Most models of party competition assume that citizens vote for a platform rather than narrowly targeted material benefits. However, there are many countries where politicians win elections by money, jobs, and services in direct exchange for votes. This is not just true in the developing world, but also in economically developed countries – such as Japan and Austria – that clearly meet the definition of stable, modern democracies. This book offers explanations for why politicians engage in clientelistic behaviors and why voters respond. Using newly collected data on national and subnational patterns of patronage and electoral competition, the contributors demonstrate why explanations based on economic modernization or electoral institutions cannot account for international variation in patron-client and programmatic competition. Instead, they show how the interaction of economic development, party competition, governance of the economy, and ethnic heterogeneity may work together to determine the choices of patrons, clients, and policies.

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This book grew out of a conference on clientelism held at Duke in 2001. The high level of interest in the topic and the excellent quality of the work being done convinced us that a more extended theoretical and empirical treatment of programmatic and clientelistic party competition was worthwhile, and over the next several years we solicited authors who spoke to these concerns – some of whom had presented at the conference and some of whom had not – to write papers for this volume. We would like to thank all of our contributors for the excellence of their contributions, their cheerfulness in making revisions and corrections, and for their willingness to shrink their papers when the original size of the volume proved too great.

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