

Corruption in Brazil: an Analytical Psychology view*

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Abstract

In recent years, international media has exposed several corruption-related scandals, which have shown not only the fragility of political systems but also the global scale of corruption. Corruption is more than a trending topic, it is a global phenomenon with severe consequences that seems to have particular distinctions from country to country. For example, in Brazil, corruption is a widespread and a pressing social problem that seems to be directly connected with the Brazilian *collective identity* and, for many, is intrinsic to the “Brazilian way” (*jeitinho brasileiro*).

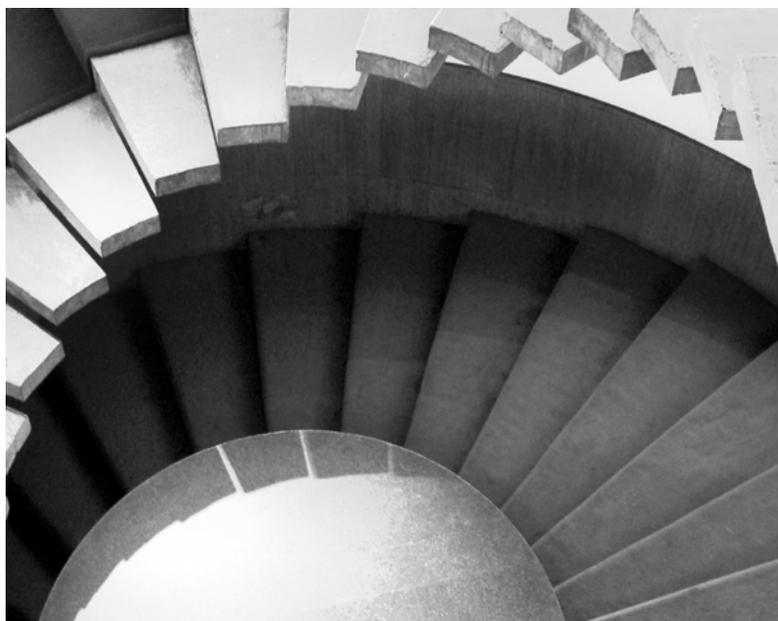
Although corruption has been a matter of discussion for many different fields of study, most existing theories of corruption are unilateral and partial as they focus on just a part of the problem,

placing the responsibility on either the lack of morality of Brazilians and their politicians, or on the inefficiency of the judicial system. People’s opinion and current interpretive theories are superficial and tend to conclude that corruption is responsible for *all* social problems in Brazil. Analytical Psychology can contribute with new approaches to the study of the corruption phenomenon. By applying psychotherapeutic values

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to political issues, I believe this research can help psychotherapists to open a two-way path between “inner realities” and the “world of politics” as Andrew Samuels proposes. This research proposes a closer look at the relationship between the inner reality of the Brazilian people and the world of politics in Brazil, particularly focusing on Brazilian corruption.

The objective of this research is to analyse corruption in its three different but complementary levels: individual, cultural and collective. I discuss the Brazilian cultural complexes and cultural

traumas that were already identified by Brazilian Jungians and that might be related to the current social-political scenario of the country. I argue that one of those complexes has not been completely identified yet: the Brazilian version of the trickster archetype that seems to be oppressing the Brazilian psyche, the cultural complex *malandro*. I also argue that political corruption must be seen not only as a selfish act of an individual, but more broadly, as a social construct and also as something related to the corruption of human nature itself. ■

Corruption in Brazil: an Analytical Psychology view

1. Introduction

Corruption is a global phenomenon. We read about it every day on the newspapers and hear in the streets. Corruption was ranked the number 1 Brazilian’s issue in a poll from the Instituto Datafolha (MENDONÇA, 2015). Besides that, “corruption is the world’s most frequently discussed global problem”, ahead of climate change, extreme poverty and hunger, unemployment, and the cost of food and energy (SCOTT, 2009). Corruption threatens the security and way of life of citizens around the whole world. In the worst case scenario, it costs lives especially when someone dies because of lack of medication or medical care due to a corrupt politician who diverted money from a public hospital.

The Brazilian Criminal Code (Law 2.848/1940) subdivides corruption into two types: active and passive. In Article 333, active corruption is defined as “offering or promising undue advantage to a public official to induce him to practice, to omit or delay any official act”. Passive corruption (Art. 317) is defined as:

requesting or receiving, for himself or for another person, directly or indirectly, even outside the function or before assuming it but because of it,

undue advantage, or on accepting promises of a such advantage.

The penalty in both crimes is imprisonment from two to twelve years and a fine.

The corruption phenomenon is a very timely subject. However, just a few psychologists have written on the topic, less than a dozen. In fact, there is only one text that deals with corruption from the point of view of Analytical Psychology, written by Denise Ramos (2004) which is a chapter called “Corruption: symptom of a cultural complex in Brazil?”. The subjective analysis of corruption seems to be almost ignored, in a way that relevant psychological issues underlying the phenomenon remain unanswered. In addition, besides being a political problem, what is corruption from the unconscious point of view? Would it be a disease, a symptom? Media often refers to corruption as a cancer in Brazilian society. However, this is an extremely negative metaphor, after all, given the current scenario of this phenomenon in the country, the “patient Brazil” would be in an advanced stage of cancer, possibly a metastasis, and therefore, fatal. So there would be little hope and future left after a terrible diagnosis like this.

