

Political Corruption: An Introduction to the Issues

Inge Amundsen

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Summary

Corruption is generally defined as the misuse of public authority, and political corruption is here defined as corruption in which the political decision-makers are involved. In addition to a review of the various definitions of corruption a classification of the various forms of corruption (bribery, embezzlement, fraud and extortion), this paper presents two alternative theories on corruption (“extractive” and “redistributive”) in order to illustrate the effects of corruption in various regime types. Furthermore, the paper presents some causes and effects of corruption, in particular in economic and political terms. Finally, there various sources of anti-corruption initiatives and endowment are discussed. Even when the effect of democratisation in curtailing corruption is not too strong according to the possible source of corruption).

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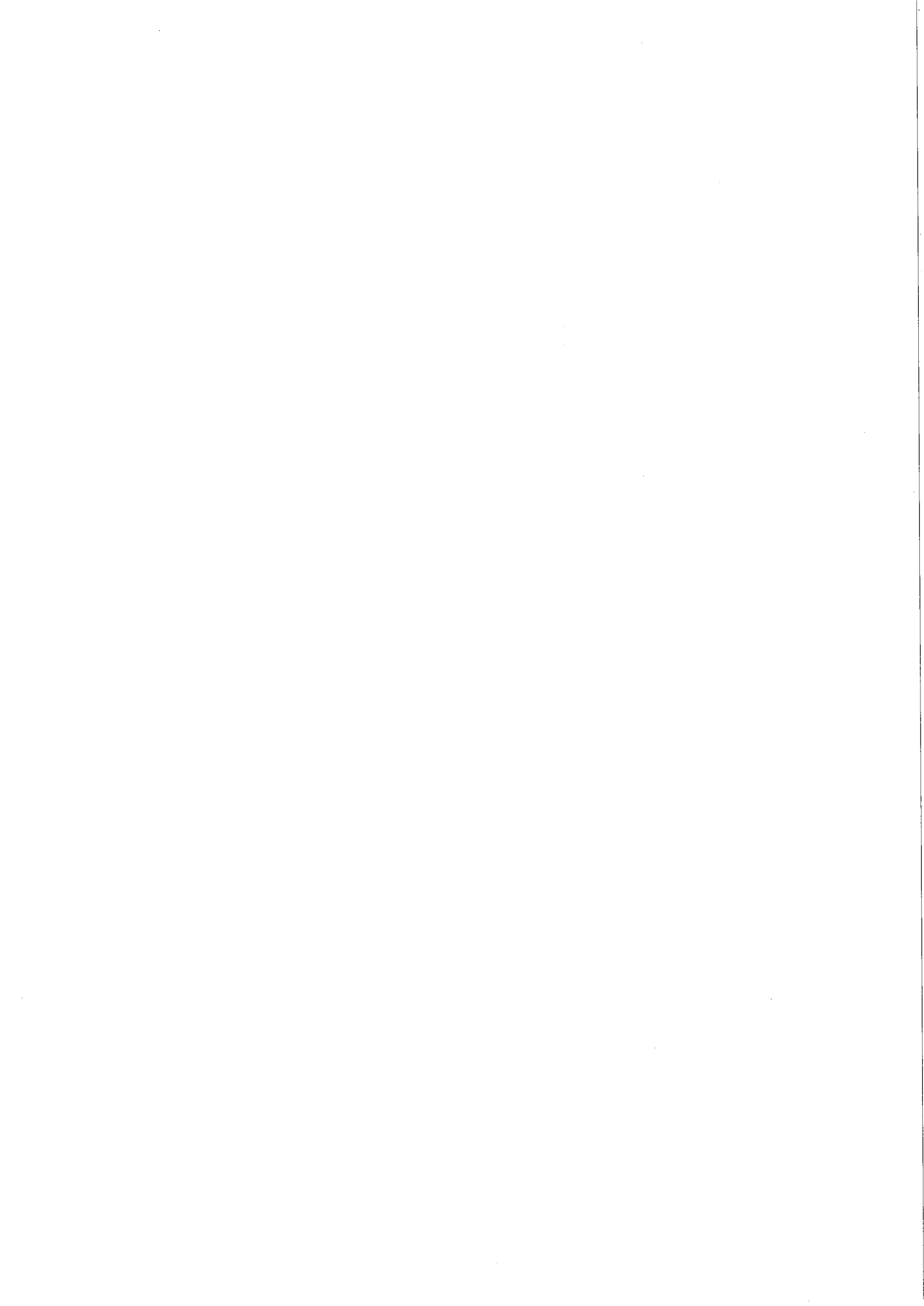
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1. Introduction

