

BRATISLAVA INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL OF LIBERAL ARTS

**Democracy and Corruption: The failure of democratic form of
government in relation to corruption in the Slovak Republic**

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Declaration of Originality

I hereby declare that this bachelor thesis is my own work and has not been published in part or in whole anywhere else. All literature used in this work has been attributed and cited in bibliography.

Bratislava, February 2018

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Signature

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Democracy and Corruption: The failure of democratic form of government in relation to corruption in the Slovak Republic

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Abstract

The focus of my thesis is on democracy, corruption and political culture in the Slovak Republic. In order to assess the three distinct but very closely related topics, the work is based on writings of three main authors; two philosophers, Aristotle and Jacques Rancière, who examine the concept of democracy and one expert on corruption, Alina Mungiu-Pippidi. The main idea being argued is that young democracies in the modern (contemporary) era are weak, resulting in an improperly implemented principles of democracy. Thus, the decisive question being analyzed is as follows: “How does democracy allow corruption”? The hypothesis is as follows: The unfamiliarity with the principles of democratic regime, lack of political culture in relation to the historical trajectory of the Slovak Republic and a related weak institutional design lead to a lack of political activism, which opens doors to corruption.

One of the focal sources of my thesis, Aristotle’s *Politics*, depicts issues that may arise as a result of democracy. Those problems are then logically interconnected with what Jacques Rancière describes in his book *Hatred of Democracy*. The above-mentioned books, even though written in different eras, have similar views on the topic of democracy. They serve here as stepping stones, the basis of this analysis; first, to make clear why democracy is not an optimal regime, and second, to explain how such a regime can promote corruption, which is supported by Mungiu-Pippidi’s arguments, anti-corruption report, and Hofstede’s database of cultural indicators.

Demokracia a korupcia: zlyhanie demokratickeho inštitucionálneho rámca vo vzťahu ku korupcii v Slovenskej Republike

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Abstrakt

Moja bakalárska práca sa zameriava na demokraciu, korupciu a politickú kultúru na Slovensku. S cieľom posúdiť tri odlišné, ale veľmi úzko súvisiace témy, je práca založená na prácach troch hlavných autorov; dvoch filozofov, Aristotela a Jacquesa Rancièra, ktorí skúmali pojem demokracie, a jednej odborníčky na korupciu, Alini Mungiu-Pippidi. Hlavná myšlienka, ktorá je obhajovaná, je, že mladé demokracie v modernej (súčasnej) dobe sú slabé, čo vedie k nedokonale implementovaným princípom demokracie. Preto je následne analyzovaná rozhodujúca otázka: "Ako demokracia umožňuje korupciu"? Hypotéza tejto práce znie: Neznalosť princípov demokratickeho režimu, nedostatok politickej kultúry vo vzťahu ku historickému vývoju Slovenskej republiky a s tým súvisiaci slabý dizajn inštitúcií vedú ku nedostatku politickej aktivity obyvateľstva, ktorá otvára dvere korupcii.

Jeden z ústredných zdrojov mojej bakalárskej práce, Aristotelova *Politika*, popisuje problémy, ktoré môžu vzniknúť ako dôsledok demokracie. Tieto problémy sú následne logicky prepojené s tým, čo Jacques Rancier popísal vo svojej knihe *Nenávisť k demokracii*. Vyššie uvedené knihy, napriek tomu, že boli napísané v rôznych obdobiach, majú podobné názory na tému demokracie. Sú tu využité ako odrazový mostík, základ pre túto analýzu; po prvé, k objasneniu, prečo demokracia nie je optimálny režim, a po druhé, k vysvetleniu, ako môže takýto režim podporovať korupciu, čo je podporené argumentami Mungiu-Pippidi, v správe o popieraní korupcie a Hostedeho databázou kultúrnych indikátorov.

Table of Contents

Declaration of Originality	iii
Acknowledgements	iv
Abstract	v
Abstrakt	vi
Introduction.....	8
Methodology and Literature Review.....	11
Chapter I: Democracy and Corruption	15
1.1 Introduction to the democratic concept	15
1.2 Introduction to the concept of corruption	16
Chapter II: Democracy	18
2.1 Aristotle’s division of regimes	18
2.2 Aristotle’s democracy and civic culture.....	18
2.3 Almond and Verba vs. Aristotle’s mixed constitutions	19
2.4 Polity as the ideal system for the common good.....	20
2.5 Rancière and his <i>Hatred of Democracy</i> , Notion of good democracy	21
2.6 Relevance of historical trajectory to democracy.....	22
2.7 Slovakia’s historical trajectory to Democracy	24
Chapter III: Corruption: its causes and effects in democracy	26
3.1 Mungiu-Pippidi’s diagnosis and treatment of corruption	26
3.2 Anti-Corruption report and the Special Corruption Eurobarometer	28
Chapter IV: Slovakia and Geert Hofstede cultural indicators.....	30
4.1 Hofstede’s cultural indicators and the civic community	30
4.2 Civic Community.....	32
Conclusion	35
Resumé	37
Bibliography.....	40

Introduction

Our contemporary world is mostly composed of nations that have chosen to be democratic. Modern society sees democracy as the best option. But, is it? In some nations, such as Russia, it can be clearly seen that democracy is nothing but a cover up of oligarchic rule with a communist veneer, which led to Russia being no longer considered a free country. Being democratic does not necessarily mean that the supposedly democratic nation is about to act democratically. Democracy is a paradox. Even though there is a “widespread popular support for democracy”, it “coexists with severe deficiencies and even the absence of democracy” (Dalton & Welzel, 2014, p. 284). It is quite easy to pretend democracy while the value of justice and equality is partially or not at all present. Stating that, it is important to understand what society means by democracy; what democracy defines and how significant it is for a nation to follow principles of democracy. The same way as oligarchy or tyranny, democracy can be defined in a given country based on its practical implementations, laws and freedoms. Democracy as a political regime provides liberties to individuals and makes citizens dependent on laws and rights. However, at the same time, the dependency of all citizens is reduced by the majority. That means, the ones who for example vote in elections make decisions for those who stay passive in the regime.

Democratic society as a whole is expected to be politically active. This activity is not only their right, but it should be taken seriously since citizens’ activity or passivity has the power to influence political decisions. However, if the nation itself is not promoting healthy decision-making and does not value the importance of justice and equality in a society, it can result in negligence of political participation by citizens. Such act of passivity may allow individuals to move up in the hierarchy, to get high level positions and obtain more freedom to make decisions based on their personal preferences. Due to a lack of interest, the ruling power, the decision makers are able to claim more confidence to do anything they like, including acts of corruption.

Since antiquity, democracy and different political regimes have been discussed by philosophers such as Aristotle, Plato, or Machiavelli. Even though the discussions were not always in favor of democracy, democracy managed to become the most popular regime in the modern era of sovereign states. Now, in the 21st century, it is a topic often debated in relation to its own successes or failures. One might argue the importance of

such debate, but I dare to disagree. Democracy as a regime built on the people and their participation is connected to aspects of civic and political culture, community, and even corruption. Democracy, at least the modern one is a representative form of government. It is a distinct regime because it is presented as a government of the people, for the people¹. Even after accepting that, it is obvious that democratic countries are not “democratic” in the same way. European countries hold the attribute “democratic”. Some of them especially Scandinavian ones are better at managing the principles of democracy compared to other nations such as Slovakia, which is quite a young independent nation, separated from the Czech Republic in 1993. Even though Slovakia has had a long history, it has not had its own political history, which would have spanned over longer period of time. Slovakia used to be part of bigger formations, and from the year 1993 on, it had to start building its own democracy through public participation, and establishment of new independent political regime.

Regarding the political participation of the people, the Slovak Republic is specific. Slovak post-socialist society is more prone to neglect political participation or transparency as aspects of political society. In Slovakia, the previous socialist regime pushed back, punished and jailed those who showed any dissent with the official policy of the regime. That led to apathy of citizens and disregard of political events and their outcomes. Even today after 25 years, some kind of indifference or lethargy is still present and widespread. Lethargy resulted from necessity not to engage in “political issues” and the wish to survive in a “gray mediocrity”. Greater personalities attract attention of political and law enforcement authorities and thus cause problems for themselves. The socialist regime systematically and purposefully generated fear among citizens; fear of losing their jobs, social securities and conveniences or access to education. Unfortunately, this mind-set was not left behind in the communist era. It moved with the ordinary people to the new era of democracy and even 29 years later, it still persists within the silent majority.

