

We also learn little about tourism, presumably the main reason that people cross borders today. This seems an important lacuna even in a book mainly focused on immigration policy, because perhaps one-third to one-half of undocumented immigrants are visa overstayers, not persons who have entered a country illegally. Schain is focused more or less exclusively on the consequences of borders for would-be immigrants, whether they arrive after having gone through the legally stipulated procedures for immigrants or refugees, are “undocumented,” or are in the process of claiming asylum (contrary to expectation, usually a less successful route to immigration than the “normal” path). In short, the book is really about the topic of its subtitle: the policy and politics of immigration in Europe and the United States.

Notwithstanding these quibbles, *The Border* provides a data-rich picture of the way the contemporary borders of the United States and Europe work to filter the entry of people. Schain shows that, although we are very far from “losing control,” as some have suggested, neither have the borders become hardened to the point of near-closure. For such a phenomenon, one would have to look at a country such as Japan, long an island fortress seeking to maintain its ethnic purity. European and American external borders have hardened because politicians have exploited the ethnic diversity of immigrant populations to reap votes, often from those fearful of such diversity. One result has been Brexit, which was largely a response to British fears that the country had lost control of its borders. As Martin Schain shows in great detail, borders matter in contemporary politics.

Clients and Constituents: Political Responsiveness in Patronage Democracies. By Jennifer Bussell. New York: Oxford University Press, 2019. 390p. \$99.00 cloth, \$29.95 paper.
doi:10.1017/S1537592720000080

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What is the relationship between legislators and citizens in developing countries? A large body of scholarship on clientelism suggests that, in low-income settings, politicians win the support of citizens not by performing well in their official roles but by purchasing the votes of citizens with targeted material inducements, distributed strategically to core supporters, swing voters, or co-ethnics. By crowding out selection based on competence or performance, clientelism is held to reduce democracy to a simulacrum of genuine accountability.

In *Clients and Constituents: Political Responsiveness in Patronage Democracies*, Jennifer Bussell probes this conventional wisdom through a study of what legislators really do in the context of India, a country she terms a

“patronage democracy.” With a tremendously impressive combination of qualitative fieldwork based on the shadowing of individual legislators, a large-scale survey of politicians at multiple levels across India, and a text-message audit experiment, she develops an argument that is either radical or sensible, depending on the reader’s perspective.

Through the shadowing of individual politicians, as well as a survey-based study of how legislators report allocating their time, she finds that legislators—both national-level parliamentarians and state-level legislators—dedicate a tremendous amount (about one-fifth) of their time to constituency service, helping individual citizens get various benefits and services from an often dysfunctional state.

This activity is neither clientelism nor vote buying, because legislators do not make these services contingent on the political loyalties of citizens seeking their assistance. In a text-message audit experiment with a near-census of Indian state and national legislators, she finds that legislators are quite responsive to text-message requests for help, but that this responsiveness does not depend on the partisanship, past voting behavior, or co-ethnicity (caste) of the putative petitioner.

To scholars of American politics, this should sound much like what US congressmen and state legislators are widely accepted to do: provide constituency service on a (mostly) indiscriminating basis in order to generate goodwill and popular support. In fact, on some dimensions, Indian legislators seem to approximate the democratic ideal to a greater extent than US legislators: Indian lawmakers display no bias in terms of caste, whereas similar audit experiments in the United States have found racial bias in responsiveness among legislators.

To many Indians, I suspect, this story will also ring true. In the context of a deeply dysfunctional state and bureaucracy, politicians of all kinds, including legislators, are an important point of contact for citizens in trying to get them critical goods and services to which they are entitled. This is one reason why poor citizens in India—who rely more heavily on government welfare programs than do middle-class and wealthy citizens—also vote and participate politically at greater rates, an inversion of the pattern found in the United States.

For the literature on clientelism, the argument is a radical one. Contrary to the widespread depiction of politicians in developing countries as venal patrons who control the voting behavior of subject clients with material threats and inducements, or as ethnic entrepreneurs who favor mainly their co-ethnics with distributive goods, Bussell offers a picture of distributive politics in India that resembles genuine and often vibrant democratic accountability. Legislators help citizens get access to critical goods and services to which they may not otherwise have access, without discriminating on the basis of political loyalty or ethnicity.