Corruption is a disease, a cancer that eats into the cultural, political and economic fabric of society, and destroys the functioning of vital organs. In the words of Transparency International, "*Corruption is one of the greatest challenges of the contemporary world. It undermines good government, fundamentally distorts public policy, leads to the misallocation of resources, harms the private sector and private sector development and particularly hurts the poor*"¹.

Corruption is found almost everywhere, but it is stubbornly entrenched in the poor countries of Sub-Saharan Africa, it is widespread in Latin America, it is deep-rooted in many of the newly industrialised countries, and it is reaching alarming proportions in several of the post-communist countries.

Corruption has been the subject of a substantial amount of theorising and empirical research over the last 30 years, and this has produced a bewildering array of alternative explanations, typologies and remedies. However, as an extensively applied notion in both politics and social sciences, corruption is being used rather haphazardly. Corruption is understood as everything from the paying of bribes to civil servants in return for some favour and the theft of public purses, to a wide range of dubious economic and political practices in which politicians and bureaucrats enrich themselves and any abusive use of public power to a personal end.

Besides, corruption is in itself a many-faceted phenomenon and the concept of corruption contains too many connotations to be analytically functional without a closer definition. The forms of corruption are diverse in terms of who are the actors, initiators and profiteers, how it is done, and to what extent it is practised. Also the causes and the consequences of corruption are complex and diverse, and have been sought in both individual ethics and civic cultures, in history and tradition, in the economic system, in the institutional arrangements, and in the political system.

The intention of this article is to classify the various forms of corruption, in order to make corruption into an analytically useful concept for social sciences, and in particular political science. First of all, some definitorial exercises will discuss the different forms of corruption, and locate corruption as an element in a broader political and economic setting. The connection between corruption – strictly defined – and a number of concepts related to corruption will also be addressed in the first part of this paper. Secondly, the main of causes and effects of corruption will be discussed, and the relationship between corruption and economic and political developments. Finally, some references will be made as to the most relevant methodologies by which studies of corruption can be carried out.

2. Corruption: some definitions

The issue of corruption has to some extent entered the political and economic sciences from the new interest in the role of the state in the developing world, and in particular from the idea that the state is an indispensable instrument for economic development. In contrast to the largely rejected "state-dominated" and "state-less" development models, there is now much consensus on the relevance of an efficient medium-sized state in economic development. The 1997 World Development Report stated that "*an effective state is vital for the provision of the goods and services – and the rules and institutions – that allow markets to flourish and people to lead healthier, happier*

¹ Transparency International, <http://www.transparency.de/mission.html> (Dec. 15th, 1998).

lives. Without it, sustainable development, both economic and social is impossible" (The World Bank 1997:1).

Corruption has come up as a thematic constituent of this renewed paradigm, in which development necessitates economic reform, which is again dependent on political and administrative reforms like good governance and civil service reforms (CRS), accountability, human rights, multipartyism and democratisation. Besides, very high levels of corruption has been observed where the government is regarded as illegitimate in the eyes of the population (implying widespread disrespect for legal procedures), and in countries where the state plays an interventionist role in the economy. The role of the state and of politics is therefore essential to understand corruption.

2.1 *The state is always involved*

The decisive role of the state is also reflected in most definitions of corruption. Corruption is conventionally understood, and referred to, as the private wealth-seeking behaviour of someone who represents the state and the public authority, or as the misuse of public goods by public officials for private ends. The working definition of the World Bank is that corruption is *the abuse of public power for private benefit*.

In Colin Nye's classical and most widely used definition, corruption is "*behaviour which deviates from the formal duties of a public role because of private-regarding (personal, close family, private clique) pecuniary or status gains; or violates rules against the exercise of certain types of private-regarding influence*" (Nye 1967:417). A somewhat updated version with the same elements is found in the definition by Mushtaq Khan, who defines it as "*behaviour that deviates from the formal rules of conduct governing the actions of someone in a position of public authority because of private-regarding motives such as wealth, power, or status*" (Khan 1996:12).

