1. Introduction to the *Handbook on the Geographies of Corruption*

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Corruption consists of an insidious set of practices through which government officials use their offices for private gain. Corruption exists in virtually all countries across the planet and has numerous debilitating economic, political, social, and environmental costs. Manifested in various forms, including bribery, extortion, nepotism, and graft, corruption lowers economic growth, makes public institutions less efficient, hampers foreign investment, undermines trust in the state, and reduces the quality of life for billions of people. Most countries in the world are corrupt, and its presence makes life more inconvenient, less safe, and lowers standards of living.

Given its extent and severity, it comes as no surprise that there is a robust literature that examines the history, causes, effects, and implications of corruption. Excellent overviews may be found in Jain (2001, 2012) and Rose-Ackerman (2006). Among the social sciences, economists have offered extensive analyses of corruption's impacts (see Aidt 2003; Bardhan 2006), including the effects on growth (Mauro 1995; Mo 2001), income inequality (Gupta et al. 2002), and foreign investment (Wei 2000; Habib and Zurawicki 2002). Political scientists have written insightfully about corruption and bribery (Bose 2004), the role of an uncensored media (Brunetti and Weder 2003), and anti-corruption strategies (Klitgaard 1998; Brinkerhoff 2000), often using game theory. Sociologists have studied corruption's influence on government (Rose-Ackerman and Palifka 2016), networks and actors (Jancsics 2014), and its relations to democracy (Moreno 2002).

However, within this body of work, issues of geography and spatiality have been marginalized. Just as there is a history and sociology of corruption, so too is there a geography. Corruption occurs unevenly throughout the globe, and reflects diverse national economic, political, and cultural circumstances. For this reason, this Handbook attempts to address this void. While corruption is most obvious in less developed countries, particularly those with totalitarian governments and centralized systems of power, it also exists in wealthier ones, including the United States (Teachout 2014). The causes and consequences of corruption vary among states, as have strategies to contain it.

THE NATURE OF CORRUPTION

Corruption may be defined in different ways, occurs in varying levels of severity, and takes various forms in time and space, depending on local political cultures and institutional frameworks. Broadly, it refers to the misuse of public office for private gains, the abuse of power, and dishonest and fraudulent conduct, typically through bribery, graft, or extortion. In this sense, corruption should be differentiated from individual misbehavior or law-breaking. Its primary practitioners are politicians, legislators, bureaucrats, civil service employees, and military officials. Technically, corruption is by definition illegal, although in different cultural contexts its legality, and hence acceptability, range considerably. Not all illegal acts involve corruption because most crimes do not involve the misuse of public offices. At times, public policies that serve an elite few may be corrupt but not illegal, as in the case of post-retirement offers of employment (e.g., lobbyists) to high ranking civil servants. Corruption is thus inherently both political and economic in nature.

Corruption takes a variety of forms, all of which involve the transfer of assets from public to private hands. It ranges from individual acts such as accepting bribes to petty theft among small groups to grand larceny on an organized, institutional scale, in which elites engineer an entire government to serve their own purposes. It may involve the diversion of monies to private purposes, including foreign bank accounts, leading officials to enrich themselves at public expense. Perhaps the most common form is bribery, the improper use of gifts and money to obtain favors. In many countries, "fees" or "tea money" are euphemisms for facilitating transactions, moving contracts through a bureaucracy, or not reporting crimes. In many cases, bribery is seen simply as the "cost of doing business," that is, a normalized part of economic functioning. In Russia, a terminological distinction exists between *mzdoimstvo*, taking remuneration to do what a public official is supposed to do anyway, and *likhoimstvo*, taking remuneration for what the official is not supposed to do (Bardhan 1997).

Other forms of corruption involve graft, embezzlement, and theft, which may be accompanied by blackmail or extortion. In hiring, nepotism and political favoritism may occur. Other cases include the sale of military commissions and siphoning of monies from inflated payrolls, overinvoicing, and selling of licenses and permits, allocations of government contracts, and mining and land concessions. Customs inspectors are notorious agents of corruption in many cases. Additionally, corrupt judiciaries flout the rule of law, refusing to penalize corrupt officials and minimizing penalties. The purchase of legislative votes constitutes yet another form. All of these examples share in common the use of public office to promote private gains, the abuse of state power, and exercise of public bureaucratic or financial authority for purposes other than they were intended.

