

ETHICS, INSTITUTIONAL TRANSPARENCY AND RULE OF LAW IN MODERN GREECE

Abstract

This study examines the action of corruption and ethics in the state apparatus in the contemporary Greek and global levels, defining it as the systematic violation of ethical and legal standards by public servants and officials, small or large, for personal gain. We will highlight the negative effects of Corruption on Democratic Institutions, public administration and citizens' trust in good governance. Various forms of corruption are briefly outlined, such as bribery, embezzlement and nepotism, while seeking to address the root causes, including ineffective governance, lack of accountability and extensive bureaucratic procedures. In addition, the destabilizing effects of corruption and ethics in the State are examined and some comprehensive measures are proposed to combat it, such as decentralization, monitoring of public spending, demographics and the long-awaited cleansing of the rule of law.

Key words: Administration, Ethics, People Management, Corruption, Rule of Law

1. INTRODUCTION

This study examines the action of corruption, defined as the abuse of public power for private gain, which undermines trust in the functioning of Democracy and ancient Greek Direct Democracy. It seriously affects the ethical functioning of public administration and erodes fundamental legal principles, such as accountability and justice, as well as the

* The author is Academician of European Academy of Sciences and Arts in Salzburg, Austria. Email address: alexios.panagopoulos@gmail.com. ORCID: 0009-0008-9304-4040.

oath in the Greek Constitution.¹ Various forms of corruption include bribery, embezzlement, fraud and nepotism, especially this has become evident in recent decades. Factors that contribute to corruption include the absence or lack of government oversight and the complex legal framework, laws, polytheism and mainly antichrist and antichristian laws. When the Preamble of the Greek Constitution makes a moral, binding and essential speech, referring to: “In the Name of the Holy Trinity”, as well as in article 3 of the Greek Constitution, where the Sacred Canons and Canon Law are enshrined, which is today violated in abundance!

Corruption, as a pathogen, can destabilize modern States, the State, the Genus and the Nation, inciting social unrest, and undermining the effectiveness of public services and administration in general, not only of the State, but also of the administration in the Church, as the late Metropolitan of Florina Augustinos also mentioned for purification. Today, according to the “General Secretariat for the Fight against Corruption” (GEGKAD) of the Hellenic Republic, corruption is defined as the “organized and systematic violation of ethical and legal rules, during the exercise of the duties of an employee or a public official”, as well as an official. The phenomenon of corruption, undoubtedly, undermines morality, democratic institutions, the economic, social, moral and political life of citizens.

¹ See Greek sources: The Constitution of Greece, Athens: Sakkoulas Publications, current edition. A. Manesis 1982; N. Alivizatos, 1979; P. Pavlopoulos, 2007; E. Spiliotopoulos 2017; A. Papadiamantis 1996; I. Kapodistrias, 1984; K. Flamiatos 1840; National Transparency Authority 2023; Hellenic Parliament 2019. Also see international sources: Transparency International, 2023; United Nations, *United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC)*, New York, 2004. OECD 2021; S. Rose-Ackerman, 1999; R. Klitgaard 1988; S. P. Huntington 1968; World Bank 1997; D. della Porta & A. Vannucci 1999. European Union, *EU Anti-Corruption Report*; Council of State, decisions on the principle of legality, transparency and good administration. Areopagus, case law on bribery of public officials and abuse of power. European Court of Human Rights, decisions related to the rule of law, transparency and institutional accountability; Court of Auditors, reports on financial control and good administration; D. Ecclesiastical and Canonical Sources; Sacred Canons of the Orthodox Church, published by the Apostolic Ministry of the Church of Greece. Also see A. Kantiotis 1998, as well as the Church of Greece, synodal texts on ecclesiastical administration and moral responsibility.