In other words, corruption is a particular (and, one could say, perverted) state-society relation. On the one side is the state, that is the civil servants, functionaries, bureaucrats and politicians, anyone who holds a position of authority to allocate rights over (scarce) public resources in the name of the state or the government. Corruption is when these individuals are misusing the public power they are bestowed with for private benefit. The corrupt act is when this responsible person accepts money or some other form of reward, and then proceeds to misuse his official powers by returning undue favours. For instance, it is an act of corruption when a state official takes a bribe to render some public service that is supposed to be free of charge or demands more than the official cost of it.

The involvement of state officials in corruption is also emphasised in an alternative definition, where corruption is seen as "*a form of secret social exchange through which those in power (political or administrative) take personal advantage, of one type or another, of the influence they exercise in virtue of their mandate or their function*" (Méry cited in de Sardan 1999:49). In sum, almost every definition (or rather conceptualisation) of corruption has a principal focus on the state and politics ("the corrupted"), and a "demand-oriented" perspective.

On the other side of a corrupt act is nevertheless the "supply side", and some theories and conceptualisations exist that emphasise the "corrupters", those who offer the bribes, and the advantages they gain. These suppliers are the general public, or – in other words – the non-state society. The counterparts to the corrupt officials are any non-governmental and non-public individual, corporate and organisational, domestic and external.

Corruption also exists within and between private businesses, within non-governmental organisations, and between individuals in their personal dealings, without any state agency or state official being involved. There is corruption also in the form of bribing, swindling, and mafia-methods within and between private businesses, there are treacherous individuals and disloyal employees also in private firms. This kind of corruption may even have repercussions into the political system as it destroys the public morale, and it may be symptomatic for the general economic and moral development of a society.

However, most definitions of corruption will exclude this intra-societal corruption, and emphasise corruption as a state-society relationship. This is quite appropriate as long as the focus is *not* exclusively on the personal, cultural and social aspects of corruption. Business-internal corruption can and will normally be handled as a disciplinary problem within the firm, as a judicial problem within a given legal framework, or as a moral problem within a cultural setting. Therefore, in contrast to corrupt state-society relations, business internal corruption will not necessarily have to consider the broader political and economic issues.

2.2 *Political corruption and bureaucratic corruption (“grand” vs. “petty”)*

In the definition shared by most political scientists, political corruption is any transaction between private and public sector actors through which collective goods are illegitimately converted into private-regarding payoffs (Heidenheimer et. al. 1993:6). This definition does not, however, distinguish clearly between political and bureaucratic corruption. It establishes the necessary involvement of the state and state agents in corruption, without any notion as to the level of authority where corruption takes place.

In a more strict definition, *political corruption involves political decision-makers*. Political or *grand* corruption takes place at the high levels of the political system. It is when the politicians and state agents, who are entitled to make and enforce the laws in the name of the people, are themselves corrupt. Political corruption is when political decision-makers use the political power they are armed with, to sustain their power, status and wealth. Thus, political corruption can be distinguished from bureaucratic or *petty* corruption, which is corruption in the public administration, at the implementation end of politics.

Even when the distinction between political and bureaucratic corruption is rather ambiguous as it depends on the separation of politics from administration (which is unclear in most political systems), the distinction is important in analytical and in practical terms. Political corruption occurs at the top level of the state, and it has political repercussions.

Political corruption not only leads to the misallocation of resources, but it also affects the manner in which decisions are made. Political corruption is the manipulation of the political institutions and the rules of procedure, and therefore it influences the institutions of government and the political system, and it frequently leads to institutional decay. Political corruption is therefore something *more* than a deviation from formal and written legal norms, from professional codes of ethics and court rulings. Political corruption is when laws and regulations are more or less systematically abused by the rulers, side-stepped, ignored, or even tailored to fit their interests². Political corruption is a deviation from the rational-legal values and

² According to Carbonell-Catilo, President Ferdinand Marcos of the Philippines for instance rewrote sections of the Philippine Constitution to legalise his looting of the nation's wealth (cited in Johnston 1996:323).

principles of the modern state, and the basic problem is the weak accountability between the governors and the governed. In particular in authoritarian countries, the legal bases, against which corrupt practices are usually evaluated and judged, are weak and furthermore subject to downright encroachment by the rulers.

