy, and his brother-in-law, the secretary of public works, among others), and personal friends (such as the minister of labour). All these functionaries were recruited by the governor and were, therefore, only beholden to him.

From the very beginning, Alperovich made clear that he was both the governor and the leader of the ruling party. The control of the party by the governor constitutes a generally accepted pattern in all Argentine provinces. In this case, however, Alperovich

³⁰ According to Antonio Guerrero, minister of government between 1999 and 2003 and historic PJ leader in Tucumán, the candidacy of Alperovich was mainly promoted by the then national President, PJ leader Eduardo Duhalde. The main leaders of the PJ in Tucumán eventually accepted it as the only chance to win the 2003 provincial elections.

³¹ He got 44% of the vote against 25% of the runner up

had to go through an internal struggle to consolidate his leadership in the party. Alperovich found some resistance to his leadership among the old guard which, having lost the control of the governorship, had been confined to the legislature. The internal opposition was in fact provoked by the decision of the governor - a complete outsider in the PJ - to take over the party and marginalize the previous Peronist elites without any compensation. That resistance was possible because the old elite had remained in control of the provincial legislature, led by the Vice-governor Fernando Juri. The legislature functioned then as the stronghold for the internal opposition. As noted in chapter 6, at least 5,000 people were hired by the legislature from 2003 to 2007, most of them brokers who, in turn, worked on the development of electoral machines in different areas of the province, distributing resources of different kinds. Yet, the patronage powers of the group of legislators which opposed Alperovich were doomed to defeat in a competition against the machinery controlled by the executive power.

In addition to the control of the public administration, Alperovich made extensive use of discretionary transfers and took advantage of a situation of fiscal prosperity to gain the allegiance of 18 out of the 19 mayors of the province (17 of them belonging to the PJ, the other co-opted from the opposition). Mayors are by definition critical electoral instruments for an internal party election. They usually control the municipal councils and have tight relationships with local associations, party brokers, football clubs' fans, and unions in their municipalities, which usually give them the power to mobilize important electoral machines via clientelism. At the same time, the governance of mayors and their performance depend on the transfers and public works decided and financed by the provincial governor as much as provincial governors depend on the resources they receive from the national government. And as Alperovich was loyal to the Peronist president, Kirchner, he was equally concerned with keeping

mayors happy through the allocation of material resources of different sorts (I elaborate on the importance of chains of exchanges between different levels of government in the concluding chapter). In those conditions it was no surprise that Alperovich won a landslide victory over his internal rivals. In a typical clash of electoral machines, the governor's wife, Beatriz Mirkin (who had been a PJ member for less than one year) was chosen by more than 70% of the voters as the new president of the PJ in Tucumán, which in reality ratified the status of Alperovich as party boss.

Those elections confirmed the dominance of the model of party organization based on the combination of a popular leader and the executive's power control of state resources. In this model, the party central office functions, if anything, as a rubber stamp in the hands of the governor. Actually, party authorities play no role at all in the PJ of Tucumán (as in the rest of PJ provincial branches). In terms of Julio Saguir, secretary of planning of the province,

"The party as a formal organization has no organic life at all. Some formalities are still fulfilled, but there is no internal life of any kind. In reality, since the beginning of the 1990s there has been no internal life in the PJ. Now, after the internal elections, there are not even internal factions any more."³²

The PJ of Tucumán had, by 2007, 206,899 members, which amounted to 21.8% of the 950,133 citizens of the province. Yet, those figures say much less about an active membership than about large clientelistic networks recruited by local brokers across the provincial territory.³³ It is difficult to establish what the party boundaries are, and where the difference between the PJ and the provincial and municipal governments lies. Even the informal organization of the PJ based on local grass-roots groups called *unidades*

³² Author's interview, July 16, 2007

³³ Party membership is a fuzzy indicator for Argentine parties. The figures have been accumulating since 1983 and members are never taken off the records. Because they do not pay fees and do not have any commitment to the party, most affiliates remain so even when they had had no connection with the party for several years. See Freidenberg and Levitsky (2006).

básicas and organized around *agrupaciones*, as Levistky described them for the 1990s, has vanished in Tucumán. The PJ is, instead, a conglomerate of two different kinds of networks sustained by state jobs and other state resources. On the one hand, there are those employees and advisers, recruited by Alperovich to run the government. These governmental networks are not composed of politicians in the traditional sense; most of them have no partisan backgrounds. But those ministers and secretaries, as my interviewee Julio Saguir acknowledges, cannot claim to be neutral technocrats. They work for and in the project led by Alperovich and are widely seen as “Alperovichistas”. Those who gain reputations as good managers and receive positive approval ratings become eligible to be at the top of the party electoral ticket, as indeed happened to Minister of Education Susana Montaldo, and to Minister of Health Julio Manzur, both of whom had no partisan backgrounds. These networks are, of course, very volatile, and it is expected that every change of governor implies a large-scale overhaul of their composition. Secondly, there are the extended networks on the ground, the electoral machines, built on the basis of patronage and clientelism. These machines have a much higher degree of stability than the governmental ones. Insofar as people remain poor and the state does not provide universal services, they will continue to be fundamental pieces of the electoral machinery. A change of governor affects the composition of these machine networks much less than it impacts that of the governmental ones. With the same composition, the machines may perfectly well be mobilized to support different leaders, insofar as the boss or a competitor guarantees the distribution of resources.

The leadership of the governor over those two different types of networks is therefore equally based on his control of state resources. The control over the state machinery provides the governor with the necessary resources to control the party structure, understood as that combination of governmental and territorial networks.

Because all party actors are in one way or the other dependent on the resources provided by the governor it is hard to imagine a PJ group defecting from his leadership. But at the same time, in order to maintain his leadership over the party structure, the governor must secure that he, and he alone, is the one who guarantees that the PJ will remain in control of the state resources. As soon as, for any reason, the governor no longer appears to be the best option to win the next provincial general elections, mayors and brokers in general will seek an alternative leader who guarantees the provision of resources.³⁴

The party organization is structured, integrated, and coordinated through state resources and, for its actors at the different levels, the primary goal is to conserve access to those resources. These informal patterns of behaviour render the PJ a very adaptable organization, flexible to alter policies and replace its elites as soon as they prove incapable of winning elections.

The UCR: The Radicals, in Tucumán and elsewhere, used to have more formal organization than the PJ. The central office used to play an important role in the UCR, and the party organizational borders used to be clear. That is not the case any more. The party's organizational transformation is the consequence of the vanishing of the representative bonds which in the past linked the UCR with important middle sectors of the province. Until the late 1990s the UCR label was electorally valuable in Tucumán, and the organization had thousands of activists, including powerful student associations, and a very lively internal life. The label has now become almost meaningless, the party does not provide a collective incentive for participation, and volunteer activism has vanished. In that context, and in the absence of an attractive leader who might lead the

³⁴ For example, by 2008 it was a poorly-kept secret that the mayor of the capital city of the province of Tucumán was waiting for his opportunity to challenge the leadership of the governor. In the meantime, while Alperovich is popular, he must wait and stay on good terms with the governor. But it is an unwritten law that as soon as the government of Alperovich falters, this mayor (or it might likewise be some other leader) will emerge as the instrument for a new renovation of the Peronist elites of the province.

party to government, it is access to material resources that defines the balance of power inside the party. As the party is out of government and without a well functioning system of state funding, access to material resources is restricted to the legislators. In fact, the two provincial UCR legislators, both of whom have a group of around 80 employee-activists and some resources to distribute in the neighbourhoods, have become the most powerful party actors. In contrast, the central office (“the provincial committee”), with its big old building, has turned into an empty shell, unable to pay the salary of its only employee.³⁵

The boundaries of the UCR, like those of the rest of the parties, have also become fluid and ill-defined, with former leaders leaving the party in search of better chances. In the words of the UCR provincial legislator José Cano,

“Nowadays the politicians look for the place most convenient for their careers. They can go, play with this or that other leader or party, and then come back to the party if they do not do well. This was unthinkable some years ago. A politician had no chance to change from one party to the other. If someone did something like that he would not be able to walk in the street. But now there is no price to pay, it is an accepted part of the game. Who cares if you are here or there?”³⁶

Mario Marigliano, the party chairman, agrees that, when lists are made,

“All those who see that they have little chances to be elected leave the party and try to find another strategy. For example, if we expect to get two legislators, nobody accepts being number three on the list. The number three quits and looks for a place on another list.”³⁷

³⁵ Obtaining some funds to pay the salary of the employee was one of the main concerns of the chairman of the UCR of Tucumán when I interviewed him in July 2007. He had asked two legislators of the party to give that employee a contract in the legislature, so as to make it possible to keep the central committee open, but although legislators had more than 80 employees each, they refused to satisfy the request of the party chairman.

³⁶ Author’s interview with José Cano, July 11, 2007.

³⁷ Author’s interview with Mario Marigliano, July 12, 2007.

If the party label is of no value, politicians have no incentives to remain with the party. For political entrepreneurs, loyalty to the party label makes little sense. It is thus no wonder that many UCR leaders have been co-opted by Alperovich or have just defected and played with other independent candidates who offered them more chances to advance their political careers. The unity and stability of party organizations is in that context always fragile. In the case of the state-party, the PJ, the unity of the networks that compose the party is achieved and maintained due to state resources. In the case of opposition parties, faced with a dearth of material resources and devoid of ideological incentives, the integration and coordination of different actors into the same organization turns into a very difficult task.

7.5 Conclusion

Table 7.5 summarizes the salient findings concerning the three dimensions of patronage discussed in this chapter, and compares them with the findings on the national level revealed in chapter 5. Patronage distribution is similarly centralized in the hands of the elected executive, both at the national and at the sub-national level. Both at national and provincial levels, positions are distributed in order to get control of the state apparatus. Due to the characteristics of Argentine bureaucracies (national and sub-national), appointments for control are necessary for the implementation of any public policy. Yet, control of the state apparatus is also seen as necessary to take over state financial and organizational resources for political goals, which quite often also entail corruption. Also at both levels of government, positions are many times distributed in order to bring different groups and personalities into the supportive coalition.

Table 7.5: Appointers, motivations and selection criteria at national and sub-national level

	National	Provinces
Appointers	Centralized dominance of the president	Centralized dominance of the governor (legislators are important when governors are weak)
Motivation	Governmental: control (of policies and resources) and cooption	1. Governmental: control (of policies but mainly of resources) and cooption 2. Organizational (machine politics)
Appointees	1. Personal linkage 2. Professional background 3. Ideology	1. Personal linkage 2. Party membership 3. Expertise

Importantly, patronage fulfils an important organizational goal at the provincial level. In addition to financing the activity of advisers and “operators”, the distribution of jobs at the provincial level is used to fuel and finance the territorial networks which, in electoral times, function as electoral machines.

Lastly, personal linkage is by far the dominant criterion for appointments in Argentina. At the national level it is common to demand expertise as a complementary requirement. The demand for expertise is lower at the provincial level, where party membership is still sometimes a common criterion to select appointees.

Party patronage is a fundamental governmental resource in the provinces just as it is at the national level. Networks of managers, professionals, and advisers (by and large less qualified than at the national level) are recruited to run state agencies. Even though the motivation for the appointment of those networks led me to classify them as cases of governmental patronage, it is important to underscore that they constitute a defining feature of current party organizations. If parties are essentially observed and evaluated on the basis of their governmental capacities, and if their linkages with large parts of the society are established on the basis of those capacities, those networks of

professionals responsible for the implementation of policies are, regardless of their background, a critical face of the party. Indeed, and although systematic studies on this subject must still be conducted, the number of “experts” recruited to run state agencies and promoted to party leadership shortly afterwards appears as an obvious pattern of current Argentine politics.

The control of state positions in the provinces is also crucial to organizing and mobilizing electoral machines, directly or through different mediators such as mayors and local leaders. While the personnel of the party professional networks are ephemeral and renewable from one term to the next, the territorial networks constitute the stable aspect of ruling parties as long as they maintain access to state resources. Naturally, if the party loses access to state resources (typically because it loses elections) those territorial networks tend to jump on the bandwagon of the new provider. State resources are necessary in order to integrate and coordinate a party organization. Yet, state resources are not necessarily decisive in general elections. Hence alternative leaders may always emerge who, getting access to the media, convince a majority of the electorate that they might be better rulers, and so challenge the hegemony of the ruling party. The emergence of alternative political figures is indeed a common feature of provincial party politics. And yet, the development of any kind of organization which goes beyond a popular personality is improbable in Argentine provinces without patronage.

CHAPTER 8

THE PATRONAGE-BASED NETWORK PARTY

You referred several times to party building. In the 1980s it was very clear what this meant: to fill committees and Unidades Básicas with activists, to organize large meetings, rallies, etc. But now..., what do you mean now when you talk about party building?

Journalist Marcelo Zlotowiagzda, interview with opposition leader Luis Juez, TV show “Palabras más, palabras menos”, TN, November 18, 2008

This dissertation has sought to shed light on the nature of the current party organization in Argentina by focusing on the practice of political appointments. As chapter 1 argued, as parties in both old and new democracies are increasingly becoming less organizations of civil society and more state or semi-state organizations, the degree and nature of their entrenchment into the state become key elements to understanding the parties development. With that goal in mind, I have investigated four analytically different aspects of party patronage. Chapters 4 to 7 studied how far parties reach into state structures, which party actors are responsible for making political appointments, what motivates parties to appoint, and what criteria parties follow to select the appointees. In this chapter I analyze the characteristics of the current party organizations in Argentina on the basis of the answers to these four questions.

