ENDEMIC AND PLANNED CORRUPTION
IN A MONARCHICAL REGIME

By JOHN WATERBURY*

Recent experience in the so-called underdeveloped countries has most vividly brought home the fact that corruption is not a mass of incoherent phenomena, but a political system, capable of being steered with tolerable precision by those in power.

—J. J. Van Klaveren¹

Even if the sovereign was willing to relax the links of personal dependence, he would never go so far as to renounce the riches which, in his view, are but a part of his own, just as their possessors are but a part of all those who belong to the dynasty: the possessor, in effect, acquired his riches thanks only to the dynasty and in the shadow of its authority.

—Ibn Khaldoun²

CORRUPTION may be defined in a legal or normative sense, and in some societies the two definitions may be coincident. In the legal sense, corruption is self-regarding behavior on the part of public functionaries that directly violates legal restrictions on such behavior. Normatively, a public functionary may be considered corrupt whether or not a law is being violated in the process. A legally corrupt person may arouse no normative reprobation; a person judged corrupt by normative standards may be legally clean. What is common to both definitions is the notion of the abuse of public power and influence for private ends. It can safely be assumed that any society or political system manifests some level of one or the other, or both of these forms of corruption.

We may consider this level (while begging the question of how to measure it) as the amount of free-floating, endemic corruption in a system. In general, analysts of corruption have portrayed it as mostly unwanted (although sometimes convenient), and most often un-

* This study was stimulated by two periods of field research in Morocco. The first, from 1965 to 1968, resulted in my book, The Commander of the Faithful: The Moroccan Political Elite—A Study in Segmented Politics (New York and London 1970). The second period, winter and spring 1970, was devoted to an interview-study of ninety high-ranking bureaucrats, in conjunction with a cross-national study of bureaucratic and political elite cultures under the supervision of S. J. Eldersveld of the Department of Political Science of the University of Michigan.


planned. It has been seen as a concomitant phenomenon accompanying the politico-administrative process, but only marginally instrumental in the maintenance and vitality of that process. The real or perceived saliency of corruption in the developing countries has generated some rethinking of the functions of corruption in both political and economic development. Again, because of the difficulty of measuring something that may be legally and morally condemned, we cannot be sure if the degree or level of corruption in various developing countries is really higher than in economically advanced nations. Perhaps, because in many developing countries cultural norms are more tolerant of corruption as legally defined, and because the laws themselves are so out of touch with cultural expectations and actual administrative practice, corrupt behavior, as judged by the outsider, is far more open than in advanced nations where such behavior is masked by legal subterfuge and the complexity of the deals.

Whatever the difficulties of measuring and comparing levels of corruption, the contemporary experience of the developing countries has provoked considerable speculation as to whether or not corruption may ultimately prove beneficial to economic growth and political development. Three authors, who will receive greater attention further on, have pointed out that corruption may promote national integration, capitalist efficiency, capital formation, administrative flexibility, and a shift toward popular democracy. Those speculations must be tested against empiric evidence, and in this essay evidence will be drawn from contemporary Morocco.

Beyond that, the analysis will be carried a step further. Not only must we consider the possibility that corruption may have certain beneficial effects on the development process, but, however we appraise these effects, it may be that corruption is far more than an accompanying phenomenon of the political process. It may be seen as a planned, cultivated, and vital element in assuring the survival of a regime. As the case of Morocco would tend to demonstrate, corruption is not simply an aspect of politics but has displaced and dwarfed all other forms of politics.

Thus, in Morocco, free-floating corruption is manipulated, guided, planned, and desired by the regime itself. Although the terms may not

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fit with precision, the Moroccan monarchy can be seen as a patrimonial regime with strong rationalizing tendencies. The elements of rationalization manifest themselves in at least two ways. First, the growing central bureaucracy is increasingly subject to rational criteria of organization, recruitment, and training. Bureaucrats, in terms of education, exposure to outside currents of thought, mental outlook, and career expectations, are somewhat removed from the traditionalistic, clientelistic, and particularistic ethos of the patrimonial regime. Moroccan bureaucrats tend to identify with an exogenous cultural referent that leads them to condemn morally corrupt behavior which, for the rest of society, may be corrupt in the legal sense only. Second, although they condemn corrupt practices, a very substantial part (again the phenomenon defies precise measurement) of the bureaucrats are involved in them. But because of their outlook and their skills, they have brought about some rationalization of the system of patronage and of corruption itself. They are willing participants in a particular regime’s system, and are in some ways its accomplices. Their participation has a price which comes in the form of illicit rewards. There is, then, a notion of contract at play here, one that is defined almost entirely in terms of participation on the one hand and payoffs on the other. This represents a straightforward, rational transaction.

The patrimonial aspects of the regime are quite obvious and will be dealt with in detail further on. Suffice it to say for the moment that the monarchy underscores its supremacy within the system by constantly spawning new relations of dependency between itself and various sectors of the society. Dependency is maintained by manipulating access to various kinds of administrative prebends. These may, of course, be seen as part of the distribution system, but they are not subject to criteria of state planning, rational development priorities, or organizational performance. Instead, they are subject to bargaining, threats, influence-trading, and, above all, the judgment and sometimes the whim of the man who has his hand on the tap.

The fact that the Moroccan regime is a monarchy highlights the patrimonial characteristics of the regime, but guided or planned corruption need in no way be confined to monarchies. Keeping in mind that manipulation of a spoils system may be not only useful to a regime but crucial to its survival, we may refer to Ann Ruth Willner’s portrayal of Sukarno.


President Sukarno successfully assumed lifetime tenure, an impressive array of titles, and a style of life that included the entourage, regalia, and rituals customarily maintained by traditional Javanese monarchs.