The formal legal framework of the state is therefore insufficient as terms of reference to assess and judge the problem of political corruption. Moral, normative, ethical, and indeed political benchmarks will have to be brought in, not at least because it will be necessary to discern legality from legitimacy when it comes to political corruption. Besides, whereas bureaucratic corruption normally can be dealt with through auditing, legislation, and institutional arrangements, the degenerative effects of political corruption cannot be counteracted by an administrative approach alone. Endemic political corruption calls for radical political reforms.

Political corruption (usually supported by widespread bureaucratic or *petty* corruption) should furthermore be considered as one of the basic modes of operation of authoritarian regimes. It is one of the mechanisms through which the authoritarian power-holders enrich themselves. Here, corruption is rarely a disease that the responsible politicians are eager to avoid, it is a deliberate, wanted and applied practice; it is one of the rulers' modes of enrichment and economic control. Political corruption is consequently a "normal" condition in authoritarian countries, although showing a great variety according to the various forms of authoritarianism.

However, as demonstrated by a large number of corruption scandals in liberal democracies over the years, political corruption is not restricted to authoritarian systems. Nevertheless, by maintaining the link between authoritarianism and political corruption, and a definition of political corruption in terms of state prerogatives manipulated to serve the interests of the rulers, one will see that the essence of the problem of political corruption differs much between authoritarian and liberal democratic regimes. In democratic countries, the problem of political corruption is more of an incidental and occasional nature, and can be dealt with within the existing political system; by reforming, strengthening and vitalising the existing political institutions of checks and balances.

2.3 *Private corruption and collective corruption ("individual" vs. "aggregated")*

Observations as well as input from political theory have led to a second analytically important classification of corruption, namely between *private* and *collective* forms of corruption. The degree to which the money or benefits collected through corruption is "privatised", is varying. It may be extraction for the benefit of an individual who will share nothing or very little of the benefits with his equals, or it may be extraction for a particular group with some coherence and unity.

The "private", individual and intimate nature of corruption is repeatedly underlined because of the illegal and surreptitious nature of corrupt transactions. The illegality and immorality of corruption necessitates a collusion or conspiracy between individuals, or at least a certain closeness and confidentiality. As noted, Méry called it a form of *secret* social exchange (Méry cited in de Sardan 1999:49). Furthermore, corruption is regarded as "private" or individual also because private benefits are sought and collected. Corruption holds some private benefit for the corrupt actor, his family or his close friends.

However, corruption may also be "collective". First of all because corruption has a substantial economic effect in aggregate terms, but also because corruption may in itself be a deliberate way of resource extraction for the benefit of a larger group. Some definitions of corruption also emphasises the point that the rulers as a group or

class, or as an institution or organisation, make unjustified use of their influence to extract resources for the benefit of the group as such. Many well-known and well documented cases of grand corruption has involved political parties (ruling parties in particular, but also prospective ruling parties), entire administrative bureaux, and national governments.

Corruption has a strong inclination for "collectivisation". To keep quiet and gradually take part in the practice is usually much less costly than to blow the whistle, inform, and confront. A conspiracy between individuals is easily extended into a larger practice involving colleagues, partners, assistants, patrons and superiors. Instances of petty corruption may therefore develop into larger networks, cliques and medium-sized brotherhoods, and finally into large-scale institutionalised corruption if unchecked, if there is "room for manoeuvre".

As corruption spreads, the social acceptance of it may also increase. When it is generally understood that there is a climate of corruption, still more people will believe it is inevitable and expected. In particular is corruption in high places contagious to lower level bureaucrats and other state agents, as these will follow the predatory examples of, or even take instructions from, their principals.

2.4 *Redistributive and extractive corruption ("from below" vs. "from above")*

In whose interest does corruption take place, and who benefits the most from corruption? The various definitions of corruption maintain that the state (or some state agent) is always involved, and that corruption is basically a particular state-society relationship. It is furthermore maintained that this relationship is based on a mutual exchange of benefits, that it is an exchange from which both the state (the state agent) and the society (the individual citizen, client or businessman) will draw some immediate and private benefit. This relationship of mutual exchange is rarely balanced, however. In aggregate terms corrupt practices will generate a flow of resources either from the society to the state (extractive corruption, or corruption from above), or from the state to the society (redistributive corruption, or corruption from below).