The chapter proceeds in three main sections. The first one briefly reviews the transformation in the linkages between parties and society which has taken place in the last 25 years. The second section focuses on the way political parties have changed in order to adapt to this transformation and underscores the critical role of patronage in forming and sustaining the networks which make up the present party organizations. The third section analyzes the case of the PJ, and focuses on the “Front for Victory”, the label it has acquired under the leadership of Néstor Kirchner since 2003.

8.1 Parties and their Linkages

The linkages between parties and society in Argentina have gone through a radical transformation since the restoration of democracy in 1983. Until then the two major Argentine parties, PJ and UCR, used to maintain solid, continuous, and intense bonds with different sectors of society, and party identity used to be the first criterion on which party competition was structured. In his work on party – society linkages in Latin America, Kenneth Roberts includes these two parties among those who developed “encapsulating” linkages, which essentially means they had “... a mass-based organizational structure and participatory modes of affiliation” (2002a:16). Both parties had local grassroots units throughout the country and provided their members with continuous opportunities for political activities, and a strong identity which used to continue across generations. In 1984, 57 per cent of the Argentine citizens considered themselves to be Peronist or Radicals (Mustapic, 2009), and party identity ranked as the most decisive factor for voting in elections (Catterberg, 1991). It is noteworthy that in the 1983 presidential elections the PJ and UCR appealed to their historical iconography and used their traditional flags, symbols, songs, and the pantheons of party heroes to attract voters.

By contrast, by 2007 only 7 per cent of the Argentine citizens identified themselves with a political party and party identity simply disappeared from the surveys which measure the factors contributing to voting behaviour (Mustapic, 2009). Candidates hide party symbols and, moreover, disguise traditional party names, regularly resorting to new labels. Indeed, elections are increasingly structured on the basis of candidates rather than parties (Cheresky, 2006; Scherlis, 2008b).¹

¹ A report from the NGO Poder Ciudadano (the local branch of Transparency International) titled “The Argentines and Political Parties” affirms that “The new generations have no idea whatsoever of the phenomenon of party identity ... and even less they define themselves in terms of any kind of ideological orientation” (Poder Ciudadano, 2007:26-27).

The old encapsulating linkages have disappeared from the political scene. By contrast, the dominant linkages between parties and society in Argentina – following Roberts’ typology – now fall within two categories, the ones based on marketing and those established through clientelistic exchanges. The explanation for this trend is twofold. As has happened in many other democracies, Argentine parties have adapted to societal and technological changes by renouncing what they saw as unsustainable representative linkages with a *classe gardée* in order to appeal to the electorate at large. Because parties seek to sell their candidates as the best choice for the next election through media-based campaigns, the episodic linkages that they establish with the voters anew in every election are essentially based on marketing techniques. As Roberts notes, marketing linkages “... are formed in specific electoral conjunctures as parties appeal to uncommitted voters on the basis of a particular policy stance, recent performance in office, the relative capabilities of particular candidates, or the negative attributes of competitors” (2002a:19). The prevalence of marketing linkages entails the absence of lasting organizational bonds and their replacement by conditional, loose, and contingent electoral support mainly built through the mass media.

At the same time, the drastic changes in the economic structure of the country (which in broad terms are usually defined as a transformation from “import substitution industrialization” to a market economy) facilitated the conditions for the reinforcement and expansion of clientelistic linkages. The neo-liberal reforms implemented in the 1990s ushered in a process of state retrenchment and deindustrialization, which led to an exponential growth of structural poverty and unemployment (Kessler and Di Virgilio, 2005).² Those factors, along with the abovementioned weakening of party

² Official data on poverty in Argentina is divided by region. We can take the metropolitan area of Buenos Aires and the Greater Buenos Aires to illustrate. In 1974 the poor were 4.7% of the population; in 1986, 12.7%; in 1992, 17.8%; in 2000, 28.9% This percentage continued to grow in the three following years (Cheresky, 2008:185).

identities, have made large-scale clientelism an efficient mechanism of inter and intra party competition. As Levitsky has demonstrated for the case of the Peronist Party, its transformation “from labour politics to machine politics” allowed it “... to find a new basis with which to maintain its old constituency (the urban poor)” while implementing public policies at odds with its traditional stances (2007:217).³ Although the dominant position of Peronism in the Argentine political system has led several scholars to associate clientelistic practices with the PJ particularly, clientelism is by no means circumscribed to this party. A good number of studies and my own findings show that all parties which attain executive offices at any level -- national, sub-national, or local -- resort to clientelism in building their linkages with the poor strata of society.⁴

Under these circumstances, parties must be able to employ diverse resources and techniques at the same time. As Levitsky has observed also, the optimal electoral strategy for Argentine parties presently consists of diversifying linkage mechanisms, combining large-scale clientelistic infrastructures in poor areas with media-based appeals to the electorate at large (2007:211).

In sum, the last 25 years have witnessed radical changes in the patterns of linkages between parties and society in Argentina and, consequently, in what parties do in order to survive and prosper. Encapsulating linkages have been replaced by a combination of clientelism (for vast poor sectors) and marketing techniques (for the entire electorate, including the poor areas). This transformation has been accompanied by equally radical transformation in the organizational characteristics of parties. In this context patronage has emerged as a fundamental resource to form and sustain the current party organizations at all their levels.

³ A similar strategy was followed by the PRI in Mexico. For a comparative study of the PJ and PRI and how they managed to implement neo-liberal policies while maintaining a popular base see Gibson, 1997

⁴ See for instance Villalón (2003) on the Movimiento Popular Neuquino in the province of Neuquén, or Kemahgloglu (2006) on the UCR in Chaco.

8.2 The Patronage-based Network Party

As parties have resigned their role of agents of social integration and channels of political expression for pre-defined segments of society, their traditional organizational structure has become obsolete. In Argentina, parties' electoral success hinges on two major factors. First, parties must be able to put forward candidates who are perceived by the electorate as effective and trustworthy rulers. And second, parties must develop large-scale clientelistic infrastructures to gain and mobilize electoral support in poor areas. These requirements determine the way parties organize and their intra-party balance of power.

On the one hand, organizational resources have been concentrated in the hands of an autonomous leadership whose legitimacy comes from its own popularity among the electorate at large. On the other hand, these popular figures lead organizations made up of networks of two different types: governmental and clientelistic-territorial. The governmental networks are aimed at the management of the government and the control of state structures, working for the political project led by the elected leader. The clientelistic-territorial networks pursue the mobilization of voters through face-to-face particularistic exchanges. The formation and functioning of the two networks depend on their leaders' control of patronage.

Elected Leaders as the Main Appointers

The dramatic drop in the level of party identification has rendered party labels valueless in terms of attracting electoral support. By contrast, the political system and the electoral competition are increasingly structured on the basis of personalities. Even when most politicians are still identifiable by their "family of origin, Radical or Peronist" (Mustapic, 2009), elections are won and lost by individual personalities rather than by parties (Szusterman, 2007; Cheresky, 2009). For top-level politicians, the

symbolic adherence to a specific party helps little in improving their electoral performance. This has led to a fluid situation in which new labels are often created by political leaders only to have an ephemeral life and vanish after having been used in one or a few elections. Political entrepreneurs feel tempted to leave the old structures and present alternative candidacies whenever they consider it to be convenient for their electoral chances. In addition, politicians can now speak directly to the electorate through the mass media, and do not need the traditional party structures to develop an electoral campaign. Moreover, an ideologically or policy oriented rank-and-file membership has become a nuisance for party leaders, contributing very little to winning elections and making costly demands in terms of policy stances.⁵ The balance of power between membership and leaders has therefore tilted radically towards the latter.

This shift in the intra-party balance of power also impinges on the control of state structures and the process of appointment to public office. As elections become personal contests, elected officials become responsible for the management of the government, with complete autonomy from the party's central office. As a consequence, it is the leader who, once elected, has the ability to appoint people to public positions, rather than any other party actor. The weakness of state bureaucracies makes it possible for the leaders who get access to office to manipulate state resources for their own political projects, thereby reinforcing the organizational imbalance. Additionally, the erosion of party identities and the fact that parties do not hold consistent programmatic goals have made a "party on the ground" hard to imagine without the distribution of jobs or other material incentives. Actually, it is due to the ample powers to appoint held by presidents, governors, and mayors - and the ability to distribute other resources

⁵ In words of Avelino Tamargo, a young politician, currently a legislator in the City of Buenos Aires, "Now the key to advancing a political career is to run "light", yes, to run light, ... without carrying any weight. Otherwise you must spend your time explaining to a bunch of people every single thing you do." Author's interview, September 3, 2007.

derived from the control of public offices - that political organizations are sustained. For analytical purposes we can view parties as formed by a web of two different networks, both centred around a popular leader. The first type is formed to carry out the management of the state machinery, while the second one pursues the mobilization of voters on the basis of clientelism. As for the central office of the party, it tends to lose all relevance and becomes, if anything, an appendix of the elected leadership.

The Governmental Networks

Once political entrepreneurs are elected to executive positions, they must recruit the staff that will run the government under their orders, in the many different sectors that make up the state. Given that elections are essentially determined by who is better prepared to hold public office, it is common that political entrepreneurs surround themselves with a group of experts, or that they create a think tank in order to strengthen their image as potential rulers.⁶ However, it is only once they are elected to executive positions that leaders see the need and get the resources to form the teams which will be responsible for the management of the state. After winning elections, elected leaders must bring together the people who will serve under their leadership, presumably with a commitment to their political project. In the case of the Argentine national government, this involves the recruitment of several thousands of people: from ministers, ambassadors, directors of decentralized agencies, undersecretaries, and lots of advisers of different kinds, to the personnel at the bottom levels in many state agencies. As a result, the *presidential party*, as Argentine scholar Natalio Botana calls it (2007), is

⁶ In recent years it has become customary in Argentina that political entrepreneurs create their own “think-tanks”. A list of some of these institutes may be found in the work of Gerardo Uña (2007) on think tanks in Argentina. According to my interviewees, almost all of these institutions are but a mere facade. They provide the politician with a supposedly serious and technocratic profile, organize seminars and send statements to the media, but in reality none of them invest the necessary resources to develop serious programs of public policies.

formed by all those networks of people appointed to run state offices during the administration led by the president. In a context of weak and consistently politicized bureaucracies, every newly elected president appoints in every sector and level the people he and his aides trust to develop his political project. The pattern is replicated by provincial and municipal governments.

The conventional notion of party government took for granted the existence of a party organization that had an independent life outside the state structures and that appointed its leaders or members to key political positions once it took office. In Argentina, where the public sector has historically lacked bureaucratic autonomy, the traditional wisdom assumed the presence of parties which, after winning elections, took over the state and appointed their people throughout all state structures. But, as suggested above, political leaders today hardly have at their disposal a pre-existent organization, let alone one from which to recruit the many trustworthy and, at least relatively, qualified functionaries needed to run state offices. By contrast, the current nature of political parties implies that elected leaders must search for people that can assure “responsive competence” (Suleiman, 2003), a combination of confidence and proficiency. It is this recruiting process that shapes (and re-shapes with the ascendancy of every new dominant coalition of leaders) the core of the party organizations. This pattern explains why patronage is presently less of a mode of linkage between parties and activists or between parties and voters, and more of a necessary mode of government, but which also simultaneously moulds and sustains the party as a group of governmental networks.

While the answer to the question “who appoints?” points to the dominance of popularly elected leaders and the irrelevance of parties’ bureaucratic bodies in these decisions, the evidence about the motivations to appoint and the criteria to select the

appointees reveal how party organizations are constituted. Elected leaders primarily appoint in order to gain control over state institutions and, at the same time, form their supportive coalitions. Because Argentine public bureaucracies are weak, unstable, and politicized, every new elected leader assumes that gaining control requires massive hiring across the top and middle levels of the state. But the organization which would allow elected leaders to gain control over state structures and develop their political projects does not exist before they get access to state offices and state resources. As Peter Mair notes, given the “decline in party membership levels” and the special skills required for the successful management of public offices, “... parties in both old and new democracies seem increasingly willing to look beyond their immediate organizational confines when searching for suitable candidates and nominees” (2003:8). It is apparent that, in the Argentine case, political entrepreneurs do not have at their disposal a pool of loyal party cadres and qualified activists to staff the administration. The latest presidents, Eduardo Duhalde and Néstor Kirchner, could hardly fill a few of the most senior positions with their trusted party fellows, who belonged to their provincial party factions.

Indeed, as was abundantly illustrated in chapters 5 and 7, party membership or a party background emerges, based on the analysis of career paths and experts’ interviews, as a secondary or even marginal criterion at time of appointing. Rather, political appointees at all levels are principally selected on the basis of the leaders’ (and their narrow circle of aides’) personal linkages. Relatives, friends, colleagues from the university, technocrats with whom they worked at a think tank, at an NGO, or at a private company, are all potential members of the leaders’ governmental staff. In turn, these appointees bring their own trusted people in order to run the offices under their

responsibility. This process ushers in a web of networks serving under the leadership of the respective president, governor or mayor.

The formation of these networks may be a one-shot deal in the case of leaders who are elected to important executive positions having no previous experience in government. However, most times governmental networks are in reality gradually built through the different positions the political entrepreneur occupies during his political life. It is common that a political leader is first elected to a legislative position where he can form a small group of advisers which is in turn enlarged once the leader achieves the position of mayor. This group serves as the base from which the leader forms the larger governmental networks once he is elected governor, while the governmental networks in the provincial government will be the basis of the national governmental networks once the leader reaches the presidency. Because all Argentine presidents since 1989 had previously been provincial governors, they had already formed their first networks of office-holders which accompanied them to the national government. For example, Kirchner filled some of the most important positions in the national government with people who had been working with him in the governorship of the province of Santa Cruz. But what is remarkable in any case is that the party in government is not the product of the appointment of long-standing party members to political positions so much as it is the result of the ability of an elected executive to recruit a network of persons he can trust and who, in turn, commit themselves to the leader's political project. In that sense, the process of development of a party organization at every layer is conducted through the distribution of state offices.

