One of the main innovative features of this book is that it attempts to collect together in-depth analyses of political corruption in various democratic nations. As mentioned in the introduction, the painful realization that the scourge of corruption is spreading has given rise to the need to compare the characteristics and evolution of the phenomenon in various democracies. Although indispensable to an understanding of any phenomenon, a comparative analysis is not an easy task. It involves, first of all, the need to create concepts that "travel well" or, in other words, are applicable to the analysis of different nations (Sartori, 1971). For this purpose, the contributions included in this volume can serve to illustrate the diverse facets of political and administrative malpractices, ranging from out-and-out extortion to the various forms of specific and non-specific corruption, from pantouflage to inside trading, from conflict of interests to the barter vote, from sottogoverno to crittogoverno. Starting from this broad overview, it will be possible to classify the different forms of political corruption and their related phenomena.

It also seems essential to make a systematic comparison of the contributions on different national cases, in order to attempt to understand the genesis and dynamics of political and administrative corruption. In analyses of individual national cases, in fact, one is often inclined to link corruption with any other pathology present in the political system or the public administration. Although it is not possible to construct general theories, given that our comparative analysis is at a very early stage, we would like in these concluding notes to begin discussing, in the light of the information that has emerged during the compilation of this volume, some of the issues concerning political corruption found in scientific literature, political debate and the press.

Between state and market: the careers of the corrupt

The proliferation of political scandals has raised, first, questions about the main players in the corruption drama: Who are the corrupted? How do they progress in their careers? How do they succeed in occupying important places within the complex political and economic systems of industrialized democracies? On this subject, two different hypotheses can be formulated. On the one hand, political corruption is associated with the presence of career politicians, in other words, according to the well-known definition by Weber (1919), those politicians who "live by politics", looking for extrinsic or instrumental advantages, as opposed to those politicians who "live for politics" and do so for intrinsic or ideological satisfaction. According to a different hypothesis, however, corrupt politicians originate from an emerging political class, still inexperienced and lacking public ethics. These, for example, are interpretations found in American publications on corrupt party machinery, the development of which is linked to the fact that "ex-plebeians", lacking both financial resources and civic values, now have access to politics (see, for example, Dahl, 1961; Banfield and Wilson, 1967: 330).

From what has emerged from the analysis of national cases, the protagonists of corrupt deals seem, in effect, to be endowed with particular characteristics, which distinguish them from career politicians in the traditional sense.

First, political careers appear to be a channel for rapid social mobility. If in the English case we have seen the moralizing role carried out by an elite of enlightened aristocrats, political corruption, on the other hand, has appeared more widespread among those described (to coin a new Italian term) as ‘rampanti’, ‘ex-plebeians’ and social climbers. By their use of politics as a channel of mobility, corrupt politicians, as described in some of the essays included in this volume, resemble those defined as ‘gain politicians’ by Rogow and Lausselli (1974), in their research on American party ‘bosses’, whom they depict as barely interested in national politics.
employees or executives in public administration, loyal servants to
their political godfathers. These different figures have been grouped together under the definition 'business politicians', i.e. individuals who combine an intermediary role in business affairs, licit or illicit, and generally, involvement in their own right in financial activity, with political intermediation in the traditional sense (Pizzorno, 1992: 24; see also Della Porta 1992a and Pizzorno and Della Porta, 1993 on 'business politicians'). As far as this type of politician is concerned, the rewards are secret and of a financial nature. Their principal function is mediation between the various protagonists in secret deals, creating contacts and facilitating negotiations between two or more parties interested in a corrupt deal. Their principal resources are knowledge and 'privileged information' which are collected and exchanged on illegal markets.

The hybridization of state and market seems also to characterize entrepreneurs who interact with corrupt politicians, whose economic successes are based not on their competitiveness in the market, but on their privileged access to the state. Amongst the entrepreneurs who enjoy a relationship with the public administration, cartels, formalized or informalized to a greater or lesser degree, include businesses which are victims of extortion, businesses 'protected' by individual politicians, or 'sponsored' by political parties, and even businesses which are actually owned directly by public administrators (albeit, in most cases, hiding behind a borrowed name). The characteristic feature of many of these businesses is that their financial fortunes are founded on privileged relationships with managers of public funds, replacing the usual professional competence and entrepreneurial skills with political 'contacts'.

Strength or weakness in the corrupt parties?