As noted by Heidenheimer, some researchers have made the distinction between corruption initiated by the office-holder and corruption initiated by the favour-seeker (Heidenheimer et.al., 1993:12). This is a useful distinction, but as the initiator takes the initiative to corrupt the relationship presumably because he believes corruption will be to his benefit more than to his disadvantage, this distinction overlaps with the distinction between corruption in the interest of the state agents and corruption in the interest of non-state actors.

To complicate this a bit further, it should be noted that upward and downward flows can take place simultaneously in different sectors and at different levels. Some ministries may for instance be very efficient in illegal resource extraction while others may be vulnerable to external influence and be extorted. Furthermore, the flows of resources differ much in quality. The resources exchanged can be countables like money, wealth and fiscal privileges to the one party, and uncountables like "influence", "identity" and "security" to the other.

This implies for instance that the state as a group or elite may extract substantial resources in the form of wealth and power *from* the nation or the society at large, while the society in return will have only symbolic resources like protection and national identity. In many cases, corrupt practices have established extremely well to do political and state-based elites (ruling classes) amidst poverty and recession. On the other hand, businesses and other groups may be very successful in getting tax

exemptions and other privileges from corrupt officials in weak states, to the extent that the unity and coherence of the state and its policies are ruined, the policy implementation capacity ravaged, and the resources of the nation depleted. In extreme situations, the state may be held hostage to and torn apart by forceful groups in society.

The effect of the corrupted state-society relationship, and the direction the aggregated flow of resources will take, is not given *a priori*. Only historical and empirical research into this relationship in given countries can reveal its true character. The role of corruption within this broader perspective of a state-society relationship is, however, usually understood –implicitly, and in aggregate terms– as either benefiting certain sectors of the society (like business interests and emerging capitalist classes) or certain state elites (like juntas and single-party nomenclatures).

The theory of redistributive corruption

In what can be called the *theory of redistributive corruption*, the state is the weaker part in the state-society relationship. Here, various social and economic groups, interests or individuals are organised and powerful enough to draw more benefit from the corrupt practices they engage in with the state as a counterpart, than is the state and the ruling elite. The main beneficiaries of the resources extracted, privatised and consumed are not the political and state-based elite, but state resources are depleted and distributed to various groups and interests according to the power configurations in each country³.

The theory of redistributive corruption is based on the experience of some of the most fragmented states in the world, like Bangladesh where state degradation is largely due to the relative power of clientelist networks, and Russia where there is an extreme growth in mafia activity. The focus is mainly on the “subversive” groups and powers, and the degenerative effects of this kind of corruption on state institutions and the national economy. Here, politically strong and organised groups will for instance be able to challenge state authority “from below” through corruption. Through corruption, alliances will be forced with functionaries who will deliver state services and goods; politicians will be bought to tailor rights and regulations that will benefit those who pay for it; and political influence will be bribed or extorted as the regime’s mere survival may depend on political support from these groups.

Who, in society, will benefit the most from this kind of corruption depends on the local distribution of forces. It might be powerful ethnic or regional groups or clans who are strong enough to extract much more from the state than their fair part of public investments, development projects, international aid, regional autonomy and representation in national institutions. It might be foreign or local corporate interests that are able to buy under-priced national resources, concessions, preferential treatments, permissions, and tax exemptions. It might be the general population, individuals who are able to buy benefits like tax exemptions, subsidies, pensions, or unemployment insurance, or get preferential access to privileged schools, medical care, housing, real estate or ownership stakes in enterprises being privatised.

The loser in this game is the state and its regulating capacity. When private citizens, commercial businesses (local and international) and various interest groups (formal and informal, modern and traditional) are able to buy national and public resources cheaply, to buy exceptions, privileges, immunity and impunity through the

³ Therefore, the notion of “redistribution”. However, this notion does not imply any equal or fair allocation of resources. The distribution of resources still follows the distribution of power in society.

use of kickbacks and mafia methods vis-à-vis public officials, the state will be eroded. The effect of “redistributive” corruption is that the state is rendered incapacitated and politically impotent. The capacity of the state to extract taxes and render public services will be eroded; its ability to implement coherent policies is destroyed, as well as the state’s ability to transform the society and the economy according to political priorities and to execute rational development policies.