2. PART A

The author Alexandros Papadiamantis (Apanta), had said, I quote it interpretively, that, as if we were deliberately liberated from the Turks, to show that we are incapable of self-government! The greatest effects of corruption, in recent decades, appear in the exercise of state functions and, especially, in the spectrum of Public Administration. In this case, for private benefit, the fundamental constitutional principles are violated, such as those of the ethics of law, meritocracy, equality, impartiality, neutrality, transparency, good administration, proportionality and equality. This situation seriously affects the principle of legality, disrupting the social relationship of trust between Citizens and the State. Furthermore, it causes confusion regarding the observance of the rules that make up the structure and constitution of the concept of the Rule of Law and the legitimacy stemming from it and of administrative action in general.

Corruption, like mismanagement and malice, which is broader than the former, morally and structurally undermine state institutions and erode the reputation of citizens, the credibility of a State, with regard to its effectiveness, while, at the same time, they reinforce the prevailing view, among the majority of citizens, that in order to solve certain of their problems, they should resort to indirect methods (we hear the people say, first you find the means and then you will apply), so that any bribery or intervention by politicians and friends (the *alisverisia*) can follow!

The fight against maladministration and corruption is inextricably linked to the fundamental principles and values of Direct Democracy, as the establishment of transparency promotes the Rule of Law and the healthy way of organizing and operating the Institutions. There are many factors that contribute to the spread of corruption, both at the national level, in various sectors, and to its export, at the international level. The main ones are the circumvention and non-implementation of laws and directives by the various state agencies, the ineffectiveness of internal control, the insufficient legislative framework, the disciplinary liability of employees, the overlap of various government procedures, the labyrinthine legislation to be implemented and the need, for a prolonged period of time, for its execution, as well as the lack of coherence, organization and consistency.

Governor Ioannis Kapodistrias (former Russian Foreign Minister and Ambassador to Switzerland, where he drafted the Cantonal Constitution) did not accept a salary from a starving Homeland. When he was assassinated, they did not find a second suit to bury him in. The assassins, Greeks and foreigners, assassinated the future of the Homeland. Just 36 days before, he had signed a decree on the incompatibility of civil servants and military personnel being members of Secret Societies. These are also mentioned in 1840 by the professor of philosophy Kosmas Flamiatos in his Answers and Memoirs, and that he was murdered for the so-called Eastern Question, which today is currently deeply troubling the Greek Country, as if it were a timeless method, as well as the bankruptcy of Greece (while it is, perhaps, the richest Country in the World in minerals) and despite being bankrupt today, does it have the ability to send military material, for example, to Ukraine or the ship Kimon and Patriot missiles, to rich Arab and distant foreign Countries?

3. PART B

Given that corruption is a widespread phenomenon internationally (we see it today internationally and with the Epstein List, in the international media), various factors have emerged that have led to its expansion and spread, at an international and global level. The justification for this fact is both the creation and consolidation of important economic alliances, at an international level and the resulting tendency of countries to achieve open markets, based on these agreements, as well as the participation of state and private investment capital which, in this way, is freely transferred between nations.²

² International Bibliography on Corruption, Globalization, and the Rule of Law: S. Rose-Ackerman 1999; R. Klitgaard 1988; Samuel P. Huntington 1968; D. della Porta & A. Vannucci 1999; Transparency International, *Corruption Perceptions Index*, annual exhibitions; World Bank 1997; United Nations, *United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC)*, New York, 2004; OECD, *Convention on Combating Bribery of Foreign Public Officials in International Business Transactions*, Paris, 1997; J. S. Nye 1967; F. Fukuyama 2014. Also see about digital governance, privacy and proportionality: European Court of Human Rights, *European Convention on Human Rights*, arts. 8, 10 and 11; Council of Europe, *Guide on Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights – Right to respect for private and family life*; European Union, *General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2016/679*; UK Parliament, *Data Protection Act 2018*, as well as P. Craig 2016; A. Barak 2012; N. Richards 2015; S. Zuboff 2019; G. Orwell 1949; G. Orwell 1945. It

All these parameters have contributed to the expansion, on a global level, of organized crime and drugs (which infect our new generation), while the harmful effects of the establishment of corruption, generally expand worldwide, as they function as communicating vessels. The whole global situation is as if preparing us for a false and global electronic government.