The lack of public interest in the modern society leads to more freedom of politicians². Those who decide to seize the opportunity to act corrupt are consequently misusing their positions and the little trust they still possess puts the whole political

¹Government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the Earth. Abraham Lincoln. See more at: <http://voicesofdemocracy.umd.edu/lincoln-gettysburg-address-speech-text/>

² To be understood as an issue: out of (public) sight, out of (public) mind.

Novotná: Democracy and Corruption

system in jeopardy. The problem of a young democratic system rises from people and their unfamiliarity with principles of democracy. Both the socialist education as well as the current one did and does teach citizens neither correctly nor satisfactorily about democratic rights and obligations. However, even then, the unfamiliarity and the comfort of it changes into ignorance and the idle democracy creates ideal conditions for corrupt behavior.

Methodology and Literature Review

Even though this thesis touches upon the problem of corruption with the example of the Slovak Republic, the main part of the thesis is based on two political philosophers and their analysis of democracy. To be able to explain what corruption is and why or how it occurs, it is important to understand democratic form of government in the first place.

I chose to cite and analyze two certain philosophers, Aristotle and Jacques Rancière due to their relevance. Aristotle represents the era of antiquity. His analysis and beliefs come from living in the democratic Greece; in the city-state of Athens; the birthplace of democracy. The second philosopher analyzed in this thesis is Jacques Rancière. He is a French philosopher of the 20th century who explains his understanding on modern democracy not only by analyzing that specific time period, but also by using his knowledge of Plato and Aristotle to support his dislike of democracy. While Aristotle focuses on different types of constitutions and thoroughly explains all of them by identifying reasons why some are good and some are bad, Rancière on the other hand talks only about one regime and that is democracy. The title of his work, *Hatred of Democracy*, says it all. For him, it is the worst regime. Throughout the book, Rancière explains why he thinks it is a bad regime and gives the reader a glimpse of what he believes is a good government.

Even though, these two writers represent two distinct eras, they both believe that democracy is a corrupt form of government inseparable from oligarchy; which by definition is a corrupt constitution. Aristotle and Rancière are not the only two writers who tackle the topic of democracy; however, their philosophical analysis of democracy includes the importance of political culture as well as the issue of corruption. Throughout the thesis, their writings are explained and supported by other authors who also depict the problems of the above mentioned social issues. As we are not aware of a better regime than democracy, we must be aware of the insufficiencies. Aristotle and Rancière's writings will help the reader understand those insufficiencies of the democratic form of government and how it helps individuals to act corrupt.

To explain the issue of corruption, texts by a Romanian anti-corruption researcher Alina Mungiu-Pippidi are cited and used in this thesis. Alina Mungiu-Pippidi, a professor of democratic studies starts her paper on *Corruption: Diagnosis and Treatment* with a

statement that corruption “can only be understood in conjunction with the stage of development of a particular state or society” (Mungiu-Pippidi, 2006, p. 87). It means that corruption in countries with different structures cannot be compared. Specific norms need to be accepted when it comes to corruption; however, a state is constantly at some stage of movement. Thus, it is necessary for a state to accept norms of universalism³. It can be said that even current modernization is a stage of movement. Modernization can be understood as an upgrade of political regime, of social and economic structure. It is a continuous development of a society. Even if a nation is in the stage of modernization, it may have already established the norms. In her work, Mungiu-Pippidi asks what corruption is and how it shows off in democracy. She dissects it, looks into the problems and tries to find answers to them.

The works of these three main authors are used as the main building blocks supported by other writings including anti-corruption report and Hofstede database of cultural indicators which are relevant to the topic of this thesis. The first chapter of this work is divided into two subchapters, each giving an introduction to every main topic of the thesis; democratic concept and the concept of corruption; with definitions and terms.

The second chapter explains Aristotle’s *The Politics*, in which he claims there are multiple types of democracies for different groupings. Democracy can be good, if the right type of democracy is represented in the right grouping. However, when particular type of democracy does not match the particular grouping, might bring excessive freedom for individuals to misuse it. Aristotle starts *The Politics* by examining a political community. The establishment of such communities is for the sake of good, and thus, even in the 21st century when an individual is part of a community (in this case of a sovereign state), one should act good in order to make a good life for themselves as well as for everybody else.

The second chapter also includes the explanation of democracy based on Jacques Rancière and his personal justifications for his *Hatred of Democracy*. He states that democracy brings disorder. The question then is, “To what extent is it true?”. Democracy is represented as a liberal state order in which majority has power and individuals have freedoms of speech or press etc. It might bring difficulties with it as well. Democracy

³ The norm of universalism to be understood as equality and fairness in a society.

once was victorious⁴ as Rancière calls it. But, not anymore. “Modern democracy signifies the destruction of political limits by means of the law of limitlessness proper to modern society” (Rancière, 2006, p. 10). Democracy does not exist on its own. It needs to be given force by people. There are aspects Rancière disagrees with when it comes to democracy, one aspect being the strength of the system. He understands it as if individuals were forced into the system. Force will not create a stable democracy. “It is obvious that to force people to participate in democratic decision-making goes against the basic principles of democracy” (Miháliková, 1994, p. 66)⁵. However, can democracy be still called democracy if its citizens are not actively involved?

The third chapter mentions the causes and effects of corruption in democracy based on Mungiu-Pippidi’s criteria. Corruption in democracy is a common trend. While some countries can deal with the problem of corruption, some cannot. As Mungiu-Pippidi would say; corruption is a destruction of integrity in a society. The public integrity should be based on norms and such norms are broken whenever bribery or favoritism occurs. Her writings are supported by the Special Eurobarometer 470⁶, which looks at corruption and its perception in individual European states. Sometimes, even identified corruption is ignored and nothing or very little is done about it. The resulting question is; why does that happen? Why do citizens ignore the civicness? Is it because democracy is allowing them to do so or is it a more deeply anchored reason?

This thesis combines insights from political philosophy with empirical insights based on methods used in comparative politics. Methodology in this thesis is an analysis of democracy, the issue of the regime and corruption in relation to Slovakia’s political culture and historical trajectory. Looking at the sources of this thesis; it is important to see whether the hypothesis is supported. Does the analysis support the hypothesis that too little familiarity, identification and sentiment with the principles of democratic regime and lack of political culture in Slovakia leads to lack of public involvement and thus opening doors to corruption?

⁴ Adapted title of the first chapter: *From Victorious Democracy to Criminal Democracy* from Jacques Rancière’s book *Hatred of Democracy*. For more see: Rancière, J.(2006). *Hatred of Democracy*. London: Verso.

⁵ Silvia Miháliková is a professor of political science. Read more at: www.mde.politics.ox.ac.uk/index.php/advisory-committee/advisory-committee/46-silvia-mihalikova

⁶ To see more, refer to: data.europa.eu/euodp/data/dataset/S2176_88_2_470_ENG

The logical structure of this paper leads to the main research question and analysis in the fourth chapter. It will disclose the relationship of young democracy to corruption in Slovak Republic to see whether democracy does or does not create favorable conditions for corruption. The conclusion of this thesis is an evaluation of the findings together with the analysis of corruption in the Slovak Republic and how overall the democratic traits, which both Aristotle and Rancière talk about are still present, showing how the ancient and modern times are not so different when it comes to quality of democracy and its insufficiency. The democratic form of government does not have to be bad, but it displays weakness and produces injustice, and for democracy to be stable, some changes need to be made.

Chapter I: Democracy and Corruption

1.1 Introduction to the democratic concept

To properly analyze and look into the topic of democracy, whether the ancient or the modern one, it is important to begin by stating the lexical definition of democracy as well as the definitions given by Aristotle and Rancière being supported by writings of Robert Dahl⁷.

Modern democracy cannot be compared to the Athenian regime as it distinctively diverged throughout the centuries. Thus it is important to state first of all the current definition of democracy, given by the *Merriam-Webster dictionary*. It states that modern democracy is “a: government by the people; especially: rule of the majority”, and “b: a government in which the supreme power is vested in the people and exercised by them directly or indirectly through a system of representation usually involving periodically held free elections” (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 2018). Most democracies around the world are based on this definition. However, whether the power is exercised in the right way can be questionable.