Furthermore, redistributive corruption will “particularly hurt the poor” because resources are privatised and redistributed according to the ability of groups to influence policies through pressure and bribes, and not through the principle of “one man one vote”. Resources will not be distributed according to “universalistic” or ideological considerations of needs and fairness. Those in most need of political redistribution, in terms of basic public services like schools, health, social services, and state protection, will suffer the most when the state’s capacity is crippled.

Feudalisation is a term that has been used when weak states are manipulated by strong societies, when the state is losing control to “civilian” forces. Feudalisation refers to the “privatisation” and “decentralisation” of the state, and underlines the clientelist relationship involved. Feudalisation occurs when entire geographical areas, economic sectors and/or military units are taken over by “private” interests. In the short run, a ruler might benefit from deliberate feudalisation in terms of loyalty (from local or regional strongmen, clientelist groups or vassals), and in terms of an assured delivery of the votes for the ruling party in elections, but in the long run the unity of the state is jeopardised.

The case *par excellence* is Russia, where the control of large tracts of the state’s prerogatives and institutions like regional tax bases, military regions, security operations, and even legislation, have been handed over as fiefs to private powers like bankers, private companies and military leaders⁴. In Cameroon, in return for loyalty and the delivery of votes, the president and ruling party have given certain regions ruled by ancient dynasties almost unrestricted powers⁵. The president has bought their loyalty by giving them the exclusive right of local taxation, and the “palace guards” of the have developed into paramilitary forces with unrestricted tribunals and dreaded prisons. In both cases, the problem is that when the ruler or the state elite through “feudalisation” is able to retain and secure its control of the central government and of important regions, the everlasting faithfulness of the latter is never guaranteed.

The theory of extractive corruption

In the alternative view, in what can be called the *theory of extractive corruption*, the state is the stronger part in the state-society relationship. According to this theory, the corrupted (the state or some state agent) benefits the most from corruption and the corrupter is more or less a passive player. Essentially, the ruling elite is the strongest force in society, this elite or class uses the state apparatus as its instrument to extract resources from society, and it does so for the benefit of the rulers. This theory is partly based on the operation of authoritarian countries in general, and on the experience of the neo-patrimonial states in particular.

⁴ “Thus, just as the Carolingian Emperors dealt with the attacks of the Vikings, Hungarians, and Saracenes by turning over provinces to their officials as fiefs, Yeltsin turned over the interest on the state’s money to the new bankers in return for (illegal) campaign contributions, and turned over control of the Fourteenth Army in Moldova to General Lebed in return for his putting pressure on the Ukraine flank” (Fairbanks Jr., 1999, p.48).

⁵ The two most well known are the sultanates of Bamoun in the West province and Rey Bouba in the North province.

The theory mainly applies where the state is not only the strongest force in society, but also where a ruling elite has developed into a dominant and ruling class in control of the powers of the state. The theory also emphasises the well-known remark that *all power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely*. That is, the more political power is concentrated exclusively in the hands of a few individuals, the greater the temptation for power abuse, selfish wealth-seeking and primitive extraction.

The theory of extractive corruption is based on the mainstream political science notion of authoritarianism, namely a rule basically in the interest of the rulers that is ultimately based on force. Authoritarian rulers are using the power capabilities of the state in the struggle for power, to attain, retain and increase their powers, and to accumulate resources from the nation and from the ruled, for private benefit. This understanding of authoritarianism dates back to the classic writings of the Greek philosopher Aristotle, who made the distinction between “rule of law” and “rule of force”. The rule of law was democratic rule for the benefit of the entire population (all citizens, the public or the nation as such), whereas the rule of force was an authoritarian, perverted and corrupted form of rule for the advantage of the ruler (the tyrant or some oligarchy)⁶.

Authoritarian regimes have ever since usually been understood and portrayed in terms of some ruling elite or class that uses and misuses the powers of the state primarily to safeguard their own corporate or class interests, at the detriment of –and usually in conflict with– other groups and interests in society. In political terms, the means available for authoritarian rulers range from charisma and persuasion to the overt use of violence. They may use sophisticated institutional arrangements like for instance presidential systems, single party systems, and the cooptation of rivals in order to restrict participation and power sharing. They may use censorship and electoral fraud, establish unjust laws and disrespect the laws they have made themselves, and use human rights violations like political surveillance and intimidation, imprisonment and torture. In economic terms, corruption, and in particular political corruption, is only one of the many modes of economic accumulation and private appropriation applied by authoritarian rulers.

