

# Corruption in Europe & Beyond - 6

Causes of Corruption 1:  
Psycho-social & Cultural  
Factors

# Psycho-social Causes - 1

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- One of the 7 deadly sins – greed, selfishness (Fidel Castro!)
- *Thymos* – Fukuyama and Phil Collins. ‘Feel good’ factor (patrons)
- Anti-social behaviour simply appeals to some people (alienated?)
- ‘Unloved’ - wealthy and high-profile shop-lifters
- Fear – entrapment – ‘honeypots/honeytraps’

# Psycho-social Causes - 2

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- Risk – buzz!
- Peer and superior pressure – ‘weak’ personalities; fear
- Concern for others
- Ambition
- Sense of insecurity (can also be structural/systemic)
- Those who argue psychological factors are dominant would have to explain why corruption rates apparently vary so much across countries

# Cultural Causes - 1

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- What is culture? Raymond Williams - 'one of the two or three most complicated words in the English language' – assigns it 4 principal meanings -
  - 1. Tending or cultivation of something – animals, cereals, etc. (as in agriculture, horticulture, viticulture)
  - 2. 'A general process of intellectual, spiritual and aesthetic development' (used like this since 18<sup>th</sup> century) – essentially, becoming civilised/cultured
  - 3. 'a particular way of life'
  - 4. 'the works and practices of intellectual and especially artistic activity'

# Cultural Causes - 2

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- ◉ What is political culture? Can it be measured or analysed empirically?
- ◉ Almond and Verba's parochial, subject, participant and civic (political) cultures
- ◉ Sub-cultures – inc. elites and masses

# Cultural Causes - 3

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## ○ Possible components:

- Religious, inc. attitudes towards the family and the state
- Attitudes towards the state and hierarchy
- Attitudes towards law and justice
- Spatial aspects – proximity to West
- Ethnic difference
- Communist and colonial experiences
- Pre-communist or pre-colonial experiences
- Economic factors (e.g. GNP per capita) – relevant?

# Cultural causes - 4

- No very clear pattern in terms of recent trends! Comparing 2005 and 2012 CPI scores:
  - 6 (50%) of **FSU** states (excluding the Baltic States) were more or less steady state (0.4 or less change) (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine), while 5 improved (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova), and 1 (Uzbekistan) had deteriorated
- Isolating the p-c states that became members of the **EU** between 2004 and 2007 produces a reasonably encouraging picture:
  - 4 countries more or less steady state (Bulgaria, Estonia, Slovakia, Slovenia), 6 improved (Czechia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania), and 0 deteriorated
- But the region with most noticeable improvement using this method of assessment appears to be **SEE** (excluding SEE EU member-states):
  - 0 deteriorations, 0 steady-staters, and 6 improvers (Albania, Bosnia and Hercegovina, Croatia, Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia)

# Cultural causes - 5

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- Religion as a proxy (LaPorta et al. 1999; Treisman 2000 and 2007)
  - Predominantly Christian (Protestant and Catholic) states' (N = 9 - Croatia; Czechia; Estonia; Hungary; Latvia; Lithuania; Poland; Slovakia; Slovenia) average 2012 – **53.5**; range 46 to 64
  - Predominantly Christian (Orthodox) states' (N = 11 - Armenia; Belarus; Bulgaria; Georgia; Rep. Macedonia; Moldova; Montenegro; Romania; Russia; Serbia; Ukraine) average 2012 – **37.7**; range 26 to 52
  - Predominantly Muslim states' (N = 8 - Albania; Azerbaijan; Kazakhstan; Kosovo; Kyrgyzstan; Tajikistan; Turkmenistan; Uzbekistan) average 2012 – **25.3**; range 17 to 34

# Cultural causes - 6

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## ◎ Proximity to West – usual clusterings

- Central Europe (N = 7 - Czechia; Estonia; Hungary; Latvia; Lithuania; Poland; Slovakia) mean average 2012 – **53.6**; range 46 to 64
- SEE (N = 10 - Albania; BiH; Bulgaria; Croatia; Kosovo; Rep. Macedonia; Montenegro; Romania; Serbia; **Slovenia**) mean average 2012 – **42.4**; range 34 to 61 [if **Slovenia** removed, av. = **40.3**, and range = 34 to 46]
- FSU (excl. Baltic States – N = 12 - Armenia; Azerbaijan; Belarus; Georgia; Kazakhstan; Kyrgyzstan; Moldova; Russia; Tajikistan; Turkmenistan; Ukraine; Uzbekistan) mean average 2012 – **28.5**; range 17 to 52

# Cultural causes – 7

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- ◎ Proximity to West – distance from Berlin (see Kopstein and Reilly 2000)
  - Up to 1000 Km from Berlin (N = 10 – Belarus; Croatia; Czechia; Hungary; Latvia; Lithuania; Poland; Serbia; Slovakia; Slovenia) – mean average 2012 CPI score 48.8; range 31 to 61
  - Between 1000 and 2000 Km from Berlin (N = 11 – Albania; Bosnia and Hercegovina; Bulgaria; Estonia; Kosovo; Rep. Macedonia; Moldova; Montenegro; Romania; Russia; Ukraine) - mean average 2012 CPI score 39.3; range 26 to 64
  - More than 2000 Km from Berlin (N = 8 – Armenia; Azerbaijan; Georgia; Kazakhstan; Kyrgyzstan; Tajikistan; Turkmenistan; Uzbekistan) - mean average 2012 CPI score 27.6; range 17 to 52

# 'Culture' as an excuse or myth

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- Tim Lindsay's argument - culture is often invoked by indigenous elites to claim that legal reform is inappropriate to their culture, and that e.g. *any* 'gift-giving' is simply part of the local culture
- Alatas on 'Western naiveté and condescension'
- Olusegun Obasanjo of Nigeria:
  - In the African concept of appreciation and hospitality, the gift is usually a token. It is not demanded. The value is usually in the spirit rather than in the material worth. It is usually done in the open, and never in secret. Where it is excessive, it becomes an embarrassment and is returned

# Conclusions

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- Those who argue cultural factors are dominant need to explain why corruption rates apparently vary so much across countries with similar cultures – or, at least, they would have to weight various cultural factors to explain differences (and would this hold across many systems, as distinct from just paired comparisons?)