Greeks, specifically the Athenians, were the first ones who established the constitution of democracy. While modern democracy includes women in decision-making process, the Athenian democracy was focused on males as they directly participated in law-making. Robert Dahl called the Athenian democracy the „first democratic transformation” (Dahl, 1999, p. 1). It was introduced as the practice of rule by the majority as it was a common practice in a city-state. However, the formation of a city-state vanished and was replaced by much bigger formation called a nation-state. Within the second transformation a “new set of political institutions” (Dahl, 1999, p. 2) was also developed. This new set is what Dahl saw as today’s democracy. The shift from the first democratic transformation to the second one “transformed the limits and possibilities of democracy” (Dahl, 1999, p. 5). The form of the regime has changed

⁷ Robert A. Dahl was a political theorist/scientist and a professor of Political Science. He wrote *Democracy and Its Critics* (1989), *The Past and the Future of Democracy* (1999). To read more about Robert Dahl, refer to H. (2014, February). *Robert A. Dahl, Yale professor and political scientist who wrote on Democracy, dies at 98*. Retrieved from The Washington Post: <https://www.washingtonpost.com/national/>

dramatically due to the increasing size of cities or states. Societies forgot that nations are not small scale nations anymore, thus our democracies are not small scaled either. We cannot expect of the large scale democracies (sovereign states) to act as if they were small scaled ones. “Large scale demos is unable to retain all the advantages of small scales and still possess the virtue and possibilities” (Dahl, 1999, p. 5). Aristotle would agree with Dahl on this statement. In his *The Politics*, he does not examine the question of one best regime even though he describes one from a city-state perspective. The best city or the best regime needs to be governed by specific person or people. It also needs to have specific features. “It must be small enough to be governed by a common language of justice or the common good” (Smith, 2012, p. 76)⁸. It is also required to have common culture and mutual trust, which, Aristotle believes, large mixed cities lack. The ruling power in a large city is not strong enough because it is unable to cover the whole population of the city. What makes it even more dysfunctional is the lack of trust and implicit standards among different groups of citizens to make it sufficiently running. Aristotle’s argument is similar to modern democratic states.

Aristotle’s definition of democracy is simple. It is the rule of the majority as well as the rule of the poor. There has to be balance between those two rules which Aristotle emphasizes as a necessity. Rancière’s definition of democracy is slightly harsher and in agreement with Dahl. He states that democracy is “the reign of the limitless desire of individuals in modern mass society” (Rancière, 2006, p. 1). For Rancière, democracy allows individuals to do anything they want, which exceeds the limits of freedom and opens up new possibilities. However, individuals even if living in democracy, ought to live within certain boundaries, which are established to guarantee happiness for all.

1.2 Introduction to the concept of corruption

The second important definition is the one of corruption and its relevance to democracy. I chose a definition given by the *Oxford English Dictionary*, which Alina Mungiu-Pippidi cited in her paper *Corruption: Diagnosis and Treatment*. It states that corruption is the “perversion or destruction of integrity in the discharge of public duties by bribery and favor” (Mungiu-Pippidi, 2006, p. 87). Corruption is a common concept,

⁸ Compilation of writings on political philosophy by Steven B. Smith: Smith, S. B. (2012). *Political Philosophy*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

and it occurs quite often within societies; in some less and in some more. Corruption as an ethical failure in a society has become more and more common in the 21st century. Societies in some cultures accept corruption as a given. They believe there is nothing they can do about it or they decide to ignore it in the first place. However, such ethical failure is not only people's fault. If there is no improvement in regards to political culture and activism of ruling politicians to deal with the problem of corruption, corruption will not disappear and will continue hurting democracy.

As Alejandro Moreno claims in his *Cultural Assessment of Corruption and Democracy*, corruption has a negative impact on the survival of democratic institutions⁹. After all, it is a cultural aspect, which is reflected in the society. Mungiu-Pippidi agrees with Moreno by stating that corruption in the political circles can hurt democracy and its consolidation. Individuals living in a corrupt society may be less likely willing to accept corrupt behavior, and such behavior can then be seen in elections as distrust towards politicians. The problem of corruption is a question of well-established regime in a society as well as of moral and ethical values within a given society. The resulting question is: "Is corruption a product of poorly implemented democracy or is it a product of a deformed development within a society"? To answer the question, looking into the Special Corruption Eurobarometer and the Hofstede cultural indicators databases will explain why some nations are more prone to corruption. When analyzing democracy, many look at economic factors, however cultural factors are as crucial if not even more important in a society. They are related to any social development, including political one. To accomplish stable democracy, all factors ought to work together in harmony. Satisfaction with life correlates with stable democracy, trust and even civic culture.

⁹ Taken from: Moreno, A. (2002). Corruption and Democracy: A Cultural Assessment. *Comparative Sociology*, 495-507.

Chapter II: Democracy

2.1 Aristotle's division of regimes

Aristotle in *The Politics* talks about a city-state and different regimes that can be found within a city. He starts with a thorough analysis of a city and how it comes to be. After the analysis of a city, he analyzes regimes, which are the best ones and which are well managed. To have a well-managed regime, a city needs to be occupied with committed citizens. Since there are multiple types of regimes, and multiple types of people, it is possible for the regimes to fail due to unfavorable environment or malicious type of people. Aristotle not only describes several different elements that can be found within a city but also multiple classes of individuals. Even though they are divided into categories such as their profession, they can only fall under one out of two categories; rich or poor. Thus for Aristotle, as there are only two basic groups of people, there are also only two types of governments; oligarchy and democracy. Moreover, Aristotle, not only differentiates regimes based on their governance, but also based on how well they are governed, or how corrupt they are. Aristotle does not talk about corruption in the way of individuals stealing from the state or bribing their way up. His explanation of corruption is through the instability of individual regimes.

2.2 Aristotle's democracy and civic culture

Aristotle defines multiple types of democracy for two reasons. "First, that peoples are different", and second is the reason just stated. The different kind of people "make democracies different when they are (differently) combined: one sort will be accompanied by fewer, another by more, another by all of them" (Aristotle, 1984, p. 183: 1317a1). Aristotle's "presupposition of the democratic sort of regime is freedom" (Aristotle, 1984, p. 183). Every type of democracy aims to achieve freedom as well as justice based on "number not on the basis of merit" (Aristotle, 1984, p. 183). Rule in a city should be based on citizens as they are; majority and minority. If it was based on merit, it would be aristocracy. The first type of democracy he describes is the first one found in a city. This first democracy was a society of farmers who "governed themselves in accordance with laws" (Aristotle, 1984, p. 127) because their work required lot of attention, and thus left them with a limited amount of leisure time. The second type occurs when anyone is able to participate but only those who have free time for governance

actually participate in decision-making. The third kind is about freedom. All are free to participate in government, but they do not due to the lack of free time. Thus for the second and third type, a law rules instead of individuals participating in assemblies. The last, fourth type was the last one created in a city. As was already mentioned, cities grew in size over time, which led to the rule “of the multitude” (Aristotle, 1984, p. 128). In bigger cities, citizens had more time to experience leisure, thus they engaged in politics. Since in Aristotle’s city the majority was the poor, they had “authority over the regime” instead of the laws” (Aristotle, 1984, p. 128). Aristotle states that multitude of the poor is very important in democracy to balance the strength of the rich. However, that does not explain what type of democracy it is going to be. It still depends on the most prevalent group of population. Aristotle does not think highly of democracy because it becomes corrupt. He sees that the enlargement of cities is breaking down democracy, because it is harder to maintain as it opens up a door for a multitude of “middling lower elements” (Aristotle, 1984, p. 188). Because people become interested in power, moderation loses its value. If the number of malicious individuals is kept low, it is not harmful; however, when not limited, it promotes disorder instead of going in the direction of common good.