...Significantly, he did not maintain his position of supremacy by direct control of a tightly organized and disciplined political, bureaucratic, or military apparatus, commanding either overt or implicit instruments of coercive pressure at his direction. Rather, his strength derived from his adroit command of various strategies of manipulation, negotiation, and bargaining; from bestowal and withdrawal of approval; from appointments and emoluments, and from psychological exploitation of his knowledge of the probable responses of his chief lieutenants and subordinates, their lieutenants and subordinates, and other leaders and contenders for power and position.6

It may be that any head of state who wishes to remain in power indefinitely, i.e., permanently, is pushed towards the elaboration of a neo-feudal patronage system. In Mexico, the PRI has avoided one-man rule, but has nonetheless created the problem of the dynastic survival of what James Wilkie calls the "Revolutionary Family." Regime maintenance has come to be founded on an elaborate system of state patronage, the benefits of which are disbursed under the budget heading erogaciones adicionales; in any year these may account for 15-23 per cent of all budgeted expenditures.7 It must be emphasized that the phenomenon under examination goes beyond mere pork-barrelism and is essential to the maintenance of the regime. In the context of United States politics, the closest analogies are to be found in the city-boss systems where, again, relations of dependency are created and maintained through the discriminatory use of the power and privileges of public office. The vote is simply a convenient way to reaffirm these ties and to measure their extent as well as their cost within the boss's arena.8

Characteristics of Endemic Corruption in Developing Countries

To reiterate an earlier point: Any political system, regardless of the nature of its regime, manifests some level of corruption; in turn, this may be incorporated into the lifeblood of those regimes that predicate their survival upon its use. It has already been intimated that corrup-

tion may best be seen as a variant of the broader phenomenon of patronage. Patronage is founded upon asymmetrical relations between a powerful person or group of persons and their clients, who seek protection, favors, and rewards from the patrons. At the same time, to an important extent the patron is powerful as a result of the size or nature of his clientele, and is able to protect and reward his supporters because he uses them to strengthen his hand in bargaining for scarce resources. A patron, of course, need not be a public official; he can attract clientele on the basis of his wealth or his control of or access to scarce resources such as jobs, or land, or arms. However, when a patron occupies a public position or extracts favors from those in public positions, patronage and corruption overlap.

In developing societies, which are characterized by material scarcity, both real and perceived, the asymmetry in relations between the powerful and the less powerful is particularly pronounced. Scarce resources are relatively more scarce, and the power derived from controlling them is more extensive and inescapable. The few resources at the disposal of the poor and the powerless can be easily lost or destroyed, and awareness of this fact heightens a general sense of vulnerability and potential disaster, and sets in motion myriads of clients in search of patrons. There is no real escape from the quest until and unless the contextual scarcity is overcome. Networks of dependency, or what Andreski more vividly calls “relations of parasitism,” are continually regenerated: “Once a society is pervaded by parasitic exploitation, the

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10 For a useful discussion of the overlap between patronage and corruption, see Edward Van Roy, “On the Theory of Corruption,” Economic Development and Cultural Change, xix (October 1970), 86-110. Scott calls attention to the same overlap when he proposes “… that corruption may be viewed as a process of political influence such that similar practices may violate community norms at one place and time and not at another” (fn. 3), 317. I do not concur in the relevance of the distinction between “patron,” a person who controls resources, and “broker,” a person who controls access to resources—a distinction made by both Scott (fn. 9), 96-98, and Lémaréchand (fn. 9), throughout. It would seem to me unlikely that any given patron would fail to combine some aspects of both functions, and, after all, connections are resources, as is the number of clients.
choice is only to skin or be skinned. A man may combine the two roles in varying measure but he cannot avoid them: he cannot follow Candide's example and till his garden, relying on hard work for his well-being, because he will not be left alone: the wielders of power will pounce upon him and seize the fruits and tools of his labour."

It has often been observed that the search for protection from nature, violence, and the exactions of arbitrary and predatory governments was a constant theme of social life in so-called traditional societies. Although today the vagaries of nature and the extent of communal violence may be more subject to technological control than they were in the past, the application of technology has become a quasi-monopoly of new state systems. The poor of the Third World may have exchanged one kind of vulnerability for another. The introduction of Mexican wheat may lead to increased yields, but the peasant must somehow obtain credit from the state agricultural credit bank and hope for the best in a market pricing system partially or totally determined by the state. The need for intercessors, protectors, and patrons is no less great now than it was in the past. Moreover, the contemporary power and penetration of the modern state apparatus has in many instances been achieved without any modification of the degree of real or perceived material scarcity. Competition for privileged access to state services or relief from impositions has come to dominate political life; the scope for corrupt patronage has expanded with the state itself.\(^{12}\)

It has frequently been the case that in politics where class structures range from fragile to nonexistent, access to political power has been the surest means to wealth (rather than the reverse which, according to Marx, was characteristic of the development of capitalist structures). The very notion of a prebend presupposes the use of office as a means to acquire property. In patronial and neo-patrimonial systems, passing on access to public office (if not the office itself) from generation to generation has been a more dominant and rational motive than

\(^{11}\) Stanislav Andreski, *Parasitem and Subversion: The Case of Latin America* (New York 1969), 11; see also Lemarchand (fn. 9), 75, n. 27, citing Ronald Cohen; Scott (fn. 9), 101.

\(^{12}\) Boissevain (fn. 9), develops this theme with reference to Sicily, suggesting that Catholicism, a saint-oriented religion, gives an other-worldly impetus to the quest for intercession. It may be that saints are part and parcel of belief systems emerging out of situations of real material scarcity. Islam, while hostile to saints, has been forced to tolerate saintly cults most everywhere it has spread. For more on the interrelation of scarcity, state power, and patronage, see Lemarchand and Legg (fn. 8); A. Vingradov and J. Waterbury, "Situations of Contested Legitimacy in Morocco: An Alternative Framework," *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, xiii (January 1971), 32-59.
acquiring wealth; in such systems, wealth has usually been subject to
the destruction, confiscation, or other predatory actions of the state.

