

Patronage as Institutional Choice:  
Evidence from Rwanda and Uganda

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Abstract:

An increasingly large literature on patronage and clientelism has developed within political science in recent years. Yet this body of scholarship has heretofore failed to develop theories that explain variation in patronage allocation across countries. Here I develop such a theory based on the logic of institutional choice, whereby political leaders allocate patronage in accordance with the political threats they face. Specifically, I argue that patronage allocation can be explained by varying political geographies and time horizons. I test this theory through a comparative case study of Rwanda and Uganda, whose current regimes are remarkably similar in origin and structure. I also extend my analysis to previous regimes in both countries, including the analysis of counterfactual or off-path behavior. In all cases I find strong support for the theory.

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*Organisation pour la démocratie populaire – mouvement du travail (ODP-MT)*  
 (Organization for Popular Democracy – Labour Movement)  
 Name of ruling party in Burkina Faso, 1989-1996

*Office de distribution du pain; mange et tais-toi*  
 (Office for Bread Distribution – Eat and Shut Up)  
 Popular wordplay on ODP-MT (Harsch, 1998, pp. 636-637)

## 1. Introduction

In recent years there has been an increased emphasis on the importance of patronage and clientelism as a mechanism for politicians to build and maintain political support. As such, a rapidly growing literature on patronage and clientelism in political science has attempted to understand how, why, where and when politicians allocate material incentives to their constituencies. Much recent attention, for instance, has focused on the relationship between corruption, economic development, democratization and patronage, whether politicians target patronage at ‘swing’ or ‘core’ voters, how politicians and voters overcome commitment problems and why or whether politicians target their own ethnic group for patronage.<sup>2</sup>

However, within this literature there has been little attempt to explore variations in the *types* of patronage politicians employ, specifically why and how the nature of patronage distribution varies across countries. This paper thus discusses patronage as a series of ‘institutional choices’ or strategies (Boone, 2003) which hinge upon a series of trade-offs. Specifically, I argue that patronage variation can be explained by the nature of political threats to politicians, which naturally vary across time and space. I explicate two variables which capture this variation in political threats, namely geography and visibility, and show how they might help to explain patronage allocation. In so doing I attempt to understand why politicians might choose to allocate patronage in a state’s periphery versus its centre, and why the patronage that is distributed can vary between being very visible and obvious to being practically invisible and secret in nature.

In order to understand this variation I take the two case studies of contemporary Rwanda and Uganda. Rather than employ a large-N quantitative analysis, I use a small-N comparative approach as it is better in understanding the causality behind patronage allocation, a process which is often difficult and secretive and therefore not easily quantifiable. Rwanda and Uganda are ideal case studies for this approach because, despite an unusually high degree of similarities in the current regimes of these two countries, the allocation of patronage across both states is strikingly different. I show below that, in accordance with my theory, current patronage in contemporary Rwanda is centralized and relatively invisible while it is peripheral and highly visible in contemporary Uganda.

In the rest of the paper I first introduce a typology of patronage as institutional choice, before examining the two case studies of Rwanda and Uganda. After a detailed examination of the current Kagame and Museveni regimes I extend my analysis to previous regimes in each country, where examinations of counterfactual or ‘off-path’ behavior confirm my argument. Finally, I conclude with wider thoughts on the study of patronage in general as well as the allocation of patronage in Africa more specifically.

## 2. An Institutional Choice Typology of Patronage

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<sup>2</sup> A non-exhaustive list includes (Chandra, 2004; Golden, 2003; Kasara, 2007; Kitschelt & Wilkinson, 2007b; Lyne, 2008; Nichter, 2008; Robinson & Verdier, 2003; Stokes, 2005, 2007).

In theory political patronage is a universal form of politics, whereby political rulers allocate material benefits to a select group of citizens in return for political support.<sup>3</sup> Inasmuch as patronage allocation is governed by a set of rules and established practices, it is thus a type of institution along (North, 1990)'s lines. Moreover, as rulers are the ones who decide when, where and to whom they will allocate patronage, we can posit that their institutional choices are governed by the desire 'to maximize their individual political power... by designing institutions that will allow them to exercise their power to the greatest extent possible. They will prefer institutions that make them more powerful rather than less' (Frye, 1997, p. 532). We should therefore expect rulers to choose patronage strategies that will maximize their power and maintain them in office (Gandhi & Przeworski, 2007), which suggests that rulers will have different strategies depending on which threats they face to their power.

Yet, despite a growing literature on patronage and clientelism, there have been remarkably few attempts at developing theories to explain patronage variation across time and space.<sup>4</sup> This lacuna should not, however, be surprising, considering the more general focus of scholars in the New Institutionalism paradigm on institutions as independent rather than dependent variables (Benoit & Schiemann, 2001; Boone, 2003). While a new set of literature has more recently attempted to explain why various political rulers choose one set of institutions over another based on a variety of pre-existing conditions, much of this literature has been focused on the post-communist transition in eastern Europe and has therefore largely been concentrated on market and electoral reforms at the expense of other issues (Benoit & Schiemann, 2001; Frye, 1997; Smith & Remington, 2000). As such, here I develop two variables which can help to explain patronage variation, namely geography and visibility, which I explain in order; I later argue through the case studies why other potential variables cannot explain this variation.

## 2.1. Geography

One choice faced by rulers in the distribution of patronage is geographical, whereby they can hand out patronage at the centre of their state or on the periphery. The advantage of the former is spelled out in the old adage, 'keep your friends close but your enemies closer':<sup>5</sup> in other words, provide your political enemies with patronage to keep them from rebelling while also keeping an eye on them. Such a strategy involves the distribution of patronage within the central government and usually in the state capital, thereby encouraging provincial rivals to leave their rural source of power behind. The classic practitioner of this strategy was King Louis XIV of France, who drew together his nobles at the court of Versailles in order to prevent a recurrence of the *Fronde* and other provincial revolts that preceded his rule (Tocqueville, 1955 [1856]).