2.3 Almond and Verba vs. Aristotle’s mixed constitutions

Aristotle, as a citizen of a democratic city-state, in which only males participated in the political sphere, writes about interaction between citizens and the ruling power. A similar interaction is described by Almond and Verba as a type of political culture in “*Political attitudes and democracy in five nations*”. For Almond and Verba, a political interaction is relevant. They explain political culture as an orientation; “attitudes toward the political system and its various parts, and attitudes toward the role of the self in the system” (Almond & Verba, 1989, p. 12). What it refers to are the input and output processes of the society¹⁰. First, input process defines the interest of individuals toward the political system and how they perceive it, while the output process defines themselves, their personal interest in terms of activity or passivity. Almond and Verba identify three types of political culture: parochial, subject and participant. Participant offers interactive relationship. That means, citizen’s opinion matters, and is heard by institutions. “A participant (of such political culture) is assumed to be aware of and be informed about the political system in both its government and political aspects” (Almond & Verba, 1989,

¹⁰ To find more about the input and output processes refer to pages 14-15 in: Almond, G. A., & Sidney Verba. (1989). *The Civic Culture*. Newbury Park: SAGE Publications.

p. 79). Participatory political culture in a society can help with political transparency and openness; aspects important in tackling corruption, while parochial type “expects nothing from the system”. The third, subject type offers some differentiation, however only in political life and is followed by passivity. Thus, if only participatory type of political culture is present, individuals would be too eager to meddle in politics without proper knowledge. Even political interaction needs to have limitations. Thus, Almond and Verba believe that societies need mixed political cultures in variations. Aristotle’s mixed constitutions are based on similar argument. Depending on the society (the kind of citizens and size of the city), mixed constitutions vary.

2.4 Polity as the ideal system for the common good

Aristotle believed that mixed constitutions would be more stable and depending on the mixture of groupings in the society, the constitutions would differ. Hence, he believed that polity was an ideal system. Simply speaking, polity is a regime composed of democratic and oligarchic attributes. Polity is a rule by the many; however, what distinguishes it from other regimes is the balance of power and the balance of different kinds of groupings. Democracy can be good if it is created by the right proportion of regimes. System of government is supposed to represent “a community or a way of life” (Smith, 2012, p. 79). The most important aspect for a society in relation to a regime for Aristotle is the society itself because what makes a regime successful are the people. Individuals make the regime prosperous by being collectivist. Through interaction they promote civic culture in order to live a good life. They should govern based on the common good, which is why three out of four democratic types failed.

Similar to Aristotle, Amartya Sen believes that development, and active participation can lead to “real freedoms that people enjoy” (Sen, 2001, p. 1), however, that is also something Sen differs from Aristotle and Almond & Verba. While they place importance on the good of the community, Sen looks at democracy through quality of life of an individual. This measure, then becomes an end of democracy. Aristotle’s goal was to assess regimes and to find what kind of regime would make people happy or satisfied. Sen looks at aspects such as security, transparency and even political affairs. Even though Sen writes about happiness and the *Development as Freedom*, he connects it to “happy” democracy and what individual satisfaction can tell us about democracy. As Amartya Sen once said on democracy and happiness, “citizen’s quality of life and their general well-

being should be considered as a measure”¹¹. What Sen means by it is that societies should not look at the advancement in economy or employment. They should look at citizen’s satisfaction with life in relation to such social and economic issues. For Sen, citizens are important in assessment of nations and their transparency, social opportunities or political freedoms. If citizens are not happy, freedom and equality may be missing from the system of government.

2.5 Rancière and his *Hatred of Democracy*, Notion of good democracy

“The reign of the limitless desire of individuals in modern mass society” is how Rancière explains democracy (Rancière, 2006, p. 1). It is an illness. It is a cause of many problems, and a cause of new concepts in a modern society. The focus of Rancière’s book is on what he calls the new hatred of democracy. Rancière looks at the individuals that „proclaim themselves to be not just democratic States but democracies *tout court*” (Rancière, 2006, p. 3). They only take into consideration the form of democracy, the basic structure and disregard the institutions in the democratic regime. There is nothing democratic about the states when it comes to institutions or laws, but these “pseudo” democracies do not see the democratic constitution as a bad form of governance. While democracy is the chosen regime, it will keep hurting society as well as the state as a whole. The ill perception of democracy has been around for many years and it has not changed. As Rancière claims: „We are accustomed to hearing that democracy is the worst of governments“ (Rancière, 2006, p. 4).

Throughout his work, Rancière wants to explain the ideology of democracy with his main focus on the question of what good democracy is. While a bad democracy does not express the need to focus on social elements such as corruption and ethical failure, it is the job of good democracy to repress such features. It is believed that democracy is fair and beneficial; however, it can be detrimental as well. It is good to have freedom but, at the same time, democracy can give too much freedom and that can be too hard to control. One result of unreasonable freedom can be accumulation of “personal belongings at the expense of common property“ (Rancière, 2006, p. 7). Corruption as it appears is a given due to the misuse of freedom. Individuals living under the democratic regime will stop seeing common good as the moral aspect of the regime and will instead turn to corruption.

¹¹ Bhal, H. (2009, November 23). *Reuters*. Retrieved from Interview- Amartya Sen says happiness important for growth: <https://in.reuters.com>

Such action should not be an option in a good democratic government since such government should be able to control the evil; evil being the democratic life (Rancière, 2006, p. 7).

The resulting question is: What is a good democracy? As Rancière claims: “It is a form of government, which is capable of controlling the double excess of collective activity and individual withdrawal inherent to democratic life” (Rancière, 2006, p. 8). Rancière does not necessarily divide democracy into good and bad. There is only one democracy, and it is known as being an evil. It is possible to have a good democracy, but only if it successfully limits and represses individualism¹². Individualism creates a social inequality, and thus equality is needed. Individuality can be a good thing; however, when it is available to everyone in a society where freedom is a given, it becomes a problem. As Rancière mentions at the beginning of his book, too much freedom is not only bad for the citizens, but for the government as well.

Democracy does not represent a good government, but it more resembles a bazaar as Plato calls it. It means that democracy is a mixture of people’s pleasures, their individualism and ignorance of collective order¹³ (Rancière, 2006). It represents not just one type of constitution but all of them. It includes the good and the bad, depending on the needs of the individuals as they can choose whatever they want due to the liberty they are given. Even though Rancière is skeptical about success of democracy because it offers too much freedom. He believes in the power of public activity, and he states that “Government is always exercised by the minority over the majority” (Rancière, 2006, p. 52). The amount of individuals who rule is minimal compare to the rest of the society. Thus, the public needs to work together, to minimize the minorities power and keep balance between them. After all, “It is the public activity that counteracts the tendency of every state to monopolize and depoliticize the public sphere” (Rancière, 2006, p. 71).

2.6 Relevance of historical trajectory to democracy

Democracy is not a new concept; thus it is fair to ask how is it that democracies in various countries are different. It is one type of regime with one set of principles. What makes the implementation of principles different? Is it the matter of history? How did the

¹² Individualism as a cultural factor. To find more more about cultural factors, see: geert-hofstede.com

¹³ To find more about the Bazaar Theory, the following books are recommended: Plato. (1992). Republic. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc.

historical trajectory lead to the change of society and to modernization? In his book “*The Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy*”, Barrington Moore talks about the importance of upper class and peasantry in relation to transformation of societies. He states that the most important change occurred on the way from the agrarian society to the modern industrial one. There was not a universal modernization path but three specific paths, which dominated in the transition of regimes, and only one of them led to democratization. All three routes to modernity were followed by violence and cruelty, but only the bourgeois revolution led to the formation of democracy by ending the power of elites.

The bourgeois revolution, as one of the three routes, successfully resulted in democracy due to commercialization of agriculture, checking the power of aristocracy, and balanced classes of citizens. The route included efforts “to establish rule of law”, proper social welfare and “power of legislature” (Moore, 1966, p. 414) while “weakening of the aristocracy, no coalition against peasants and workers” (Moore, 1966, p. 431). Not all nations followed the route to democracy the same way at the same time. Mette Frisk Jensen, a Danish history and culture researcher would agree with Moore. In her paper¹⁴ on Danish rule of law, she gives an example of successful strong democracy, which formed out of long history of Danish kingdom rule, and the kingdom’s outstanding elimination of aristocracy.

Denmark compared to Slovakia had a significant advantage. When we look at the bourgeois revolution and other paths toward modernity in comparison to the Nordic states, they evolved by following a similar path. Denmark was a kingdom with an absolutist regime. Since very early years, the monarch of the kingdom became “the secular head of the churches” who “took over the responsibility and obligations of the well-being of people” (Jensen, 2014, p. 4). Due to the movement of power and weakening of aristocracy, peasant class and workers were protected. Nowadays, Denmark has one of the strongest democracies with strong welfare system, rule of law and balanced classes. Nonetheless, that cannot be said about Slovakia. Factors mentioned above, which were present in the formation of Danish democracy, were missing in Slovakia. Slovakia was

¹⁴ Jensen, M. (2014). *The Question of how Denmark got to be Denmark-Establishing rule of law and fighting corruption in the state of Denmark 1660-1900*. Gothenburg: The Quality of Government Institute.

more of a peasant land with a lack of bourgeoisie class. Its problem with peasantry was resolved in the era of communism with industrialization. Peasantry, and aristocracy were not the only problems. Slovakia never possessed its own sovereign land before Europe started evolving. Slovakia, or the territory that is now known as the Slovak Republic, was part of something larger such as the Great Moravian Empire, the Kingdom of Hungary, the Austro-Hungarian Empire or Czechoslovakia for many centuries. It did not have a chance to build what Denmark started building in 1600.