It is worth stressing that these governmental networks compose the core of what I call "really existing party organization". One might surely see all appointees with no party backgrounds as non-partisan (or even non-political, see for example Geddes,

1994:154-9). Actually, the formation of the government on the basis of the discretionary appointment by elected leaders of functionaries of their own choosing has led scholars to suggest the absence of party government in Argentina (Szusterman, 2007:232). However, rather than a lack of party government, what we observe is a different mechanism to build and sustain political parties. Appointees at all levels of government, regardless of their professional and political backgrounds, must commit themselves to work for the political leaders' projects, or otherwise resign. Indeed, the whole process of policy-making and implementation is subordinated to the short-term political and electoral needs of political leaders (Spiller and Tommasi, 2008). Appointees might still be called non-partisans because often they do not have a background as party activists and do not frequent party offices, but the point is that there is hardly any party office to be visited and there is little left of a party beyond the office-holders who work for and defer to their appointer. The conventional distinction between party and government becomes obsolete since the party becomes essentially – if not solely – a semi-state agency of government which is by and large shaped through the appointment of state positions.

Furthermore, parties are increasingly observed and evaluated on the basis of their (actual or potential) managerial abilities, which makes the networks of functionaries and personnel occupying positions in the management of the state a key element of the party. It is notable that the performance of the heads of those networks is one of the major points that the electorate judges in elections (and in the weekly polls!). Accordingly, the promotion of those supposedly non-partisan functionaries to party candidacies seems to be an increasing trend in Argentine politics.⁷ At the same time, the party in central office remains a formal but powerless and meaningless institution which

⁷ Although no systematic data has been presented here the trend appears as evident for observers of Argentine politics. I will study this point in the context of a postdoctoral research starting in September 2009.

is, when useful, occupied by the elected leaders and their favourite aides. In addition, public officials also perform crucial activities at election times. It is through the control of state structures by political appointees that the ruling party manages to manipulate the state apparatus to the benefit of its candidates, prioritizing the allocation of resources and the implementation of policies on the basis of its electoral needs. On top of that, the confusion between public offices and ruling parties paves the way for the regular utilization of public offices under the control of political appointees for sheer electoral activities.⁸ All in all, the governmental networks undertake what nowadays are some of the most important party functions, such as the management of public affairs, the supply of new candidates and leaders, and the logistics for electoral campaigns.

To summarize, it is the possibility to appoint and build networks via the discretionary decisions of an elected leader that creates the party organizations as they exist today in Argentina. Although the conventional model suggested that parties filled governmental staffs with their partisans, nowadays the party cadres are those persons who the leader decides to incorporate into the governmental staffs, even when they do not have any partisan background. Moreover, it is the ability to appoint state personnel – something that occurs in Argentina to a larger extent than in many other countries, including neighbours Chile or Uruguay – that makes it possible to sustain the party as a web of governmental networks. Bringing in and establishing networks to run the government is how the leader constitutes and shapes the party organization. Ministers, secretaries, undersecretaries, chiefs of cabinets, advisers, and employees at all levels make up those networks committed to the political project led by the leader and which constitute the party organization. In that sense, Argentine national parties resemble what

⁸ For example, as shown in chapter 5, the Secretariat of Media functioned as a propaganda machine for the candidacy of Cristina Kirchner in 2007.

Katz and Kolodny (1994) defined, in reference of political parties in the United States, “empty vessels”, which every new leader fills as he or she considers fit.

The Clientelistic-electoral Networks

As noted earlier, scholars have distinguished between two different dominant patterns of linkages between parties and society in Argentina. The prevalence of marketing linkages established through the mass media is visible in the big urban centres and overall at the national level,. Yet, in vast low-income areas, linkages between parties and citizens are also frequently based on the distribution of state goods and services in a particularistic face-to-face manner (Mocca, 2004:97-8; Levitsky, 2007:210-11). The development of large clientelistic networks in these areas helps to mobilize voters. Although there is enough evidence that no sub-national, let alone national, election is won in Argentina solely on the basis of clientelistic machines⁹, these networks can make a decisive difference in a tight contest, especially in the districts with high levels of indigence. More importantly, the formation of clientelistic electoral machines is crucial for intra-party politics. Because parties do not have volunteer memberships, when internal disputes need to be resolved through party elections, candidates have to mobilize voters through clientelistic exchanges.¹⁰ The extension of intra-party competition from 1983 onwards boosted the search for electoral clienteles. As Levitsky explains with reference to the PJ and the process of democratization in the 1980s, “... internal elections placed increased importance on the delivery of votes, which created an incentive for both leaders and activists to organize around patronage distribution”

⁹ Governors with extensive machines have lost general elections several times, even in very poor provinces (for example the PJ in Chaco in 1991; in Tucumán in 1995; or in Misiones in 2006). An often cited example is the defeat of the PJ in the province of Buenos Aires, allegedly the strongest electoral machine of the country, in 1997.

¹⁰ As De Luca et al (2006) have shown, by building large clientelistic networks the governors and mayors many times prevent the emergence of any potential challenger to their leadership within the party.

(2003:124). The distribution of state resources soon proved successful for internal competition in the two main parties, displacing more horizontal forms of participation which had emerged in the wake of the democratic transition process (Palermo, 1986:117-118). In the PJ “... state resources became the primary linkage between activists and the party” and in the 1990s, favoured by the growth of poverty and unemployment, patronage-based competition became “the only game in town” (Levitsky, 2003:124). Lastly, the recruitment of a large network of people has also become necessary in order to monitor elections if candidates do not want to see their ballots disappear from the ballot-boxes.¹¹

Electoral machines are principally sustained by the distribution of social assistance benefits in a clientelistic mode. Various forms of clientelistic exchanges permeate all socio-economic strata. However, they find fertile ground and have stronger electoral impact in contexts of extreme poverty (Stokes, 2009; Weitz-Schapiro, 2006). In Argentina, structural poverty has helped make clientelistic distribution of welfare aid an extensive method of political mobilization. That is why such machines have been examined in more detail by studies on clientelism (Auyero, 2001; Stokes, 2005) than by this dissertation, which has focused on patronage. Yet, it is remarkable that employees are frequently forced to take part in these machines. Monitoring and voting in internal and general elections, or assisting in campaign activities, is quite often a price that must be paid by public employees who have been appointed by a party politician, even when they have no previous connection to the party. These employees who are hired through fixed-terms contracts are especially likely to be integrated into their patrons’ electoral machines in times of electoral campaigns.

¹¹ In Argentina every party presents a different ballot. See chapter 7, footnote 15.

Public jobs and state resources more generally are important in recruiting brokers, or *punteros*, who link the political entrepreneur with the clients by distributing the benefits that the former supplies in exchange for the votes and the political allegiance of the latter. Brokers play a critical role in the mobilization of voters for general and internal elections. Yet, their belonging to the party and/or loyalty to the politician are contingent on the flux of resources distributed by that party or politician. Brokers may remain loyal to a party or a party leader indefinitely as long as that party or leader offers more and better resources than any other. Yet, most times brokers choose who to work with on the basis of their strategic reasoning irrespective of any permanent party loyalty. In the context of fluid and unstable party systems, brokers' loyalties have turned fluid as well. That is why most brokers are better defined as *floating brokers*, rather than as party brokers, and their networks are seen as *floating apparatuses* (Rodríguez Blanco et al, 2004:228). In any case, gaining the allegiance of a broker requires access to a large amount of resources, which is achieved through access to state offices. Only the leaders who control executive positions – governors or mayors – are in the position to form or get control over a sizable network of brokers and clients.¹²

The ability of political leaders to appoint the right functionaries to the appropriate positions is a necessary requisite for manipulating state resources in order to make those machines work. In any event, no party can develop electoral machines without first controlling the state agencies that can provide the necessary financial, organizational, and human resources to do so.¹³

¹² We have observed in chapter 7 that legislators in some provinces, for instance in Tucumán, also get enough resources to maintain clientelistic networks.

¹³ In recent times a successful businessman, Francisco de Narváez, created little clientelistic networks in the province of Buenos Aires on the basis of his own private fortune. However, it was acknowledged by one of his closest aides that without the control of municipalities it would be impossible for them to develop large networks on the ground. Author's interview, May 12, 2008.

All in all, party organizations in Argentina are currently formed and structured from the top of the state and on the basis of two different types of networks which serve two different purposes. What the two types of networks have in common, however, is that in both of them loyalty to a party label or to a political entrepreneur is largely dependent on the availability of material resources provided by the public budget. Actually, both the governmental and the clientelistic networks, may well serve different leaders at different moments, offering their services to whoever secures access to the resources. Remarkably, the fluidity of these networks accounts for the uncertainty of party boundaries. Because entire networks or their members may easily cross party boundaries and pay no political cost for the move, the frontiers between parties have become blurred and are in continuous change.¹⁴ Likewise, the criterion of party membership has become increasingly vague and imprecise, regardless of parties' formal rules. The neighbourhood broker may well change patrons from one election to the next, delivering the votes of his/her clients to whoever provides with more and better goods and services for him and for his clients.¹⁵ Similarly, the team of experts in, say, education, health, or finance, may also serve different leaders at different levels (a national president from one party now, a provincial governor from another party tomorrow). And yet, when they are serving a specific party leader, both the team of experts and the clientelistic network led by the broker are part of the really existing party organization, irrespective of what the parties' formal statutes can say.

Whoever wants to integrate these networks into a party organization must in any case control the resources provided by an executive position. The formation and coordination of political parties at each level of the state is therefore carried out by a

¹⁴ The moves are however more common between labels belonging to the same "family of origin".

¹⁵ Buying off brokers and speculating about who works with who have become normal matters of electoral processes. As Leiras notes, "every electoral campaign resembles a market in which different leaders try to obtain the support of the different territorial electoral machines." (2007:89)

popularly elected political entrepreneur on the basis of patronage and, at sub-national and local levels, also clientelism.

Another critical matter in the nature and functioning of parties which has not yet been addressed in this dissertation relates to the way in which different organizational tiers, built as described in the previous paragraphs, manage to coordinate a national strategy and aggregate themselves into a single organization. The following paragraphs intend to answer this question.

The Stratarchical Organizational Imperative

In federalized party systems, “... in which more than one territorially delimited party system operate” (Gibson and Suarez Cao, 2007), parties face what Kenneth Carty (2004) calls the stratarchical organizational imperative. This refers to the challenge of maintaining the unity of a national organization across the national territory, aggregating and coordinating the increasingly autonomous sub-units organized at the different layers of electoral competition. In Argentina, the aggregation of all those sub-units within a multi-level political organization becomes particularly problematic given the dearth of ideological or identity-based incentives and a strongly federal institutional design (Leiras, 2007:114).¹⁶ Actually, in recent years scholars have noted a process of deep *provincialization* or *territorialization* of political competition and political organizations (Calvo and Escolar, 2005; Eaton, 2004). Not only do parties have their loci of competition at the sub-national level but also, due to the different coalitions and the strategies they follow, it is difficult to find the same label competing in more than one province at the same time. Indeed, recent studies measuring the level of

¹⁶ In this regard, Argentine parties only compete in one effectively national election every four years, when they vote for the national president. All the other elections, including those of national legislators, are conducted along provincial lines (Calvo and Abal Medina, 2001). Even in legal terms parties are initially created as provincial organizations, and only later can they converge into a national organization. In addition, the bulk of official state funding is given to parties’ provincial branches.

nationalization of parties have ranked Argentina at the lowest level in Latin America (Harbers, 2009).

However, more than one national coalition is formed for every presidential election. Moreover, its fluidity and imprecise boundaries notwithstanding, the existence of a national Peronist Party present throughout the country - or at least a national confederation of Peronist provincial parties (Levitsky and Murillo, 2003) - is not disputed. The puzzle is thus the following: How do parties whose loci of competition are 24 different provincial party systems manage to aggregate themselves into a multi-tiered organization?

The previous paragraphs have explained how the president and the governors, at the national and at the provincial level, integrate party organizations through patronage. Patronage, however, has no effect on the coordination between the different levels of parties. As observed in chapter 5, President Néstor Kirchner did not incorporate functionaries coming from the leadership of provincial branches of the PJ into the national government, except for those from his own provincial branch (Santa Cruz) and, initially, a few others from the province of Buenos Aires. Yet, almost all branches of the PJ accepted the leadership of Kirchner and, eventually, supported Cristina Fernández de Kirchner's candidacy in the 2007 presidential elections. In the absence of ideological, identity-based or institutional incentives, the major stimulus for maintaining party unity and coordinating common strategies is the possibility, or the expectation, of gaining access to the material resources. While every party at every level of electoral competition – national, provincial or municipal - is integrated in a top-down manner through the distribution of public jobs and funds, the stratarchical imperative is met on the basis of the (actual or expected) allocation of state resources from the presidency. Control of the federal government (or a strong expectation to control it in the near

future) is thus a necessary requirement to fulfil the stratarchical imperative. For those who do not control the national government and are not expected to do so soon, the formation and coordination of a national organization which includes sub-national and local branches becomes unlikely. Given that Peronist leaders have been in control of the federal government almost without interruption since 1989, the PJ has been the only party able to fulfil the minimal conditions of the stratarchical organizational imperative. In times of political disaffection, in which party labels mean little for voters, the PJ has remained the only multi-level national organization, present in all Argentine provinces, and responsive to one national leader, the president.