However, there are at least three problems with this strategy. First, except in countries without a periphery, patronage that goes to the centre will trickle down to

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<sup>3</sup> Despite their confusion in the literature, it is important to distinguish patronage, which is generally not illegal, from corruption, which is considered illegal inasmuch as it involves politicians both allocating and receiving material benefits. It is also important to distinguish patronage, which can take the form of 'pork' or club goods that are targeted towards specific groups of citizens, from the allocation of pure public goods, which by definition are non-excludable. For more on these definitions see (Stokes, 2007).

<sup>4</sup> The sole notable exception here is (Lemarchand & Legg, 1972), who establish a four-fold typology of patronage along a single variable of modernization. Their analysis, however, unfortunately does not help us much in analyzing patronage variation at similar levels of development.

<sup>5</sup> While this phrase is most famously uttered in the film *The Godfather, Part II* (1974), its origins lie in Sun-Tzu's *The Art of War* (6<sup>th</sup> century BC).

peripheral citizens, most likely through their ethnic 'delegates' at the centre. This strategy, however, requires an enforcement mechanism between urban migrants and their rural brethren, and when this mechanism fails or is non-existent and patronage does not trickle down, poor citizens in the periphery will often take up arms in revolt, as arguably took place in Mali and Sierra Leone in the 1990s (Azam, 2007, p. 236).

A second problem is a risk that, once clients are 'hooked' on patronage and a state fully suffers from what (Azam, 2007, p. 215) calls the 'redistribution syndrome,' those who receive less patronage than others can become angry and threaten the government. Indeed, the oft-heard claim from coup d'état leaders that the previous regime was 'tribalistic' or 'corrupt' is merely another way of saying that patronage was unequally distributed across society. For example, President Félix Houphouët-Boigny's relative parity of patronage distribution in Côte d'Ivoire allowed him to rule in peace up to his death from natural causes in 1993, but his successors' inability to redistribute to northerners led to a coup d'état in 1999 and an ongoing civil war since 2002 (Azam, 2007).

A third and final problem with patronage at the centre is that a sudden drop in patronage can lead to instability as clients grow angry and rebel against their former patrons. Once they had decided their patrons were more a burden than a benefit, these clients could use the commercial networks and links they had formerly established to fund and launch insurgencies, as seen in the collapse of such regimes as Doe's Liberia, Barrie's Somalia and Mobutu's Zaire (now Democratic Republic of Congo; DRC), among others (Reno, 2002, 2006). Indeed, as noted above, one of the more notable recent changes in African politics is the number of rebel leaders who have come to power since the mid-1980s.

An alternative approach to the centralized model is thus for a government to create patronage in the periphery, where clients cannot threaten to overthrow the regime in power. While this strategy is politically safer for the government, its downside is that clients are free to develop independent sources of power in the countryside and, potentially, develop secessionist or rebel movements (Reno, 2002). Similarly, this strategy can prove dangerous where peripheral clients can develop local power alongside ties with neighboring states. Two examples here will suffice: first, Laurent Kabila's service in the North Katanga government in eastern DRC in the 1960s allowed him to create links with Rwanda and Uganda that he was to develop and use successfully to overthrow Mobutu some three decades later (Schatzberg, 1997). A second example comes from Afghanistan, where during its ongoing civil wars the warlords Abdul Rashid Dostum and Ismail Khan had developed their own armies and links with neighboring Uzbekistan and Iran, respectively, before the overthrow of the Taliban; as a result, President Hamid Karzai appointed Dostum and Khan to largely ceremonial posts in Kabul so as to neutralize their ability to threaten his rule from the periphery (Giustozzi, 2009).

Thus, to summarize, in states where secession, rebellion or invasion is not a worry or where peripheral areas do not threaten the centre, we should expect leaders to employ patronage in the periphery rather than the centre. Conversely, where the periphery poses a political challenge to the centre, we should expect leaders to centralize patronage.

## *2.2. Visibility*

A second trade-off is in the visibility of patronage, whereby the patron can choose to utilize patronage that is either visible to the general public or unknown to many others beyond the recipient. Where politicians face serious political competition they have incentives to use public resources or policy concessions to win elections or maintain support (Block, Ferree, & Singh, 2003; Gandhi & Przeworski, 2007; Stein & Bickers, 1994), whereby their spending often takes the form of public goods that are both observable or measurable and whose benefits are easy to trace

back to the politicians who created them (Mani & Mukand, 2007). In particular ‘pork’ or club goods – i.e., patronage that is publicly and legally allocated to a group of citizens in the form of government policies<sup>6</sup> – are highly visible, inasmuch as they are ‘clearly seen as evidence of political patrons fulfilling their promises to clients’ (Keefer & Khemani, 2005, p. 12). Moreover, inasmuch as politicians in competitive democracies have short time horizons, there are more incentives for them to pursue short-term policies like pork that will win them the next election.

As such, evidence abounds of highly visible public projects that developing world politicians have utilized to win elections, including state farms in Ghana and Nigeria (R. Bates, 1981, pp. 114-115), sugar factories and port facilities in Côte d’Ivoire (Azam, 2007, p. 234), wells in Pakistan (Keefer & Khemani, 2005, p. 13), drought relief programs in Botswana (Charlton, 1993, p. 342), highway and education infrastructure in Mexico (Magaloni, Diaz-Cayeros, & Estevez, 2007) and, perhaps most famously, famine relief projects in post-independence India (Sen, 1999), among others. However, in states with little competition – which includes dominant-party democracies and all stable non-democracies – the pressures for redistribution are much lower as politicians have less of a need to curry votes from the public. In such countries there is thus obviously more of an incentive for politicians to provide private goods, or ‘spoils’ (Gandhi & Przeworski, 2007), to their rivals in order to maintain their support. As opposed to the club goods or ‘pork’ in competitive democracies, here patronage primarily consists of politicians offering jobs. In particular, according to (Robinson & Verdier, 2003), the allocation of jobs is useful as it is reversible, thus getting around the problem of how to ensure long-term political support. Indeed, the problem with ‘pork’ in this setting is that, once it has been created, it cannot be withdrawn from ungrateful clients.<sup>7</sup>

Thus patronage in this sense is personalized and not always legal, and as a result usually fails to have a paper trace. As with club goods, evidence abounds, but perhaps one classic example from Mobutu’s Zaire can suffice here. When the Kabila government’s aptly-named Office of Ill-Gotten Gains (OIGG) attempted to locate his estimated \$8 billion fortune, it only managed to find \$4 million in his Swiss bank accounts. The rest of the money, it seemed, had been distributed as patronage, but a lack of records meant that any attempts of the OIGG to track down who received what was largely hopeless (Wrong, 2000).