2.7 Slovakia's historical trajectory to Democracy

Slovakia is a young country, and, after gaining independence, it was to establish a new political structure. Despite the opportunity to build stronger political structure, this step was not successfully achieved. "The process of forming a stabilized political scene {and political culture too} is not finished, and the new state is in the initial stage of building its institutions, which are still far from consolidated" (Szomolányi, 1994, p. 6). Even though Szomolányi's essay "*Introduction: A Transition to Democracy?*" was written in 1994, it is still relevant. Slovak political system transformation was expected; however, because it was rushed, it was not completed. With the sudden split of Czechoslovakia, the transformation was not only about creating proper Slovak political scene, but also about moving in the direction of modernization. However, modernization of Slovakia was far from the expected result. "The hastened modernization process of Slovakia was found in its radical, unmanaged and destructive impact" (Szomolányi, 1994, p. 8). Modernization was about the new democratic system and as Miháliková says, moving away from the socialist democracy to 'democracy' could not be done simply by "the removal of the word 'socialist'" (Miháliková, 1994, p. 56). The post-communist societies were "forced to adopt new laws relatively quickly and to profoundly renew their existing constitutions, thus, the possibility exists for government powers to formulate the rules of political play according to their own particular interests" (Miháliková, 1994, p. 59).

Vladimír Mečiar¹⁵ is an example of a politician in power who misused the situation of Slovakia to his own advantage. Between the years 1990 and 1998, Mečiar was appointed and served as the Prime Minister of the Slovak Republic three times.

¹⁵ Slovak politician and former prime minister of the Slovak Republic from 1994 to 1998 and the leader of the Movement for a Democratic Slovakia political party.

However, his last term from Autumn 1994 to 1998 is the most memorable for Slovakia. In March 1994, during his second term, he was unseated by opposition parties, and after subsequent early elections in Autumn 1994, he became the prime minister for the third time and he stated: “It is after elections, get used to it”¹⁶. It was a memorable phrase, which Vladimir Mečiar became infamous for. He is also remembered for his acts of “cleaning” the parliamentary committees and government positions. Mečiar is remembered by many abuses of democratic principles, one being the notorious “night of long knives”. In one night all supervisory bodies of the Parliament were casted by the coalition members and representatives of the opposition parties were moved to the Environment Committee and laws were rewritten. And it was not all. The coalition was able to replace all presidents, vice-presidents and directors of state institutions to which Parliament had any reach. Mečiar even though represented a democratic party, was not a democrat himself. His act after the early elections, was nothing else but an open manifestation of autocracy which led to the lust toward manipulation and corruption.

Due to the lack of institutional constraints (which persist to this day) he was able to abuse the freedom given to him by the regime. Aristotle would explain such behavior through the failure of democracy. As is mentioned above, when a nation does not have any limitations and does not control the malicious element of the society, the regime can crumble and result in disorder. Mečiar is the example of malicious element. Due to the low level of constraints, he was able to follow his interest, while taking the principles of democracy down with him.

¹⁶ Translated from Slovak: “Je po voľbách, zvyknite si”. See more, refer to: <http://bratislava.dnes24.sk/volby-v-roku-1994-sotili-slovensko-do-temnoty-megahit-vivat-slovakia-vystriedali-slovenske-mamicky-meciar-vtipkoval-o-smrti-havlovej-zeny-230542>

Chapter III: Corruption: its causes and effects in democracy

3.1 Mungiu-Pippidi's diagnosis and treatment of corruption

Corruption is an enormous problem for democracy. "It is a challenge for all societies" (Special Eurobarometer 470, 2017); some more, some less. Even though the freedom of democracy allows anybody to participate on corrupt activities, it is usually the ones in high positions such as politicians who are able to get away with acts of corruption. Mungiu-Pippidi gives us two definitions of corruption. While the later one defines more of the modern understanding of corruption, "the individual cases of infringement of the norm of integrity" (Mungiu-Pippidi, 2006, p. 86), Mungiu-Pippidi states that the former definition of corruption is represented by particularism. Particularism is "a mode of social organization characterized by the regular distribution of public goods" (Mungiu-Pippidi, 2006, p. 87). It was not about equal opportunities and equal distribution. Particularism was about "equal" distribution based on the groups within the society and their status. The modern definition given by the Oxford English Dictionary is based on that "equality" and the importance of public welfare, which is why Mungiu-Pippidi believes corruption has to be analyzed based on the level of the state's development. Europe is home to developed nations which are democratic and are based on freedom, equality and fairness. With these principles applied, corruption can be discussed. Even though the western world has moved away from the former definition of society in relation to equality, the former understanding is still present. Status does wonders. Individuals who are closer to power in any way are more likely to use it to their advantage. "Equal treatment is not yet the norm in societies" (Mungiu-Pippidi, 2006, p. 88) which raises "fundamental questions about the way people pursue and exchange wealth and power" (Johnston, 2005, p. 1)¹⁷.

In post-communist countries, getting rid of corruption is not an easy task. The two-generation long influence of the socialist regime left an indelible mark on countries such as Slovakia. To move up in the socialist hierarchy, it was a matter of political connections and political status. Only people with membership in the communist party had access to all advantages and opportunities. People did not have the freedom of speech in their rights. As soon as someone publicly portrayed disloyalty (*reservations*) towards

¹⁷ Michael Johnston is a professor of political science and an author of multiple books on topics of corruption, democratization, and reform. Refer to: www.iaca.int/about-us/72-faculty/iaca-faculty/869-michael-johnston.html

the regime or disagreement with official policy, his or her options to live a regular life were reduced and it affected their whole family. The outcome of this suppression of freedom of speech and of critical thinking was the already mentioned lethargy and passivity. The tendency toward passivity still persists among majority of Slovak citizens. More than 25 years after the fall of communism, majority of citizens of post-socialist countries accept without any public reservations what is put forward by the ruling power and are not as engaged and committed as they should be in a real democratic society. Every country acts differently when it comes to corruption, however, “without a powerful, public demand for strong action against corruption, political leaders will not act against it” (Heymann, 1996, p. 346).

Thus she proposes a strategy, in which the “goal is to understand whether corruption is the exception or whether it is the norm” (Mungiu-Pippidi, 2006, p. 91). As was mentioned previously, there are two types of corruption Mungiu-Pippidi deals with; the modern one, and the former one, in which particularism ruled. To see what role corruption plays in the given society, it has to be specified what kind of a society it represents. Is it ruled by particularism or by the modern version? Mungiu-Pippidi identifies several indicators of particularism. The first one she mentions is the “persistence of corruption despite changes in government” (Mungiu-Pippidi, 2006, p. 92). When there is a “failure to take legal action against even the most notoriously corrupt members of high-status groups”, it is another indicator of particularism, which tells us that the society puts politicians above the law and lets them govern however they wish (Mungiu-Pippidi, 2006, p. 92).

Such failures can be common in societies as well as the practice of ignoring the occurrence of corruption. Treatment of corruption should be a priority for politicians, however most often it is not. Only a small amount of corruption incidents is sued in courtrooms, and unfortunately, it is mostly the kind of corruption citizens are not interested in. The high-level corruptions, done by politicians or individuals holding high positions whom people trust, are the ones, citizens want the court to deal with. Full transparency is one of the important steps toward proper treatment of corruption. Societies “are expected to attain a level of transparency and undergo proper political transformation” (Jonhston, 2005, p. 1) when political regime suddenly changes such as in Slovakia. The society has to “institute the norms of universalism” (Mungiu-Pippidi, 2006, p. 97). Both the social and political life has to be based on “fairness and integrity”

(Mungiu-Pippidi, 2006, p. 97). Mungiu-Pippidi also believes it is important for nations to establish stable anticorruption coalitions, which would cooperate with the government thus promoting the elimination of corruption. Such cooperation would not only result in the support of the public, but it would lead to the involvement of sectors and the “free and fair competition” (Mungiu-Pippidi, 2006, p. 98). Strongly embedded particularism (especially by a previous regime) is hard to eliminate.