The theme of political careers is linked to that of the political parties, who should be the ones selecting the political class. As can be imagined, sociologists and political scientists have often tackled the subject of political corruption in relation to the characteristics of political parties. In his now classic explanation, the American political scientist, Samuel Huntington, has linked the development of political involvement. In the course of modernization, corruption spreads along certain specific paths, those where the normal growth in the people's involvement in political decisions does not go hand-
in-hand with a strengthening of those institutions which – like the parties – should screen and channel the demands of the people. The weaker and less accepted parties, the greater the probability of corruption (Huntington, 1968: 71). In apparent contradiction with this hypothesis is the widespread conviction that corruption is in fact helped by the omnipresent and omnipotent nature of political parties, which are strong, well-organized machines, capable of controlling civil society and the economic system. It appears reasonable, therefore, to ask which of the two interpretations best explains the reality: is political corruption encouraged by the weakness of parties, or by their strength? An analysis of our national cases helps us to specify what measure of relative 'strength' and 'weakness' affects the dynamics of corrupt deals.

In the first place, one must make clear that strength and weakness cannot be related simply to the size of the electorate or the number of party members. In our examples, in fact, political corruption has developed both in large and in small parties, especially parties endowed with a strong 'power of coalition'. Furthermore, political corruption appears to appear in parties with few members – the parties of the influential few referred to in the contribution on France, and the parties of voters referred to in the Spanish case – and in parties with many members – the parties of the masses in Italy and Germany. If in the first case, political corruption has appeared in France, and the parties of voters referred to in the Spanish case – and in parties with many members – the parties of the masses in Italy and Germany. If in the first case, political corruption has appeared in France, and the parties of voters referred to in the Spanish case – and in parties with many members – the parties of the masses in Italy and Germany. Then, in our examples, in fact, political corruption has developed both in large and in small parties, especially parties endowed with a strong 'power of coalition'. Furthermore, political corruption appears to appear in parties with few members – the parties of the influential few referred to in the contribution on France, and the parties of voters referred to in the Spanish case – and in parties with many members – the parties of the masses in Italy and Germany. If in the first case, political corruption has appeared, in some cases, to be linked to the characteristics of the individual parties but to the characteristics of the whole party system. On this subject too, we can offer some hypotheses, at first sight conflicting, on the causes and dynamics of corruption. Political corruption has appeared, in some cases, to be linked to the rise to power of new parties. Both in France and in Spain, parties which after a long period in opposition have taken it in turns to govern, have been accused of malversation (corrupt administration). In both cases the socialist parties, immediately after gaining power, have had to face problems in financing their bureaucratic machinery, which have been seen not to count either on the goodwill of big financial interests, as is normally

CONCLUSION

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*Trans. note: "The tendency to conspire ... In a pluralistic government such as Italy's, the tendency to involve all the major political forces, whether government or opposition, in government decisions."
the case with conservative parties, or on contributions from ideologically motivated militants, as happens with their cousins, the communist parties.

It must be added, however, that in other cases political corruption seems to have been fostered by the long stay in power of the same party, i.e. by absence of any alternation. In Japan as in Italy, the apparent irremovability from power of the Liberals and Christian Democrats respectively, seems to have given them a certainty of impunity, both from the electoral point of view and from the legal point of view. In both countries, the parties excluded from government, sharing a common belief that they will never be able to gain power, have been unable to exercise the function of a coherent opposition which, for example in the UK case, is recognized as an effective instrument of control over corruption.

In effect, the lack of a real opposition appears to be a factor common to many corruption cases. The spread of political corruption is permitted, in fact, by a system of agreements between the major opposition parties for the sharing out of certain material benefits. In 'open' politics, the interest of the parties in increasing their contributions from ideologically motivated militants, as happens with their cousins, the communist parties, seems to have been fostered by the communist parties. An example in the UK case, is recognized as an effective instrument of long stay in power.

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Cost of politics and clientelism

'Consociationism' allows the amount of political financing to be increased illegally, but, of course, does not eliminate competition between parties, sections and political figures; some of the money obtained through bribery is spent in this competition. A variable which influences the spread of corruption seems to be, in fact, the cost of politics. The need for money, for politicians, is determined partly by institutional factors which influence both the levels of competition between the parties and within parties (e.g. whether they are single-candidate constituencies or not, use of the preference vote, etc.) and the number of elections (e.g. factors such as the levels of government, existence of primary elections, number of elective chambers, etc.). Alongside the institutional variables there are, however, variables of a cultural nature which define the models for the organization of the consensus. In particular, many cases indicate that the costs of politics increase where political integration is based on the distribution of material resources through clientelistic exchanges.