In summary, according to this logic, we would thus expect that leaders in competitive democracies would more likely to employ easily visible types of patronage, or ‘pork,’ as they seek to win their next election, while leaders in states without competitive elections are more likely to rely upon less visible and permanent types of patronage. Phrased another way, politicians with high discount rates have an interest in employing visible project-based patronage that could bring them a large one-off benefit, rather than a series of more modest long-term gains. Conversely, when politicians are better able to plan for the future due to a weak opposition, we should expect them to employ less visible types of patronage like state jobs, tariffs and taxes that they can (threaten to) withdraw from unworthy clients.

### 3. Empirical Evidence from Rwanda and Uganda

<sup>6</sup> While some authors consider pork merely a type of private good, with club goods as an intermediate between private and public goods (Desposato, 2006), I consider the two concepts synonymous inasmuch as they are understood to mean the ‘distribution of a collective benefit... targeted to a specific electoral district’ (Golden, 2003, p. 200).

<sup>7</sup> Jobs are, of course, not the only type of private patronage which politicians dole out: there is now a growing literature on the importance of vote and turnout buying (Nichter, 2008; Stokes, 2005; Vicente, 2008). Of course, jobs are superior to these other patronage strategies for two reasons: first, because they are reversible, and second, as noted especially by (Vicente, 2008), vote-buying can also be employed by the political opposition, while only the government can offer bureaucratic jobs to citizens.

Table 1 recapitulates the two institutional strategies listed above, along with examples of what types of patronage comprise each strategy.

[Insert Table 1 here]

As with practically all of the other empirical literature on patronage, I employ here a case-based approach in order to examine the empirical evidence behind these predictions. Specifically, I examine the two case studies of Rwanda and Uganda, with the goal of explicating exactly how the current regimes of Paul Kagame and Yoweri Museveni have utilized patronage to maintain political support. These two states, despite being neighbors and sharing many common factors, have rarely been analyzed together. Yet Rwanda and Uganda have many factors in common which have been previously been taken to account for varying types of public policy allocation, including the degree of democratic institutionalization (Van de Walle, 2007), poverty levels (Kitschelt & Wilkinson, 2007a; Stokes, 2007), the number of years of continuous democratic elections (Keefer, 2007), levels of urbanization (Scheiner, 2007), the ratio of the winning political coalition to the 'selectorate' (Bueno de Mesquita, Smith, Siverson, & Morrow, 2003), and literacy/education levels (Keefer & Khemani, 2005). In the rest of this section I thus introduce the two states and demonstrate how and why Kagame and Museveni have chosen different institutional strategies for the allocation of patronage. I show that the theory suggested above not only explains how both leaders have allocated patronage but also explains patronage variation under previous regimes in both countries.

### *3.1 Background Information on Rwanda and Uganda*

As indicated in Table 2, Rwanda and Uganda are among the poorest countries in the world, with low literacy and urbanization rates and high levels of poverty. Both countries are land-locked and blessed with high-quality farmland suitable for growing coffee, historically both country's main export, with concomitant higher population densities than any of their other neighbors. Presidents Kagame and Museveni have a remarkable amount in common as well. Both men were raised in southwest Uganda, attended the same secondary school in Mbarara district, left Uganda for Tanzania in 1978 to fight against Idi Amin's regime, and fought together against Milton Obote's regime in the early 1980s (Waugh, 2004). After joining Museveni's government as the head of military intelligence in 1986, Kagame started his own rebel movement of Rwandan exiles, invading Rwanda in 1990 and taking Kigali in 1994.

[Insert Table 2 here]

Both Kagame and Museveni took power as the leaders of rebel armies which had fought against regimes that targeted the formerly dominant ethnic groups in each country, namely the Tutsi and Baganda, as part of their counter-insurgency strategies. After overthrowing the previous regime, both Kagame and Museveni formed a broad-based post-conflict government and initiated a process of democratization, beginning with local elections alongside the creation of a constitutional commission designed to solicit views of the public on the design for a new constitution. Once the new constitutions had been approved by both parliaments, Kagame and Museveni set up presidential and parliamentary elections under majoritarian rules (in 2003 and 1996, respectively), which they and their parties overwhelmingly won. In both cases the new constitutions mandated for the first time significant minority representation in the parliament, especially for women but also for

youth and the disabled.<sup>8</sup> Post-conflict reconstruction in both countries, as well as efforts at post-genocide reconciliation in Rwanda and successful HIV/AIDS policies in Uganda, have drawn large amounts of praise and aid from donors and visits from US Presidents Clinton and Bush. As such both leaders were for a while dubbed members of the 'new breed' of African leaders that were supposed to lead Africa to a new era of democracy and development (Oloka-Onyango, 2004).

Yet despite holding a number of elections in each country, both countries have authoritarian tendencies, thereby fitting them into the recently-created category of 'semi-democracies' or 'anocracies' (Vreeland, 2008).<sup>9</sup> In both cases journalists and politicians are regularly arrested, and power remains in a small series of concentric groups within each government: in Uganda power rests in the Banyankole ethnic group (10% of the population), and within it in the hands of the Bahima sub-group (Green, 2006; Mwenda & Tangri, 2005), while in Rwanda Tutsis (14% of the population) dominate in the government, with more power concentrated in the *akazu* (little house) of Ugandan-born Tutsis (Reyntjens, 2004). In other words, in the terminology of (Bueno de Mesquita et al., 2003), the size of both Kagame and Museveni's 'winning coalition' is small in comparison to the size of their 'selectorates,' which in both cases is synonymous with the electorate.