THE CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES OF CORRUPTION

Corruption is a form of rent-seeking behavior that occurs when the benefits of the misuse of public power exceed the expected costs (i.e., the probability of being apprehended and the penalties that might follow). It requires that an official have discretionary power over the allocation of state resources; the greater the power, the stronger is the temptation to abuse it. Corruption thus involves avoiding or changing state regulations through the use of political authority; as Jain (2001, p. 78) argues, "therefore, we would expect to find larger discretionary powers, and hence more corruption, in regulated and controlled economies as opposed to market economies." The prevalence and severity of corruption are therefore a function of the expected gains it yields, how much those gains exceed legitimate forms of income (e.g., salaries), local cultural and political mores, the probability of being caught, and the punishments associated with exposure.

Klitgaard (1998) famously proposed that corruption occurs when the gains (monetary or political) exceed the expected costs, that is, the penalties multiplied by the probability of being caught. In this logic, corruption is a function of the discretion and power of corrupt officials as well as the degree of accountability and transparency they face. Greater authoritative oversight and penalties should, at least in theory, reduce the magnitude of corruption.

Corruption flourishes in states where important decisions are made out of view of the public, lack an independent media, have a judiciary highly amenable to the influence of power-holders, restrict civil liberties, and where legal channels are not equally available to everyone. In such environments, nepotism, favoritism, and political connections take the place of market-based criteria or meritocracies (Fisman 2001). Essentially, the practice requires lack of effective oversight and enforcement of existing laws, leading to inadequate accountability; corruption thus tends to be most common in highly centralized political systems. Bardhan (2006) usefully differentiates between political corruption, in which extra-legal means are used to gain power, and administrative or bureaucratic corruption, in which control over state resources is used for private gains. In countries where there is not much difference between political parties and the state, however, such as Vietnam or China, this distinction is small.

Another common cause of corruption is underpaid public employees, notably police officers and customs officials. Goel and Nelson (1989) found that in the United States, higher salaries were associated with reduced bribe-taking, although van Rijckeghent and Weder (2001) discovered empirically that large salary increases are needed to reduce corruption.

The ties between globalization and corruption are complex and geographically variable. Lalountas et al. (2011), using cross-sectional data for 127 countries, found that globalization (in the forms of foreign direct investment and import penetration) mitigated corruption in relatively developed countries but had no impact on corruption in poorer ones. Corrupt practices such as smuggling or black market money exchanges flourish when government policies are overly restrictive, unduly complicated, irrational, rigid, or unrealistic (such as setting official exchange rates too high). Corrupt countries tend to have porous borders through which drugs, weapons, or slaves may be moved easily.

Corruption owes much to insufficient transparency, as it is typically conducted in secrecy, including backroom deals wherein local elites manipulate the state for their own ends. When bribery is mutually beneficial for public officials and those bribing them, neither has an incentive to report the payments made. For this reason, it is commonly argued that democratic societies tend to have lower levels of corruption because they create mechanisms for accountability and the enforcement of laws (Moreno 2002). Indeed, many of the most notoriously corrupt governments today are profoundly anti-democratic. Countries with a relatively unfettered media, in which the press can publicize public sector misbehavior, have lower levels of corruption (Brunetti and Weder 2003).

The geographic variability of corruption also reflects national and cultural differentials in social norms. As Bardhan (1997, p. 1330) puts it, "What is regarded in one culture as corrupt may be considered a part of routine transaction in another." Interpersonal interactions may be monetized, such as with the payment of *baksheesh* in many Middle Eastern and South Asian countries. Gift exchanges are often held to be a regular part of doing business in many developing countries. But such explanations border on the tautological: a country is deemed corrupt because its culture is corrupt. Gender roles also play a role: Swamy et al. (2001) demonstrate that corruption tends to be mitigated when women hold larger shares of political office and high-level administrative positions (see also Goetz 2000).

Widespread, endemic corruption has a variety of corrosive social and economic effects. Notably, it engenders despair and resignation, saps the morale of the public, and leads to widespread cynicism and distrust of the government. Corruption undermines the credibility of the state, erodes public confidence, contributing to what Habermas (1973) famously called a legitimation crisis, in which the legitimacy of the state becomes problematic for social reproduction.