The discovery of the unconscious brought a tremendous revolution of values. Erich Neumann (1990) made “the first notable attempt to formulate the ethical problems raised by the discovery of the unconscious” (JUNG, 2014, v. 18, par. 1420). Alarmed by the horrific effects of the world wars, Neumann proposes a distinction between an *old ethic* and a *new ethic*. The old ethic is based on the opposition between good and evil, light and dark – a dualistic conception of world. With Judaeo-Christian and Greek religious roots, the old ethic has an ascetic tendency and pursues an illusory perfection by repressing the dark side. For Jung, to seek perfection is legitimate and inborn in the human nature. This peculiarity provides civilization its strongest roots. Nonetheless, man “must suffer from the opposite of his intentions for the sake of his completeness” (JUNG, 2014, v. 9/2, par. 123), which showed to have catastrophic outcomes during the wars.

Neumann proposes a new attitude towards evil, as the old ethic was deteriorating and proved inadequate to solve the modern man’s moral problem. Neumann’s new ethic presupposes an individual who is moral by the standards of what he called old ethic, but goes further: its goal is not perfection, but wholeness. It replaces the old opposition of good and evil with the integration of the shadow. Perfection does not contain what was not accepted by the ego, but wholeness embraces the imperfection of the shadow. Jung endorsed Neumann’s view, saying “the integration of the personality is unthinkable without the responsible, and that means moral, relation of the parts to one another” (JUNG, 2014, v. 18, par. 1412). Jung also stated:

[...] the shadow is a moral problem that challenges the whole ego personality, for no one can become conscious of the shadow without considerable moral effort. To become conscious of it involves recognizing the dark aspects of the personality as present and real. (JUNG, 2014, v. 9/2, par. 14)

The process of individuation is an ethical challenge, which demands commitment to oneself and also to the collective norm. “The real core of the ethical problem is the union of conscious and unconscious in the individuation process” (JUNG, 2014, v. 18, par. 1419).

The parts of this article are structured into *definitions, causes* and *consequences* of corruption under the perspective of Analytical Psychology, in its three different, but complementary, layers of the unconscious: *individual, cultural* and *collective*.

2. Personal level of corruption

2.1. Definitions

Corruption can be described as a “deviant behaviour” of legal norms and moral values, “which manifests itself in an abuse of a function in politics, society or economy, in favor of another person or institution” (RABL, 2008, p. 25). It refers to decision-making in ethical dilemmas situations and also to the justification strategies of corrupt individuals. For example, the corrupt individual can opt for a bribe to seal a deal in a difficult business negotiation or to get out of a financial difficulty. In these situations, the individual tends to avoid dealing with his own incompetence or feelings of inferiority – an avoidance of their own unpleasant unconscious contents. From the standpoint of Analytical Psychology, corruption can be understood in the corrupt individual as a defence mechanism against the harmful effects of the shadow. It seems that corruption is an easy and lazy way to solve one’s problems or inadequacies. In this level of analysis, *corruption is related to individual characteristics of the personality*, a selfish act of an individual.

2.2. Causes

Corruption represents an archetypal tendency of the ego to inflation and to the transgression of social norms at the expense of public interests. It seems to be born from the dissatisfaction of the ego with itself and with its inferiority. The act of corruption requires the feeling of

immense power and uniqueness in order to justify the enormous desire for personal gain by means of a transgression of the rules. Corrupt individuals put their own needs above the needs of the entire society, disregarding the consequences of their greed. Identified with the Self, the corrupt individual seems to have no limits. When an act of corruption is perpetrated, there is no commitment to the welfare of the nation or even to the “love of thy neighbour”. Corruption is a hedonist act, in which *having* (either money or power) is placed above of *being*.

Corrupt politicians seem to consider themselves as gods. They steal, because they believe they are superior to other people.

In the realm of politics, the political leader who has inflated his personality through identification with his office, or who feels that he represents the collective will experience a sense of confidence, omnipotence, and megalomania that borders on “godlikeness”. (ODAJNYK, 2007, p. 22)

Corrupt individuals seem to make no effort to be in accordance with the “new ethic”. For them, what matters is to obtain more power or money, even if it is by destructive means – Ashforth and Anand (2003) use the expression “suicidal corruption”. Corrupt individuals tend to use a lazy short-cut in their attempt to be like gods, but they only fool themselves. Jung states: “[...] He who deceives others deceives himself, and vice versa. Nothing is gained by that, much less the integration of the shadow” (2014, v. 18, par. 1414).