3.2 Anti-Corruption report and the Special Corruption Eurobarometer

“For many years, corruption was seen as a problem only of developing countries” (Mungiu-Pippidi, 2013, p. 1), however, that is not true anymore. Europe is home to developed countries out of which, few rank very low in the corruption index even though they are well developed countries. Mungiu-Pippidi participated in a research project against corruption called ANTICORP¹⁸ which took place in 16 countries in the span of 5 years. Mungiu-Pippidi with other researchers put together a report, in which they analyze and compare corruption in European countries. She believes that control of corruption is linked to the level of development and uses it as “a control to test the relationship” (Mungiu-Pippidi, 2013, p. 2). Slovakia is a developed democratic country, but with high levels of corruption.

In the Anti-Corruption report on European Union Member States, Slovakia constantly was among the lowest ranked states, sometimes even had the luck to be ranked at the rock bottom of the list. Authors of this report researched topics such as healthcare, fiscal deficit, tax collection, absorption of EU funds or even government favoritism. Slovakia’s control of corruption has been given a rank 3 out of 10. It can be assumed that, there might be some control, but very little of it or almost none existent. Slovakia’s corruption has an enormous effect on the EU funds they are able to receive. The EU Cohesion Fund rewards countries with funds “to foster development” (Mungiu-Pippidi, 2013, p. 9), however if corruption is present, a country will receive limited or no funding at all. It is a constant circle impossible to avoid.

Mungiu-Pippidi looks into the problem of government favoritism in relation to market competition. Based on data by World Economic Forum, Slovakia ranked the worst in this sphere. It tells us that decision to choose is always biased. Unfortunately,

¹⁸ Project full title: Anti-corruption Policies Revisited: Global Trends and European Responses to the Challenge of Corruption

“government favoritism is the rule rather than the exception in more than half the countries of the EU” (Mungiu-Pippidi, 2013, p. 11). Slovakia was ranked as a country which has low resources but at the same time low constraints. It means that it is possible to eliminate corruption, however it has strong presence of “insufficient constraints” (Mungiu-Pippidi, 2013, p. 30), thus it is also easy for corruption to persist. Even though Slovak corruption is aired on TV and is subject of many reports, nothing is done about that. The Special Eurobarometer 374 on Corruption cited by Alina Mungiu-Pippidi ranks Slovak Republic as the fourth country in which citizens feel their lives are affected by corruption every day, while in the Eurobarometer 470, Slovakia is tenth with 85% of respondents saying corruption in Slovakia is fully widespread.

“Corruption takes many forms, such as bribery, trading in influence, abuse of functions, but can also hide behind nepotism, conflicts of interest, or revolving doors between the public and the private sectors” (Special Eurobarometer 470, 2017, p. 1). The Eurobarometer highlights how relevant corruption is in European Union countries, and which type occurs the most. Previous surveys showed that corruption is in fact a dominant problem, which needs to be solved. One of the many forms of corruption is doing a favor. Slovakia ranked 2nd with 53% of respondents saying it is always/sometimes acceptable. Even though the Eurobarometer adds all data together, it shows the perception of individual countries as well. In the ranking of individual institutions in Slovakia, corruption within the political parties received the second highest amount of votes (50%), with officials awarding tenders right behind with 48%. Corruption among politicians at national and regional level right received 45%. Interestingly, with 55% of respondents, healthcare system is perceived as the most corrupt in Slovakia with the judiciary sector at 52%.¹⁹ This data shows the current situation in Slovakia. How are citizens supposed to be satisfied and happy in their country, if sectors depend on bribes and do not feel ashamed of their corrupt behavior? However, none of this would be possible without people themselves. Corruption is a socially created problem on account of incorrectly developed political culture and weak institutions.

¹⁹ All data has been taken from the Special Corruption Eurobarometer 470 published in October 2017. For more information, refer to: (2017). *Special Eurobarometer 470*. European Commission.

Chapter IV: Slovakia and Geert Hofstede cultural indicators

4.1 Hofstede's cultural indicators and the civic community

As was already mentioned, cultural indicators are crucial to democracy. They tell us what to expect from citizens; how they are going to act politically or socially. Cultural factors are related to social development, economic and even political. Stable democracy is characterized by harmony among the above mentioned factors. If there is stability and harmony, citizens are satisfied with their lives. Through research projects conducted between 1967 and 1973, professor Geert Hofstede gathered information about nations and their cultural factors and how they influence and shape social and political aspect of the societies. Since the first extensive research has taken place, Hofstede kept exploring the cultural factors and kept updating the data also by adding data of other researchers with the last update in 2011. Hofstede analyses six dimensions; power distance, individualism, masculinity, uncertainty avoidance, long term orientation, and indulgence.

Power distance represents “the extent, to which the less powerful members of institutions and organizations within a country expect and accept that power is being distributed unequally” (Hofstede, 2018). Slovakia in power distance scored 100 points. In other words, it means that Slovaks do not mind the unequal distribution of power, also because they are used to it. There is no horizontal accountability nor vertical accountability in the Slovak society. While horizontal accountability relates to institutions such as parliament and the judiciary sector and how they check each other, the vertical accountability is about how citizens “seek to enforce standards of good performance of officials” (Stapenhurst & O'Brien, Accountability in Governance). Since public accountability is weak, and horizontal accountability has not been created within the Slovak political sector, power distance portrays the sad reality of Slovakia. It is the main residue of socialist regime, which still persists within the Slovak society.

Another dimension is Individualism. It represents an interdependence within a society. The question to ask when analyzing individualism is, “Are citizens more self-centered or more group-centered?” Is it “Me”, or is it “Us”? Slovakia scored 52 points in this dimension. Although Slovakia based on the Hofstede cultural indicators is right in the middle, for Slovakia to be individualistic was not a choice. It was given by history. Even though the communist regime tried to engage all individuals and become

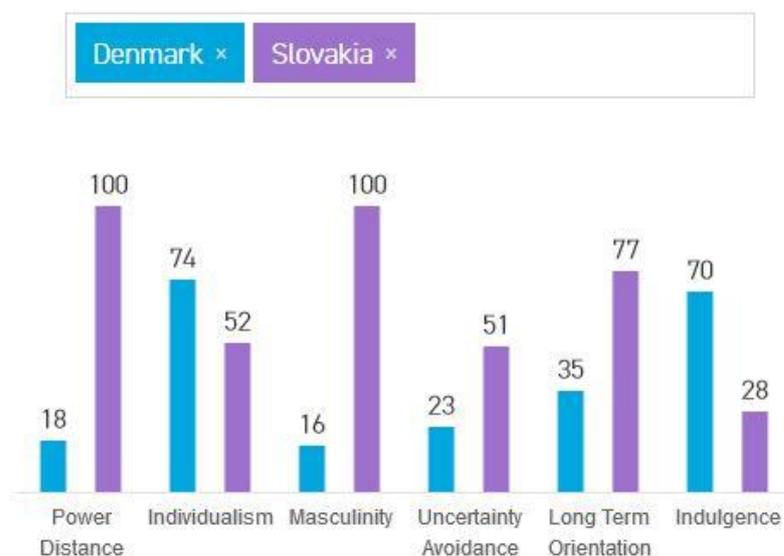
collectivist, paradoxically it did the opposite. “Where the modernization process gave birth to and promoted individualism, in Slovakia it occurred in the form of social engineering”, which in other words means that an individual was nothing more but an object (Szomolányi, 1994, p. 8). “People were deprived of initiative, creativity, individual responsibility, while learned helplessness and social infantilism became wide spread in human behavior” (Szomolányi, 1994, p. 8).

Another dimension is masculinity. In Hofstede’s language, it represents “a preference in society for achievement, heroism, assertiveness, and material rewards for success” (Geert-Hofstede). Slovakia scored 100 points in masculinity, which tells us that Slovaks are very self-oriented and competitive. It can be said that authority in a society with high level of masculinity is able to determine rules by which society will play. Vladimír Mečiar is an example of a masculine dimension²⁰. The masculinity can also be explained through individuality. Slovaks were taught to stick to themselves and focus on their own work to accumulate as much as they can.