Although governors are powerful political figures in their provinces and most times dominate their provincial party organization, they are highly dependent on the resources they receive from the national executive to administrate their provincial governments. Provincial administrations finance, on average, less than 35 per cent of their spending with their own revenues. The bulk of the provincial budgets are financed with a set of transfer mechanisms from the central government, whose details are subject to continual negotiations between the president and the governors. Remarkably, in many small – and generally poor – provinces, transfers from the federal government make for over 80 per cent of the budget (Spiller and Tommasi, 2007).¹⁷ Hence governors seek to maintain good ties with the president, who in turn demands their explicit support for the national government. And since party backgrounds and ideological identities have little impact on these games, crossing party borders and endorsing the national president emerges as the rational strategy for most governors.

¹⁷ For instance, 88.64% of the annual state spending of the province of Chaco in 2006 was financed with resources transferred by the national state. In the case of Tucumán, it was 75.57%. Bigger and richer provinces seem relatively less dependent on the national state. Santa Fe receives 64.1%, (Data from Proinfo, Secretariat of Provinces, Ministry of Interior). It has been noted that the more the provinces depend on national resources the more governors endorse the presidential project. See for example “Se resquebraja la disciplina impuesta por el kirchnerismo”, *La Nación*, April 9, 2008.

The same pattern is replicated in the relationship between governors and mayors, the latter being financially dependent on the resources discretionally allocated by the former.¹⁸

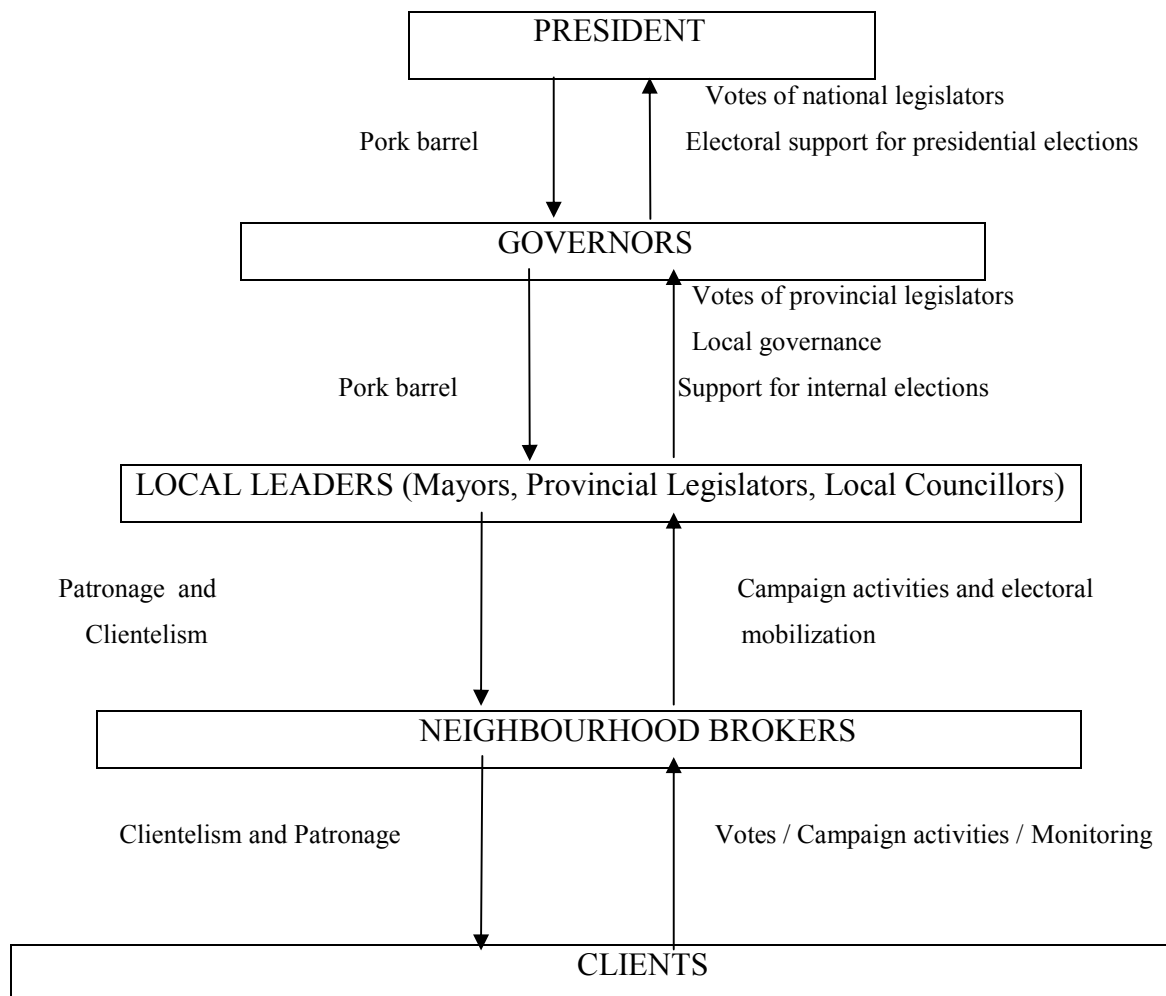
This does not mean, however, that governors and mayors align ineluctably with the *presidential party*. The popularity of the president is another important factor in this regard. Actually, regardless of the fiscal exchanges and needs, governors distance themselves from presidents with low approval ratings, so that their own image is not damaged by the negative coattail effects, especially at election times. Likewise, the governors who decide to seek the presidential nomination and do not receive the “blessing” of the incumbent president will also become harsh opponents, irrespective of fiscal considerations, let alone ideological or partisan matters.

But in any case, the point to be made here is that national coalitions of multi-tiered organizations are formed fundamentally on the basis of the resources allocated from the top of the state. Having these resources is not always enough to bring together a national coalition which includes all 24 provinces. But no multi-level organization is sustainable without the control of the national government or a shared expectation to win the presidential election in the foreseeable future. The power to allocate state resources to specific districts on a political basis (which in a broad sense I have defined in chapter 1 as pork barrel) works as the glue that binds together provincial branches under the leadership of the president and municipal branches under the leadership of the governor. The integration of a multi-level organization is thus realized in a top-down manner through the allocation of material resources to the provincial and municipal

¹⁸ However, national presidents have their own mechanisms to seduce municipal mayors without the mediation of provincial governors. The most commonly used mechanism to distribute funds from the presidency to the mayors is the so called ATN, *Aportes del Tesoro Nacional* or National Treasury Grants. Gibson and Calvo (2000) offer evidence about the political manipulation of ATNs. The manipulation is often denounced by the political opposition and the press. See for instance “El gobierno nacional repartió dinero solo entre comunas del Kirchnerismo” (“The national government allocated funds only to Kirchneristas municipalities”), *Crítica de la Argentina*, August 23, 2008.

leaders. Figure 8.1 presents a simplified model of how the party is knitted together from chains of exchanges which link its different organizational levels. The aggregation of these levels is made possible through the articulation of three different practices: patronage, pork barrel and clientelism.¹⁹

Figure 8.1: Exchanges within the Multi-tiered Patronage-based Network Party



The first echelon of exchanges refers to the support of provincial governors (as leaders of the provincial party branches) for the president (as the national party leader). The governors receive funds from the national treasury, which are necessary for their

¹⁹ The model is developed in more detail in Scherlis (2008a)

successful tenure and for their dominance of the sub-national branch of the party. In exchange, they provide the president with the votes of the party deputies and senators elected in their provinces. They also use their electoral influence in their districts in favour of the president. Provincial governors, in turn, distribute resources to the mayors and local leaders in order to maintain their support at the municipal level. In exchange, municipal mayors and local leaders support the provincial leadership of the governor, campaigning for him in general and internal elections, and guaranteeing the vote of the provincial legislators under their influence for the bills promoted by the governor.

The following echelons refer to the building of the territorial-electoral networks, linking mayors to neighbourhood brokers and clients. Mayors, councillors, and other local political leaders with access to state resources supply jobs and other clientelistic benefits in exchange for the votes that the latter can deliver through the mobilization of clients. To sum up, the party integrates itself as a confederation of one national, 24 sub-national, and hundreds of municipal organizations through the distribution of different material resources. Pork barrel guarantees the support of governors and – indirectly - of national legislators for the president. Pork barrel is also crucial to ensuring the support of a broad number of sub-national and local leaders and district brokers for the provincial governor, thus providing the governor with control of the provincial branch of the party. Clientelism and patronage provide sub-national and local leaders with the support of the brokers who mobilize their clienteles in internal and general elections.

The PJ is the only party which, as of 2008, has managed to meet the stratarchical imperative, linking patronage-based network organizations of the three levels all across the national territory. The next section demonstrates my main theoretical arguments concerning the patronage-based network party with reference to the functioning of the PJ for the period 2003-2007.

8.3 PJ, Kirchner and the Front for Victory

The PJ is the only Argentine political force that has managed to adapt successfully to the conditions of contemporary electoral competition. Its “disorganized organization”, as Levitsky has called it, works on the basis of material exchanges whose major source is the state at its different levels. The transformation from a union-based to a patronage-based party has provided Peronism with the flexibility to adopt any kind of public policies while maintaining organizational loyalty to these leaders who are best situated to win elections and thereby secure access to resources (Levitsky, 2003).

The adaptability of Peronism entails the capacity to change and replace its elites periodically. The parties which have emerged in the last 20 years in Argentina have been the personal devices of political entrepreneurs. Accordingly, and following the fate of what Hopkin and Paolucci called the business firm party (1999), they have crumbled along with the failures of their founding leaders, sometimes after an ephemeral success.²⁰ In contrast, the PJ, sustained by the control of most governorships and municipalities, has been able to generate new leadership and thus win the popular vote and secure the control over state resources. This capacity to update and replace its elites has confused more than one reputable pundit. Every ten years, in light of the new physiognomy of the dominant coalition, pundits, journalists and sometimes scholars wonder whether we are witnessing the demise of the PJ.²¹ The fact that every new Peronist leader forges a new coalition by co-opting and incorporating persons and groups with no background in the party surely contributes to this confusion. Moreover,

²⁰ That has been the case of the UCD and Alvaro Alsogaray, Modin and Aldo Rico, Acción por la República and Domingo Cavallo, the Frente Grande and “Chacho” Alvarez, Recrear and Ricardo López Murphy, among others. All these parties emerged as alternatives to the traditional parties and all achieved, albeit in different degrees, important electoral victories.

²¹ For instance, that was suggested by the influential journalist Horacio Verbitsky. In his Sunday articles in the newspaper *Página 12* Verbitsky used to argue that Kirchner’s coalitional politics implied the end of the PJ. In his opinion, the Front for Victory on the left and new political actors on the right would replace the PJ and UCR, respectively. See for example “Cambio de pantalla. Cómo será la política en 2008”, *Página 12*, October 7, 2007.

not only is every Peronist governmental coalition successively called by the name of its circumstantial leader (*Menemismo* in the times of Carlos Menem, *Duhaldismo* with Eduardo Duhalde, *Kirchnerismo* in the times of Néstor and Cristina Kirchner) but every new Peronist president also gives their political force a new ideological profile and even a new official label that includes the new partners and allies.

Since winning elections is necessary to keep control over state resources, the process of elites replacement is a key imperative for the organizational survival of the PJ. Hence, those who cannot secure electoral victories have little chance to maintain their party leadership. The organizational system does not demand anything in terms of party programs, public policies, or ethics, but it is implacable with those who fail to provide electoral triumphs. Those leaders who – because of their electoral performances - assure the control over state structures and resources will be, as long as they continue to do so, the bosses of the machines. But their leadership ceases as soon as they fail to do so. When the president - due to low approval ratings - is perceived as unable to win the next presidential election or designate a successor, provincial bosses begin to look for (or fight to be recognized as) the new national leader who can lead the party towards future electoral triumphs. When a provincial governor is unable to win the next provincial elections, a similar movement is initiated by the mayors.

In each one of the different strata (national, provincial, municipal), the elected leader forms and shapes the party as a semi-state web of networks of government, recruiting with total autonomy the people who will run the state apparatus under his leadership. The new functionaries become the new elite of the party, precisely because they have been appointed by the elected leader to senior positions with access to abundant state organizational and financial resources.

Thus, the central office remains a rubber stamp. When the leader considers it to be useful, he assumes the highest formal position – at the national level, the presidency of the National Council – and designates his aides in other top posts.²²

In this way, due to its management of state resources and organizational flexibility, Peronism has been the only party able to meet the requirements of the stratarchical imperative. The aggregation of the multiple sub-units is not possible if the party does not control, or does not expect to soon control, the national state. When, in 1999, a coalition of non-Peronist forces won the presidency, the PJ failed to maintain its unity at the national level, falling into a process of profound fragmentation and internal struggle. For the 2003 presidential elections the PJ provincial bosses could not agree on a nomination process and failed to choose a common candidate. Without the glue provided from above by the firm control of the resources of the national state and without a popular candidate promoted and sponsored by the presidency, provincial bosses did not manage to converge on a common strategy.²³ Eventually, three different Peronist candidates ran for the presidency under three different labels, risking the chances of the party to win the election (Levitsky, 2005:203).²⁴ But once the ruthless internal dispute was resolved in the general presidential elections in favour of Néstor

²² A recent work on the party system in Ukraine seems to describe appropriately the Argentine case: "... rather than parties promoting leaders to positions of power within the institutional structure, positions within the institutional structure have promoted leaders to positions within parties." (Wilson and Birch, 2007:70). For example, the chief of cabinet during the Kirchner administration, Alberto Fernández, was not appointed to that position because he was the president of the PJ in the City of Buenos Aires but, precisely the other way around, as the appointed chief of cabinet of the national government he became the president of the PJ in the City of Buenos Aires.