It is not new for clientelism and corruption to be considered as 'related' phenomena, almost indistinguishable even from each other. There are, however, good reasons to consider the two concepts as analytically separate. In the first place, there is a considerable difference in the medium of barrier. In fact, while political corruption involves the trading of public decisions for money, clientelism, on the contrary, bars protection for consensus. This difference leads to other differences relating both to the relationships between the protagonists and to the structure of the barrier. First, although the barrier is a two-way process in both cases, only in the case of clientelism is it possible to determine a vertical distinction with the subordination of clients to a patron. Furthermore, while the patron/client relationship is based on a generalized exchange relating to unspecified services, political corruption, on the other hand, is an exchange of a financial type, with an immediate and well-defined payback. This has certain consequences for the mechanism by which such services are repaid; in the case of clientelism the repayment is guaranteed by personal obligations and gratitude (Mancuzi, 1980); while in the case of corruption it is linked more to a choice of instrumental rationality linked to the expectation of a replay of the game (Vannucci, 1993a). Also linked to the medium – money versus
consensus – is another difference between the two phenomena: the different degree of perceived illegality. In fact, whereas the protagonists in a corrupt exchange know they are committing illegal actions – and therefore tend to conceal them more – clientelistic practices (including the custom of pulling strings) have long been considered as legal and are therefore carried out in the light of day.

If, therefore, the two phenomena are to be kept separate from an analytical viewpoint, on an empirical level, in countries with histories as diverse as Spain, Italy and Japan, corruption develops together with political clientelism. It can be added that the co-presence of corruption and clientelism is not fortuitous, but rather is linked to certain complementary aspects of the two phenomena, and to the similarity in their causal dynamics.

In the first place, both clientelism and corruption – at least in the forms that we have analysed – entail exchange relationships, i.e. interaction based on intrinsic or instrumental benefits, as opposed, therefore, to those relationships of an 'ideological nature' which are based on intrinsic or expressive benefits (Graziano, 1980). As noted with reference to the Japanese case, in the clientelistic structure of consensus, the politician must guarantee his electorate a series of services which range from the organization of recreational activities to a financial contribution at the key points in their lives (weddings, funerals, etc.). To be able to offer these services, the politician must construct a very complex electoral apparatus which, with reference still to Japan, is comprised of thousands of clubs and hundreds of local federations. Lastly, a proportion of the votes are bought, in Japan as in Italy, through the good offices of various mediators who hold entire ‘packages’ of electoral votes. We can add that both clientelism and corruption require a similar structure of values.

The emphasis on instrumental friendship is typical not only of corrupt exchanges, but also of clientelistic relationships where actions which are clearly a repayment of services given by a client to a patron are described as being given out of friendship'. In Spain amiguerismo leads to a search for intermediaries – patrons or corrupt politicians – who can facilitate contacts with the public administration. In Japan, identification with one’s own community prevents any recognition of a broader collective welfare, leading to the bartering of votes or bribes with those political mediators who can guarantee the flow of resources from the centre to the periphery. As has already been noted in other research studies, the Italian cases also show that the main players in corruption are very skilful at developing personal contacts, satisfying needs and doing favours, appearing friendly and affable, and even going as far as adopting the gift-giving strategy, as mentioned in the Japanese case. Corrupt public administrators, as well as entrepreneurs who pay bribes and citizen-clients, seem to share the belief that it is fair to use public means as private resources. Clientelism and corruption appeal, therefore, to the vestiges of paternalism, visible, for instance, in the hereditary political careers of Japanese politicians, or in the personalized management of Franco-African relationships, or in the private financing of public administrators mentioned with reference to past history in Russia and Spain.

To conclude, both clientelism and corruption stand at the crossroads where two interacting demands meet. On the one hand, both corruption and clientelism imply a privatization of politics by public administrators, i.e. utilization of access to political authority as a private resource (Graziano, 1978). On the other hand, both clients and entrepreneurs involved in corruption demonstrate a pattern of preferences oriented towards individual activity. With this in mind, an antidote to corruption should therefore also be sought in a country’s political culture, and particularly in the spread of those civic values referred to in the case of England.