In the contemporary period that motive has been reinforced in many
ways. Frequently the governments of the developing countries main-
tain arbitrary and predatory practices that involve the destruction of
resources of real or imagined enemies. Moreover, the technological and
administrative means to achieve these ends have been greatly expanded
in the twentieth century. At the same time, relatively well-organized
and penetrative state bureaucracies have come to intervene in and con-
trol large areas of the economic life of their societies. Not only do these
bureaucracies regulate and sanction ever wider spheres of social and
economic behavior, but they influence and determine the allocation
of desired resources on a hitherto unprecedented scale. It is little wonder
then that, for the ambitious, access to public power has become more
than ever the key to material success as well as to the formation of
clientelistic support.18 For the average citizen, reaching some sort of
modus vivendi with a state system that affects nearly all aspects of one’s
life has become a daily chore.

In brief, historical precedent and conditions, combined with the
logic of contemporary bureaucratic expansion in the developing coun-
tries, have fostered the growth of extensive amounts of systemic cor-
ruption.

For the most part it is corruption in the legal sense only, for while
the politics and abuses of patronage may be disliked by the masses,
they are not regarded as illicit; in effect, they are seen as a fact of life
that one cannot avoid and that had best be mastered. “Corruption,”
Huntington posits, “is behavior of public officials which deviates from
accepted norms in order to serve private ends.”14 But self-regarding or
client-regarding activities of public officials do not deviate from accepted
norms. Something of the attitudinal ambivalence involved here is re-
vealed by certain findings of a recent mass survey in India. Forty-two
per cent of an urban and 48 per cent of a rural sample thought that the
majority of civil servants was corrupt. At the same time, 76 and 89
per cent, respectively, of the same samples stated that they would prefer
to work for the government as compared with the private sector: “The
expectation of dishonesty and corruption in government is high in

18 William J. Siffin emphasizes this process with regard to Thailand. See his “Per-
sonnel Processes of the Thai Bureaucracy,” in Heady and Stokes, eds., Papers in Com-
14 Samuel P. Huntington, Political Order in Changing Societies (New Haven 1968),
60.
India and, paradoxically, for the same people who see government service as prestigeful. Government service is apparently seen in two separate images, from two distinct value positions. It is both corrupt and prestigeful." On the basis of this statement, I would suggest that the paradox is more apparent than real, and that the corrupt and prestigeful images of the bureaucracy are in fact reconciled within an ethos founded on asymmetrical relations of dependency and vulnerability. Power and privilege are simultaneously resented and coveted by those who do not have them.

The tolerance of corruption at all levels is predicated upon the basic cynicism of the people with regard to their government. No one is dupe in this game where services and influence are marketable commodities and where buyers and sellers use all their wiles to strike a bargain.

When, as a supplicant, the peasant tries to bribe a clerk, or to establish a dependent relationship with an official in the idiom of a family relationship or of a courtier at the king's palace, he is in fact trying to coerce the clerk or the official by including him within his own moral community. He is trying to transform the transaction, which he knows is one of exploitation, into a moral relationship, because it is in his interest to do so. In just the same way, when the campaigning politician addresses him as "brother," the peasant sees this as an act of hypocrisy, and looks behind the facade of symbolic friendliness for the hidden interest.

As regards transactions inherent in administrative corruption, we are dealing with the distribution of and payment for services and dispensations. For the masses of supplicants, paying for the service (brib-

15 See S. J. Eldersveld and others, The Citizen and the Administrator in a Developing Democracy (New Delhi 1968), 31-33 (citation from p. 33).

16 It may be hypothesized, although I have seen no systematic test of the hypothesis, that in many developing countries corruption fails to arouse mass moral indignation because the notions of public and private spheres are not highly developed. That is, when we speak of the use of public power for private ends, it is assumed that we can define what is private, and that public power is subject to universalistic criteria. It is also assumed that there is a kind of multiple role specialization whereby a bureaucrat is a "public" figure for eight hours a day and a "private" citizen the rest. In fact, it is common for bureaucrats in developing countries to carry role-playing to extremes by insulating themselves rigidly in the impartiality and rule-conscious role of the public official in order to stave off the importunities of clients who want to force them into the role of dispenser of particularistic favors. Variations on this theme are explored in Fred Riggs, Administration in Developing Countries: The Theory of Prismatic Society (Boston 1964); Hahn-Bee Lee, "Developmentalist Time and Leadership in Developing Countries," CAG Occasional Papers (Bloomington 1966); and José A. Silva Michelen, "The Venezuelan Bureaucrat," in A Strategy for Research on Social Policy (The Politics of Change in Venezuela), I (Boston 1967), 86-119.

ing) is not reprehensible in itself; but when the market value of services becomes too high, moral indignation is aroused. In Morocco, for instance, some evidence suggests that the inflation in the price of corruption has become onerous and resented. Passports and work permits are too highly priced, price-control brigades shake down retailers too often and for too much, entrance "fees" for state examinations have been greatly inflated, and so forth. It is at this point that the indignation of the masses over the excessive prices of needed services may mesh with the professed indignation of the educated elites who condemn corruption regardless of its costs.

Finally, we may note that pervasive administrative corruption at the lower echelons of the bureaucracy is particularly favored by the low level of literacy in many developing countries, as well as by the personalized rendering of administrative services. Where literacy is at a premium, there are very few routine operations that can be performed anonymously between the citizen and the functionary. One must line up, find someone to fill out the forms, locate the intermediary who knows the right office, and then bargain one's way to some sort of solution. The process is on a face-to-face basis, with several possible services to be purchased along the way.\(^1\)

The Costs and Benefits of Corruption in Morocco

With virtually no exceptions, the kinds of endemic corruption set forth in the preceding pages are to be found in Morocco. Is it possible to establish some sort of balance sheet as to their costs and benefits to the Moroccan polity and society?

