

A Model for Investigating the Nature of Corruption: An Ontological Aspect

Elena Vladimirovna Gryaznova^{1*}, Aleksey Gennadievich Goncharuk¹,

Evgeny Vladimirovich Plisov¹, Svetlana Vladimirovna Pronina²,

Irina Igorevna Borisova²

¹*Minin Nizhny Novgorod State Pedagogical University, Nizhny Novgorod, 603005, Russia*

²*Lobachevsky State University of Nizhny Novgorod, Nizhny Novgorod, 603950, Russia*

**Corresponding author. Email: egik37@yandex.ru*

ABSTRACT

The problem of corruption, permeating all spheres of human life, has been urgent for mankind for more than one century and not one generation of people. In the scientific literature, this issue is addressed quite often. Basically, today the legal and economic direction of the study of corruption problems is well developed. There are many works devoted to philosophical-anthropological and socio-philosophical studies of the phenomenon of corruption. However, holistic systemic philosophical studies of its nature and essence are not enough. An analysis of numerous domestic and foreign works devoted to the study of the ontological foundations of corruption showed that, as such, a model that allows one to see substrates, attributes, and other essential properties of corruption has not been proposed. As a result of the study, the authors conclude that corruption has two main substrates: - social and anthropological. They, in turn, specify the essential, generic signs (attributes) of corruption, as well as its various modes. It is these qualities and properties that make it possible to determine the nature of corruption as a system developing on the basis of a socio-anthropological substrate. Knowing the nature of the phenomenon, we can determine its causes and effects.

Keywords: *corruption, substrate, attribute, attributive model, society, personality*

1. INTRODUCTION

The nature of corruption, its essence and properties is investigated quite often in the scientific literature. However, the opinions of scientists in determining the essential features of this phenomenon differ.

The most common one is the position according to which the person's immoral qualities are a source of corruption. So, for example, Zhidko S.Yu., Sulima I.I., Sulima E.V. argue that, "The nature of corruption is based on the immoral attitude of an official. Its essence lies in immorality" [1, p. 91].

In other words, it is believed that the nature of corruption lies in the greedy qualities of the person himself. However, if we recall that man is a biosocial being, then the next question arises: "In what component of human nature does corruption begin"? In this case, the second point of view also turns out to be no less justified - corruption originates where social authorities appear [2].

So, we come to the main contradiction in determining the essence of the phenomenon of corruption - this is the question of whether this quality is subjective, i.e. belongs to the person or it is the result of the institutionalization of human relations, i.e. is the quality of the collective subject [3]. It is rather difficult to find unequivocal answers to this

question in the scientific literature. As a rule, the authors, posing this problem, come to understanding the dialectical unity of the nature of corruption, its subjective-objective essence [4, 5].

This disagreement in revealing the nature of corruption originates from the works of ancient thinkers who tried to find the answer to this question. Here we are talking primarily about the fact that the source of self-interest is property. However, this phenomenon is not a natural acquisition of a person, i.e. property is not given to him by nature. Property has social roots - artificial nature, it creates and defines society. Rules and norms of behavior, laws are also a product of the social rather than biological nature of man. This idea develops in the writings of thinkers of the New Age.

A lot of work has been written on the social nature of corruption. Scientists see its origins in the nature of the state [6]. It is with its emergence that subjects appear officially endowed with power, which is an element of the profession of an official. At the same time, a second group of subjects is formed that do not possess power. There is a clash or conflict of interest, which is the main cause of corruption [7, 8].

Two main positions on the nature of corruption, as well as their dialectical unity, are reflected in scientific works on various branches of philosophy [9, 10].

The analysis of these and many other works devoted to the study of the nature of corruption showed that corruption is mainly recognized as an offense phenomenon and is considered in the field of legal or social sciences. Its manifestations are expressed in the decomposition of power, the undermining of the economic foundations of the state, the violation of legal norms, and selfish motivation in achieving personal gain for officials.

To understand the true causes of the emergence and development of corruption in society one needs a holistic systematic analysis of its nature. To do this, we should distract from the already substantiated provisions on the social or anthropological essence of corruption and try to identify its essential, generic features, i.e. attributes. In this case, it is necessary to turn to the methodology of the substrate approach.