### 3.2. The Institutional Logic of Patronage in Rwanda and Uganda

Despite these similarities, however, Kagame and Museveni have employed strikingly different strategies of patronage allocation. These supposed inconsistencies, however, can be explained by the institutional constraints of each country's political and economic endowments. Below I return to the two sets of institutional choices detailed above, before examining how each president has utilized patronage to his advantage.

#### *Geography*

Above we concluded that rulers that were unconcerned about political threats from the periphery but were concerned about potential rebellions from the centre would tend to allocate patronage in peripheral areas, and vice-versa. Uganda, despite verbal threats of secession from southern political leaders in the 1960s and northern politicians today more recently, does not have a serious history of secession or peripheral rebellion that has threatened the center.<sup>10</sup> Indeed, the various rebel movements that have erupted in Uganda's periphery have all failed to threaten the center, with the one partial exception of Alice Lakwena's Holy Spirit Movement, to which we return later. Much of this peripheral weakness in Uganda is due to the fact that none of Uganda's major indigenous ethnic groups have politically or numerically powerful brethren in neighboring countries.

On the other hand, however, Uganda has a long history of central instability, with five coup d'etats overthrowing regimes since independence. Moreover, the one Ugandan rebel movement that successfully overthrew the regime in Kampala was Museveni's National Resistance Army, which was based in central Uganda rather than its periphery. More recently, President Museveni has faced numerous threats

<sup>8</sup> Rwanda's 2008 elections saw 56.25% of its parliamentary seats go to women, the first time in world history women have comprised an elected majority of a national parliament.

<sup>9</sup> This fact is reflected in similar scores for both countries in the most recent Polity IV datasets, where scores between -5 and 5 qualify as anocracies. Rwanda had a score of -4 from 2000 to 2002 and has had a score of -3 since 2003, while Uganda's was -4 between 1993 and 2004 and has been -1 since 2005.

<sup>10</sup> The one exception here, namely the Tanzanian invasion of Uganda in 1978 was, of course, a counter-invasion in response to Amin's invasion of Tanzania.

from within his ruling NRM party, most notably from his former personal doctor, Colonel Kizza Besigye, who broke ranks to run against Museveni in the 2001 and 2006 presidential elections. Thus we would expect to see the peripheral allocation of patronage in Uganda.

Rwanda is quite different from Uganda in this respect, in that, with the exception of Juvenal Habyarimana's coup d'état in 1973, it does not have a history of rebellion from the centre. It does, however, have a history of being surrounded by enemies intent on overthrowing the regime in Kigali. As opposed to Uganda, three of Rwanda's four neighbors have significant Tutsi and Hutu minorities, all of whom have welcomed Rwandan migrants at various points and thus facilitated the formation of rebel movements.

Rwanda's history of foreign invasions and enemies started only a year after independence, when in late 1963 Tutsi exiles launched two failed invasions from Burundi, the second of which reached as close as 12 miles from Kigali before being repelled; a week after the second invasion Rwandan Tutsi refugees in Uganda launched another failed attempt. More recently, in 1990 Paul Kagame and the RPF led an invasion of Tutsi exiles from Uganda, eventually taking Kigali after the 1994 genocide. The RPF's success led the *interahamwe* who committed much of the genocide to flee across the border to the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC); their presence there supposedly prompted Rwanda's subsequent invasion of the DRC. The Congolese invasion, whereby Uganda also sent in its armed forces, later turned the relations between Kagame and Museveni sour to the point where the Rwandan and Ugandan troops fought each other in the Congolese city of Kisangani in 1999-2000. At the same time many *interahamwe* reformed as the Army for the Liberation of Rwanda (ALIR) and invaded the provinces of Gisenyi and Ruhengeri in northwest Rwanda, only to be repelled by the Rwandan army after fierce fighting (Orth, 2006). This long history of invasion from three different neighboring countries, the threat of ALIR and its successors, the presence of a hostile neighbor only 80 km from Kigali, and Kagame's own successful history in leading an invasion of Rwanda from Uganda in 1990, all suggest that Kagame would be concerned about the allocation of patronage in peripheral Rwanda that might fall into the hands of his enemies. In other words, we would expect to see more centralized patronage in Rwanda and more peripheral patronage in Uganda.

### *Visibility*

The logic above suggested that rulers in competitive democracies would employ more visible patronage, or pork, in order to win elections, while their counterparts in less competitive states would allocate patronage less visibly. Here again we see a marked contrast between Uganda and Rwanda, which have very different histories of political competition. The nature of each country's social composition has much to do with this difference: some 85% of the Rwandan population is Hutu, making it possibly the most ethnically homogenous country in Africa (Fearon, 2003). Uganda, on the other hand, has a claim to the title of the most ethnically fractionalized country in the world (Alesina, Devleeshauwer, Easterly, Kurlat, & Wacziarg, 2003), with the largest ethnic group, the Baganda, only comprising some 17% of the population. Similarly and just as important in many ways, Rwanda has been dominated since colonial times by Catholicism, which currently accounts for 56.5% of the population, with the rest of the population splintered among a number of different religious groups. Uganda, on the other hand, has historically been split between Catholics (currently 42% of the population) and



Anglicans (36%),<sup>11</sup> with the latter assuming national power after independence thanks in part to British support.

Thus it is no surprise that Rwanda only had a post-independence history of single-party elections before Kagame's rule; its sole multi-party election took place before independence in 1961, when the Hutu Catholic PARMEHUTU party secured 77.7% of the vote. However, even before independence Uganda was politically split between the Protestant Uganda People's Congress and the Catholic Democratic Party, which had fierce electoral battles in the first two post-independence elections of 1962 and 1980. In the latter case the election was largely assumed to be stolen by Milton Obote, whose brazenness in doing so launched Museveni's ultimately successful rebellion. Not surprisingly, the differences between the two countries has continued to the present day. If we compare each country's first post-constitutional election, Museveni received 74.3% in 1996 while Kagame got 95.1% of the vote in 2003; in each country's first legislative elections, the NRM received 57.8% of the seats while the RPF coalition received 73.8%.