Both Leff and Nye have suggested a number of possible benefits resulting from corruption. Regarding economic development, Nye argues that corruption may encourage capital formation where taxation would inhibit it. Further, illegal purchases of administrative favors may help cut red tape and overcome the rigidity of administrative practices. Finally, corruption may promote efficient entrepreneurial behavior. Leff joins Nye in emphasizing this point. In situations of what he calls "market corruption," the highest bribe wins the contract or favor, and it may be that the most efficient capitalist is the one who can muster the highest bribe; ergo, corruption rewards efficiency.\(^2\)

We may summarize some of the other advantages, particularly as

\(^1\) See the graphic description of one such process in Richard Patch, "The La Paz Census of 1970," *American Universities Field Staff Report* (West Coast Latin American Series, Hanover, N.H., 1970), 7-10.

\(^2\) Leff (fn. 3); Nye (fn. 1).
presented by Nye, as follows: corruption (implicitly on a broad scale) may tend to overcome elite cleavages by means of the unobtrusive and clandestine redistribution of spoils. It is perhaps this "function" that Scott has in mind in his remarks about Thailand: "What distribution [of corruption] takes place is intended to cement the ties that bind particular military-civil cliques together and prevent defection to other potential 'coup-groups."²⁰

In addition, corruption permits access to the distribution system to groups and minorities that might otherwise be frozen out. Ironically, corruption is thus seen as overcoming certain discriminatory practices and as promoting national integration. Along these same lines, corruption—particularly when viewed as a facet of broader patronage networks—may mitigate potential ethnic or class conflict by diverting the attention of spokesmen from the exploitation of grievances to the distribution of spoils.²¹ A third political and integrative benefit may derive from the use of corruption to create supporting institutions such as political parties, and to grease the wheels of electoral politics. Moreover, it may be, as Scott argues, that electoral corruption indicates a real spread of popular democracy when a regime can no longer control elections through violence, threat, or fraud, and must pay for votes rather than extract them by force.

We may now try to determine how Morocco scores on some of these dimensions, but a preliminary remark is in order. It is illusory to think that we can actually measure the costs and benefits of corruption in Morocco or in any other country. The reason is simple. Either one is dealing with a country in which some level of corruption is apparent or with a country in which, at least for the sake of argument, no corruption is apparent. On the one hand, a discussion of the benefits of corruption would oblige the observer to make a purely hypothetical guess as to how the system would function without corruption, and on the other, how a noncorrupt system would function with corruption. One can convincingly and legitimately analyze only what actually is going on and what the costs and benefits seem to be. It is very difficult to suggest what the costs and benefits of some hypothetical process might be. The only way out of this bind would be to find (or simulate) two or more governmental systems sharing the same cultural environment and basic socioeconomic configurations.

²⁰ Scott (fn. 3), 335; see also Weingrod (fn. 9).
²¹ Boissevain (fn. 9) sustains this point with regard to Sicily; see also Ernest Gellner, "Patterns of Rural Rebellion in Morocco: Tribes as Minorities," European Journal of Sociology, III, No. 2 (1962); Lemarchand (fn. 9), 68.
and political regimes, one of which is "corrupt" and the other "clean," and then compare the functioning of the two systems in terms of costs and benefits. Unfortunately, no two such comparable units come to mind.

**MARKET CORRUPTION ENCOURAGES CAPITAL FORMATION AND ENTREPRENEURIAL EFFICIENCY**

Leff's hypothesis regarding the positive effect of corruption upon capital formation is too simplistic and naive. The amount of capital the bidder is able to offer depends on far more than efficiency. The highest bidder may be—and in the Moroccan context frequently is—a talented speculator who made a killing in urban real estate or in import-export. In general, the indigenous native bourgeoisie has accepted and cultivated relations of dependency with the state bureaucracy and semipublic authorities. It is a parasitic bourgeoisie that lives off privileged access to state-controlled resources or the differential application of state regulations. At the same time, individual entrepreneurs may specialize in serving as intermediaries between the Moroccan State and various foreign private investors. Whatever deal they are able to arrange entitles them to a percentage of the investment: As brokers they take a "commission" but invest nothing except their time and influence.22

It is true that the biggest bribes in Morocco can be and probably are offered by the French industrial establishment (*patronat*) of Casablanca and other Moroccan cities. It is also true that the *patronat* represents the most efficient industrial and commercial enterprises in the country. Their payoffs, in the form of protection money to avoid discriminatory application of regulations, and in placing influential Moroccans on their boards of directors with high salaries, may be seen as promoting efficient capitalist endeavor. But the relationship is blurred by the existence of protected markets or industries, and the fact that various enterprises (banks, vehicle assemblies, breweries, cement factories, sugar refineries) are branch operations of metropolitan enterprises rather than independent establishments that must sink or swim on their own.

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A not unusual scenario involving some of the themes mentioned above might unfold as follows. X, Y, and Z are prominent Moroccan businessmen with connections in the Palace and, more often than not, close relations or friends in the Ministry of Finance. They approach a thriving French textile plant and propose that they be allowed to acquire a certain proportion of the company’s stock, let us say 15 per cent of all outstanding shares. It is understood that they will pay nothing for the shares, but that dividends will accrue in their names until they are equivalent to the value of the shares on the day of “purchase.” The company can use those dividends as they accumulate, and, depending on the bargain, include interest in the purchase price. In the meantime, X, Y, and Z will have been “elected” to the board of directors with salary. Without investing a penny, the three entrepreneurs can each pick up a salary and eventually a share of the company’s assets. The more influential they appear to be, the more often they can repeat this gambit. In return for what is essentially protection money, they do favors for the company, such as arranging duty-free importation of machinery or keeping the labor inspector from closing the place down for violation of safety regulations.

It should also be noted that Leff’s analysis of market corruption does not take into account the use of illegal payments in an ongoing process that Fred Riggs has called “strategic spending.”23 To summarize Riggs’s argument, an individual’s surplus earnings—be he public official or private entrepreneur—are disbursed in tributes and gifts to safeguard his power position and to maintain his ability to extract tributes and gifts in turn. Wealth is not power; rather, it is spent in the quest for power. As a result, Riggs concludes, strategic spending keeps surplus resources from productive investment and hence leads to “negative development.”