The main reasons that cause state corruption are the non-existent or insufficient government control, mainly for most projects, private transactions and the monopoly, in most basic services (as a well-known doctor told us in the past, for the position of supreme judge financial controller, they offered him a package of money, for his signature, which he did not accept). Also, the prolonged tenure of leaders in institutions, which expands the network of their interests and the bypassing of work cycles. In addition, the weak government accountability, in disciplinary and judicial bodies and bodies, also the long work cycles, the huge number of required procedures and time-consuming bureaucracy, and the lack of transparency, for citizens. The apparent decline in the general level of financial earnings and the absence of moral and ethical rules and the blurring of the boundaries between legality and illegality, especially in the acquisition of services.

Corruption today has become comparable to a tip (as the people are heard to say), while informal brokerage has become a recognized and acquired fragile privilege. Civil society, the people, becomes weak and powerless to exercise control. The absence of morality and corruption can fuel social and political discontent, especially a feeling of inequality and social injustice, as it distorts government decisions and undermines

is also necessary to have in the mind the Greek academic and institutional sources: The Constitution of Greece, especially arts. 2, 5, 9A, 25 and 103; A. Manitakis 1994; N. Alivizatos 2007; E. Spiliotopoulos 2017; Personal Data Protection Authority, opinions on digital governance and personal data; Council of State, case law on the principle of proportionality and protection of personal data. National Transparency Authority, annual reports on corruption and public administration. Finally, see bibliography on bioethics and public health: L. Montagnier, public interventions and interviews on bioethics and pandemic policy; World Health Organization, 2020; T. Beauchamp & J. F. Childress 2019; UNESCO, *Universal Declaration on Bioethics and Human Rights*, 2005 and also sources about social unrest and “Arabic” Spring: G. Achcar 2013; M. Lynch 2012; Freedom House, reports on political freedoms and corruption in the Middle East; and United Nations Development Programme, *Arab Human Development Reports*.

the correctness of the provision of various public services, such as education at all levels, as well as healthcare.

For example, the non-application of the Principle of Proportionality, as enshrined in the Greek legal order and in the practice of the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR, articles 8, 10, 11), presupposes that any restriction of freedoms should be appropriate, necessary and proportionate to the intended purpose. Specifically, the modern mandatory nature of digital passes (perhaps they want to make us addicted to electronic devices), as well as the imposition of absolute digital control and the abolition of the person, through the personal number (PN). As has been argued, it conflicts with the principle of proportionality, since there are alternative and hitherto traditional transactional measures that allow social service, without limiting individual rights.

A recent comparison of the mandatory nature of data protection in England and Switzerland makes this clearer. In England, social and digital data are managed under strict regulatory principles (Data Protection Act, 2018) with an emphasis on proportionality and privacy protection, as a result of demands and popular uprisings and their dynamic reactions. Restrictions on freedom of movement or consumption are only applied temporarily and under legal supervision. In Switzerland, the introduction of digital measures, as for social services, is governed by the principle of proportionality and the principle of direct accountability of public authorities to citizens. Any restriction of individual rights is subject to a referendum, parliamentary approval and judicial review.

The Greek reality, as already recorded in the trial, for the Tempri tragedy with the train collision, but also before, the murderous fires in Mati, and let us not forget, catastrophic floods in Thessaly, and before that the fires in the Peloponnese and Evros and elsewhere, as well as the various bombings in the past in banks (e.g. Marfin). While recently the Covid-19 epidemic and the mandatory use of experimental preparations, to which health workers also reacted with a hunger strike, such as Mr. Lambros Tsapalis. These public choices indicate a lack of respect, ethics and bioethics, for fundamental procedures and the social Rule of Law, as the late French Nobel laureate Montagnier and the constitutionalist Georgios Kasimatis observed. All of this raises questions about the effective ability of the Greek authorities to combine efficiency, digitalization and institutional protection of rights. And the contemporary socio-political question enters: what else will the computer named Daedalus in Lavrio

contribute, beyond the well-known flying Pretender, to Orwell's new electronic Oceania?