The book also addresses some additional puzzles, including why legislators—who are fairly high-level politicians far removed from the everyday lives of most citizens—are so frequently contacted with relatively mundane requests for assistance. Bussell argues that Indian citizens strategically engage in forum shopping, going to higher-level politicians and legislators when they cannot get assistance from lower-level politicians—for instance, elected village councilors—who are more likely to engage in politically discriminatory practices. Drawing on a survey of citizens, and consistent with prior work, she provides evidence that village council presidents do tend to distribute local distributive goods preferentially to co-partisans.

Clients and Constituents makes many important contributions. It analytically and empirically distinguishes between clientelism and constituency service (something that the literature on clientelism often fails to do, mistakenly treating any individualized contact with politicians in developing countries as “clientelism”); shows that constituency service better describes citizen–legislator interactions in India; and provides a treasure trove of data on representational style in India.

Like any important book, it also provokes questions. One question I had was whether the picture of diligent and effective constituency service that emerges from legislator surveys might not capture more the representational style of legislators than where their efforts and capacities really lie. According to the survey data, national and state legislators claim to receive on average two to three *thousand* visitors every day. This figure seems unrealistic by an order of magnitude. Nevertheless, the results are informative in indicating legislators are keen to represent themselves as such avid providers of constituency service.

Clients and Constituents fits well with other recent scholarship highlighting the richness of grassroots democratic participation and accountability in India. However, an important question for this literature, built over the last decade, is the recent electoral resurgence of Hindu nationalism in India, which has resulted in the erosion of the secularism of the Indian constitution, weakening of the rule of law, repression of minorities, violence against dissenters, and other forms of decay of liberal democracy, on a scale not seen since India’s democracy was altogether suspended during the state of emergency declared by Indira Gandhi between 1975 and 1977. How do we square the responsiveness of individual legislators to their constituents with the authoritarian style of the ruling party to which many legislators collectively belong? This important question is implicitly raised by this book (which was written before the electoral resurgence of the BJP), and future scholarship will have to grapple with it.

The book also opens up rich areas for future inquiry and research, in particular whether individual legislators have the capacity to provide assistance on a large-scale basis that

helps fill the gap of weak state capacity in India in a meaningful way. In India, legislators, like bureaucrats, are deeply capacity constrained. They often lack staff; they face a steep incumbency disadvantage and have to cultivate backup employment options in the absence of corporate boards, think tanks, and party organization that provide such employment in places like the United States; and despite attempts to exert control by constantly transferring bureaucrats, they, like citizens, have a tough time getting the sprawling and dysfunctional bureaucracy to carry out their orders.

The constituency service that legislators provide is vital to those who receive it and an important embodiment of real democratic accountability and responsiveness, as Bussell compellingly documents. Future research could explore whether this is enough to cover the state capacity gap from which India and many other countries, both developing and developed, suffer.

Clients and Constituents makes the case that these kinds of issues are worth studying—and that it may be time to move on from viewing all facets of distributive politics in developing countries through the lens of patronage and clientelism.

Islam, Authoritarianism, and Underdevelopment: A Global and Historical Comparison.

By Ahmet T. Kuru. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019. 316p. \$99.99 cloth, \$34.99 paper.

doi:10.1017/S1537592720000377

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In one of the most important studies on the topic in recent years, Ahmet Kuru examines the causes of contemporary underdevelopment and authoritarianism in the Muslim world. Relying on the key insights of the institutional approach to economic development, Kuru analyzes both how the religio-political institutions that failed the Muslim world were established and legitimized in the first place and the role of ideas in this process.

Kuru argues that the gradual shift in the relationships between the political, economic, and religious classes starting in the eleventh and twelfth centuries reversed the intellectual and economic dynamism in the Muslim world and set in motion the process for its economic and political downfall in the modern period. In early Islamic history, the independence of the ulema class—the Muslim equivalent of the clergy—and the growth of the merchant class underlay notable progress between the ninth and twelfth centuries. The intellectual life in this period, including that of the ulema, was supported by the merchant class and did not rely on the benevolence and support of the political elite, leading to a vibrant and