2. METHODOLOGY

In the current research the authors propose one of the possible options for constructing an ontological model of corruption as a phenomenon. During the preliminary stage of the study, methods of analysis, generalization, comparison, as well as the method of analytical review of scientific literature were used. At the main stage of the study, such methods and approaches were used as the substrate approach, the sphere approach, the activity approach, the dialectical method and its principles. In constructing the substrate-attributive model of the nature of corruption, the authors turned to not only materialistic, but also idealistic concepts of philosophical ontology.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In philosophy the substrate approach has fundamental concepts, categories, and concepts in its categorical apparatus. One of the main here is the category of "substance". Its development and comprehension can be seen in the works of ancient Greek and medieval philosophers, scholastics, French materialists, German philosophers, etc. In other words, at different times and eras, researchers have turned to this category in order to understand and describe the fundamental principles of the structure of the world.

As a result, a rather multifaceted picture has developed, offering different versions of the substantial foundations of the universe. For example, in the works of R. Descartes, using the category of substance, a dualistic concept was substantiated, the essence of which was the position that matter and consciousness have a synchronous unity, i.e. these are two different substances - spiritual and material. In the writings of B. Spinoza, the concept of "substance" is used as a single principle for explaining the world. He believed that nature is a substance that does not require other definitions and determinants.

When referring to the substrate method, philosophers were forced to develop categories that are needed to explain the principles of existence and development of substance.

They understood that any entity has visible and invisible qualities, there are generic and acquired properties. So, B. Spinoza introduced derivative concepts from the category of "substance", such as "substrate", "modus", "attribute", "accidents" [11]. In this case, the basis is substance, which is the cause of Itself and does not need anything for its existence. Any substance is not a frozen reality, it evolves, develops, differentiating into peculiar local formations, which it calls substrates. In turn, in order to understand what a substrate is, categories were needed that could reveal one or another of its qualities and properties, which made it possible to distinguish substrates from each other and other entities.

In the substrate approach, the concept of attributes appears. As universal attributes that are used in philosophy, we can name such as motion, time, space - inalienable properties of matter. There is the concept of generic attributes, for example: consciousness, language, communication, activity as the generic qualities of a person. Attributes, as you know, reveal certain universal or generic qualities of the substrate. However, attributes are not a frozen reality. They are able to manifest themselves in various modes depending on many factors: time, place, space, situation etc. If you apply the Spinoza method to understanding the essence of corruption, you should take into account that consciousness, activity, communication and language are the generic qualities of a person. Then, for example, the implementation of activities can take place in various modes, say, as economic, managerial, legal, etc. activities. Corruption activity in this case is recognized as a property of a certain type of activity, i.e. accidents.

To comprehend the substrate and attributive properties of corruption, it is necessary to turn to the understanding of the substrate as a system in which there is a certain set of elements and relationships between them. This version of the systems approach can be seen in the works of E. Durkheim [12]. In particular, with its help he describes the "material substrate of society" as a system of elements such as "communication lines", "population density", etc. The study of the substrate as the essence of corruption will reveal its main characteristics and nature.

Thus, within the framework of the substrate approach, it can be determined that corruption as a phenomenon can have a heterogeneous substrate or different substrates, which gives it the corresponding attributes and modes.

In this study, we will proceed from two basic assumptions, which are most widely used and substantiated in modern scientific literature. The first, the substrate of corruption is a person, and the second - the substrate of corruption is society. Thus, we can say that corruption has at least two substrates - anthropological and social [13].

To determine the attributes and modes of corruption, it is necessary to proceed, first of all, from the structure of the substrate.

Attributes and modes of the social substrate of corruption.

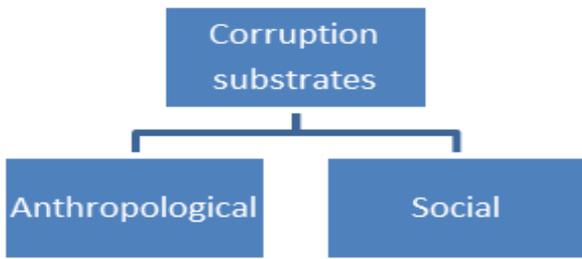


Figure 1 Substrates of corruption

A social substrate is a society with all its components. To identify the attributive properties of corruption in society, it is necessary to turn to its structure. As you know, the most effective in this case may be a sphere approach, in which society is conditionally divided into spheres. If we turn to the model of the spheres of social life, adopted in Russian social philosophy, we can distinguish four main ones: political, social, spiritual and economic [14, 15]. If we use foreign literature there are three main areas: information, social and political [16, 17].