In Morocco, and elsewhere, strategic spending may be perfectly legal, but more than likely it will involve trading in privileges and favors dependent upon persons in public office. Private groups may pay protection, good will, or access money as a strategic device, and hope for administrative favors in return. In addition, considerable strategic spending goes on within the administration, including falsified accounts, manipulation of personnel and promotion, differential application of watch-dog and auditing procedures, cost-plus contracting where the work is performed by a public agency, and so forth. All these operations may be carried out as tributes and loans among bureaucratic clans and political power-holders.

23 Riggs (fn. 16), 141-42.
This kind of trading, rather than constituting market corruption, seems designed to insulate the participants in a protective web of obligations and expected services that makes every man at once a creditor and a debtor. In an administration whose upper reaches are subject to the whims of the ruler, the unpredictable redistribution of prebends, and the vagaries of clan-infighting, strategic spending leads to some minimal degree of predictability of social security. No one really has much incentive to break away from the web, for, while he may escape his debts, he will also abandon his claims to what is owed him. Investments in this web bear no interest, and some degree of stability is bought at the price of productivity. Finally, flight into the private sector solves nothing: to the extent that it is dependent on the administration, the refugee’s web of obligations will follow him.

The notion of protection payments warrants further attention, for it bears directly upon entrepreneurial activity and capital formation. The kind of corruption that is under discussion is a negative transaction between some branch of the administration (and by implication, the regime itself) as one party and any designated interest as the other. In return for political loyalty or apoliticism, the regime offers not to apply discriminatory practices. In 1966, for example, an important sugar importer and newspaper owner received word that his connections with a leftist party were well known and unfavorably viewed in higher circles. It was suggested that these connections be terminated lest his warehouses be closed for various violations or his applications for import licenses be turned down. In such a transaction nothing is exchanged; both parties agree to conditions guaranteeing that neither will engage in activities harmful to the other.24

Because there is some tendency in Morocco’s political system for the Palace to view any successful entrepreneur as politically dangerous (he could buy clientele, influence, and a political power base) there is also a tendency to break or domesticate such men, to reassert the links of dependency essential to the regime’s survival. Most actors are aware of the possibility of discriminatory sanctions, and this awareness or general expectation is more important than the actual frequency with which sanctions are applied. Anticipatory reaction to this threat motivates entrepreneurs to make short-term speculation and protection payments

24 In this instance, sanctions were applied. The businessman’s newspaper was temporarily closed down by order of the Minister of Interior, just long enough for the shipping companies that published their schedules in it to transfer their advertising and notices to another newspaper. The “leftist” newspaper went out of business. Its publisher, after having mulled over his fate for a while, was put at the head of an important state investment body.
and to shun strategies of long-term investments. In conclusion: corruption in the Moroccan system does little to contribute to entrepreneurial efficiency or capital formation.

**CORRUPTION PROMOTES ADMINISTRATIVE FLEXIBILITY**

In one respect, the flexibility hypothesis would seem to apply in Morocco. Corruption does, to some extent, promote flexibility in *intra*-administrative procedures. These involve skirting, manipulating, or violating civil-service rules for all matters regarding living, promotion, salaries, benefits, expense accounts, and so forth. One quasi-legal device is the contract system (*contrat fonctionnel*). Access to various levels of the civil service is nominally determined by educational and training qualifications. When Morocco first became independent, there was a severe shortage of Moroccans who could meet French educational standards for various posts. To overcome this, ministries were allowed to negotiate bilateral contracts to meet staffing needs. The same kind of contract could be renegotiated to promote the contractee to a higher post. However, even after the initial shortages were overcome, the practice of using discretionary contracts continued, for they provided a means by which a minister or *directeur* could reward his clientele with coveted posts. In this way the *contrat fonctionnel* became an integral part of the patronage system while at the same time eroding some of the rigidity inherent in the civil service code.

It could be argued that the possibility to milk an office or market administrative services helps attract talented personnel to the administration—personnel that might otherwise be discouraged by the very low salaries paid at all levels. This judgment would apply particularly to the middle and upper reaches of the civil service. Each ministry or agency may contain an internal prebendary system by which service payments at one level are disbursed to the personnel involved while a certain percentage is passed on to the next level. In addition, some ministries or directors within them may be particularly well placed to extract large-scale tributes: Public Works, contracting for road and dam construction; Education, contracting for school construction; and Commerce, contracting for licensing, market inspection, weights and measures, import permits, and so forth. All of these ministries offer a vast potential for kickbacks and protection money. The administrative "entrepreneurs" who seek out appointments as ministers or in key directions all know the relative ranking of these agencies. The prebend is known in the trade (with no offense to David Easton) as the *caisse noire* or "black box." The biggest and most coveted black box is that of
the Ministry of Finance which extracts tribute from all other ministries and agencies through the budget and auditing process and the control of the civil-service payroll, and from the non-governmental sector through fiscal control. The Minister of Finance and his clients have a finger in every pie and can exact a heavy price for their vital services.25

To an important degree, a parallel, non-official, and illegal system of payments and incentives has developed, providing a possibility for high material rewards that the official salary structure precludes. Perhaps talented Moroccans would shun administrative careers without the parallel system. Corruption, it could be argued, serves in this instance to maintain a façade of austerity while at the same time attracting quality personnel to the administration. Yet to the extent that this is true, the benefit is cancelled by at least two major costs. First, budget austerity was originally designed to stabilize the salary structure in the public sector and free state resources for productive investment. For all intents and purposes that objective has been abandoned. Second, the civil-service code was designed to bring stability and predictability to administrative careers, an element notably lacking to date. Moreover, talented personnel is wasted by immersion in the game of manipulating the quasi-illicit procedures that have developed to improve career prospects and earnings. Without reallocating state resources, civil-service salaries could probably be raised across the board and promotion practices standardized without reallocating state resources. But for reasons of political control, the King has been reluctant (at least until July 1971) to put an end to these civil-service games precisely because the ambitious civil servant becomes so preoccupied with them that he has little time left over to think about the “system” as a whole.