Ironically, at times, when the machinery of government moves too slowly, corrupt practices such as bribery may actually improve the functioning of the state. For example, in many countries "speed money" is used to cut through bureaucratic red tape and reduce queues for government contracts (Bose 2004). This phenomenon has generated a debate between those who argue that corruption "greases the wheels" of the state and those who maintain it "throws sand in the gears." In addition, corruption increases the size of the underground economy and the black market, including smuggling and the drug trade.

Corruption undermines the efficiency and effectiveness of government policies. Endemic corruption may push an administrative system to the point of collapse. It may lead, for example, to shortages of medical and military supplies and delays in the delivery of funds. Bribes may lead to the shoddy construction of buildings and infrastructure using substandard materials such as concrete diluted with too much sand, which increases the risk from earthquake damage, resulting in unnecessary fatalities, as recent quakes in Turkey and China revealed. Foreign aid, such as famine relief, may end up being sold on the black market, never reaching those it was intended to help. Nepotistic hiring practices lead to overstaffing of government offices and unqualified personnel. Corruption also inhibits effective natural resource management: in a case study of Indian forest management, Robbins (2000) concludes that corruption selectively stressed some elements of the ecosystem and not others.

A raft of economic studies concludes that corruption tends to alarm investors, misallocates talent and capital, and retards economic growth (Mauro 1995; Bardhan 1997; Aidt 2003; Rose-Ackerman 2006). Bribes and similar payments distort the allocation of public resources, leading to a schism between the intended and the privately appropriated benefits of capital, as when public funds for construction are used to build luxury homes for government officials. Corruption and economic inequality are thus closely related (Gupta et al. 2002). Corruption also reduces legitimate rent-seeking investments, including the introduction of new products and technologies, for which the demand is price-inelastic. Innovators generally lack extensive political connections and are more susceptible to demands for bribes than are most firms. High levels of corruption are thus associated with reduced foreign direct investment (Wei 2000; Habib and Zurawicki 2002). In a sense, corruption raises the transactions costs of economic activities, reducing efficiency and lowering productivity.

Corruption raises the barriers to entry for non-privileged groups, notably those lacking in political connections and funds for bribes and kickbacks. Thus Mo (2001) found that a 1 percent increase in the level of corruption reduces economic growth by 0.72 percent. By diminishing the quality of governance, corruption acts as a sort of tax (Jain 2001), reducing efficiency, raising production and transportation costs, lowering standards of living, and enhancing inequality.

OUTLINE OF THIS VOLUME

This Handbook consists of two major parts. Part I offers conceptual overviews of corruption, while Part II consists of a series of case studies of different countries. In Part I, chapters address issues such as the causes of corruption, the role of human capital, the frequently overlooked topic of gender, the global geographies of corruption, its consequences, and the role – potential as well as real – of electronic government in its mediation. Part II offers a series of national case studies that collectively highlight how and why corruption plays out unevenly in different contexts. These include two studies of Latin American countries, three drawn from Europe and Russia, two from the Middle East, one from Africa, and six from Asia. More detailed chapter summaries follow.

In Chapter 2, Sufyan Dabbous and Eugen Dimant offer an extended literature review of the causes and consequences of corruption, focusing on recent empirical studies. They note that recent works have addressed issues such as the contagion effects that facilitate the diffusion of corruption, wherein one state influences corruption in its neighbors, the roles of economic development and educational levels, and touch on the increasingly important role of e-government. They also examine the relation between immigration and corruption, a topic that rarely receives attention, as well as the Internet. Their summary of the effects of corruption includes analyses of the brain drain from developing countries, fiscal deficits, human capital, and the shadow (or underground) economy.

The third chapter, by Asma Sghaier and Asma Guizani, focuses on the interrelations among corruption, human capital, and economic growth in developing countries. Whereas the literature on corruption is dominated by Western scholars, they offer an Islamic interpretation. They also summarize the different causes of corruption, as well as the impacts, focusing on the creation of human capital. They use a Cobb-Douglas production function to examine corruption's relations to economic growth and institutional variables empirically. They show that corruption and the growth of human capital are simultaneously determinant: corruption impedes the creation of skills by discouraging the young from pursuing their studies, which in turn facilitates corruption.

Chapter 4, authored by Helena Olafsdotter Stensöta and Lena Wängnerud, delves into the much-overlooked issue of gender and corruption. Are men, by virtue of male entitlement, more prone to corrupt behaviors than women? Their chapter explores the institutional linkages between gender and corruption and its effects. Women are more likely to suffer the effects of corruption than are men, and the evidence indicates that having more women in high political offices tends to reduce corruption levels. Male-dominated networks and patriarchal regimes in most countries are ripe for corruption. In contrast, women frequently provide the "raw material," that is, an assemblage of characteristics, that lead them to favor policies that facilitate social reproduction. Finally, they turn to the gendered nature of accountability mechanisms, including social movements.

