

**CORRUPTION AS A CULTURAL AND ETHNIC PHENOMENON**

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Abstract

The topic of corruption has been one of the most attractive for researchers of the widest range during the last decades. The fact is that it is an extremely paradoxical phenomenon, since the theoretical degree of its study, as well as the intensity of practical measures to combat it do not contribute to its eradication or even reduction of its manifestations. At the same time, corruption continues to have an extremely negative impact on the social life of society and its everyday reality.

Introduction

Corruption continues to have an extremely negative impact on the social life of society, on its everyday reality, which is why scholars are striving to expand the boundaries of existing approaches to this "serious violation.

In addition to the destructive social aspect, corruption is characterized by the degradation of individual human morality. Unprincipled power of money is established in society, and money itself acts as a permissive document legalizing the most unworthy manifestations of man. This is the "cynical function of money" that P. Sloterdijk speaks of. In this sense, the danger posed by corruption is self-evident. We will not give any statistical data to show its real scale because any attempts to justify corruption as an economically expedient phenomenon seem immoral, coming from narrow utilitarian considerations.

Another problem that makes the phenomenon of corruption an important philosophical and anthropological topic is its alleged intractability and irredeemability. In this case the appeal to the "criminal nature" of human beings often looks helpless and intensive legal work turns out to be ineffective. It is obvious that the phenomenon of corruption should be studied not only in the sociopolitical and economic spheres, but also in the philosophical and anthropological dimension. The corrupt act is connected with existential, moral and religious manifestations of human nature which require methods of new philosophical analytics for their research. This is the defining thesis of our work, setting the key vector of the study of corruption in the context of philosophical and social anthropology. Undoubtedly, corruption is both a social and an individual evil, and only a comprehensive study of it can contribute to overcoming it as much as possible.

1. One of the main reasons for the inefficiency of state, legal, socio-political and civil anti-corruption measures is that corruption is looked at as an external social phenomenon without analysing the fundamental internal anthropological reasons - existential, moral and religious factors forming the integral human anthropological configuration. Studying the



phenomenon of corruption in the context of philosophical and social anthropology makes it possible to reveal the underlying motives behind the act of corruption, which helps to develop more effective anti-corruption measures as well as to develop measures of anthropological expertise.

2. An essential factor for philosophical and anthropological analysis of corruption is to understand this phenomenon in a broad historical and cultural context, since corrupt behaviour largely depends on the accepted norms and standards of a particular cultural community, which go deep into the traditions and customs of cultural and civilisation systems. We have identified the following parallels between national character traits and patterns of corrupt behavior: deformation of the "sense of kinship" - wide spread of nepotism (cronyism); hypertrophy of moral principles (moral centerism) and low legal culture of opposing corruption; false aspiration to "allness", which generates tolerant attitude to various forms of social evil (including corruption).

3. existential origins of corruption include three main factors which significantly expand the understanding of this phenomenon and help to develop more efficient measures to fight it: deprivation, frustration and deviation. Deprivation is a mechanism revealing human striving for power in general, which is fraught with corruption costs; frustration is a spiritual ailment of modern consumer society seeking to compensate anxiety with irrepressible consumption, which entails corrupt ways of income; deviation is the most complicated form of social behaviour testifying to relativity and conventionality of moral norms and values, including corruption.

4. Corruption by its nature is a complex phenomenon in which sociality has a deep inner connection with anthropological anomalies of personality (moral pathology). This allows us to shift the emphasis from the social and political dimensions of this phenomenon to the personal (moral and anthropological) dimensions. In this context, L. Acton's statement that "all power corrupts, absolute power corrupts ab-absolutely" is criticized, as it is proved that there is no direct connection between power and moral vice. Philosophical anthropological analysis allowed us to identify specific vices inherent in corrupt behavior, such as hypertrophied passion for gain, pursuit of personal gain, greediness and venality. Appeal to T. Hobbes made it possible to reveal the source of corruption as a social evil.

5. The study showed the existence of a deep interconnection between corruption and the religious factor. The economic category "self-interest" is synonymous to such a negative religious concept as "greed", which forms a semantic field with the core "covetousness", the components of which are "hoarding", "usury", "avarice", "greediness", "covetousness", "greediness", "hoarderism", "greed". It is shown that the spiritual potential of Christian doctrine can be the most effective means to overcome corruption as religion realizes spiritual and moral neutralization of deep anthropological sources and properties of this phenomenon.

6. The widespread spread of corruption, in addition to the factor of personal moral depravity, is also caused by a general decline in the spiritual culture of society, which is in a state of value relativism and indifference. This is explained by the axiological shift of the values of consumer society, turned toward hedonism. An indicator of the decline of spiritual culture is the lowering of the status of labor, which becomes primarily a tool of material



enrichment. The transformation of the axiology of labor is largely related to the change in the anthropological status of homo faber, which is being replaced by the anthropological type of symbolic analysts. Honest labor ceases to be a value in modern society, which opens the way to unjust forms of enrichment, among which corruption is the most widespread. We can talk about the interconnection of the following phenomena: decrease in the spiritual culture of society - decrease in the axiological status of labor - spread of corruption. All this requires increasing the social and symbolic status of honest labor, which can become a real restriction of corrupt activities.

Analysis of the mental prerequisites for corruption leads to a fairly clear distinction between "Western" and "Eastern" types of corrupt mentality. Accordingly, each type carries the basic features of the culture within which certain types of corrupt acts are legitimized. This contact problematizes questions about domestic corruption, about its belonging to the Eastern or Western type, how domestic mentality is predisposed to corrupt behavior.

Between national character traits identified by Western philosophy and patterns of corrupt behavior, e.g:

- a special sense of kinship (the philosophy of N.F. Fedorov) - widespread "nepotism";
- the hypertrophy of moral principles (moral-centrism) - lack of legal culture of confrontation with corruption
- the desire for omnipresence - a tolerant attitude towards various forms of social evil (including corruption).

National traits and national values, reflected in the concept of "mentality," are long-term and enduring. In this sense, it is extremely inconsiderate to underestimate the mental factor. The question that arises in this connection is related to the possibilities of interpretation of mental factors, including the fight against negative manifestations of these national traits.

Conclusions:

- the majority of interpretations of corruption come down to the social interpretation of this phenomenon, which has mainly economic, political and criminological origins;
- Among the factors indicating, on the one hand, the difficulty of studying corruption and, on the other hand, the ineffectiveness of existing measures to combat it, are the antiquity and universality of this phenomenon, covering almost the entire known history of human civilisation;
- among the factors influencing the form and intensity of corruption are factors of cultural and elemental order. The typology of existing forms of corruption divides it into Eastern and Western types with inherent features of Eastern and Western culture;
- the most acute and dramatic issue is the question of mental preconditions of domestic corruption, which involves polar points of view on the nature and essence of domestic culture in general.



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