Slovaks as they are more prone to neglect society in favor of their own benefit, are also prone to believe half-truths, which Hofstede shows in the dimension of Long Term Orientation. Slovakia in this dimension ended up with a score of 77 points. High score in this dimension is signified by pragmatism. Hofstede explains that within pragmatic societies such as Slovakia “the truth depends very much on situation, context, and time” (Hofstede, 2018). Citizens’ opinion or judgement can be easily influenced and thus, they are more likely to believe false information in the media. These Slovak attributes, which are analyzed by Hofstede can be compared with Denmark as an example of a nation untouched by communism or other regime.

²⁰ See page 25.

Chart 1: Comparison of Denmark and Slovakia on Hofstede's cultural indicators



The chart²¹ instantly tells us, there is a big difference between the Slovak and Danish political culture. While Slovakia received 100 points on power distance and masculinity indicators, Denmark scored less than 20 points on both dimension. It was established that power distance shows how participatory citizens are. Denmark is the opposite. The Slovak score tells us, that Slovaks do not care and accept what is, while Denmark is a country based on equality.

4.2 Civic Community

Other important factor is the dimension of vs. femininity. In other words: (materialistic) competitiveness vs. quality of life. Denmark is a “feminine” nation which looks at a society as a whole and what can benefit it, instead of looking at individuals and their self-interests. It can be compared to quantity vs. quality. Based on the analysis of Slovakia above, we can how different and quite successful Denmark is. Denmark was ranked #1 in the Corruption Perceptions Index 2016²² as well as is constantly ranked among the top five happiest countries²³. While Denmark is steadily ranked at the top of international indexes, Slovakia is much lower in the lists. The OECD Better Life Index²⁴

²¹ Comparison chart of cultural indicators taken from Hofstede-insights. See more at <https://www.hofstede-insights.com/country-comparison/denmark,slovakia/>

²² An index on corruption published by Transparency International in 2017

²³ See the World Happiness Report 2017 published by the Sustainable Development Solutions Network. www.worldhappiness.report/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2017/03/HR17.pdf

²⁴ The better Life Index compares key factors of society that contribute to well-being of 35 countries, which are the members of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development. See more at: www.oecdbetterlifeindex.org/about/better-life-initiative/

ranks civic engagement in Slovakia with a medium score. It is not poor; however, it is not satisfactory either. “Trust in government is essential for social cohesion and well-being” (OECD, 2018). Compared to other countries in relation to their voter turnout, Slovakia ranked below the average. Public participation is important “for holding the government to account and maintain confidence in public institutions” (OECD, 2018). Unless the percentage of public participants in Slovakia goes up, “the future will probably depend more upon the responsible behavior of political elites and on a free press” (Miháliková, 1994, s. 66). Robert Putnam, in his book *Making Democracy Work* talks explains institutional performance. He asks why and how regions or countries are different. Putnam explained it from the side of civiness. What is a civic community? It is a community, in which “patterns of civic involvement and social solidarity” (Putnam, Leonardi, & Nanetti, 1993, p. 83) can be traced. Citizens ought to act according to their duties and what is best for their community or city to achieve stability. Stability of democratic government depends on social and economic transformation (Putnam, Leonardi, & Nanetti, 1993, p. 83). Social and political participation is significant, as it can help achieve political equality, however both are results of historical traditions. A civic community should be tolerant and based on trust and solidarity with all individuals being open to equal opportunities and freedom of speech. For Putnam, such indicator (in Italy) is a referendum. It shows that people want to choose and want to decide what is good for their country. “Citizenship in a civic community is marked, first of all, by active participation in public affairs” (Putnam, Leonardi, & Nanetti, 1993, p. 87).

Many experts on democracy and the question of corruption say that active participation is crucial. As Putnam, Russell Dalton also believes in assertiveness instead of allegiance. He believes that active citizenship matters. Citizens should not follow like sheep, but ought to look at their government with a critical eye. As Dalton states, “how a society’s political culture is shaped has far reaching consequences for how this society is governed” (Dalton & Welzel, 2014, p. 287). To achieve stability, there has to be balance between institutions and the political culture of the society. That means, one influences the other. “How society is governed reflects key features of its culture” (Dalton & Welzel, 2014, p. 289) which can be seen in Geert Hofstede database of cultural indicators on Slovakia. However, Slovaks are slowly moving away from the passivity, especially the younger generation. An example are the not so old anti-corruption protests²⁵ organized

²⁵ For more information, please see: www.velkyprotikorupcny pochod.sk/

Novotná: Democracy and Corruption

by students themselves. Those students in the streets by addressing the issue of corruption put pressure on the government, which had to put the problem of corruption on the table. It does not mean, that the government will make corruption its priority. However, it acknowledges it. With more pressure from the public, the government will have to deal with the issue and properly address it.

Conclusion

This bachelor thesis joined three topics, each with distinct importance to Slovak society. The hypothesis of this work was specific. Its work was not to refute, but was to show the correlation between the principles of democracy, corruption and political culture, and how one influences the other. Based on this analysis, we know where the problems spring from. Some countries know how to protect its citizens from corruption as well as limit it successfully, but Slovakia cannot. Even though this bachelor thesis was well researched, the size and the importance of the topic led to some unavoidable limitations. First of all, the enthusiasm for this topic and its relevance led me to research more than I could add to this thesis due to the length requirement. Second of all, some researched sources relevant to this thesis had to be cut in order to keep it straightforward and not diverge from the main purpose of this bachelor thesis. The topic of corruption in Slovakia is a vast aspect of society and to explain its causes not only through the principles of democracy and political participation would require more time and more paper space.

Overall, this thesis was successful in properly analyzing not only the problem of democracy, but also how corruption is promoted especially in young democracies, and how political participation can limit it or help it thrive.

Democracy is believed to be badly implemented regime by both Aristotle and Rancière. Democracy is not necessarily an incorrect regime; however, its success lays in its proper implementation. Both agree that with the growing size of societies, adjustments need to be made, otherwise it will lead to disorder, excessive freedom and a lack of limits among citizens. This attribute can be relatable to Slovakia. Slovakia as a young democracy after 1993 opened doors to limitlessness. The fact that democracy ought to be based on principles discussed in this thesis was forgotten, which helped toward the rampant corruption. Even though corruption in Slovakia is high due to low constraints and weak political culture, the lack of strong historical trajectory helped it thrive. Can a post-communist country with young democratic governance find its way to transparency?

When we look back at Mungiu Pippidi's two types of corruption. Slovakia is clearly a particularistic society. There is no horizontal nor vertical accountability in the society, thus there is not a body, which would check ministries and institutions. It also

needs to be realized that it would be naïve to expect from all Slovaks to be active. Even Miháliková asks whether such participation should be required from citizens, or it should be a decision made by citizens themselves. However, the current situation, in which parochial and subject type of society prevail, the society needs to start building its participatory political culture to improve the battle against corruption.

Corruption is one aspect of young democracy that is hard to eliminate. Slovakia is an example of a country with low constraints and a lack of historical trajectory to democracy. When such aspect is missing, Almond and Verba states as well as Aristotle that education and transparency is important. Education can be used as the tool to teach its citizens about democratic values. However, it is not only about education. It relates to families and societies as well, which should emphasize the importance of democratic values and principles. The passivity of civic engagement can be reduced through the activation of the new/young generations. Individuals who have no experience with socialist regime need to become interested in their country and fight against the practices of the old regime. Hofstede cultural indicators showed that passivity toward civic engagement and excess of competitiveness is deeply rooted within the Slovak society.

Based on the analysis I conclude that, Slovakia, due to its historical development, was not able to fully implement principles of democracy. Instead of building strong political culture right from the separation of Czechoslovakia in 1993, the power of socialist awareness was stronger, which slowed down not only the development of already mentioned political culture, but also transparency of Slovak political sphere. However, as this thesis showed, the political culture can be improved. To achieve it first of all, it is needed to educate citizens on the principles of democracy, as well as on the importance of their participation. Second of all, it is important to establish horizontal and vertical accountability to achieve transparency needed to tackle corruption. Without these two steps, young democracy in Slovakia will not achieve its full potential and will never be able to tackle the issue of corruption.