World regional geographies of corruption are the subject of Chapter 5, by Barney Warf. He examines global patterns using Transparency International's Corruption Perception Index, and proceeds to summarize corruption in Europe, the Middle East/North Africa, Asia, sub-Saharan Africa, and Latin America, using maps of each. The point of this survey is to demonstrate that there is no "one-size-fits-all" model of corruption; rather, it must be understood within widely varying economic, political, and cultural contexts.

Dominik Enste and Christina Heldman, the authors of Chapter 6, write about the consequence of corruption, which are numerous, nefarious, and debilitating. They trace corruption's effects on private investment, foreign direct investment and capital inflows, foreign trade, government expenditures and services, gross domestic product, inequality, and the shadow or underground economy. These effects are not straightforward and the evidence is not always consistent, and poorly functioning economies may generate corruption as much as corruption retards economic growth. However, there is convincing proof that corruption rewards a few officials but makes everyone else poorer.

In Chapter 7, Nasr Elbahnasawy turns to electronic government, or e-government, the use of the Internet by states around the world. E-government has occasionally been celebrated as a panacea to control corruption by improving transparency and making it easier for citizens to report public malfeasance. The reality is more complicated. Certainly countries with low levels of e-government readiness tend to be more corrupt, but this relation may reflect other forces such as poverty, illiteracy, and lack of a free media as much as anything. Elbahnasawy also explores the nexus between e-government and corruption, in which the former expands available information about public agents and may limit their discretionary powers. The empirical evidence about this issue is mixed, with some studies concluding e-government is a useful tool to limit corruption but only in specific cultural and institutional environments.

The second part of the book – national case studies – opens with Chapter 8, by Stephen Morris, which concerns Mexico. As with many countries, corruption there is deeply entrenched. Under the PRI (Institutional Revolutionary Party), corruption may have contributed to political stability by allowing government officials to enjoy the spoils. More recently, despite a gradual shift away from one-party PRI authoritarianism, corruption in Mexico has increased. The decline in the PRI's influence enhanced the power of state officials, with an associated splurge in local corruption. The shift involves new, and more corrupt, relations between firms and the state. Even democratization does not immunize a country from corruption, and Mexico's efforts to stem corruption have been half-hearted at best. One of the most serious consequences has been a horrific increase in deaths related to drug trafficking and associated gang activity. Another victim has been public confidence in the Mexican state.

Kelly Senters and Matthew Winters write about the ongoing corruption scandals in Brazil in Chapter 9, which have felled two presidents to date. Beyond the recurrent scandals lie deeply embedded forces that recreate corruption on a daily basis. Bribes, misallocations of public funds, non-competitive procurement processes, fake receipts, and the like testify to corruption's pervasiveness at all levels of the Brazil government bureaucracy. They also write about Brazil's attempts to curb corruption through institutional changes, such as random auditing of municipalities. They conclude by examining the growing public outrage over this matter and voter backlash against corrupt officials.

In the context of Eastern Europe, Agnes Batory discusses in Chapter 10 whether joining the European Union (EU) has helped or hindered the growth of corruption in post-communist states. Charges of misusing EU subsidies have been leveled in countries such as Croatia and the Czech Republic. She outlines the legacy of corruption during the dark days of Soviet occupation, such as clientelistic political structures under the *nomenclatura* system, which persisted in the form of shadowy networks that hamper democratic reforms in the region. She also discusses new forms that have arisen in the post-accession era such as transnational criminal groups and the opportunities for graft embedded in the transition to privatization. Adherence to the EU's legal rules was often more evident on paper than in practice. Corruption varies throughout the region: in addition to the east-west divide that distinguishes the region from low-corruption countries in Western Europe, there is also a north-south divide that places the continent's most corrupt states in the Balkans, where state capture by corrupt officials is evident.

Chapter 11, by Johannes Leitner and Hannes Meissner, focuses on Ukraine, where successive generations of politicians have pronounced corruption their top priority, to no avail. The Soviet legacy, a stuttering economy, and a rocky transition to a privatized economy set the stage for widespread corruption of various forms. Clientelism ensures that favors are handed down in return for loyalty, a practice that has become normalized over time in business networks. Notably, these practices vary considerably between the eastern and western parts of the country. The result has been widespread distrust of the state among Ukrainians and failed attempts to curb corruption.