²³ In 2002 the Peronist leader of the province of Buenos Aires, Eduardo Duhalde, assumed the presidency appointed by Congress in the wake of the political crisis of December 2001. The interim nature of this presidency, its short period in office and the certainty that the president would not win a presidential election, along with the deep economic crisis in the country, made Duhalde incapable to unify all the provincial bosses under the same candidate.

²⁴ The former President Carlos Menem ran with the label "Frente por la Lealtad (Front for Loyalty); the governor of San Luis Adolfo Rodríguez Saa used the label "Frente Movimiento Popular" (Popular Front Movement) and governor of Santa Cruz Néstor Kirchner used the name "Frente para la Victoria" (Front for Victory).

Kirchner, the vast majority of the provincial bosses recognized – and deferred to - the leadership of the winner.

The Front for Victory, the name Kirchner gave to his ruling coalition, has no well defined organizational boundaries. Rather, it gathers all who declare their loyalty to the new president and take part in his government together with all those who, at the sub-national and local level, support the presidential project. At the national level, the Front for Victory includes a heterogeneous array of groups and persons that are part of the administration, irrespective of their formal party affiliation. Naturally, having been the governor of a province for the previous 12 years, Kirchner assigned many who had worked at his side in Santa Cruz to senior positions in his national administration. Yet, in addition, the president recruited a multiplicity of groups, social movements, party factions and politically independent individuals to be part of his administration. While this recruitment process was a necessary step in order to get control over weak and unstable state structures, it simultaneously enabled Kirchner to build the political force to sustain and advance his political project. By bringing all these groups and personalities into the government, Kirchner formed and shaped his support coalition.

The Front for Victory also includes all the governors and mayors who support the president, be they Peronist or not, along with the political forces they lead. Four related factors helped Kirchner to enlarge his ruling coalition to include almost all Argentine governors and a majority of mayors. The first was the prosperous fiscal situation of the national government, that is, the availability of abundant funds to be distributed to the provinces discretionally.²⁵ The second factor was his strong popular support. During his four year term, approval ratings hovered around 70 per cent, which encouraged sub-national and local political leaders to show themselves to be supportive

²⁵ Between 2003 and 2007 the Argentine GDP maintained an average of 9% of annual growth.

and close to the president. Third, it was expected that he (or, as it eventually happened, his wife) would remain in control of the national government, while the opposition did not have a plausible challenger. The fourth factor was a deliberate decision by the president to seduce and co-opt governors and mayors from different parties, which included an aggressive strategy in the allocation of funds and the realization of public works.

As a result, Kirchner's presidency was supported by 22 of the 24 provincial governors. Not only did all but one of the Peronist governors endorse the presidential project, but 6 of the 7 governors elected by the UCR did so as well.²⁶ For these governors, as for many of their fellow UCR mayors across the country, it made little sense to remain in opposition while access to resources for their districts depended on their alignment with the presidential party. These governors and mayors know they pay no political price for jumping on the bandwagon of the president and abandoning their original party affiliation, insofar as they get more resources for their districts. Indeed, while the president enjoyed high ratings of popular approval, portraying themselves as close to Kirchner helped them to improve their own standing. These UCR governors and mayors and the organizations they led assumed the name of *Radicales K* (in reference to their support to Kirchner) and joined the presidential project.

In sum, the Front for Victory is integrated by the president in a top down manner through the use of state resources and structures. By appointing aides, functionaries and personnel to the national state he gave rise to the new party elite. By distributing resources among the governors he managed to align the provincial sub-units of the party. The central office of the party is, in turn, a simple appendix of the executive

²⁶ The only Peronist governor who did not join the Kirchner coalition was Adolfo Rodríguez Saa, who had competed for the presidency in 2003 and whose presidential aspirations for 2007 were incompatible with a support to the political project led by Kirchner. Among the UCR governors, the only one who was not co-opted by Kirchner was the governor of Chaco Roy Nikisch, mainly because he had no possibilities of re-election due to a constitutional prohibition.

leader. Typically, as noted above, the president occupies the position of president of the National Council of the PJ. Yet, in the case of Néstor Kirchner, he just left the position vacant, making the absolute irrelevancy of the formal party structure perfectly clear. As the president, Kirchner was the undisputable party leader, irrespective of party statutes and regulations.²⁷

It is remarkable that the lifetime of the Front for Victory as the official face of Peronism will most likely be the same as Kirchner's stay in power, currently extended until 2011 by the disguised re-election headed by his wife Cristina Fernández de Kirchner in the October 2007 presidential elections. As soon as the Kirchner couple is perceived as unable to guide Peronism to a new presidential term, a new figure will emerge (most likely from among the governors) to offer a new renewal which – by portraying itself as new, different, and (if necessary) at odds with the Kirchners' administrations – will make it possible for the vast multi-tiered structure to maintain the control over the state apparatus and resources.

The formal statutes and official membership records say little about what the Peronist Party is and how it works (see Freidenberg and Levitsky, 2006). The really existing Peronist organization is the one that is structured and mobilized around the *presidential party* (which is, in every province, replicated by the *gubernatorial party*). The party leader is the one who occupies the executive position, while his aides and the teams recruited for the management of the state constitute the party elites as they exist at every layer of competition. In the provinces and municipalities, the really existing organization of the party includes also the extensive networks on the ground, which are fuelled and sustained on the basis of clientelistic exchanges financed and commanded

²⁷ When Kirchner left the presidency in the hands of his wife Cristina Fernández de Kirchner, in December 2007, he decided to assume the presidency of the PJ so as to have an institutional position from where to speak and act. He personally, rather than any party congress, distributed the rest of the positions of the party National Council.

by state offices.²⁸ Although assessing how rooted the Peronist identity remains among the working class is a pending task which requires more specific and periodically updated empirical studies, there is little – if anything – left of the Peronist organization that is not sustained by state resources.²⁹

8.4 Conclusion

Since the return of democracy in 1983 the political parties in Argentina have gone through a dramatic process of change. The demise of volunteer activism and the parallel movement of parties from civil society towards the state are among the most significant transformations in the mode in which parties organize. In this context, the control of state offices has become crucial to sustaining a party organization. Observing the distribution and the rationale of patronage is thus necessary in order to understand the nature and functioning of current Argentine parties.

In reality, the absorption of parties into state structures is a widespread phenomenon visible in many democratic regimes in both old and new democracies. Political parties, even in well-established democratic systems, have been defined as public utilities (van Biezen, 2004) and as semi-state organizations (Katz and Mair 1995). The concomitant ascendancy of the party actors who control public offices to the detriment of the central office and the party on the ground has also been identified as a general trend (Katz and Mair, 2002; Dalton and Wattenberg, 2000). Moreover, parties' participation in government and their ability to distribute jobs and other material

²⁸ In this sense, even the *Unidades Básicas*, the gigantic web of base level offices of the PJ spread all over the country have largely disappeared. Instead, brokers' houses, or local soup-kitchens and clubs operate as the centres for the distribution of clientelistic exchanges.

²⁹ Naturally, the fact that the party organization is sustained by state funds does not mean that identity feelings do not exist among many of its members. Actually, the historically strong Radical and Peronist identities in Argentina were to a large extent forged on the basis of the distribution of particularistic benefits. Yet, the point is that the really existing Peronist organizations are structured and mobilized by state resources.

benefits has been recently pointed out as an important requirement to maintain parties' organizational stability (Bolleyer, 2009).

Yet, the findings of this dissertation cast light on several specific features which, in the Argentine case, have brought about distinctive consequences. Remarkably, parties' invasion of the state was facilitated and bolstered by the weakness of the Argentine state bureaucracies. This bureaucratic weakness makes it possible for every new leader to proceed with a simultaneous process of colonization of state structures and party building through the recruitment and appointment of networks of functionaries and employees responsive to the political leader. The same institutional weakness permits the manipulation of state resources by office-holding politicians in order to develop and sustain clientelistic infrastructures, which growth is fostered by poverty and indigence. The absence of an inclusive and universal system of state funding reinforces the importance of state budgets and offices as fundamental organizational resources, and makes party organizations dependant on their access to public offices.

In addition, the dearth of efficient systems of accountability and control, and the consequent discretionary use of state resources allow elected leaders to form and dominate malleable patronage-based political forces. The patronage-based nature of their supportive organizations provides political leaders with the necessary flexibility to adapt to the changing requirements of public opinion. This flexibility, which for example allowed the PJ to implement far-reaching neo-liberal reforms in the 1990s and statist economic policies in the 2000s, has proved occasionally useful for short-term governability and for the stability of the party system. However, it has also eroded the quality of democratic representation, rendering party labels meaningless to voters. Even though the long history of political identities developed by Radicals and Peronists over

the course of a century cannot disappear overnight, the electoral competition today is fundamentally structured by personalities and not by party labels, which have turned meaningless in terms of political stances and programs.

In this context, the findings of my research also lead to a reassessment of the overall role of patronage in the current Argentine parties. Patronage, in Argentina and elsewhere, has generally been seen as a mode of linkage, an unequal relationship through which parties reward activists. The literature has also observed patronage as a mode of gaining control over the policy-making processes. These uses of patronage are undoubtedly present in Argentina. In fact, as was repeatedly stressed throughout this dissertation, controlling state structures is the main rationale for political appointments in Argentina, while politicians still use jobs as a payoff for services rendered (or to be rendered) to the party. Yet, rather than a mode to strengthen a previously existent organization, appointing people to public offices appears now as the major mechanism through which a party organization is actually filled, shaped and sustained over time. Patronage is both a necessity for elected politicians to get control over state structures and run the government and the instrument through which they build the networks that make up their supportive organizations. These networks are built on the basis of patronage and constitute, regardless of formal statutes, the really existing party organizations.

These organizations hardly perform political socialization and mobilization roles which the classic party literature used to attribute to parties. However, they must be seen as political parties since they compose groups identified with a label that compete in elections and are capable of placing candidates for public office (see Sartori, 1976:64). More remarkably, these networks are vital in undertaking the tasks actually performed by current parties, that is, the management of government, the recruitment of candidates

and leaders, and the provision of the logistics and the workforce for electoral campaigns.

The patronage-based network party is not necessarily the final and irreplaceable model of party organization in Argentina. In fact, its most visible features are frequently criticized by politicians who gain prestige and reputation by repudiating the “vices and degradation” of the established party structures.³⁰ However, so far those critics have failed to offer an alternative model of party organization. They have either confined themselves to leading personal parties which disappear with the debacle of the founding leader, or they have reproduced the model of the patronage-based network party once they have reached a municipal or provincial executive office, or they have simply been co-opted by one of those established structures. Occasionally, they may also lead strongly ideological parties which recruit a few volunteer activists and survive on the margins of the political system. The point is that while the current nature of electoral competition might suggest that politicians have little need for anything other than an abundant presence in the media and a team of experts in political marketing and communications to attain electoral victories, any political project that goes beyond an ephemeral electoral success demands the building of a party organization. That organization is crucial in order to run the government, to control the state apparatus, to reach the vast poor and marginal sectors of society, and to organize future electoral campaigns.

All in all, the patronage-based network party has been the only mode in which political parties, particularly the PJ at the national level, but also a few other parties at sub-national and local levels, have managed to win elections and thrive in the context of current Argentine socio-political conditions. Those conditions require from parties two

³⁰ Interview with the young municipal mayor Martín Sabatella, *Crítica de la Argentina*, April 9, 2009.

principal elements. First, parties must be able to promote and put forward attractive candidates, who are skilful in using the media, and regardless of their party background, have an enormous degree of ideological flexibility; and second, parties must have the capacity to develop large-scale clientelistic networks among the poor sectors of society, which requires the control of public offices and state structures.

For those who do not have access to state resources, the development or the maintenance of an electorally competitive party organization has become improbable. It does not seem exaggerated to say, paraphrasing Schattschneider (1942:1) that the Argentine party organizations have become unthinkable save in terms of patronage.