Another measure of political competition is the nature of regime change and the length of rulers' tenure (Gandhi & Przeworski, 2007), and here again Rwanda and Uganda differ. Rwanda's most recent political succession, namely the resignation of President Pasteur Bizimungu in 2000, was peaceful; in all it has had only three extralegal regime changes since independence, in 1973 and 1994 (twice). Uganda, however, has had no peaceful political transitions since independence, with six extralegal regime changes in 1971, 1979, 1980 (twice), 1985 and 1986. The result is that Uganda's presidents have only lasted in office for a mean of 5.1 years and a median of 3.4 years, while Rwandan presidents have lasted in office for 9.2 and 8+ years, respectively.<sup>12</sup> Thus, as a result of Rwanda's relative lack of political competition compared to Uganda, we would thus expect to see more visible patronage in Rwanda than in Uganda.

### *3.3 Patronage in Current Rwanda and Uganda*

We now examine the actual use of patronage in contemporary Rwanda and Uganda to see if it conforms to our theoretical predictions. If we recall, we predicted that patronage in Rwanda would be centralized and relatively invisible, while in Uganda it would be peripheral and visible. As I now show, the evidence conforms very well with these predictions, as it also does regarding the changing nature of patronage in Museveni's Uganda over time.

#### *Rwanda*

Patronage distribution in Kagame's Rwanda has largely been focused on central government jobs, both in the cabinet and the legislature, particularly the Senate. Rwanda's 26 Senators serve for eight year terms; of these twelve are elected by provincial councils, eight are appointed by the President to 'ensure the representation of historically marginalized communities,' four are appointed by the Forum on Political Organizations and two are elected by university staff. Kagame has used his power to appoint to the Senate both Alvera Mukabaramba, a presidential candidate in 2003 from the opposition Party for Progress and Concord, as well as Stanley Safari, former vice-president of the Democratic Republican Movement (MDR) and son-in-law of Theodore Sindikubwabo, interim President of Rwanda during the 1994 genocide. The Senate's President since 2004 has been Vincent Biruta, the chairman of the opposition Social Democratic Party (PSD) which

<sup>11</sup> US State Department 2007 Report on International Religious Freedom; <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/irf/2007/>.

<sup>12</sup> Kagame's time in office currently marks the median tenure for Rwandan presidents.

received 12.3% of the vote in the 2003 elections, while one of the two Vice-Presidents is Prosper Higiyo, former President of the Liberal Party (PL) which received 10.6% of the vote in the elections. In all there are seven non-RPF members in the Senate, comprising 26.9% of the seats, a far cry from the 4.9% opposition candidates received in the 2003 presidential election. Opposition party members were also selected in 2008 by a joint parliamentary session to represent Rwanda in the East African Legislative Assembly, including the former Senator and cabinet minister Odette Nyiramirimo (PL), ex-MP and President of the *Union Démocratique du Peuple Rwandais* Claire Kayirangwa, and ex-MP and former Deputy Speaker of the Transitional National Assembly Jacqueline Muhongayire (PSD).

Moreover, Rwanda's 2003 constitution has institutionalized power-sharing across political parties by stipulating both that the President and Speaker of the Chamber of Deputies must be from different political parties (Article 58) and that no party can control more than 50% of seats in the cabinet (Article 116). These provisions, while ostensibly designed to prevent future conflicts, not only allow for the allocation of cabinet posts as a means for the distribution of spoils to opposition party members, but, by stating this openly in the constitution, greatly increases the credibility of Kagame's offers of patronage redistribution. As such the Speaker of the Chamber of Deputies is Centrist Democratic Party (PDC) leader Alfred Mukezamfura, while opposition members in the cabinet include the current Prime Minister (former MDR member Bernard Makuza), Minister of Youth (PL President Protais Mitali) and Internal Security Minister (President of the *Parti Démocrate Idéale* Mussa Fazil Harerimana), among others.

One could, of course, argue that these parties have little popular support and are only incorporated in government in order to allow Kagame to pretend that his regime is broad-based, despite the fact that he banned the main MDR opposition party in 2003. Yet of the three original opposition parties other than the MDR which formed a coalition against President Habyarimana upon the return to multi-party democracy in 1991 and which were allocated cabinet positions in the 1993 Arusha Agreement along with the RPF and then-ruling MRNDD party, the leaders of all three – the PL, PDC and PSD – have seats in the Senate or cabinet today. Moreover, Kagame has tried to buy off MDR members with offers of positions in the central government, which, as noted above, proved successful with Stanley Safari and Bernard Makuza, and which for a while was successful with former Prime Minister Pierre-Célestin Rwigema and former Foreign Minister Anastase Gasana.

Inasmuch as these patronage opportunities are central government jobs, they are both centralized and largely invisible forms of patronage. Kagame has refrained from creating patronage opportunities in the periphery: as (Golooba-Mutebi, 2008, p. 27) notes, the RPF strategy of bringing former enemies and exiles into its fold seems based on a belief that they 'were less a threat at home than they were likely to be from outside the country's borders.' Indeed, while increasingly utilizing patronage opportunities in Kigali by creating new ministries, Kagame has simultaneously reduced the amount of patronage in the periphery. Specifically, he reduced the number of *communes*, the second-highest level of local government which were subsequently renamed as districts, from 154 to 106 in 2002, before reducing them again to 30 in 2006. In the same year Kagame also decreased the number of provinces, which are the highest-level of local government, from twelve to five; currently the government is in the process of phasing out provinces altogether.

This reduction in the number of local government units certainly fits in as well with Kagame's lack of interest in employing visible patronage or 'pork.' An overwhelming concern for Kagame has been the provision of secure national borders, the prime example of a pure or non-excludable public good. Indeed, rather than focus his energies on creating club goods or 'pork' for electoral purposes, Kagame ran his 2003 campaign on non-distributive issues like security, stability, reconciliation and economic recovery (Waugh, 2004), while his government has

achieved significant achievements in relatively invisible public goods like health and education by returning to pre-1994 trendlines and even surpassing them in the case of gross primary school enrolment (Lopez & Wodon, 2005).