The flexibility hypothesis seems misplaced as regards corruption arising between civil servants and the citizenry. In fact, corruption in the form of taking and offering bribes is directly linked to the maintenance of red tape. A service charge is to be expected in every instance that an administrative regulation is applied. The service charge does not permit the payee to avoid the regulation, but rather guarantees —sometimes—that the civil servant will expedite the payee’s case. The Royal Gendarmerie inspects trucks and cars for faulty headlights or

25 There are so many operations going on within the Ministry of Finance that it is hard to know which are the most profitable. One steady source of income to the Ministry’s black box comes from the processing of all governmental claims for overtime payments. A fixed percentage of whatever total is approved by Finance for a given agency is retained for Finance’s black box. A threat that Finance can always use vis-à-vis other ministries is to refuse to budget their unfilled slots; as much as 25 per cent of all funded slots in the civil service may go unfilled, allowing one man to draw two salaries. Finance holds the key to this practice.
tires: a flat fee is charged whether or not there is a violation; Moroccans who work in Europe need passports and renewals: a service charge is required before the wheels grind. Virtually any piece of paper issued by local authorities requires a fee or the promise of further services: birth certificates, work permits, death and marriage documents, affidavits that one is destitute, that one has a sick child requiring medical attention, that one has school-age children, that one is an army veteran entitled to a pension, that one is a cripple—all of these have a price. Add to these building permits, trading licenses, property deeds, water rights, zoning regulations, taxes, building and work inspection, and price controls, and it is clear that administrative corruption touches all aspects of the citizen's life, whether rich or poor. The underpaid civil servant renders his career somewhat more palatable, but he is being bribed to perform his normal duties rather than to cut through red tape.

**CORRUPTION MITIGATES ETHNIC OR CLASS CONFLICT BY DIVERTING ATTENTION TO THE SPOILS SYSTEM**

The mitigation of class conflict is indeed a consciously sought-after objective of the Moroccan spoils system. However, the notion of level is important here. Corruption runs throughout the administration, and the most humble Moroccan can nourish the hope that his son may someday, with a modicum of education, accede to the lower echelons of the civil service. Thus, the opportunity of social mobility may operate against alienation from the system along class lines. Yet, to the extent that this is true, spoils and corruption are not the key elements. The status and salary associated with civil-service employment would be sufficient in themselves to attract the offspring of the poor.

But if it is implied that entire classes or segments thereof can be co-opted through systems of corruption, the situation is far different. On the one hand, the regime has actually been creating a dependent *kulak* class through the illegal sale of land taken over by the state from the French. The sales have gone on since 1956, linking the material well-being of officials of the Ministry of Interior, army officers, and the rural nobility to the survival of the regime. To some extent, the formation of this quasi-class may serve as a buffer between the growing numbers of landless peasants and the traditional rural land-owning groups. At the same time there is little the regime can do to avert the increase of the landless peasantry and its derivative, the urban unemployed. If there are remedies to the growth of these groups, they do not lie in the
expansion of the spoils system. Co-optation through spoils on a class basis may be possible, if at all, only in those developing societies that have exceptional resource bases, such as Iran.

While conventional class cleavages can be partially bridged by corruption, this same phenomenon contributes to the development of an administrative class. In Morocco, the state is by far the largest employer in the country. Civil servants at all levels are relatively privileged and relatively resented. There is a strong tendency for the citizenry to talk in terms of “us and them.” While administrative corruption is regarded as normal, it is nonetheless disagreeable and serves to reinforce the cleavage between the masses and the administration.

At the uppermost levels of the civil service, where corruption takes place on a major scale, ethnicity, class, and participation in the spoils system tend to overlap. The merchant-bourgeois elite, drawn disproportionately from families from the city of Fez (hence the appellation Fassi for this group) represented, before 1912, a relatively well educated and skilled group that had an initial edge in acceding to privileged positions in the administration and the market economy developed by the French during the Protectorate (1912–1956). The essential point here is that a particularist elite category—the Fassi—overlaps with a nascent class category, the indigenous haute bourgeoisie. These groups have taken over the lion’s share of high-level administrative posts. At the same time they dominate the private and semi-private sectors of the economy (if one leaves aside the French patronat) which depend on the favors and protection of the state. They have, to say the least, privileged access to those public officials who can grease the wheels. Thus, administrative and entrepreneurial elites are really wings of the same group. Not only is there much back-scratching and evidence of joint ventures between the two wings, but also a constant coming and going of personnel. A civil servant, let us say in the Ministry of Industry and Mines, can facilitate the success of an enterprise whose directorship may subsequently be his reward. Of course, these kinds of transactions also take place with regard to the French patronat, but there, relations are not so chummy and room to maneuver is somewhat more restricted. After the attempted coup d’état of July 1971, there was much talk that the rebel officers had wanted to clean up the “Fassi Mafia”; to view this group in such terms does not distort reality.

The conclusion that can be drawn here is that high-level corruption

has taken place to some extent in a socially closed circuit. Market cor-
rupption may allow outsiders to buy their way into the circuit, but it
is no easy task. In sum, corruption in Morocco may have contributed
to the stratification of resources within a particularist bourgeois elite.

**Corruption affords access to the administration for minorities that might otherwise be excluded**

The French *patronat*, either by numbers or by nationality, is a minor-
ity that has bought its way into the system. The most obvious, although
dwindling, Moroccan minority is that of the Jews. Despite the fact
that the Six-Day War of 1967 and the attempted coup d'etat of July
1971 accelerated the rate of Jewish emigration, we can make some
generalizations about Jewish integration in the system since 1956. Like
the Fassi, the Jews enjoyed educational advantages not shared by most
of the Moroccans. Under the Protectorate they had become prominent
in commerce, manufacturing, insurance and banking, the free profes-
sions, and the administration. Several Jews have been, and still are,
highly placed civil servants (although only one ever rose to ministerial
rank). Quite clearly they traffic in influence and favors as much as any-
body, but they must be more careful than the Muslims. A Jewish busi-
nessman may have to be more circumspect in offering a bribe, or per-
haps pay a higher price. When on the receiving end, the Jewish civil
servant may find that he cannot refuse a bribe. Either way, he must
play the game while running a higher risk of discriminatory denun-
ciation.