APPENDIX I

STATE SECTORS: INSTITUTIONS AND SIZE (BY NUMBERS OF EMPLOYEES)

NATIONAL CONGRESS

Institutions	Chamber of Senators; Chamber of Deputies; Library of the Congress; Print of the Congress; Ombudsman Office; General Auditing Office (AGN); Direction of Social Assistance (ADS)
Total Size	10,243

JUDICIARY

Institutions	Council of the Magistracy; National Supreme Court; National Courts; General Attorney Office; General Defender Office
Total Size	21,200 Approx

MILITARY AND POLICE

	Min Depts	NDACs	Executing Institutions
Institutions	Ministry of Defense; Ministry of Interior	Geographic Military Institute; CITEFA (Institute of Technological and Scientific Research for Defense); RENAR (National Registry of Weapons); IAF (Institute of Financial Help for Military Pensions); Immigration National Agency; Persons Registration National Agency	Army; Navy; Airforce; Commanding Office (Estado Mayor Conjunto); Federal Police; National Frontier Police; Coast Guard; Airports Security Police; Federal Prisons Service
Size	4,100	4,300	203,700
Total Size	212,100		

CULTURE & EDUCATION

	Min Depts	NDACs	Executing Institutions
Institutions	Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology; Secretary of Culture	National Commission for the Evaluation of University Education (CONEAU); Film National Institute; Arts National Fund; Theatre National Institute	40 National Universities; National Council of Scientific and Technological Research (CONICET); National Library; Cervantes National Theatre; National Ballet; Fine Arts Museum; Orchestras Personnel
Size	3,680	450	94,770 Approx
Total Size	98,900		

ECONOMY

	Min Depts	NDACs	Executing Institutions
Institutions	Ministry of Economy and Production; Ministry of Federal Planning, Investments, and Services	INPI (Industrial Property); CONEA (Atomic Energy National Comisión); INASE (Seeds Institute); Regulatory Commissions (Transportation, Gas, Communications, Routes, Energy, Nuclear Energy); Water National Institute; SENASA (Analysis of Food Quality); INTA (Agriculture and Cattle Technology); INTI (Industrial Technology); INIDEP (Fishing Research); INDEC (National Institute of Statistics and Census); ONCCA (Control of Agriculture Commerce Office); Wines National Institute	Aysa (Water and sewers of the city of Buenos Aires); Nucleoeléctrica Argentina S.A. (2 Nuclear Plants); Yacimientos Carboníferos de Río Turbio [Coal Mines]; Intercargo (Service to airlines in airports); National Post; ENARSA (National Energy); Lafsa (Federal Airways); Vialidad- Agency of Routes and Paths; Military Factories
Size	8,250	14,550	26,400
Total Size	49,200		

FINANCE

	Min Depts	NDACs	Executing Institutions
Institutions	Secretariat of Finance and Secretariat of Treasury (Ministry of Economy)	National Securities Commission [Comisión Nacional de Valores]; General Auditing Office [SIGEN]; Investments Development Agency [ADI]; Tax collection agency [AFIP]	Central Bank; Argentine National Bank; Investment and Foreign Trade Bank [BICE]
Size	370	21.300	19.200
Total Size	40,870		

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

	Min Depts	NDACs	Executing Institutions
Institutions	Ministry of Foreign Relations, International Commerce, and Religious Affairs	Space Activities National Commission	78 Embassies, 16 Consulates, and 7 Permanent Missions (UN, OAS, UNESCO, EU, FAO, MERCOSUR, International Organizations in Geneva)
Size	2,350	150	1,300
Total Size	3,800		

WELFARE

	Min Depts	NDACs	Executing Institutions
Institutions	Ministry of Social Development	Superintendent Office on Labour Risks; Superintendent Office on Health Services; National Institute of Native People Affairs; National Direction of Youth; National Institute of Social Economy; National Council for Childhood and Family	Social Security National Administration (ANSES); National Institute of Social Services for Pensioned and Retired (PAMI); Transplants Agency (Incucai); 5 hospitals (almost all state hospitals fall under provincial and municipal administration)
Size	8,300	1,100	25,500
Total Size	34,900		

MEDIA

	Min Depts	NDACs	Executing Institutions
Institutions	Secretariat of Media	Broadcasting National Commission (COMFER)	TV Channel 7; National Radio (four radio stations); National Press Agency - Télam
Size	350	650	2,400
Total Size	3,400		

APPENDIX II

EXPERT SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

Questions 1 to 2 refer to the specific institutional type and are asked for everyone of the three institutional types of each sector (except Judiciary and Congress)	
Q.1. Formal Powers to Appoint	
Q1. Is this area formally reachable by political parties, i.e. do parties (President, ministers, secretaries, party chairmen, etc.) have legal power to appoint individuals to jobs in this area?	Yes/No
Q1.a. Political parties are entitled to appoint: -- in a few institutions of this area; -- in most institutions; or -- in all institutions.	Range 1 to 3
Q1.b. Political parties are entitled to appoint at: -- the top managerial level -- the middle level employees -- the bottom level technical and service personnel	Range 1 to 3
Q.1.c. Political parties are entitled to appoint: -- Up to one third of the positions of the area -- Between one third and two thirds of the positions -- More than two thirds of the positions	Range 1 to 3

The Actual Practice of Party Patronage	
Q2. The Scope of Party Patronage	
Q2.a. In your opinion, political parties appoint positions: -- in a few institutions of this area; -- in most institutions; or -- in all institutions. Q2.b. In your opinion, political parties appoint positions at -- the top managerial level -- the middle level employees -- the bottom level technical and service personnel Q2.c. In your opinion, political parties appoint -- Up to one third of the positions of the area -- Between one third and two thirds of the positions -- More than two thirds of the positions	Range 1 to 3 Range 1 to 3 Range 1 to 3
Questions 3 to 6 refer to the whole policy sector and are thus asked only once per interview	
Q3. The Structure of Control of Party Patronage	
Q3: In reality, who within the parties is responsible for making these appointments? Is it fundamentally the central office of the ruling party, or is it directly those politicians who occupy public positions? Are patronage powers concentrated in a specific person or group or they are fragmented among different actors?	Open ended
Q4. The Motivations of Party Patronage	
Q4. Why do politicians actually carry out patronage appointments in this sector? For every one of the six following options choose the most appropriate of the five possible answers given below. -- because they want to improve their electoral chances by having large clienteles; -- to reward loyal party activists or members in order to maintain partisan networks; -- to keep cohesion and discipline among party factions; -- for fund-raising reasons; -- because they want to control the institutions of this sector; -- to forge informal coalitions incorporations or co-opting political groups and leaders	

a. It is always or almost always the dominant motivation in the sector (4); b. It is important in many cases (3); c. It is common but mostly secondary (2); d. It is possible but marginal (1); e. It is not present (0)	
Q5. Criteria followed to select the appointees	
Q5: What are the criteria followed by politicians to select the appointees? For every one of the 4 following options choose the most appropriate of the five possible answers given bellow. -- party affiliation; -- qualifications and expertise; -- ideological affinity; -- personal linkage with the nominators a. It is always a necessary condition to be appointed (4); b. It is important in many cases (3); c. It is common but mostly secondary (2); d. It is possible but marginal (1); e. It is not present (0).	
Q6: Do you think that the current practices of appointments differ substantially from previous periods? If so, how and why?	Open ended
Q7: Additional comments, questions and clarifications. Potential explanations for the scope and extent of party patronage.	Open ended

APPENDIX III

STATE POSTS (BY INSTITUTIONAL TYPE AND LEVEL)

	Ministerial	NDACs	Executing	Judiciary	Congress
Top Level	Ministers, deputy ministers, state secretaries, undersecretaries, political cabinets	Director, president, members of board	Director, president, members of board, chief commandants of security forces, ambassadors	Judge (Supreme Court, Appeal Courts, Ordinary Tribunals) Councilor of the Magistracy	Parliamentary secretary, administrative secretary, deputy secretaries, general Auditor, ombudsman
Middle Level	National directors, general directors, heads of departments, sections heads, program coordinators	Managers, deputy managers	Managers, deputy managers, officers of security forces, attachés in embassies	Courts' secretaries, advisors	Directors, deputy directors, managers, committees' secretaries, deputies' and senators' advisors
Bottom Level	Administrative, technical, maintenance, security	Idem	Idem, soldiers, policemen, teachers	Idem	Idem

APPENDIX IV

NATIONAL TOP POSITIONS: CRITERIA FOR SELECTION*

Id: Ideological Affinity

PM: Party Membership

PL: Personal Linkage

Prof: Profesional Background

Appointee and Position	Main Selection Criteria
1. Secretary General of the Presidency - Oscar Parrilli	PM (PJ Neuquén)
2. Undersecretary General of the presidency - Daniel Varizat	PM (PJ Santa Cruz)
3. Undersecretary of Presidency - Coordination Susana Baum -	PM (PJ Neuquén) – PL
4. Legal Secretary of the Presidency – Carlos Zannini -	PM (PJ Santa Cruz) - PL
5. Undersecretary of Legal Affairs - Ofelia Cedola –	PM (PJ Neuquén) and PL
6. Secretary of State Intelligence – Hector Icazuriaga	PM (PJ Santa Cruz)
7. Undersecretary of State Intelligence – José Larcher	PM (PJ Santa Cruz) - PL
8. Secretary of Tourism – Carlos Meyer	PM (PJ Santa Cruz)
9. Undersecretary of Tourism – Daniel Aguilera	PL
10. Secretary of Drugs Prevention – José Granero	PM (PJ Santa Cruz)
11. Undersecretary of Drug-Traffic Control – Norma Vallejo	Prof
12. Secretary of Culture – José Nun	Id – Prof
13. Undersecretary of Culture – Pablo Wisznia	PL
14. Director of the National Library – Horacio González	Id – Prof
15. Director of the Fine Arts Museum – Américo Castilla	PL
16. President of the Film National Institute – Jorge Alvarez	PL – Prof
17. Chief of Cabinet – Alberto Fernández	PM (PJ CBA)
18. Deputy Chief of Cabinet – Jorge Rivas	PM – (PS)
19. Secretary of Sports – Claudio Morresi	PM (PJ CBA)
20. Coordinator of Sports Programs – Horacio Elizondo	PL
21. Secr. of Cabinet and Parliamentary Relations – J.C. Pezoa	PL – Prof
22. Unders. of Institutional Reform – Martha Oyanharte	Prof
23. Undersecretary of Institutional Relations – Claudio Ferreño	PM (PJ CBA) – PL
24. Undersecretary of Budget Evaluation – Julio Vitobello	PM (PJ CBA)
25. Undersecretary of Public Function – J.M. Abal Medina	PM (PJ)
26. Secretary of Media – José Albistur	PM (PJ)
27. Undersecretary of Communication – Juan Mariotto	PM (PJ)
28. Undersecretary of Media Management – A. Lenzberg	PL
29. Director of National News Agency – Martín Granovsky	Id - Prof
30. National Radio – “Mona” Moncalvillo	Id – Prof
31. National Television – Ricardo Palacios	PM (PJ Chubut)
32. Secretary of Environment – Romina Picolotti	Prof

33.Minister of Foreign Affairs – Jorge Taiana	Id – PM (PJ)
34.Secretary of Foreign Affairs – R. García Moritán	Id – Prof
35.Undersecretary of coordination of F.A.- R. Ojea Quintana	PL
36.Under of Institutional Relations of FA – M. Fuentes	PL
37.Unders of Latin American Politics – A. Colombo Sierra	Prof
38.Secretary of Commerce and International Economic Relations – Alfredo Chiaradía	PL – Prof
39.Undersecretary of Economic Integration – Eduardo Sigal	Id
40.Undersecretary of Int. Commerce –Luis Kreckler	PL
41.Secretary of Cult – Guillermo Oliveri	PM (PJ CBA)
42.Ambassador in Brazil – Juan Pablo Lohlé	Prof – Id
43.Ambassador in US – José Bordón	Prof – PM (PJ)
44.Ambassador in EU – J. Remes Lenicov	PM (PJ Buenos Aires)
45.Ambassador in Venezuela – Alicia Castro	Id
46.Ambassador in Spain – Carlos Bettini	PL
47.Ambassador in Chile – Carlos Abbihagle	PM (PJ Mendoza)
48.Minister of Defense – Nilda Garré	Id
49.Chief of cabinet of the Ministry of Defense – Jorge Garré	PL
50.Secretary of Military Affairs – J. Vázquez Ocampo	Id – Prof
51.Unders of Technical-Military Affairs – E. Montenegro	Id – Prof
52.Undersecretary of Planning of the M.of D. – O. Quattromo	PL – Id
53.Undersecretary of Coordination – B. Oliveros	PL
54.Chief of the Army – Roberto Bendini	PL
55.Chief of the Navy – Jorge Godoy	PL – Prof
56.Chief of the Air Force – Normando Constantino	PL – Prof
57.Minister of economy – Felisa Miceli	PL – Id
58.Secretary of the Treasury – Carlos Mosse	PL – Prof
59.Undersecretary of Public Revenues – Mario Presa	PL – Prof
60.Undersecretary of Budget – Raúl Rigo	Prof – PL
61.Undersecretary of Provinces – Norma Fraccaroli	Prof
62.Secretary of Finance – Sergio Chodos	PL – Prof
63.Undersecretary of Financial Services – Marta Zaghini	Prof
64.Undersecretary of Finance – Alejandra Scharf	PL
65.Secretary of Economic Policy – Oscar Tangelson	Prof
66.Undersecretary of Economic Coordination – Silvia Canela	PL
67.Undersecretary of Economic Program – Martín Abeles	PL
68.Legal Secretary of the Ministry of Ec. – Estela Palomeque	PL
69.Legal Undersecretary – Alejandra Tadei	PL
70.Secretary of Industry, Commerce and Little and Middle Companies – Miguel Peirano	Id
71.Undersecretary of Industry – José Díaz Pérez	PL
72.Undersecretary of Little and Middle Enterprises – M. Kulfas	PL – Prof
73.Secretary of Agriculture – J. de Urquiza	PM (PJ Santa Cruz)
74.Undersecretary of Agriculture Policies – Fernando Nebbia	PL – Id
75.Undersecretary of Fish and Agriculture – Gerardo Nieto	PM (PJ Santa Cruz)
76.Secretary of Interior Commerce – Guillermo Moreno	PM (PJ Santa Cruz)
77.Undersecretary of Consumers Defense – José Luis López	PM (PJ Santa Fe)
78.Director Banco Nación – Gabriela Ciganotto	PL – PM (PJ Santa Cruz)