The theory of extractive corruption is furthermore derived from the relatively stable and rather flexible *neo-patrimonial* political systems found in most of Africa and in a few Latin American and Asian countries. Neo-patrimonialism is a widely used concept in political science for this sub-category of non-democratic and semi-democratic regimes characterised by pervasive patron-client structures, the non-distinction between public and private, and political weakness.

Neo-patrimonialism is defined as a political system where the chief executive maintains authority through personal patronage, rather than through ideology or law. As with the classical or “traditional” patrimonialism described by Max Weber, the right to rule is ascribed to a person rather than an office, and exercised more through the informal clientelist and nepotist practices than through formal routes of authority⁷. What makes the *neo-patrimonial* system different from the patrimonial ones, is that the neo-patrimonial regime maintains a façade of modernity, legality, rationality, and professional bureaucratic structures. However, underneath what appear to rational and

⁶ Aristotle (384-322 BC): *The Polis*. Hammondsworth, 1991, Penguin.

⁷ In a truly patrimonial system there is no distinction between public and private, and the modern idea of corruption will make no sense because the ruler’s personal income is the same as the government’s revenue, and there is no nepotism because there is no criterion for appointment to office other than the ruler’s favour.

legal processes and structures, the clientelist and patrimonial logics prevail. Relationships of loyalty and dependence pervade the formal and administrative structures, and leaders occupy bureaucratic and political positions less to perform public services than to acquire personal wealth and status (Bratton & van de Walle 1994:458).

In neo-patrimonial systems, there is no clear distinction between the public and the private domain. Public office and position is seen as a personal asset and a personal right, and it is treated as a private resource. Thus, the entire political system is characterised by a deep and thorough privatisation and usurpation of public resources. Politics is to a large extent about distributing resources in the form of jobs, contracts, scholarships, gifts and other public resources to one's relatives, friends and political allies.

Furthermore, politics is about acquiring wealth and prestige through the system of prebendal accumulation, which has also been called "parasitism" and "kleptocracy". That is, public authority is used by the rulers to extract resources from the ruled and from the nation's riches. Public office is used to enforce the collection of prebends and "gifts" of all sorts from the dependent clients. Corruption, embezzlement, theft and extortion are used to make private fortunes, and political power is used by power-holders to enter into profitable businesses (and to establish monopoly rights, tax exemptions and other advantages for these). Nationalisation, indigenisation, privatisation, the allocation of monopoly rights, land entitlements, subsidies, subsidised credits, import and export licences and tariffs, and a number of other public resources are likewise distributed according to the patrimonial logic.

Clientelism is a basic feature of the neo-patrimonial system. This is the sophisticated hierarchic network of patron-client relationships through which the patrons grant services, positions, and public support to his clients, in exchange for political and material support. These clientelist "networks of reciprocities" or "nets of interaction" are used by patrons at different levels to build support through the extraction and distribution of wealth and prestige, constructing a pyramid of social differentiation. Villagers for instance relate as clients to landowners, traders, saints, local administrators and others taking the roles of patronising middlemen. These low class clients then offer electoral support, social prestige, religious support, labour and material and fiscal benefits to their patron, in return for his protection, leadership and a sense of belonging. From the level of the middlemen, the clientelist system extends all the way up to the president of the republic.

In most Sub-Saharan African countries, long lasting patrimonial and clientelist practices have over the years established what has been called hegemonic elites, or ruling state-classes. These are composed of a rather small elite of politically and economically dominating families. Studies have shown that the countries like the Côte d'Ivoire and Cameroon is ruled and dominated by an elite composed of some 50 families or approximately 1000 individuals who are controlling most of the public as well as the private sector (Amundsen 1997).

In neo-patrimonial countries, political corruption is an integrated part of the clientelist system, it is what is labelled in French "*la fraude érigée en système*", institutionalised political corruption. Political corruption is here one of the economic backbones of the state elite, its domination and survival. The extractive capacity of a