Both schemes make it possible to assume that activity of any kind, being a generic quality of a person, gives rise to such a modus in each type of activity as corruption. The only remark that should be noted in this case is the fact that such enlarged sphere models of society make it difficult to analyze all varieties of corruption modes. Therefore, we propose using a model of society represented by eight spheres of public life: economic, environmental, managerial, pedagogical, medical, physical education, scientific and artistic. Then corruption will have more modes, which allows a more holistic analysis of its essence.

Thus, it turns out that the social attribute of corruption is the sphere of public life, which is based on a certain type of activity. Only in it is a conflict of interests possible, which are sources of corruption - its generic quality. A holistic picture of the modes of corruption can be built on the spheres of public life; then we get corruption in the economic, managerial, pedagogical, medical spheres, etc. If we move on, the very sphere of public life has its own structure. In the scientific literature, there are many options for structuring the spheres of society.

The most acceptable one for a systematic analysis of the attributes and modes of corruption is the scheme presented in the works of L.A. Zelenov [18]. In particular, he proposes to single out five main components in it: human needs and abilities, activities, social institutions, social relations. Moving according to the proposed scheme, we can see that the conflict of interests - the source of corruption can be defined in each of the proposed elements. For example, the conflict between the needs and abilities of the subject of the public sphere. This is perhaps the main tribal attribute of corruption. The mismatch of the balance between the needs and abilities of the social

subject can manifest itself at various levels and take on different forms [19].

A conflict of interest arises when needs no longer correspond to abilities. One of the forms of resolving such a conflict is corruption. Knowing the mechanisms of its occurrence, measures can be taken to prevent it. Another element is social institutions. As you know, a social institution is a regulator of social relations. Any regulator is an element of the control system. So we come to understanding that a conflict of interest arises wherever there is a management process. Management always involves feedback and control. When implementing management, there is a need for adjustment. All these processes cannot take place without conflict in social management. Any act of management affects the interests of subjects, both managers and managed. This methodology will provide an opportunity to consider the nature of corruption in various fields of activity, for example, in pedagogical [20, 21].

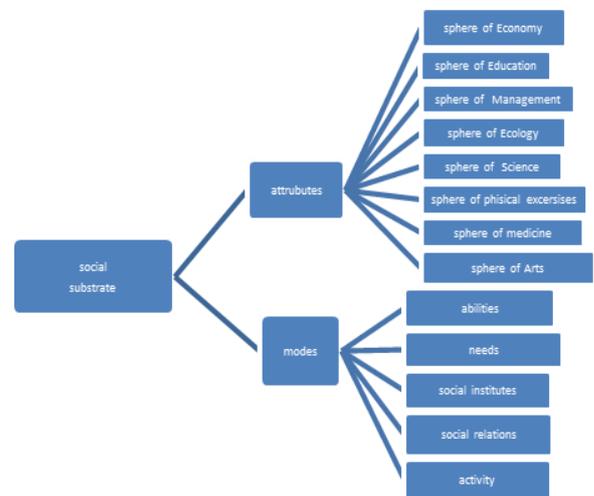


Figure 2 Attributes and modes of the social substrate of corruption

Say, the attributes of corruption in pedagogical activity will be the subjects (the bribe giver and the bribe taker - the subject, objects - the interests of the subjects, funds - money, material and other types of values, conditions - the educational process, benefit - benefit received etc.

Attributes and modes of anthropological substrate of corruption.

An anthropological substrate is a person with all his generic qualities. It cannot be formed and cannot exist outside of a social substrate, just as a social substrate does not exist outside of anthropological. But they should be considered separately in order to more clearly present the nature of corruption and its foundations. Indeed, even the spheres of public life, which we spoke about above, do not exist without a social subject - a person. In each element of the field of activity there is a subject.

Revealing the attributes of the anthropological substrate of corruption, we inevitably turn to the generic qualities of man. For example, consciousness is the highest form of

reflection, which is manifested in the many unique abilities of a person that distinguishes him from all other essences of the universe. Say, the ability to reflect the world in concepts and terms, the ability to abstract thinking, etc. The mental structures of a person, his psyche are responsible for what algorithms will form a personal worldview. Society sets the vector, norms and rules, fills the worldview of a person with content and meaning. However, not only the collective subject, but also the subjective qualities of the person himself are responsible for the "survival" of such. And here, those researchers who believe that such personality traits as greed, thirst for profit, greed, etc. are the source of corruption will be right. To search for answers to questions whether these properties are innate or acquired, researchers turn to the psychological sciences [22]. But for us this is not important in this case. It is important to understand that the nature of corruption lies in the attributes and modes of man [23].