79. Director INDEC – Alejandro Barrios	Prof – Id
80. Director AFIP – Alberto Abad	PM (PJ) – Prof
81. Director of Customs – Ricardo Echegaray	PM (PJ Santa Cruz)
82. President INTI – Enrique Martínez	Prof – PL
83. President INTA – Carlos Cheppi	Prof – PL
84. President SENASA – Jorge Amaya	Prof – PM (PJ Santa Cruz)
85. President SIGEN (Audit Office) – Claudio Moroni	PL
86. Presid National Agency for Investments – Beatriz Nofal	PM (UCR Mendoza)
87. President ONCCA – José Portillo	PL – Prof
88. Minister of Federal Planning – Julio De Vido	PM (PJ Santa Cruz)
89. Secretary of Public Works – José López	PM (PJ Santa Cruz)
90. Undersecretary of Public works – Raúl Rodríguez	PL
91. Und. Coord Federal Public Works – Carlos Kirchner	PL
92. Undersecr. Water resources – Fabián López	Prof
93. Under Urban development and housing – Luis Bontempo	PM (PJ Santa Cruz)
94. Unders of Landing for social habitat – Luis D’Elia	Id
95. Secretary of Communications – Lisandro Salas	PM (PJ Santa Cruz)
96. Secretary of Energy – Daniel Cameron	PM (PJ Santa Cruz)
97. Unders of Electronic Energy – Bautista Marcheschi	Prof – PL
98. Unders of fuels – Cristian Folgar	Prof
99. Secretary of Mining – Jorge Mayoral	Prof – PL
100. Secretary of Transport – Ricardo Jaime	PM (PJ Santa Cruz) – PL
101. Unders of Ports and Rivers – Ricardo Luján	PM (CGT)
102. Unders of Railway transport – Antonio Luna	PM (CGT)
103. Unders of Transport – Jorge González	PM (CGT)
104. Unders of Air Transport – Ricardo Cirielli	PM (CGT)
105. Und of Coordination and Management – Roberto Baratta	PL
106. Unders. Legal – Enrique Llorens	PL
107. Und Territorial Investment Planning – Graciela Oporto	PL – Id
108. Director of Routes – Nelson Periotti	PM (PJ Santa Cruz)
109. President of CONEA – José Abriata	Prof
110. ENARGAS – Fulvio Madaro	PM (PJ Santa Cruz)
111. Military Fabrications – Arturo Puricelli	PM (PJ Santa Cruz)
112. ENRE – Ricardo Martínez	PM (PJ)
113. ERAS (Water) – Carlos Vilas	Prof – PM (PJ)
114. ONABE – “Flaco” Suárez	PM (PJ Buenos Aires)
115. ORSNA – Horacio Orefice	PL
116. OCCOVI – Claudio Uberti	PM (PJ Santa Cruz)
117. ENARSA – Ezequiel Espinoza	PM (PJ Chubut) – Prof
118. AYSA – Carlos Ben	PM (CGT)
119. Minister of Justice – Alberto Iribarne	PM (PJ CBA)
120. Secretary of Justice – Marcela Losardo	PL
121. Secretary of Criminal Policies – Alejandro Slokar	Prof – PL
122. Undersecretary of Prisons Affairs – Federico Ramos	Prof – PL
123. Secretary of Human Rights – Eduardo Duhalde	Id – PL
124. Und Promotion & Protection of HR – Rodolfo Mattarollo	PL – Prof
125. Unders Coordination and Innovation – Norma Vicente	PL

126. Unders of Registers – Carola Rodríguez	PL
127. Anti-corruption Agency – Abel Fleitas	PL – Prof
128. Minister of Interior – Aníbal Fernández	PM (PJ Buenos Aires)
129. Secretary of Interior Security – Luis Tibiletti	Prof – Id
130. Und of Security and Civil Protection – Ricardo Colombo	PL
131. Unders of Security in Sport Events – J. Castrilli	PL
132. Secr of Interior Security Council – Héctor Masquelet	Prof
133. Secretary of Political Affairs – Pablo Paladino	PM (PJ Buenos Aires) – PL
134. Secretary of Municipal Affairs – Raquel Kismer de Olmos	PM (PJ CBA)
135. Unders of Municipal Management – Claudio Leoni	PM (PJ Santa Fe)
136. Secretary of Provinces – Rafael Follonier	PM (PJ) – PL
137. Secretary of Interior – Silvina Zabala	PM (PJ Buenos Aires)
138. Unders of Interior – Susana Llorente	PL
139. Unders of Coordination- José Lucas Gincerain	PM (PJ Buenos Aires) – PL
140. Chief of the Federal Police - Néstor Vallega	Prof
141. Chief of the Borders Security Force - Héctor Schenone	Prof
142. Chief of the Air Ports Police – Marcelo Sain	Prof – Id
143. Director of National Persons Register – E. Descalzo	PM (PJ Buenos Aires)
144. RENAR (weapons register) - Andrés Meiszner	PL
145. Minister of Health – Ginés González García	PM (PJ Buenos Aires) – Prof
146. Secr of Sanitary Policy and Regulation – Carlos Soratti	PL – Prof
147. Und Policy, Regulation & Monitoring – Claudia Madies	PL – Prof
148. Und of Sanitary Relations – Carlos Vizzotti	PL – Prof
149. Secr of Sanitary Programs – Walter Valle	PL – Prof
150. Unders of Prevention Programs – Andrés Leibovich	PL – Prof
151. Unders of Coordination - José Ondarcuhu	PL
152. PAMI – Graciela Ocaña	PM (ARI)
153. Director of Health Services – Héctor Capaccioli	PL
154. Administration of Special Programs – Juan Rinaldi	PM (CGT)
155. Minister of Labour – Carlos Tomada	PM (PJ) – Prof
156. Secretary of Labour – Noemí Rial	Prof – Id
157. Unders of Labour Relations – Guillermo Alonso Navone	Prof – PL
158. Und Labour and Social Sec. regulation – J.C. Casaveros	PM (PJ)
159. Secretary of employment – Adolfo Deibe	PL – Prof
160. Unders of Employment Policies – Daniel Hernández	PL - Prof
161. Secretary of Social Security – Alfredo Conte-Grand	Prof
162. Unders of Social Security	PL – Prof
163. Unders of Technical Programs – Marta Novick	PL – Prof
164. Unders of Coordination – José Ordeix	Prof
165. National Agency for Social Security – Sergio Massa	PM (PJ Buenos Aires)
166. Director of Labour Risks – Héctor Verón	PL
167. Minister of Education – Daniel Filmus	Prof – PM (PJ)
168. Secretary of Education – J.C. Tedesco	Prof
169. Unders of Educational Planning – Osvaldo Devries	Prof – PL
170. Secretary of University Policies – Alberto Dibbern	Prof
171. Unders of University Policies – Santos Fazio	PL – Prof
172. Secretary of Science and Technology – Tulio Del Bono	PM (PJ San Juan)

173. Unders of Administrative Coordination – G. Iglesias	Prof – PL
174. Unders of Quality and Equity – Alejandra Birgin	PL
175. Secr of Federal Council of Educ. – Domingo De Cara	Prof – PM (PJ)
176. President of Conicet – Eduardo Charreau	Prof – Id
177. Minister of social development – Alicia Kirchner	PM (PJ Santa Cruz) – PL
178. Secr. of Social Policies – Daniel Arroyo	Prof – Id
179. Unders of Popular Organization – J. Ceballos	PM (Libres del Sur)
180. Secr of Institutional Management – Aldo Marconetto	PM (PJ Chubut)
181. Under of Territorial Management – Sergio Berni	PM (PJ Santa Cruz)
182. Secretary of Social Communication – Fernando Grey	PM (PJ Buenos Aires)
183. Secretary of Coordination – Carlos Castagnetto	PM (PJ Buenos Aires)
184. Unders of Nutritional Policies – Liliana Paredes	PL – Prof
185. Unders of Social Income Organization – D. Fernández	PL
186. Und Local Develop & Social Econ – Pacha Velasco	Id – PL
187. Nat. Comm. Of Assistance Pensions: Inés Páez	PL
188. Secr of Childhood and Family: Marcela Vessvessian	PL
189. Nat Institute of Social Economy – Patricio Griffin	PL – Id
190. Nat Inst of Indigenous Affairs – Jorge Rodríguez	PM (PJ Jujuy)
191. Nat Dir of Youth – Mariana Gras	Id – PL
192. COMFER – Julio Bárbaro	PM (PJ)
193. ARN- Raúl Racana	PL – Prof
194. CONAE – Conrado Varotto	Prof

* Data refers to June 2006 (Néstor Kirchner administration)

APPENDIX V

LIST OF INTERVIEWEES AND THEIR INSTITUTIONAL AFFILIATION

Álvarez, Guillermo – Provincial Administrator, Santa Fe
Ascoeta, Matías – ANDHES (Lawyers of the Northwest in Human Rights and Social Studies), Tucumán
Assef, Estela – APDH (Permanent Assembly for Human Rights), Tucumán
Badía, Gustavo – Universidad Nacional de General Sarmiento
Banti, Liliana – Governmental Administrator, Ministry of Defence
Barberis, Pablo – Universidad Nacional de Rosario / Legislature of Santa Fe
Bechara, Marisa – Governmental Administrator, Ministry of Education
Bulcourn, Pablo – Universidad Nacional de Quilmes
Bussi, Ricardo (h) – National Senator, Fuerza Republicana Tucumán
Campione, Daniel – Governmental Administrator / National Library
Cano, José – Provincial Legislator, UCR Tucumán
Capanegra, Horacio – Provincial Administrator, Ministry of Economy, Santa Fe
Cao, Horacio – Governmental Administrator
Carbajal, Lorena – Universidad Nacional de Rosario
Cárcova, Carlos – Gioja Institute of Legal Research – Universidad de Buenos Aires
Castro, Leandro – ATE (Union of state personnel)
Costa, Oscar – Universidad Nacional del Litoral
Delgado, Soledad – Universidad de Buenos Aires / Ministry of State Reform, Santa Fe
Diamint, Rut – Universidad Torcuato Di Tella
Díaz, Cristina – Universidad Nacional de Rosario
Díaz, Laura – National Congress
Díaz Frers, Liliana – CIPPEC (Centre for the Implementation of Public Policies for Equity and Growth)
Di Pasquale, Mónica – Provincial Administrator, Ministry of Social Development, Santa Fe
Durand, Héctor – Headmaster of Colegio Tucumán (Tucumán Higschool), Tucumán
Dusset, Ricardo – Universidad Nacional del Nordeste / UCR activist, Chaco
Escalante, Miguel – AYSA (Waters public company)
Fernández, Jorge – Chief of cabinet of the president of the PJ bloc, National Chamber of Deputies / Vice-president of the PJ, Santa Fe / Minister of Education, Santa Fe (1987-1991)
Fernández, Jorge (h) – Universidad Nacional del Litoral / Iturraspe Provincial Hospital
Föhrig, Alberto – Universidad de San Andrés
Fucito, Felipe – Universidad de Buenos Aires
Gallotti, Aldo – Secretary General of PS, City of Buenos Aires
García, Julio – Lawyer of Native Peoples, Chaco
Gerlero, Mario – Universidad de Buenos Aires
Gulich, Anabella – CONAE (National Commission of Space Activities)
Giupponi, Leopoldo – Ministry of Justice
Gómez, Claudia – Ministry of Health, Chaco
Gómez Lestani, Eduardo – Journalist, *Diario Norte*, Resistencia, Chaco
González, Gustavo – Universidad de Buenos Aires
Groisman, Enrique – Secretary of the Public Administration, (1983-1987)
Guerrero, Antonio – Minister of Government (1999-2003), Tucumán
Iacoviello, Mercedes – Governmental Administrator / Universidad de San Andrés
Jaime, Fernando – Undersecretariat of the Public Administration, Presidential Office
Javkin, Pablo – ARI Provincial Legislator, Santa Fe
Jeger, Pablo – Universidad Nacional de Tucumán
Katz, Gabriel – Channel 7 (public TV station)
Kleiman, Pablo – CTA (Federation of Argentine Workers)

Leiva, Luciano – PJ municipal councillor, Santa Fe
 Lizarraga, Marisa – UCR Provincial Legislator, Chaco
 Llenderrozas, Elsa – School of Social Sciences, Universidad de Buenos Aires and Universidad del Salvador
 Loccisano, María Cecilia – Ministry of Health
 Long, Alicia – Provincial Administrator, Undersecretary at the Municipality of Santa Fe
 López, Andrea – INAP (National Institute of Public Administration)
 Loto, Nora - CiSsaDEMS (Círculo Santiagueño de Docentes de Enseñanza Media y Superior)
 Maldonado, Hugo – President of the UCR, Chaco
 Mareque, Juan – Undersecretary at the Ministry of Decentralization, CBA (2005-2006)
 Marigliano, Mario – President of the UCR, Tucumán
 Martínez, Concha – Journalist, newspaper *La Gaceta*, Tucumán
 Mass, Leandro – Ministry of Interior
 Mastrini, Guillermo – Director of the program in social communications, Universidad de Buenos Aires
 Mendoza, Cecilia – Governmental Administrator, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
 Mezzadra, Florencia – CIPPEC (Centro de Implementación de Políticas Públicas para la Equidad y el Crecimiento)
 Mutti, Gastón – Universidad Nacional de Rosario
 Nabel, Valentín – Ministry of Social Development
 Nápoli, Sergio – National Judge
 Natanson, José – journalist newspaper *Página 12*
 Nin, Carola – Former Minister of Education, Santa Fe / Universidad Nacional de Rosario
 Nuñez, Rolando – Mandela Centre for Social Research, Resistencia, Chaco
 Obeid, Jorge – Provincial Governor, 1995-1999 and 2003-2007, Santa Fe
 Olivieri, Alicia – Universidad de Buenos Aires/Government of the City of Buenos Aires
 Orden, Claudia – UCR activist, Tucumán
 Orlansky, Dora – Universidad de Buenos Aires
 Parisi, José Luis – Ministry of Education
 Paulón, Esteban – Secretary of the PS parliamentary bloc, National Congress
 Pavicich, Pedro – Administrative Secretary of the Chamber of Deputies, Santa Fe
 Perel, Liliana – AFIP (Tax Collection Agency)
 Pérez Colman, Alejandra – Provincial Administrator, Ministry of Social Development, Santa Fe
 Raigorosky, Nicolás – Anti-corruption office, Ministry of Justice
 Ramallo, Teresa – Secretary General of SADOP, Union of private teachers, Tucumán
 Rea, Patricia – Universidad Nacional de Santiago del Estero
 Rodríguez, Alejandro – Social Security Institute, Chaco
 Rodríguez Espada, Zuñilda – Former Director of the Office for Building Permits, Tucumán
 Rojkind, Ana Laura – Ramos Mejía Hospital, CBA
 Rotman, Sergio – Legislature of City of Buenos Aires
 Rovira, Patricio – ANDHES (Lawyers of the Northwest in Human Rights and Social Studies), Tucumán
 Rubins, Roxana – Governmental Administrator – Expert in local government
 Rubio, Daniel – Sanitarian expert, Chaco
 Saguir, Julio – Secretary of Planning, Tucumán
 Salazar, Analía – Headmaster of the Colegio Suizo (Swiss Highschool), Tucumán
 Salazzari, Claudio – Secretary General of AEDGI, Union of the Tax Collection Agency
 Sanchez, Oscar – ATECH (teachers' union), Chaco
 Sangenis, Alejandro – Independent Provincial Legislator, Tucumán
 Scheibler, Guillermo – Judge, City of Buenos Aires
 Schweinheim, Guillermo – Universidad de San Martín
 Sciarrotta, Fernando – Ministry of Labour
 Sillo – Office of the President of the municipal council, Rosario, Santa Fe
 Siri, Eduardo – PS Provincial Legislator, Chaco
 Sola, Juan Vicente – Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Ambassador)/Universidad de Buenos Aires