Whereas this last solution requires the lengthy time span necessary for any cultural change, in the short term it is more feasible to manipulate another variable which affects the cost of politics: the potential outlay, particularly with reference to expenditure on electoral campaigns. In this instance, as well, the English case seems to offer a positive example, thanks to the rigorous restriction of electoral expenditure established at the end of the last century.

Public administration and corruption

With reference to the structure of values, particular mention is made, in studies on political corruption, of the culture of public bureaucrats: team spirit and ethics in public service (i.e. the belief that public service must be performed in an impersonal, impartial and efficient way) are among the elements – mentioned in the German and English cases – which discourage such officials from taking part in corrupt exchanges by increasing their moral cost. Still within the area of public administration, we can also mention other variables which certainly have an effect on the opportunities for political corruption. The hypotheses that have been formulated so far are partly contradictory.
opportunities for corruption, as shown both by the monarchic power observed, however, that centralization of power can also produce the French apparatus far from any control exerted by the centre. Franco-African relationships, traditionally considered the sphere exchanges, given the high number of individualized regulations. As the extension of welfare programmes, an increase in the relative dimensions of the public sectors and the proliferation of laws and regulations.

The cases assembled in this volume show, in effect, that political corruption tends to be frequent in areas where political decisions have greater weight. The opportunities for corruption have appeared, in fact, to be particularly prevalent in those sectors where public expenditure is higher and where measures taken by the public administration have greater influence. In these sectors, the frequency of relationships between the public and private protagonists supports a sort of institutionalization of bribery. It must be added, however, that the actual point of privatization and deregulation in the new Federal Germany, or in the UK or in Russia seems to be characterized by an increase in the opportunities for corruption.

A second characteristic in the evolution of public administration, mentioned as favouring the expansion of corruption, is administrative decentralization. The increase in the number of public bodies appears to lead to a similar growth in the number of potential areas for corrupt decisions as observed, for example, with reference to the creation of 17 autonomous regions in Spain. Furthermore, local bodies seem to have a potential advantage as arenas for corruption. The growing number of rules and regulations and, on the other, the ever-increasing availability of money in the public sector, increase the opportunities for corruption, by providing incentives for private individuals and at the same time opportunities for public officials. The opportunities for corruption are said, it is from the increased number of decisions now made through political rather than market mechanisms. Corruption is therefore encouraged by phenomena such as the extension of welfare programmes, an increase in the relative dimensions of the public sectors and the proliferation of laws and regulations.

It must be added, however, that the actual point of privatization and deregulation in the new Federal Germany, or in the UK or in Russia seems to be characterized by an increase in the opportunities for corruption. Administrative decentralization affects the development of political corruption is determined by other conditions in the organization and in the bureaucratic procedures. The information presented in the analyses of individual national cases suggests, in particular, the importance of three linked themes the discretionary nature of the administrative powers, the control structures, and the transparency of administrative action. One can, in the first instance, observe that cases of bribery have been found in the course of contracts entailing money payments by the public administration awarded by different procedures. As seen in the case of Italy, notwithstanding the complex rules which regulate decisions on expenditure by public bodies, businesses which are prepared to pay a bribe can be helped to win contracts through various mechanisms, according to the type of allocation procedures selected beforehand. Among these mechanisms there is the invitation to tender, the distribution of information on secret index cards relating to the minimum and maximum amounts fixed by the commissions, the commission to evaluate the best offer, the distribution of information on offers already received from other competitors.

Corruption seems, therefore, easier when the administrative decisions are more arbitrary. Frequently, corrupt administrators try, in fact, to increase the possibilities of employing less restrictive procedures. From this point of view, for example, the emergency procedures employed during national disasters - ranging from typhoons in Japan to earthquakes in Italy - clearly increase the risks of malversation. An increase in the opportunities for corruption also occurs with those administrative procedures which delegate public duties to private businesses such as, in France, associations that come under state agencies which are supposed to operate with entrepreneurial objectives, like the UK quangos.