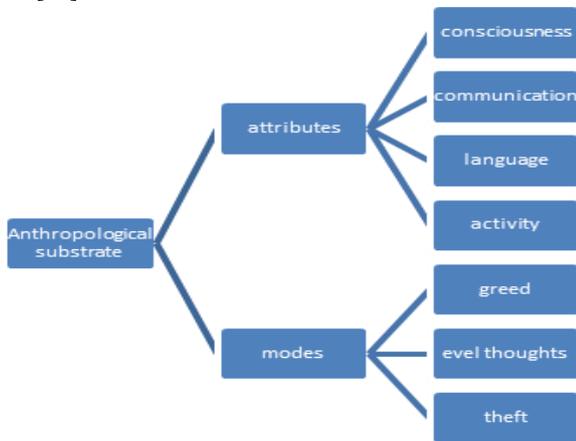


Figure 3 Attributes and modes of the anthropological substrate of corruption

Thus, the ontology of personality corruption behavior is revealed through the balance or imbalance of attributes and modes of the subject's sphere of activity. The anthropological substrate in this case acts as the primary, since the subject absorbs the consciousness, language and basic moral values and future social relations at birth in the primary social community - the family. In the future, the two main substrates of corruption - social and anthropological lead us to an inter-correlation scheme of the attributes and modes of these substrates, which is manifested through a conflict of interests, expressed in the imbalance of the abilities and needs of the subject. Here it is appropriate to recall the words of the apostle Peter: "... serve each other with the gift that you received" (New Testament, First Epistle of Peter, 4:10).

In this case, when we say that consciousness is a generic sign of a person, we are in the position of materialism. However, idealistic, religious and other close ontological positions do not contradict this position, but rather reveal it from a different perspective - from the position of spirit and spirituality. In these concepts, the generic attribute of man is the soul, spirituality, spiritual. These phenomena

are also attributes of the anthropological substrate of the person himself, and, consequently, of all types of his activity. And from these positions, morality is a product of spirituality.

A religious tradition, for example, originating several millennia ago, focuses on the "inner world" of a person and, especially, on the state of his soul [24]. The purity of human thoughts has been given great importance since antiquity. This is due to the fact that the inner world of a person will necessarily prove himself in the interests and external actions of the individual.

The Scriptures claim that it is from the heart that evil thoughts of man come out. We can make a similar statement on the basis of one of the places of the New Testament. In a situation where the scribes and Pharisees asked Jesus why his disciples did not perform the ritual of washing their hands before eating, as was prescribed in the Old Testament, He replied that not only what goes into the mouth defiles a person, but what comes out of the mouth defiles a person, for both the words and actions of men come from the heart. "Jesus said, "Do you really not yet understand? Don't you understand that everything that enters the mouth goes into the womb and erupts out?". And coming from the mouth - from the heart - this defiles a person, because evil thoughts, murders, adultery, theft, perjury, blasphemy come from the heart. This defiles a person; but eating with unwashed hands does not defile man" (Matthew 15: 16-20)".

The most famous Old Testament king of Israel, King David, writes in one of the psalms: "Create a pure heart in me, God, and renew the right spirit within me" (Psalm 50:12). And his son, King Solomon, the wisest man who has ever lived on Earth, expands the meaning of the heart in a person's life and claims: "Keep your heart most of all that is kept, because it is the source of life" (Proverbs of Solomon 4:23). Thus, we see that in the anthropological substrate, when revealing the "roots" of corruption, such significant modes are defined as the "inner world" of a person, the spirit of a person and the state of his heart [25]. In other words, a purposeful, qualitatively "positive" impact on consciousness, activity, communication and language - the generic qualities of a person, as well as moral values and harmony in the "ability-need" system are an important preventive element in resolving a corruption problem.

4. CONCLUSION

The current study showed that the nature of corruption is twofold. It has a socio-anthropological substrate. Its integral attributes are the generic qualities of society and man, which, undergoing evolutionary changes, are modified, turning into modes. It is with them that we are dealing, applying regulatory acts in the fight against corruption.

However, this is clearly not enough. It is necessary to develop measures to stop the very modification of the generic qualities of man and society. Our model allows us to see the full picture of the sources of corruption and to

attempt to build a typological model of its varieties which will be the subject of our further study.

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