While, many dangers lurk, of the over-concentration of power and digital control, as a useful tool, for a new type of Hitler (or anti-christ), who in the future may appear, as a supposedly world leader and cosmocrat, possibly of a Western coalition. In fact, now, with the methodical mandatory introduction of the personal number (PN), which if not accompanied by clear institutional guarantees of free choice, may co-operate, the tool, of universal surveillance, with implications for personal freedom, the Constitution and our moral and social autonomy, a matter where the publication, within three months, of the expected court decision should take serious account.

This general dissatisfaction, even with the recent killing of so many thousands of farmers' animals in Lesvos in Greece, due to diseases without vaccinating them, and with the unequal distribution of European funds to the farmer, can be the object of hybrid exploitation and by centrifugal internal forces. And this for more objections, in order to undermine uprisings, by disrupting the legal order, gathering the necessary popular support, for this the Rule of Law, owes the necessary institutional consolidation and the restoration of prestige by purifying itself. We mention that in the uprisings of the "Arab Spring", corruption was the one that fueled the broader complaints, a fact that facilitated popular mobilization against the various Governments.

4. PART C

In resource-rich states, such as Central African states, the high incomes derived from them can provide incentives for violent conflicts, e.g., those excluded from power and, consequently, with control over the flow of money, use violence to seek access and control over these opportunities. Crime, as we know, has no immunity.³

³ See about corruption, state, institutions and policy destabilization: S. Rose-Ackerman 1999; R. Klitgaard 1988; D. C. North 1990; F. Fukuyama 2014; S. P. Huntington 1968; Transparency International, *Corruption Perceptions Index*, annual reports; World Bank 2004. Also take into consideration naturalists' resources, conflicts and "resource curse"; P. Collier & A. Hoeffler 2004; M. L. Ross 2012; T. Lynn Karl 1997; J. D. Sachs & A. Warner 1995. See sources about decentralization, public expenses and PETS: World Bank 2001; R. Reinikka & J. Svensson 1999; J. Faguet 2012; E. Ostrom 1990; OECD 2020; European Commission 2020. See immigration,

If corruption transforms the State from a set of Institutions that provide public goods to a set of Bodies that exploit them for private gain, then the State becomes a prize that one must fight for in order to win for one's own benefit.

Young people are also called to be vigilant, to read, to study encyclopedias, in order to acquire moral powers, comparison and mutual understanding and spiritual self-defense. The future of this society is the young people, the eroded system wants them to be poisoned, not only intellectually, but also nutritionally (food contamination), with any uncontrolled import of foods, e.g., from Mercosur (recently they discovered that 80% of frozen chickens in Greece were contaminated with salmonella), dangerous morally, bioethically and socio-economically.

In general, corruption can undermine both the capacity and legitimacy of the State. In particular, by inequitably distributing public resources, corruption weakens the capacity of the State to provide essential public services, including internal and external security. This may have a negative impact on the efficiency and effectiveness of security services in general, by weakening them, as reduced budgets undermine both human resources and logistical equipment. Corruption can also reduce the degree of legitimacy of the State when the government, due to the resulting inefficiency, does not meet the expectations of citizens, with the latter becoming resentful and, ultimately, rebelling in various ways against the Government.