Russian corruption is the focus of Chapter 12, by Günther Schulze and Nikita Zakharov. They put forth an intriguing argument: the state holds wages artificially low, and in return officials reap the benefits of kickbacks and embezzlement, which cements their political loyalties. Unlike democracies, corruption in autocratic states may help to promote stability. They hold that this state of affairs is the path-dependent result of a long historical trajectory that finds its origins during the Mongol occupation in the thirteenth through the fifteenth centuries. This so-called *kormlenie* system of systemic corruption persisted after the Bolshevik revolution, all throughout the seven decades of the USSR, and into the current kleptocracy under Putin. They conclude by looking at strategies to rein in corruption, including higher salaries and legislative initiatives.

In Turkey, the fight against corruption has been long, arduous, and largely unsuccessful, according to Alfredo Jiménez, Secil Bayraktar, and Mesut Eren in Chapter 13. Rapid economic growth in a neoliberalizing state has done little to curtail corruption, where bribery is endemic. They embed this phenomenon within Turkish culture, including the high levels of "power distance" or access to power among varying groups, collectivism, or the tendency to privilege members of in-groups at the expense of outsiders, the country's low level of interpersonal trust, and a paternalistic set of values that legitimizes the patronage networks set up by authority figures. Although Turkey has taken steps to reduce corruption, partly due to attempts to join the EU, it has little to show for its efforts.

Wasta – the Arabic term for nepotism or using personal connections to obtain government jobs and services – is the focus of Chapter 14, by Marcus Marktanner and Maureen Wilson. Not all *wasta* is bad, and some forms are culturally acceptable: it may refer to the use of legitimate intermediaries, but bad *wasta*, that is, corruption, is condemned by the Quran. A legacy of tribalism, the phenomenon is ubiquitous in the Arab world. Marktanner and Wilson use a game-theory approach to understand why some people use *wasta* and others do not, concluding that corrupt institutions promote the bad forms. Thus, as bribery becomes increasingly normalized, control of corruption becomes ever more difficult. They conclude by situating Arab corruption within an international dataset that reveals that while the prevalence of bribery there is not significantly greater than most of the world, attempts to control it have enjoyed less success.

South African corruption, studied in Chapter 15 by Karl Meyer and John Luiz, has roots in the colonial era. Under apartheid, the state resorted to money laundering and organized crime. The shift to black majority rule starting in 1994 did little to change its prevalence, allowing a small elite to capture the state as a means of extensive rent-seeking. The corruption of former President Jacob Zuma, who faces 783 charges of corruption, fraud and racketeering, is a case in point. An unstable political environment and intense income inequality have fueled corruption in different corners, a burden carried largely by the poor. As a result, distrust of the state is rampant. They then examine private corruption, such as in the country's construction industry, and conclude by turning to corporate responses.

"Drugs and corruption in former Soviet Central Asia," the title of Chapter 16 by Filippo De Danieli, offers a fascinating glimpse into the transnational crime networks that operate in Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Afghanistan. Borders mean little to nothing. The collapse of the Soviet Union, and the prolonged wars in Afghanistan, led to a river of opium spewing out of Afghanistan into the five former Soviet republics. Afghan warlords and Islamic groups alike partook of the bounty. Cities that once prospered due to the old Silk Road, such as Osh, found a new lease on life. De Danieli charts the decentralized organized crime groups that have also taken advantage of the situation. Not surprisingly, opium-derived revenues have tainted government officials and professionals throughout the region, whose countries are some of the world's most corrupt.

Pakistan, with almost 200 million people, is depressingly corrupt, as Feisal Khan lays out in Chapter 17. He notes that the trauma that accompanied partition in 1947 essentially has continued to the present, with administrative collapse and weak state institutions. After detailing the severity of the country's corruption, Khan charts its impacts on government revenues, such as taxes and the minuscule share of the budget dedicated to social and welfare programs. Remittances from Pakistanis working abroad have also contributed to the crisis. Corruption has also flourished despite – or perhaps because of – tens of billions of dollars of US aid. Indeed, remittances and foreign aid act as a version of the famed "resource curse." Efforts to control the plague are ineffective: military dictatorships turn a blind eye to the problem, and Pakistan's Anti-Corruption

Agency is a joke. The result is a deeply dysfunctional state plagued by social unrest, creating fertile ground for terrorist networks.