### *Uganda*

In recent years Uganda has seen a very different system of patronage than in Rwanda. While Museveni has, like Kagame, used central government positions as a source of patronage, he has not allocated them to current or former political rivals but rather political allies. Since his rebel days Museveni's base has been among the Bantu-speaking peoples of southern and western Uganda, specifically the Baganda of central Uganda and his own Banyankole ethnic group in western Uganda. Under his rule it is these two groups which have most benefited in Kampala: to take a recent snapshot of the cabinet as an example, of the nineteen senior ministers in 2004, eleven were from the west and five were from Buganda, with only two from the North and one from the East (Mutumba, 2004). Similarly, two of Museveni's three Vice-Presidents and three of his four Prime Ministers have been Baganda, while five of six army commanders, as well as two of the three Inspector Generals of Government responsible for fighting government corruption, have been westerners.

Politically Museveni began his reign with an overwhelming amount of political support across the country, thanks in large part to his relatively successful efforts at economic growth, poverty reduction, and combating the HIV/AIDS epidemic. At the same time Museveni faced an unusually strong rebel movement called the Holy Spirit Movement (HSM), which was led by a woman from northern Uganda named Alice Lakwena with the support of many former soldiers of the previous Obote and Okello governments. In late 1987 the HSM reached as far as Jinja, less than 100 kilometres from Kampala, before it was finally defeated by Museveni's government army.

Thus, with little political competition alongside peripheral threats to Museveni's power from the HSM and other rebel movements,<sup>13</sup> my patronage theory suggests that Museveni would have employed a centralized and invisible patronage strategy at the time, in much the same way as in Rwanda. The theory holds well here, as for most of his first decade in power Museveni led a broad-based government that included the main opposition leader, Democratic Party chairman Paul Ssemogerere, as a member of his cabinet up to 1995 alongside other leaders from the Conservative Party and the former UNRF rebel movement. Moreover, he decidedly failed to create new patronage opportunities in the countryside. A Commission of Inquiry into the Local Government System appointed by Museveni called for the creation of four new provincial districts in 1987, while monarchists from the five former ethnic kingdoms abolished by Milton Obote in the 1960s, namely Ankole, Buganda, Bunyoro, Busoga and Toro, demanded their restoration. Yet in both cases Museveni initially refused, certainly concerned in the latter case about the aforementioned history of the Buganda kingdom's verbal threats of secession in the 1960s; instead he agreed to put the former kings on his payroll and give them a monthly living allowance. More generally, rather than focusing his attention on the provision of club goods Museveni thus focused instead on pure public goods like universal primary school enrolment, whose great successes drew a great deal of attention (Stasavage, 2004).

Yet Museveni's broad-based support began to narrow in the 1990s, as political party leaders like Ssemogerere and even former rebel army allies like Besigye started to turn against him in Kampala. With no non-NRM and only one or two non-Bantu ministers and army officers left, Museveni instead continued to shift

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<sup>13</sup> The Uganda People's Democratic Army (UPDA) was also prominent in northern Uganda at the time, as was the insipient Lord's Resistance Army, which absorbed many members from the UPDA and the HSM after it began operations in 1988.

towards other forms of patronage to rule over Uganda. In Bantu areas he restored four of the five ethnic kingdoms just in time for the 1994 Constituent Assembly elections;<sup>14</sup> the kingdoms were not granted the political powers they held in the 1960s and under colonial rule, but were rather allowed to exist as cultural institutions. In non-Bantu areas, which have never had large ethnic kingdoms, Museveni has focused on the creation of new districts (the highest level of local government), despite his aforementioned earlier reluctance. In complete contrast to Kagame, Museveni has created 47 districts since 1990, or more new highest-level sub-national units than any other country in the world.<sup>15</sup> These have been concentrated in non-Bantu areas of Uganda and have been consistently created around election times: in 2000 and 2005 Museveni created districts only a matter of months before elections the following year, while in the 1996 and 2006 campaigns he promised to create new districts after the elections. Moreover, voters in new districts have responded in all three presidential elections, voting more for Museveni than the Ugandan average by a margin of 14.9%, 3.1% and 14.3% in 1996, 2001 and 2006, respectively (Green, 2008).

These two types of patronage – the restoration of kingdoms and new districts – have proven to be peripheral and highly visible. Almost by definition the restored kingdoms and new districts have been in the periphery, with only one of the 47 districts created in an urban area. The kingdoms have brought many new jobs to rural parts of central and western Uganda: even the Buganda kingdom, whose capital is in Kampala, has used funds donated by rich Baganda to restore its various palaces and shrines across rural Buganda. Each district has also brought a whole slew of new jobs to rural Uganda, including more than two dozen technical support positions and a new set of district councilors representing special interest groups like women, the youth and the disabled, not to mention the district chairperson. These positions have a profound local trickle-down effect, as people who take up new district positions are usually promoted from further down the bureaucratic chain. Moreover, due to a government policy that district capitals are to be constructed in the geographic middle of a district, district creation has led to a large number of local construction jobs across Uganda. Finally, inasmuch as donors increasingly interact directly with local governments across the developing world, new districts in Uganda have also brought new donor jobs as well. As Uganda's districts are not represented at the central government level (with the exception of Women MPs from each district), Museveni thus does not face the risk of creating clients that could eventually overthrow him.

The kingdoms and new districts have been very visible as well. The restoration of the kingdoms in 1993 drew international attention, and each kingdom has focused on local development projects within its area. As regards the districts, Uganda's decentralization program has reallocated power over public land from the centre to the districts, which also receive collectively more than one-third of all central government expenditure in the form of grants. This program has also mandated local elections, which means that leadership positions within the districts, as with kingdoms, are not decided from Kampala. Moreover, both kingdoms and districts are not reversible like central government jobs inasmuch as the government has never

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<sup>14</sup> The one kingdom Museveni did not restore was his own, Ankole, ostensibly because it was not popular, but possibly also because a restored traditional king would be technically superior to all Banyankole, including Museveni.