Decentralization to the countryside can be partially successful in combating corruption if beneficiaries are in a position to respond effectively. However, the impact of decentralization on corruption may also depend on the local context, including the extent, if any, of press

national sovereignty and hybrid pressures: K. M. Greenhill 2011; S. P. Huntington 2004; R. Brubaker 1992; United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees 2023; annual reports; European Union Agency for Asylum, annual reports on migration Flows and asylum; Frontex, *annual risk analysis reports*; R. Koopmans 2010; state law, sovereignty and constitutional theory: C. Schmitt 1985; H. Kelsen 1967; J. Habermas 1998; A. Barak 2006; The Constitution of Greece, especially arts. 1, 2, 4, 5, 25, 26 and 28. A. Manesis 1980; N. Alivizatos 2011. See Greek historical and political references: I. Makrygiannis 2011; D. Kokkinos 1956; S. Trikoupi 1860; K. Paparrigopoulos 1970; Greek Parliament 2000. Also see bioethics, social policy and public health references: T. L. Beauchamp & J. F. Childress 2019; UNESCO 2005; World Health Organization, reports about public health and social inequalities and M. Foucault 1977.

freedom, the size of the government units being reformed, the nature of accountability structures in local government, and the extent to which communities participate in planning and monitoring activities. Monitoring public spending can be done in many ways, although all use a variation of a “deviation approach” to measure the leakage of public funds.

Unfortunately, without an ethical and national conscience, the true cure of Corruption is impossible. Today, the most modern and accurate legal tool in Greece is referred to as an electronic form in the “Public Expenditure Tracking Survey” (PETS). This approach monitors the flow of public money from central ministries to their recipients, by comparing the reported with the actual expenditures. Reforms in these areas can be considered effective, under specific national conditions. At this point, there is a small set of available bibliography, which analyzes the effectiveness of these reforms in reducing corruption, with reference to case studies in developing countries, such as Peru, the Philippines, etc.

However, political and clientelist relationships and the resulting way of exercising politics may prevent the reforms promoted each time and the results that appear, to be merely fictitious or far-fetched. Control in the public procurement system, corruption, which is used by a certain range of methodological research, is necessary. These studies suggest that the reforms in question can reduce corruption, through interventions in electronic monitoring, supervision and transparency, mainly applied in combination. However, some significant gaps remain in the findings, such as, for example, the analysis of the costs and benefits of different forms of reforms.

The massive and prolonged migratory pressure that Greece has been experiencing in recent decades is not exclusively a humanitarian or social phenomenon. On the contrary, it is a complex issue of the transparency of international relations, with direct implications for the ethical functioning of the Rule of Law, fiscal sustainability and, above all, the safeguarding and exercise of National Sovereignty. In the modern international environment, the movement of populations has become a tool of political pressure and strategic destabilization of Europe. The relevant theoretical approach has been thoroughly analyzed by political scientist Kelly M. Greenhill, in her work *Weapons of Mass Migration* (2011), where it is documented that mass migration flows can also function as unconventional means of exercising power, capable of influencing State decisions, altering social balances and disproportionately

burdening public finances, to the detriment of natives (as a hybrid form of Nativism's warfare).

Greece, due to its geostrategic position, on the external borders of the European Union, has become a field of application of this form of hybrid pressure. The continuous entry of large population groups, without effective control and without the possibility of rapid return, has led to a permanent state of institutional exception, within which the Rule of Law operates under a regime of pressure and suspension. The Rule of Law, however, is not an abstract legal construction, cut off from its historical and national basis (whether we like it or not, we are descendants of heroes, saints and martyrs – allow me to say that I had as an ancestor the provost Panagos Panagopoulos in the 1821 revolution in Kalavryta, also my grandfather, a prisoner in Smyrna in 1922 and also a fighter on the Albanian front in 1940). We do not agree with our enemies that we are all, as a Nation, descendants of traitorous collaborators, even though we have a few of them.

In Western political thought and in the Greek constitutional tradition, the Rule of Law presupposes the existence of a sovereign State, capable of controlling its territory, applying the Law equally and protecting the collective interest of the political body. When National Sovereignty is weakened, the Rule of Law turns into a formal form, without any substantive content. The fiscal dimension of the phenomenon is equally critical. Mass immigration brings significant and lasting financial costs to state budgets, in the costs of food, housing, healthcare, security, administrative management and social benefits. The words of an unnamed metropolitan who disappointed us a few years ago, while publicly saying that irregular refugees from third and fourth countries will help us with many problems, perhaps even with our demographics, were characterized as a great failure. The large economic cost is being passed on to the Greek taxpayers, without any prior constitutional and democratic consent or parliamentary mandate for such a large-scale redistribution of public resources. Furthermore, the prolonged fiscal burden undermines the ability to pursue social policy in favor of indigenous Greek citizens, eroding the relationship of trust between State and Society.