The reason is simple and reflects the peculiar dependency relations-
ships that have long defined the Jews' room for maneuver within the
dominant community. Jewish patronage networks are always partially
interwoven with Muslim networks, and any Jewish participant must
have his Muslim umbrella. In a very real sense, “the umbrella of um-
brellas” for the Jews is the King himself who has made efficient use of
this protected minority, holding them in thrall by the fear of what his
removal would mean to them.

Still, it is impossible to say whether or not the Jews have better access
to the system through corruption than they would have without it.
Their integration is founded on traditional dependency, supplemented
by the modern business, technical, and managerial skills they are able
to offer their protectors. What is clear, however, is that the weighing
of costs and benefits in this respect is irrelevant because in the coming
years the Jewish minority will have *dis*-integrated itself from the sys-
tem and moved elsewhere.
CORRUPTION IN ELECTORAL POLITICS MAY INDICATE THE SPREAD OF POPULAR DEMOCRACY

Constitutionally, Morocco is a multi-party system. Up to 1965, when King Hassan suspended Morocco's first elected parliament, there was at least an outside chance that a competitive multi-party system might actually emerge. But during the 1960’s the Palace made a concerted and successful effort to drain all important sources of patronage and spoils away from the parties. By 1970, with a quasi-monopoly on patronage sources, the Palace had achieved its objective of keeping up a "liberal" multi-party regime in which the parties could not really compete but only participate. Since 1963 various rounds of local and parliamentary elections and referendums have demonstrated, if anything, only that the carrot may be cheaper than the stick: It is probably less expensive to buy votes than to extract them by force. In Morocco's non-competitive electoral process, material inducements such as distributing PL 480 American wheat can buy an election for the regime without its having to stuff the ballot box.27 The incidence of electoral corruption in Morocco says nothing one way or another about the vitality of popular democracy in that country.

PLANNED CORRUPTION IN MOROCCO

The elements of corruption in the Moroccan system that have so far been described are to be found in all political systems. But only under some regimes are they the ingredients of regime survival and an essential source of its cohesion. Several of the strategies of the utilization of corruption and patronage by the monarchy have been alluded to in the preceding pages. It is now time to try to pull them together.

All systems must provide rewards for those who agree to participate in them. Participation implies something less than the acceptance of the legitimacy of the regime on the part of the participants. Whether or not they actually believe in its legitimacy is not essential to its survival; what is essential is that they continue to play the game. In this sense participation is equivalent to acquiescence; the regime can maintain control of the political arena if strategic groups acquiesce.

The rewards of acquiescence vary from regime to regime. Prestige, power, high salaries, and the satisfaction of serving national or ide-
logical goals may all be involved. But Morocco, as a monarchy, cannot easily handle rewards in the same way as non-monarchist nation-states. To the extent that Morocco is a partrimonial system and the King is ruler for life, rewards, promotions, and demotions within the administrative and military spheres are dependent upon the will of the monarch. Only in this way can he assure his relevance to the system. In general, the King’s degree of political control varies directly with the level of fragmentation and factionalization within the system, and inversely with the level of institutionalization among political parties and administrative agencies. The King must always maintain the initiative through the systematic inculcation of an atmosphere of unpredictability and provisionality among all elites and the maximization of their vulnerability relative to his mastery of the situation. With their political and material fortunes always in doubt, he is in a position to exert and maintain the asymmetrical lines of dependency and protection that the elites seek to establish. If at any time (as when the rebel officers struck) the King’s mastery is questioned, then the asymmetry of the relations disappears, and his relevance to the system is immediately called into question.

With specific regard to the civil service, what the King has sought to avoid is a psychological disposition among strategic elites that would lead to the notion of a meritocracy. High-ranking bureaucrats must not believe that they have earned their positions; there must always be the recognition that were it not for H.M.’s favor, they might never have made it. 28 Conversely, they must always be aware that they may rapidly fall from grace despite their professional qualifications. In successfully nurturing this disposition, the King has maintained the initiative; all elites are preoccupied with trying to anticipate or trying to react to the King’s moves. Seldom do they have the confidence, and almost never the resources, to take initiatives themselves. They are constantly reminded of their vulnerability by the unpredictable and sometimes arbitrary interventions of the King into the administrative sphere. Rapid and unexplained demotions and promotions and inscrutable policy decisions leave any high-ranking bureaucrat fearful for his future. The participants in this system are thus reduced as much as pos-

28 So too, senior army officers, most of whom served in the French army at the time King Hassan’s father, Mohammed V, was sent into exile by the French authorities in 1953. That these officers wound up in command of the Moroccan armed forces after 1956, rather than being tried as traitors, is attributable only to the will of the Moroccan monarchs. Both Mohammed V and Hassan II never let them forget that fact—which is all the more testimony to their desperation in trying to overthrow Hassan II in July 1971 and again in August 1972.
sible to the role of competent (rational) and obedient (patrimonial) executors of the Royal Will. If they find this too demeaning, they can try to find another game. The King once remarked in an interview, "If one day all my ministers resigned, I would say to my chauffeur, be minister." 29

Quite clearly, inculcating the mental disposition among the elite that maximizes royal control of the game limits the kinds of rewards the King can offer to his clients. He cannot offer them career stability; nor can he offer them significant influence over the policy-making process. He cannot offer them the satisfaction of devoting themselves to a coherent doctrine of government or of development. Finally, he cannot offer them even the satisfaction of developing and implementing specific programs. Career instability and policy impotence go hand in hand, and Moroccan bureaucrats are aware of this pairing. Even though they may have a sincere interest in the programs of their agencies, there are no institutional guarantees that they will be around long enough to have any effect upon them. 30 Personnel turnover may be no more rapid in the Moroccan administration than in any other, 31 but Moroccan civil servants are aware that, in their case, turnover could be extremely rapid. Most of them, at the level of chef de service and above, feel at the mercy of the discretionary powers of promotion and transfer vested in the minister and, by derivation, in the King—against which there are no institutional defenses.