<sup>15</sup> Inasmuch as the kingdoms and the districts created under Museveni 'incorporate potential opposition forces, investing them with a stake in the ruler's survival,' they are thus highly comparable to the use of partisan legislatures by autocrats analyzed by (Gandhi & Przeworski, 2007, p. 1280). The only real difference here is that I claim that the kingdoms and districts are *themselves* a form of patronage, rather than a means to create patronage as in (Gandhi & Przeworski, 2007). The end effect, however, is the same.

even threatened to abolish a kingdom or a district. Indeed, the creation of new districts is a simple process: Museveni's government proposes a set of new districts to be voted on by the National Assembly, which most recently in 2005 voted by 175 to none in favor. The clarity of Museveni's role in creating new districts can be seen in the often bizarre forms of protest that take place when citizens demand a new district, for instance when the residents of Tororo district publicly ate rats in full view of Museveni to demonstrate the seriousness of their claim.

### *3.4 Historical Extensions and Counterfactuals*

The point of the 'most similar' comparative research design is to demonstrate that the two cases are almost identical with the exception of dependent variable and the crucial independent variable, thereby isolating and clarifying causality (Gerring, 2007). Of course, what this approach suggests is that the same causal explanation should apply when the cases are not so similar; in the current context, this would mean that patronage allocation in Rwanda and Uganda should not only conform to the theory developed above under the regimes of Kagame and Museveni but also under previous rulers as well. Here I briefly examine four previous regimes in Rwanda and Uganda, whose allocation of patronage and subsequent success or failure at maintaining themselves in power clearly demonstrates support of our theory.

In Rwanda, the pre-genocide regime of Juvenal Habyarimana was quite successful at allocating patronage to maintain its hold on power. On the one hand Habyarimana claimed at least to be interested in the allocation of patronage to the countryside, with positive references to agriculture and the Hutu peasantry in his speeches (Verwimp, 2000). However, as under Kagame, Habyarimana centralized power in Kigali rather than the countryside, using his coffee revenues to buy off his opposition in Kigali while also channeling large amounts of state resources to Hutu elites from his region of Gisenyi. Thus, despite being considered anti-Tutsi in retrospect, Habyarimana nonetheless hired Tutsi as cabinet ministers, ambassadors and as senior members of his MRND party. In accord with the theory here, however, Habyarimana allowed Tutsi no remit in the countryside, with 'an almost total absence of Tutsi from the organs of the local state: there was only one Tutsi prefect, the prefect of Butare who was killed in the genocide, and not a single Tutsi burgomaster' in 1990 (Mamdani, 2001, p. 141). Moreover, as with Kagame Habyarimana focused little on the provision of club goods or pork during his reign, preferring instead to focus on pure public goods like primary school enrolment and infant mortality (Lopez & Wodon, 2005). Habyarimana's loss of control from the late 1980s onwards thus had arguably less to do with the internal dynamics of his rule than with the collapse of international coffee prices, the winds of change blowing through Francophone Africa, the imposition of a Structural Adjustment program in 1990 and the invasion of the RPF, which consisted of Tutsi exiles whose allegiance Habyarimana was unable to purchase (Mamdani, 2001; Verwimp, 2003).

In Uganda, Idi Amin's rule conformed to the Museveni pattern of decentralized patronage but, as it was a dictatorship, patronage was largely invisible and personalized. As with the other examples here Amin was notorious for almost exclusively appointing his fellow citizens from West Nile region, especially Kakwa and Nubians, to top positions in the military and government. Yet he was able to maintain himself in power by creating three new sources of patronage that he could allocate to his political rivals. First, in 1972 he notoriously exiled the country's Asian community, thereby opening up a great deal of patronage resources. Rather than centralize these assets by resting them in government hands, Amin instead quickly redistributed some 3000-4000 former Asian businesses within only three months, thereby creating a new class of businessmen known as the *mafutamingi* (Swahili for "a lot of fat") (Schultheis, 1975). Secondly, in 1973 he introduced a whole new

provincial tier of regional government, numbering ten across the whole country, while also nearly doubling the number of districts from 19 to 37. As under Museveni these new provinces and districts allowed Amin to placate his political rivals and remove them from Kampala at the same time (Jørgensen, 1981); however, unlike Museveni Amin did not allow for local elections or decentralize power, decision-making or resources to these new administrative units, thereby making them useful as patronage posts or 'prebends' but hardly visible or useful to most Ugandans (Van de Walle, 2007). Third and finally, in 1975 Amin's government passed the Land Reform Decree, which nationalized all land in Uganda, thereby creating even more peripheral sources of patronage. As with the aforementioned example of Mobutu and the DRC's missing billions, there are almost no records of the names of the recipients of these three types of patronage, which again is indicative of the largely secretive or invisible nature of patronage allocation under Amin. In the end Amin's ability to redistribute enough patronage to maintain himself in power thus lasted until the collapse of the East African Community in 1977, the US ban on the import of Ugandan coffee in October 1978 and the Tanzanian decision to counter-invade after Amin sent troops across the border two weeks after the US coffee ban (Nurnberger, 1982).

Another way to test the theory presented here is to examine counterfactuals or 'off-the-path' behavior by politicians that led to adverse consequences (Boone, 2003; Levy, 2008). Here again the evidence is strong. As opposed to Habyarimana and Kagame's centralized patronage, Rwanda's first President Grégoire Kayibanda did not redistribute centralized resources to his political enemies. Unlike Habyarimana Kayibanda completely shut out Tutsis from his government after 1964, yet allowed Tutsis to gain access to lower-level jobs, especially in schools. However, what was perhaps most important in Kayibanda's eventual downfall was his failure to distribute centralized patronage to Hutus outside a small circle from southern Rwanda, who dominated the powerful state marketing board TRAFIPRO. Instead, Kayibanda kept troublesome military leaders like Major Sabin Benda and future RPF chairman Lieutenant-Colonel Alexis Kanyarengwe far from Kigali, appointing them instead as directors of a tea factory in Cyangugu and a seminary in Gisenyi, respectively. Kayibanda's final mistake was to create local anti-Tutsi vigilante committees in 1972-73, whose power was quickly usurped by local Hutu politicians who, along with the aforementioned military officers outside the remit of Kigali, supported Habyarimana's military coup in July 1973 (Reyntjens, 1985).