The result is the delegitimization of the Institutions and the strengthening of social tensions, a development that contradicts the very constitutive logic of the Greek Rule of Law. At the level of international relations, the sending or toleration of mass migratory flows, by third States, can be perceived as a form of indirect pressure or even hostile

action, especially when combined with the rhetoric of questioning the sovereign rights of our islands, by the neighboring country, or with practices of creating political faits accomplis. The theory of deterrence is not limited to military threats, but also includes the ability of the State to control who enters its territory and under what conditions, as Hungarian Orban, Slovak Ficci, and the Czech Minister of Defense, as well as Italian Salvini and Prime Minister Meloni and today the new president of Bulgaria, have said. In addition, the recent statements at the Delphi Economic Forum (May 2026) by European Prosecutor Laura Kovesi, that corruption more or less exists in most States and citizens inform the prosecutor's office because they trust it, while she brought the example of a Greek farmer mother, who also wanted equality and justice for her child. Recently, with the events of the cover-up in the Tempi case, regarding the train accident, Areopagite Fotios Mouzakis also resigned.

5. CONCLUSIONS

Greek constitutional history demonstrates that borders are not simply administrative lines (sea or land, or air), but the highest concentration of the historical struggles, sacrifices and collective memory of our Honorable Ancestors, because we are not, as a majority, servile. If a politician had thought about this, he would not have said, a few years ago, that: "I did not know that the sea has borders", underestimating his knowledge, and us. As descendants of Odysseus Androutsos, Karaiskakis, Markos Botsaris, Athanasios Diakos, the monk Samuel in Kougi, the brave women in Souli and Zaloggo and the heroic Messo-longhi, etc. Their preservation is inextricably linked to the timeless continuity of the Greek Nation and to the very concept of moral and political freedom. The invocation of political correctness cannot function as an alibi to avoid rational or legitimate political decisions. The protection of borders, the observance of legality in the entry and stay of foreigners and the implementation of return procedures for those who do not meet the conditions of international protection, constitute fundamental obligations of every sovereign State and conditions for the viability of the Rule of Law.

The policies that fight the Nativism of the Peoples and lead it to obligations are unlawful, foreign, aeolian and anti-christ. In conclusion, the treatment of instrumentalized mass migration does not oppose the Rule of Law, but presupposes it. A Rule of Law without borders,

without fiscal control and without national self-awareness, turns into a managerial structure of dependencies. On the contrary, a Rule of Law with national roots, historical continuity and clear exercise of national sovereignty, can combine respect for international law with the protection of collective freedom and political autonomy. The absence of ethics, bioethics, the principles of Christianity and Orthodoxy, lead our society to pitiful and horrific phenomena, as recently with the unfortunate girl Myrto in Kefalonia, where an entire island was found to have no doctor on duty. Our youth deserve education, protection, and the best, as a moral example. We are all morally co-responsible for our youth. Also, we should keep in mind that cities of 15 minutes, or otherwise two weeks, may be close to us in time! That is why political forces should understand the concept of unity, that on their own, each one cannot do many things. Social cohesion is needed. Unity, humility and love are needed. Solidarity is needed. Collectiveness and purification are needed. If political parties do not understand this and do not put it into practice, they will become the cause of many evils, instead of solving problems. I hope that those responsible will wake up. This is not a time for reflection or meditation, but a time for sacred responsibility, duty, sacred mission, self-protection and collective catharsis! We are a solitary nation and we have no few friends, as General John Makriyiannis used to say (Memoirs): “when they touch my Homeland and my Religion, I will speak, I will act, and let them do whatever they want to me”.

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