Mohammad Nurunnabi addresses the sad state of corruption in the Bangladeshi financial sector in Chapter 18. Corrupt and unstable financial institutions impede economic growth. After situating it within the broader context of a country with poor governance and widespread bribery, he proceeds to a case study of the Hallmark Group, which received hundreds of millions of dollars in illegal loans, which it then redistributed through fictitious companies, resulting in high levels of non-performing loans. He concludes with recommendations to address this problem.

China is not only the world's most populous country, it is also one of the most corrupt. In Chapter 19, Vanesa Pesqué-Cela charts the growth of Chinese corruption since its incorporation into the world economy began in the late twentieth century, noting its shift from individual behavior to an organized collective practice. In a country with highly centralized power structure and severe censorship, corruption is one of the major threats to the Communist Party, a hideously corrupt organization if there ever was one. From there, corruption has radiated out into the judiciary, law enforcement, and finance. Widespread bribery, kickbacks, the buying and selling of promotions, embezzlement, illegal taxes, the stripping of state-owned enterprise, nepotism, and cronyism testify to the capture of the Chinese state by corrupt parties. China's failure to develop a Weberian bureaucracy, that is, a meritocracy with clear lines of responsibility and accountability, has played a central role in this disaster. The reliance of local governments on discretionary transfers of funds from the national state and absence of an independent judiciary compounded the problem. As a result, the anti-corruption efforts of Xi Jinping, including the arrest of 1.3 million officials since 2014, have had minimal impacts. Tellingly, only 3 percent of those were criminally prosecuted. However, China also exhibits a "corruption paradox," in which high levels of malfeasance have not led to political instability or lowered its high rates of economic growth.

Cleo Calimbahin documents corruption in the Philippines in Chapter 20. Centuries of Spanish and American colonialism led to the formation of a weak state rife with systemic corruption. The long dictatorship of Ferdinand Marcos was a case study in kleptocracy. Clan-based oligarchs use a clientelistic power structure and crony capitalism that offer impunity to corrupt officials and led to an unholy marriage with organized crime. Corrupt elites and dynastic ruling families engage in widespread election fraud. More recently, Filipino corruption has taken a horrifically violent turn: President Duterte's campaign against illegal drugs has led to the deaths of 7,000 people, many murdered extra-judicially.

Lastly, in Chapter 21 Marcus Mietzner turns to Indonesia, the world's fourth-most populous country and largest Muslim nation. From the Dutch colonial era to the tyranny of Suharto, corruption became deeply interwoven with the Indonesian state. Aristocratic families came to view the state as a personal cash machine. Mietzner focuses on the important issue as to why democratization there has not led to a concomitant decline in corruption, and lays blame at the expensive and inefficient system of funding political campaigns. Rather than swirling around the presidency, corruption became multi-tiered and decentralized. Corruption has not been uncontested however; the Corruption Eradication Commission has arrested hundreds of politicians, mayors, judges, and others, although the actual prison time served is typically minimal and some convicted officials were re-elected. However, he emphasizes throughout that corruption persists in Indonesia because the likely gains exceed the costs.

These case studies serve to illustrate the diversity of corruption around the world. With varying historical legacies, economic and class structures, cultures, and political systems, it is not surprising that both the causes and effects of corruption differ greatly among countries. Corruption in Mexico is wrapped up in the near-monopoly of the PRI and the horrific violence of the drug trade; in Eastern Europe, it reflects the residues of the Soviet system; in the Arab world, in cultural attitudes that accept some nominally corrupt behaviors as normal; in South Africa, the legacy of apartheid continues to infect the government; in Pakistan, endemic corruption led to a failed state; in China, the lack of an effective government bureaucracy and a corrupt Communist Party are responsible; and in Indonesia, corruption arises in part from a competitive but expensive political system. There is, in short, a rich geography to corruption, and its spatiality is an inescapable part of understanding how and why it occurs as well as attempts to combat it. Such comments should give one pause in adopting broad theorizations that ignore local and national contexts. Rather, corruption can only be understood by viewing it through the path-dependent trajectories that give rise to the unique circumstances of each social formation. For this reason, strategies to reduce corruption must likewise take into account specific constellations of factors; one country's successful strategy may fail in another.

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