The compensation offered to the Moroccan participant is access to the spoils system. Above all else, access is subject to the arbitrary manipulation of the Palace, and hence is supportive of patrimonial ties. At whatever level—the policeman who takes a bribe or the minister who builds a chateau on $13,000 a year—access is a privilege which is not earned or merited. It is a privilege whose ultimate source is always known and which can easily be revoked. Finally, it is a privilege which is always to some degree illicit. The participant runs the risk of exposure by rivals or superiors, of scandals, and of the confiscation of the fruits of his acquiescence and participation. Moreover, it is somewhat degrading to compete for material reward in this way, and success in the competition is not something of which the participant can feel

29 From an interview in Réalités, No. 250 (November 1966).
30 Interviews with ninety high-ranking bureaucrats revealed that only a few ventured to predict what job they would have a year hence. It is not pure hyperbole to note that one of those who did predict was shot and killed at Skhirat a year later. It is also important to note that the rebel officers were allegedly partially motivated by their unhappiness with unstable careers and political marginality.
31 Over a period of twelve months, 25 per cent of an initial sample of 160 high-ranking bureaucrats changed posts at least once, some of them three times.
proud. The participant becomes the accomplice of the system. What holds it together is not necessarily loyalty to its master; rather it is the commensal sharing of its spoils. Everyone the master deems of strategic importance is invited or cajoled to join the feast. When the privileges are revoked, the erstwhile participant has no recourse. He must simply keep his silence, for what he knows of the system’s corruption he learned through participation in it. The strategy is not foolproof, as the attempted coup of 1971 indicated. The King published the inventory of the rebel officers’ ill-gotten gains within forty-eight hours of the coup attempt. It was a hollow gesture, because fear of exposure was supposed to have kept the officers from acting in the first place. But even if the temple had crashed down upon the King’s head, he would have had the last word: Few Moroccans would ever have accepted the rebel officers as undeniled builders of a new order; they would still have been seen as self-seeking accomplices of the *ancien régime*.

The preoccupation of all sectors of the elite with governmental spoils has made competition for access to the administration the major form of politics in the country. From the point of view of the Palace this development is not only desirable but planned; the politics of patronage are essentially non-ideological. The competition is not among “isms” or programs, a realm in which the monarch is relatively weak and vulnerable, but among patronage groups who vie for material advantage, a process in which the monarch-boss is indeed supreme. De-politicization of the administration (for it was highly politicized from 1956 to 1961) is bought in this manner. Individuals and groups can re-politicize the system only at the risk of police repression (“leftist” plots and subsequent trials were staged in 1963 and 1971; in-between, Mehdi Ben Barka was kidnapped and assassinated) and in face of the artfully manipulated threat that the army would intervene if the politicians became too active. Much to the King’s surprise the army did intervene, apparently out of disgust for the patronage system and its own inglorious role in it; but, having survived the intervention, the King is still able to argue that if civilians do not like his game, they will like the army’s even less.

In the absence of some major breakdown in the system, the old rules still obtain. Administrative patrons, rotating in and out of various offices, build their own nest eggs in terms of material resources or favors and obligations that they can cash in on later. The politico-administrative ethos that has emerged in the 1960’s is strikingly similar to that of the old Sultanate before 1912. The Sultan turns over a prebend to a “trusted servant” who then farms it as intensely as possible, gaining
title to the usufruct but not to the farm itself. An atmosphere of every
man for himself and every clan for itself emerges that precludes large-
scale coalition-building or politicking in the bureaucracy. Various clans,
to the extent that they have any political coloring at all, represent only
marginal policy options: \( X \) is pro-American, \( Y \) pro-French; \( Z \) wants
six dams instead of eight, and \( Y \) wants to introduce hybrid corn, etc.

Whatever the participant amasses he is permitted to keep; but that
too is a privilege, not a rule. The artful administrative patron can ac-
cumulate, through his office and strategic spending, enough resources
to sustain him through thick and thin. The fall from grace is seldom
draconian, for the King does not want to alienate ex-participants.\(^{32}\)
Inasmuch as there has been a tendency to maximize the numbers of
participants (accomplices) by encouraging the rotation of personnel
in and out of the administration, the regime might, by employing
harsher methods, risk creating a large class of disgruntled ex-partici-
pants. Therefore, title to usufruct is seldom revoked.

Very few Moroccans have any illusions about the game: certainly
not the King or the participants, nor, for the most part, the masses. It
is for this reason that, although the term “patrimonial” has been used,
it is somewhat misplaced: loyalty is not a crucial element in the Moroc-
can system. There is a general level of cynicism running throughout—
the cynicism of the non-participant masses who fall back on the tradi-
tional reflex, “government has ever been thus”; the cynicism of the
participants who partake of the system individually while refusing any
responsibility for it; and the cynicism of the King who plays on the
weakness and greed of his subjects.

In this system, corruption serves only one “positive” function—that of
the survival of the regime. Resources are absorbed in patronage and
are drained away from rational productive investment. Morocco re-
mains fixed in a system of scarcity in which the vulnerable seek pro-
tection and thus regenerate the links of dependency and patronage that
perpetuate the system. The dilemma for the ruler in such a system
is whether, in the short term, his survival can be made compatible with
rational administration and economic development, or whether, in the
long term, it can be made compatible with planned corruption.

\(^{32}\) Since the attempted coup, some ministers have been actually been put on trial
for corruption—up to then an unheard-of punishment. At the same time, a minister
who was fired in the fall of 1970 amid rumors of malfeasance has been made Minister
of Interior.