Solórzano, Diana – Ministry of Economy, Tucumán
Sosa, Luis – Ministry of Education, Santiago del Estero
Sueyro, Esteban – UTE (Union of Education Workers), City of Buenos Aires
Sztern, Gustavo – Ministry of Social Development
Tamargo, Avelino – Legislator, City of Buenos Aires
Taricco, Víctor – ONCCA (National Office for the Control of Agriculture Commerce)
Tarter, Javier – Ministry of Social Development, Chaco
Tarzia, Verónica – ACIJ (Asociación Civil por la Igualdad y la Justicia)
Taulamenti, Verónica – Ministry of Social Development, Santa Fe
Terada, Alicia – ARI Provincial Legislator, Chaco
Tortorola, Emiliano – Secretariat of Culture
Uña, Gerardo - CIPPEC
Van Mameren, Federico, Chief of editorial staff, newspaper *La Gaceta*, Tucumán
Vasquez, Mariana – Universidad de Buenos Aires
Vázquez, Sergio – Ministry of Education, Chaco
Vega, Laura – Government of the City of Buenos Aires
Vera, Alejandro – CIPPEC and Ministry of Education
Vidal, Armando – Journalist, newspaper *Clarín*
Winer, Federico – Universidad de Buenos Aires
Zaiat, Alfredo – Journalist, newspaper *Página 12* and Rock & Pop radio station
Zommer, Laura – CIPPEC and newspaper *La Nación*

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PATRONAGE EN PARTIJORGANISATIE IN ARGENTINIË: DE OPKOMST VAN DE *PATRONAGE-BASED NETWORK PARTY*

Studies naar partijorganisaties in de afgelopen 15 jaar hebben steeds gewezen op een proces van erosie van de verbanden tussen partijen en de samenleving en een gelijktijdige versterking van de banden tussen de partijen en de staat. Wetenschappers hebben aangetoond dat politieke partijen hebben geprobeerd om te compenseren voor de scherpe achteruitgang van hun representatieve capaciteiten door hun institutionele en procedurele rol te versterken. Tientallen jaren lang werden partijen primair beschreven als actoren die politieke socialisatie en de uiting van in de maatschappij levende opvattingen mogelijk maakten; tegenwoordig worden ze vaak beschouwd als (semi-)staatsinstituties. Het bestuderen van hedendaagse partijorganisaties vereist dus "minstens zoveel aandacht, zo niet meer, voor de relatie tussen partij en staat als (..) voor de relatie tussen de partijen en het maatschappelijk middenveld" (Mair 1997:139). Dit proefschrift beantwoordt aan Mairs oproep in de context van de Argentijnse partijorganisaties. Het onderzoekt de mate waarin Argentijnse politieke partijen de staatsstructuren binnendringen.

Dit proefschrift bestaat uit een empirische studie van de omvang, werking en rationale van partijpatronage in Argentinië. Het tracht te beoordelen in welke mate partijen daadwerkelijk mensen benoemen in openbare functies, wie er in feite verantwoordelijk is voor patronage binnen partijen, wat partijen motiveert om in verschillende sectoren te benoemen alsmede op welke overheidsniveaus en welke criteria ze hanteren bij benoemingen. Omdat de manier waarop partijen dit doen zo sterk samenhangt met de relatie tussen partij en staat, kunnen we uit de analyse van de patronen van patronage cruciale inzichten verkrijgen over de aard en werking van hedendaagse partijorganisaties in Argentinië. Daarnaast zal dit onderzoek over partijpatronage in Argentinië hopelijk een bijdrage leveren aan het begrip van bredere organisatorische veranderingen binnen partijen.

Vanuit een breder perspectief beantwoordt dit onderzoek ook de door Helmke en Levitsky (2006:2) gedefinieerde *Guillermo O'Donnel's call*, namelijk de oproep om Latijns-Amerikaanse democratieën te onderzoeken aan de hand van "de feitelijke regels die worden gevolgd" (O'Donnel: 1996b: 10). Na twee decennia van studies over nieuwe

democratieën gericht op *institutional engeneering* en de werking van formele politieke instituties, is er een toenemend bewustzijn van het belang van informele politieke instellingen, namelijk die “regels en procedures die worden gemaakt, verspreid en afgedwongen buiten de officiële kanalen” (Helmke en Levitsky, 2006:1). Dit onderzoek geeft inzicht in “*what games are really being played*” (O’Donnell, 1996a:43) in deze nieuwe Latijns Amerikaanse democratieën. Het doel van dit onderzoek is een allesomvattend beeld te geven van het verschijnsel van partijpatronage als een cruciale informele institutie in de Argentijnse partijpolitiek. De lange traditie van politieke manipulatie van de publieke bureaucratie dat dit land karakteriseert, samen met het meer recente proces van deinstitutionalisering van partijen, maakt een studie naar partijorganisaties en -patronage bijzonder relevant voor het begrijpen van de hedendaagse Argentijnse partijpolitiek.

Het centrale argument van dit proefschrift is dat patronage het primaire middel is geworden bij het bouwen van hedendaagse partijorganisaties in Argentinië. Ik betoog dat Argentijnse partijorganisaties worden gevormd en gehandhaafd op basis van het vermogen van een gekozen president – op nationaal niveau – of gouverneur – op subnationaal niveau – om controle te krijgen over staatsinstellingen. Dit onderzoek toont aan dat hedendaagse partijorganisaties uit twee soorten netwerken bestaan. Aan de ene kant zijn netwerken gericht op het besturen van de staat vanuit een politiek project. Aan de andere kant zijn deze netwerken erop gericht om kiezers te mobiliseren op basis van cliëntelistische uitwisselingen. Partijstatuten daargelaten, vormen deze twee soorten netwerken de, wat ik noem, “echt bestaande partijorganisaties”. Beide zijn compleet afhankelijk van de verdeling van patronage. Vanuit een ander perspectief gezien, is patronage opgekomen als een fundamenteel hulpmiddel voor partijleiders die autonomie om electorale strategieën te ontwikkelen zoeken, maar ook tegelijkertijd een loyale en competente organisatie nodig hebben om kiezers te mobiliseren en de staatsmachine onder controle te krijgen. Patronage is dus het onmisbare middel waarmee de twee soorten netwerken - welke het enige type partijorganisatie vormen dat succesvol is gebleken in het hedendaagse Argentinië - kunnen worden gerekruteerd en gehandhaafd. Ik noem dit type partijorganisatie de “*patronage-based network party*”. Voor degenen die geen toegang hebben tot staatsmiddelen, is het ontwikkelen of onderhouden van een electoraal competitieve partij organisatie onwaarschijnlijk geworden. Dit is waarom, om Schattschneider’s stelling over de relatie tussen politieke partijen en democratie te

parafraseren (1942:1), ik bepleit dat de Argentijnse partijorganisaties ondenkbaar zijn geworden, behalve in termen van patronage.

Het werk bestaat uit acht hoofdstukken. In het eerste hoofdstuk worden de kernconcepten gedefinieerd, het theoretische kader gepresenteerd, de twee onderzoeksvragen besproken en de relevantie van de studie toegelicht. Hoofdstuk 2 bespreekt de onderzoeksaanpak die gebruikt is om partijpatronage in Argentinië beter te begrijpen. Ik meet en analyseer patronage aan de hand van vier aspecten: de omvang, de benoemers (*appointers*), de motivatie en de selectiecriteria. Verder licht ik in dit hoofdstuk toe waarom patronage binnen de Argentijnse staat zowel op het nationale als subnationale niveau bestudeerd wordt. Tot slot, worden de verwachte resultaten besproken. Hoofdstuk 3 beschrijft het onderzoeksontwerp, inclusief de selectie van provinciale casussen en een beschrijving van de methodologie. De data is afkomstig van 125 semi-gestructureerde interviews met experts over verschillende sectoren van de Argentijnse staat, op zowel nationaal als subnationaal niveau.

Hoofdstuk 4 en 5 presenteren de data en de analyse van patronage op nationaal niveau. Hoofdstuk 4 bespreekt de omvang van patronage, in andere woorden hoeveel posities partijen benoemen in drie soorten instituties (ministeriële, staats en non-departementale) binnen negen sectoren van de Argentijnse staat. Het daaropvolgende hoofdstuk bestudeert wie benoemt, wat de motivatie is voor benoemingen, en welke criteria worden gehanteerd tijdens de selectieprocedure. Hoofdstukken 6 en 7 herhalen deze analyse op het provinciale niveau (*provincial states*). Hoofdstuk 7 bevat een analyse van twee partij organisaties in één provincie (PJ and UCR uit Tucumán) en vergelijkt de werking van partijpatronage op het provinciale en nationale niveau. Hoofdstukken 4 tot en met 7 laten zien dat patronage binnen partijorganisaties in Argentinië een belangrijke rol speelt en meer aandacht verdient in wetenschappelijk onderzoek. Twee belangrijke conclusies volgen uit de analyse: ten eerste, benadrukken de empirische hoofdstukken het belang van patronage als middel om nieuwe partners en bondgenoten te introduceren in regeringscoalities en voor het veiligstellen van de controle over het staatsapparaat. Ten tweede, is patronage een belangrijk middel voor gekozen leiders, omdat het ze in staat stelt een netwerk op te bouwen van ondersteunende partijorganisaties.

Hoofdstuk 8 bevat een samenvatting van alle bevindingen en introduceert het model van de *patronage-based network party*. Enkel dit type partij organisatie kan gedijen in een omgeving waarin de identiteit van partijen zwak en veranderlijk is. Het model wordt toegelicht aan de hand van de bijzondere eigenschappen van het *Front for Victory*, de naam waaronder de Peronisten zich verenigden tijdens het voorzitterschap van Néstor Kirchner (tussen 2003 en 2007). Bijlagen I, II, III en IV bevatten extra informatie over verschillende aspecten van het onderzoek. Voorbeelden van deze aspecten zijn, de omvang en de instituties van de Argentijnse staat (I), de vragenlijst die gebruikt is bij de interviews (II), de institutionele vormen (types) van de nationale staat (III) en een lijst van 194 benoemde posities (IV). Tot slot, bevat bijlage V de namen en institutionele affiliaties van de experts die zijn geïnterviewd voor deze dissertatie.

CURRICULUM VITAE

Gerardo Scherlis was born on 18 January 1974 in Buenos Aires, Argentina. He completed secondary school at the Luis Pasteur National School in Buenos Aires. He studied Law and Political Science at Universidad de Buenos Aires.

From 1999 to 2005 he worked as teaching assistant and junior lecturer in several courses at the School of Law and the School of Social Sciences at Universidad de Buenos Aires. In 2001 he won a scholarship from the same university to carry out a research on the political history of the Socialist Party in Argentina.

Gerardo Scherlis has worked as a consultant in several projects to design, promote and implement institutional reforms in Argentina, for the United Nations Development Program (2000-2001), for the Ministry of Justice (2004-2005), and currently for the NGO CIPPEC (since September 2009).

In 2004 he won the first prize in the “Twenty Years of Democracy in Argentina” Essay Contest, offered by the FLACSO (Latin American School of Social Sciences). In 2005 he was awarded the Alban Scholarship (European Union Programme of High Level Scholarships for Latin America) to carry out a doctoral research on party organizations at Leiden University. Between September 2006 and December 2008 he taught the courses “Government and Politics in Contemporary Latin America”, “Democracy and Democratization”, and “International Politics” at the Department of Political Science of Leiden University. In 2008 he was invited as a visiting researcher to the German Institute of Global and Area Studies (GIGA) in Hamburg, sponsored by the DAAD (German Academic Exchange Service).

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In May 2009 he obtained a position of Assistant Professor (*Profesor Adjunto*) at the Department of Public Law at Universidad de Buenos Aires. In October 2009 he was appointed a researcher in the Argentine National Council of Scientific and Technological Research (*CONICET*).