Resumé

Demokracia, tak ako je považovaná za dobrý, ba priam najlepší politický režim, je taktiež aj kritizovaná za svoje nedostatky už od dôb Antiky. Rýchly rozvoj demokracie priviedol ľudí k povedomiu, že suverénna krajina by mala byť automaticky demokratická. V opačnom prípade by nemala byť akceptovaná ani považovaná za plnohodnotnú. Demokratický atribút vie pomôcť krajine v rámci jej medzinárodného postavenia, kontaktov a možnosti byť akceptovaný v medzinárodných organizáciách, avšak tento atribút je taktiež aj zneužívaný. Ruská federácia je príkladom krajiny, ktorá využíva tento atribút ako štít vo svoj prospech. Demokracia v tomto prípade je len zakamuflovaná vláda oligarchie, doplnená komunistickými rysmi. To, že štát je demokratický, neznamená, že demokratické pravidlá a princípy aj dodržiava. Ako tomu predísť? Občania musia byť politicky aktívni a poznať svoje práva. Na jednej strane štát, čím sa myslí vláda štátu, ktorej dali občania svoj hlas, by sa mala správať eticky a na druhej strane občania by nemali zabúdať, že ich hlas je dôležitý na udržanie princípov demokracie. Ak občania neprejavujú adekvátnu politickú angažovanosť a záujem o kontrolu verejnej správy, takáto pasivita a ľahostajnosť môže napomáhať k porušovaniu demokratických princípov zo strany vládnej administratívy. Táto téma ma zaujala vďaka môjmu štúdiu komparatívnej politiky a politickej filozofie. V tejto bakalárskej práci analyzujem demokraciu z hľadiska nedostatkov implementácie jej princípov a kauzálnu súvislosť týchto deficitov demokracie s korupciou. Demokracia nie je len o tom, že sa štátu pridá moderný atribút. Demokratický štát sa vyznačuje rovnosťou, slobodou a mal by byť primárne postavený na politickej angažovanosti svojich občanom, nakoľko je to režim ľudu.

Po krátkom úvode, v ktorom je stručne opísaná problematika demokracie, korupcie a občianskej angažovanosti v Slovenskej republike, sa moja bakalárska práca v prvej kapitole zaoberá hlavnými východiskami dvoch hlavných tém; demokracie a korupcie. Vysvetlenie definícií hlavných pojmov považujem za kľúčové k objasneniu súvislostí, v ktorých budú použité. Metodológia mojej práce je založená na analýze odborných prác s väzbou na Slovenskú republiku a je podporená štatistickými dátami získanými z Eurobarometra, Indexu korupcie a databázy kultúrnych indikátorov Geert Hofstede. Hypotézou, ktorú chcem v svojej práci potvrdiť, je, že v Slovenskej republike nie sú plnohodnotne implementované princípy demokratického štátneho zriadenia a že

tento stav vyplýva nielen z nedostatku politickej kultúry, ale že má hlbokú kauzálnu súvislosť s historickým vývojom na Slovensku v minulom tisícročí a s pretrvávajúcimi dôsledkami predchádzajúceho socialistického zriadenia, ktoré viedli k nedostatku politickej angažovanosti verejnosti a otvorili dvere korupcii.

V druhej kapitole svojej práce stručne analyzujem Aristotelovu knihu *Politika*, jeho rozdelenie režimov, a jeho špecifické chápanie demokracie. Aj keď Aristoteles vníma demokraciu ako jeden z nedokonalých režimov, je pevným zástancam politickej participácie a angažovanosti verejnosti. Z tohto dôvodu následne v tejto kapitole porovnávam politickú kultúru podľa Aristotela s prácou autorov Almonda a Verbu, pre ktorých je táto participácia tiež veľmi dôležitá. Tak ako Almond a Verba veria, že zmiešaná politická kultúra vie najlepšie udržať štruktúru politického systému, tak aj Aristoteles verí, že zmiešané režimy vedia zabezpečiť rovnosť medzi tými ktorí vládnu, a tými, ktorí sú ovládaní (verejnosťou). V druhej kapitole sa taktiež zaoberám Rancièrovou knihou *Nenávist' k demokracii*. Rancière v nej obhajuje svoj názor, že demokracia dáva až príliš slobody, čo vedie k ignorovaniu demokratických pravidiel. Rancièrovou hlavnou témou je popis pojmov „good democracy“ (vo význame správna, kvalitná demokracia). Podľa Rancièra musí byť kvalitná demokracia schopná eliminovať individualizmus a z neho vyplývajúce riziká korupčného správania predstaviteľov štátnej administratívy. Poslednou témou druhej kapitoly je analýza vývoja demokracie podľa Barringtona Moora²⁶ a taktiež na Slovensku. Tu argumentujem, že Slovensko nie je vzorovým príkladom demokracie, čo je zapríčinené aj historickými súvislosťami.

V tretej kapitole analyzujem chápanie korupcie podľa rumunskej odborníčky na korupciu Aliny Mungiu-Pippidi. V knihe *Diagnoza a treatment* definuje táto autorka dva základné typy korupcie, z ktorých partikularizmus²⁷ identifikujem ako veľmi relevantný vzhľadom k stavu implementácie demokratických princípov na Slovensku. Mungiu-Pippidi identifikuje niekoľko indikátorov partikularizmu, ktoré môžeme jednoznačne identifikovať aj na Slovensku. Ako merateľný ukazovateľ korupcie je tu prezentované jej

²⁶ *Sociálne pôvody diktatúry a demokracie* od Barrington Moora. Preložené z angličtiny: Moore, B. (1966). *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy: Lord and Peasant in the Making of the Modern World*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press.

²⁷ Partikularizmus je politická teória ktorá hovorí, že každá politická skupina má právo presadzovať svoje vlastné záujmy a najmä nezávislosť bez ohľadu na záujmy väčších skupín. Definícia od Merriam Webster: Particularism. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/particularism>

vnímanie verejnou na základe prieskumov verejnej mienky. Za najobjektívnejší z nich považujem v tejto súvislosti „Eurobarometer“- prieskum verejnej mienky v rámci EÚ. Ale aj Mungiu-Pippidi sa podieľala a spracovaní správy, obsahom ktorej je analýza a porovnanie korupcie v európskych krajinách. Slovensko je v tejto správe hodnotené z rozličných hľadísk ako sú dane, eurofondy alebo.

V štvrtej kapitole svojej bakalárskej práce analyzujem stav politickej kultúry na Slovensku z hľadiska kultúrnych indikátorov spracovaných Geert Hofstedem²⁸. V tejto kapitole predstavujem jednotlivé typy kultúrnych indikátorov, ktoré poukazujú na kultúrne faktory a ich vplyv na sociálne a politické aspekty spoločnosti. Následne porovnávam Slovensko s Dánskom, ako krajinou s prirodzeným historickým vývojom demokracie, neprerušeným skúsenosťou so socialistickou „demokraciou“, a poukazujem na dôležitosť kontinuity historického vývoja krajiny. V tejto kapitole ešte spätne poukazujem na korupciu na Slovensku a špecificky na nesprávne vnútorné mechanizmy v rámci vlády (tzv. *horizontal accountability*²⁹), z čoho vyplýva kritické vnímanie mocenských vzťahov verejnou a nízka miera akceptácie, že sa táto moc nerozdeľuje rovnomerne (tzv. *power distance*³⁰).

V závere svojej práce sumarizujem jej dve hlavné témy, demokraciu a korupciu, vo vzťahu k Slovensku a poukazujem na dôležitosť politickej kultúry. V rámci tejto sumarizácie tiež vyvodzujem záver, že Slovensko (aj) vďaka svojmu historickému vývoju nebolo doteraz schopne plnohodnotne aplikovať demokratické princípy. Namiesto toho, aby sa zodpovedná politická garnitúra snažila vytvoriť silnú politickú kultúru hneď od roku 1993, sila prežívajúceho socialistického povedomia bola silnejšia a spomalila vývoj nielen spomínanej politickej kultúry medzi občanmi, ale aj transparentnosť slovenskej politickej sféry.

²⁸ Pre viacej informácií: www.hofstede-insights.com/country-comparison/slovakia/

²⁹ Pre viacej informácií, nasledujúci dokument je odporúčaný: Stapenhurst a O'Brien – Zodpovednosť vo verejnej správe. Z anglického prekladu: *Accountability in Governance*.

<https://siteresources.worldbank.org/>

³⁰ Pre viacej informácií: www.hofstede-insights.com/country-comparison/slovakia/

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