The Obote regime in the early 1960s represents a similar example of 'off-the-path' behavior from Uganda. Obote made the mistake of centralizing patronage, most notoriously by abolishing Uganda's southern Bantu-speaking kingdoms and all regional and district assemblies across the country in 1967. In his attempt to copy Julius Nyerere's *ujamaa* policies in Tanzania, Obote announced the partial nationalization of some 80 major companies in his so-called 'Move to the Left,' whose rhetoric indicated that future policies were more likely to include the nationalization of land and large-scale government redistribution of income than the distribution of club goods. Included among these policies was Obote's notorious 'one plus three' election proposal for the never-held parliamentary elections of 1971, which required putative MPs in a given constituency to receive a base amount of support in three other constituencies in other parts of Uganda and thereby disadvantaged MPs who only had local support (Jørgensen, 1981). All of these moves thus threatened local patronage networks, especially among the Baganda who stood to lose the most from Obote's policies. Despite efforts to build an inclusive cabinet and bureaucracy with members from all of Uganda's regions, Obote was nonetheless overthrown by Amin in a widely-supported coup in 1971.

#### 4. Conclusion

In this article I created a typology of patronage as a series of institutional choices or strategies along two variables, namely geography and visibility. I then showed how similar regimes in Rwanda and Uganda have nonetheless employed quite different strategies of patronage allocation, with centralized and relatively invisible types of patronage in Kagame's Rwanda and peripheral and highly visible patronage in Museveni's Uganda. Moreover, I showed how the same logic of patronage allocation explained a shift over time during the Museveni regime in Uganda, the logic of patronage under Habyarimana's and Amin's regimes, and why off-path behavior in Kayibanda's and Obote's initial post-independence regimes contributed in both cases to their fall from power.

I conclude here with two lessons for the study of patronage and clientelism, as well some wider thoughts on patronage in contemporary Africa. As regards the former, one lesson is that the nature of patronage allocation can have little to do with regime type and economic development, but much to do with the different threats to political power in a given country across time and space. As with (Boone, 2003), the evidence here suggests that geographical factors play a large role in deciding how and where political leaders allocate patronage, and, as with (R. H. Bates, 2008), it emphasizes the role of time horizons in altering the decision making of politicians in the developing world. It thus suggests that the level of democracy may not be the most important factor in explaining patronage or club good provision, thereby adding to a growing literature that suggests that democracies and non-democracies have fewer policy differences than was previously thought (Mulligan, Gil, & Sala-i-Martin, 2004; Ross, 2006). Further research into the differences between competitive and non-competitive democracies might therefore help to bring these differences into sharper focus.

A second lesson is that attempts to develop theories of patronage need to incorporate variations in threats to political power. The debate over whether governments allocate patronage to swing or core voters discussed by (Stokes, 2007) is thus not very useful without a discussion of political context, as is increasingly suggested by the literature. For instance, in Uganda (Green, 2008) demonstrates that neither the core nor the swing voter hypotheses do a good job at predicting district creation; rather, as predicted from the argument above, a Bantu dummy variable is significant across a variety of specifications. (Horiuchi & Lee, 2008) similarly demonstrate that country-specific institutional factors like executive dominance and center-local ties, rather than the swing/core voter hypotheses, account for patronage variation in contemporary South Korea.

As to the empirical evidence, we should note that the patronage strategies demonstrated here are not equally distributed across Africa, with an increased focus on visible and peripheral patronage as in Uganda. Many countries such as Cameroon, the DRC, Ghana, Mozambique, Nigeria and South Africa, among others, have recently restored or granted more powers to ethnic chiefs (Englebert, 2002). Similarly, Museveni's strategy of creating new districts as a source of patronage has been echoed elsewhere in Africa, with new provinces created recently in Benin, Burkina Faso, Chad, the DRC, Ghana, Malawi and Sudan.

The reason for this increased focus on visible patronage is clear when we examine the current state of political opposition in Africa. Unlike Rwanda with its history of political stability and long presidential tenures, the return of multi-party elections in Africa in the 1990s has brought high presidential turnover rates to many parts of the continent: while only one African president lost an election between 1960 and 1990, fourteen have lost elections since 1990 (Posner & Young, 2007, p. 131). The reintroduction of multi-party politics has thus meant that African presidents have been much more likely to raise their discount rate than to lower it, with an arguably concomitant increased focus on the provision of club goods or 'pork.'

Rwanda is also exceptional in its history of invasion and threats from its neighbors and periphery. Unlike Rwanda, in most other African states conflicts can

take place in the periphery without threatening rule at the centre, which suggests that Rwanda's system of centralized patronage may be anomalous. There is evidence that a concern over locating power in the periphery may indeed have been valid in an earlier era where secession was a serious concern for national leaders in such countries as Nigeria (Biafra) and DRC (Katanga), but secession has largely disappeared as a strategy for African provincial elites over the past few decades as opposition leaders have increasingly attempted to gain control over the central government instead (Englebert & Hummel, 2005).

In the end, with a slow but sure process of democratization across Africa, the logic above thus suggests that peripheral and visible patronage will play an increasingly important role in Africa in coming years. It is therefore important that scholars continue to study the nature of patronage in these young democracies to better understand how and why governments employ a variety of patronage strategies.



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**Table 1: Patronage as Institutional Choice**

<b>Institutional Variable</b>	<b>Option 1</b>	<b>Option 2</b>
Geography	Centre (Central Government Jobs)	Periphery (Local Government Jobs)
Visibility	Non-Visible and Reversible (Individualized Transfers)	Visible and Non-Reversible (‘Pork’)

**Table 2: Select Descriptive Statistics for Rwanda and Uganda  
(Source: (UNDP, 2007))**

	<b>Literacy Rate</b>	<b>GDP/capita</b>	<b>Human Poverty Index</b>	<b>Urban Population</b>
<b>Rwanda</b>	64.9%	\$1206	36.5%	19.3%
<b>Uganda</b>	66.8%	\$1454	34.7%	12.6%