In modern bureaucracies, a complex control structure should punish any subdivision of discretionary power into arbitrariness. With respect to controls, the Italian cases also allow us to make certain observations. A first observation, based particularly on the case of France, but
also confirmed in the case of Spain (and by contrast in the case of the UK) is that the accumulation of administrative mandates increases the number of situations with objective conflicts of interest, reducing, furthermore, the possibilities for any cross-controls to function effectively. A second observation is that the proliferation of purely formal controls seems useless and even counterproductive. As seen with reference to both Italy and France, formal controls not only impede the discovery of cases of political corruption but they also create the need for loopholes, thereby encouraging the spread of informal procedures which favour corruption. Conversely, the possibilities of discovering cases of bad administration — thereby increasing the costs of corruption in terms of the risks of discovery and punishment — are increased by a system of substantial controls on the efficiency and effectiveness of administrative decisions. Alongside substantial controls, an important element in reducing the opportunities for corruption is the 'transparency' of the decision-making process. On examining our national cases, we can observe, for example, that the opportunities for corruption increase where there is less control by public opinion. In the course of decision-making processes concerning military expenditures (referred to in the German case) or prison construction (examples of which can be found in the Italian case), the 'confidentiality' of the dealings, requested ostensibly for reasons of national security, appears to have facilitated the spread of bribery. In an analogous fashion, opportunities for corruption seemed to be very considerable, both in the French and Italian cases, in the aid policies for developing countries, the effects of which are not easily visible, objectively speaking, to public opinion in the investing countries.

The reference to transparency in the decision-making process in public decisions leads to the last element to emerge from our comparative analysis of the various national cases: the role played, in the Italian and French cases, in the aid policies for developing countries, the effects of which are not easily visible, objectively speaking, to public opinion in the investing countries.

In the discussion on political corruption in Russia, we have noticed the importance of the widespread existence of informal networks of relationships — often including criminal groups — which occupy the void left by the lack of a state power, and which manage independently the relationships between the centre and the periphery. Both studies underline the close interweaving, particularly in the south of the country, between corrupt politicians and criminal powers, such as mafia, camorra and 'ndrangheta. With reference to Franco-African politics, mention has been made, for instance, of the influence of a network of Gaullist activists originating from the resistance and underground groups which were active during the period of Nazi occupation and the Vichy Republic. Still with reference to French politics in Africa — but also with reference to many countries in Mediterranean Europe and Latin America, including one of the most recent scandals in Italy — mention may be made of the role sometimes played by intelligence agents in the development of secret exchanges.

In both the Italian and French cases, we can highlight the role played in organizing more or less legal dealings by some masonic lodges. We can conclude, therefore, by observing that important functions in the widening spread of corruption are played by various networks of power, characterized by secrecy, 'transvere' involvement of politicians from different parties, entrepreneurs, public officials, professionals; selective membership procedures which consolidate the relationships between members.

Corruption and democracy: a final note

As already observed in the introduction to this volume, political corruption endangers the very functioning of democracy. Our comparative analysis has allowed us to specify some of the mechanisms through which corruption weakens democracy: the proliferation of 'business' politicians interested in their own personal enrichment, rather than in the preparation of general programmes; the invasion of society and of the market by political parties, which have become 'guarantors' of corrupt exchanges; the transformation of citizens into clients and the increasing discrimination against those citizens not prepared to pay bribes; the partiality of the public administration; the growth of a secret, invisible, illegitimate power. However, we would like to add — and not only so that we can end on a note of optimism — that the democracies studied in this volume are far from being destroyed by increasing corruption. If one of the strengths of democracy lies in its ability to reform itself, it seems to us that the aspect of political corruption is no exception to the rule. The degree of alarm shown by public opinion has sufficiently called attention to the problem and to the legislative, administrative and judicial intervention aimed at reducing the occurrence of administrative irregularities. Those cases with which political corruption has been shown to be most widespread — in Italy, above all — seem to demonstrate that a deep understanding of the dynamics of the phenomenon
EMOCRACY AND CORRUPTION IN EUROPE can bring about effective projects of reform. We hope that with this volume we shall have contributed to this understanding.

Notes


2. In other words, the assembled decisions taken by subversive political forces operating underground, in contact with the secret services (Bobbio, 1987).

3. For a detailed explanation on this point, see also Mény (1992a) for France, and Pinto-Duschinsky (1981) for the UK.

4. For a detailed explanation on this point, see also Meny (1992a) for France, and Pinto-Duschinsky (1981) for the UK.

5. On the German case, see also Roth, 1995. On corruption and 'consociative' democracy in Belgium, see Frisoni, 1986.

6. In a research study on cases of corruption in Great Britain (Chibnall and Saunders, 1977) it has been noted that this concep­tion of politics functions as a 'neutralizing technique' allowing corrupted and corruptors to justify their own conduct as not illegal, though not strictly orthodox.

7. On this point, see also Banfield (1975).

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