When corruption becomes standard behaviour, a significant moral inversion takes place. Ashforth and Anand (2003, p. 1) named this process as “normalization of corruption” and described it as how corruption acts become

embedded in the organization structures and processes, internalized by organizational members as permissible and even desirable behaviour, and passed on to successive generations of members. (ASHFORTH; ANAND, 2003, p. 1)

Ashforth and Anand’s model of normalization is an attempt of explanation of how honest individuals engage in corruption without experiencing conflict. Their model can be used to understand corruption as a psychological process.

Rationalization, one of the elements of normalization, describes “the process by which individuals who engage in corrupt acts use socially constructed accounts to legitimate the acts in their own eyes” (ibid., p. 3). They believe that a *compartmentalisation of identities* is responsible for the separation between corrupt acts practiced by individuals in the context of an organisation and their display of morality outside of it. According to Ashforth and Anand, an otherwise ethically-minded individual is influenced by and acts accordingly to what is socially expected from him/her in a corrupt environment because of a transmission of corrupt values. That compartmentalization of identities helps them to engage in corruption without experiencing conflict. From a Jungian view of what they suggested, it can be said that different personas are being used by the same individual in different contexts, and in addition, that these personas are in opposition: a corrupt persona and an ethical one.

2.3. Consequences

Ashforth and Anand (ibid., p. 5) highlight that white-collar offenders are conceived as psychologically normal. However, they affirm “corrupt individuals tend not to view themselves as corrupt. [...] By denying the label of corrupt, such individuals avoid the adverse effects of an undesirable social identity” (ibid., p. 15). In a Jungian interpretation, two sides of the corrupt individual’s personality seem to grow terribly apart. This dissociation is also evidenced by the fact that

[...] most individuals engaged in corrupt acts tend not to abandon the values that society espouses; they continue to value fairness, honesty, integrity and so forth even as they engage in corruption. (ibid, p. 15)

This is a neurotic dissociation, because it is related to a “discrepancy between the conscious attitude and the trend of the unconscious” (JUNG, 2014, v. 16, par. 26).

Corrupt individuals live in a dissociation state, like Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde. However, both realms are experienced within the perception of normality. The corrupt individual can also be a loving parent, a thoughtful neighbour or a devout churchgoer (ASHFORTH; ANAND, 2003, p. 3). In politicians this side can be extremely charismatic, due to a *mana personality*. Nonetheless, the corrupt politician has an evil “doppelgänger” within him/herself. Corruption reveals a neurotic dissociation caused by an ethical dilemma. It is a defence mechanism against the evil dark side of personality and represents a refusal to individuation as a moral realization.

The individuation is a conscious process of differentiation from the collective norms, in which one must build an individual “path” towards the development of the personality. To some extent it is actually opposed to the collective norms, however, to follow only one’s own norms is individualism, not individuation. The aim of individualism, as Jung puts it, is “pathological and inimical to life”, as it conflicts with the collective norm. “Individualism means deliberately stressing and giving prominence to some supposed peculiarity rather than to collective considerations and obligations”. Nonetheless, the aim of individuation is to become an indivisible unity, a “whole” in an optimal relationship with the society:

Individuation means precisely the better and more complete fulfilment of the collective qualities of the human being, since adequate consideration of the peculiarity of the individual is more conducive to a better social performance than when the peculiarity is neglected or suppressed. (JUNG, 2014, v. 7, par. 267)

The individualist and narcissistic characteristics of the corrupt individual coincide with society’s projection of non-conformance to the

social norm. Society uses their politicians to reaffirm their own integrity and honesty. There is an enormous refusal by the citizens to acknowledge that the despicable side they see in the corrupt politicians is also part of themselves. It might be that this rupture is initiated by guilt and shame (JACOBY, 1996). Corrupt individuals seem to be away from their own personal individuation processes, as they are identified with the collective evil shadow projected onto them. Getting caught might be a way out of this process and also a relief. But when confronted with their guilt and shame of the public exposure they have a chance to go back to their path of individuation. According to John Beebe (1992, p. 67), shame can be a healing path, but only if lived with integrity.

Corruption has as a consequence an atrophy of the individual personality, as corrupt politicians serve a collective purpose of evil projection, which hinders their personal process of individuation. When their acts become public through the media, shame and guilt of having sinned arise on their consciousness. Metaphorically, they ate the forbidden fruit of corruption and were expelled from heaven, or, in this case, the tax haven.

3. Cultural level of corruption

Freud and Jung made several analyses of social phenomena in their works. Jung was particularly influenced by Wilhelm Wundt’s *Völkerpsychologie*, which has been translated as *ethnopsychology* or *folk psychology*. It was a theory that achieved relative success until it was associated with Nazism (SHAMDASANI, 2003). Jung’s psychological analysis of social events were quite controversial. Jungians must ask if Jungian psychology is actually prepared to analyse cultures. Can individual psychology be used to explain social phenomena? In other words, it would be possible to analyse a group, a culture, like an individual, making a simple transfer of concepts (LU, 2013)? The anthropomorphization of cultures or countries is extremely complex and has to be done

with caution. Many Jungians have made this transposition of theories without due care and by putting Brazil on the couch. If we assume that Brazil is a patient, would Jungians be ready to talk about the individuation countries? How would that be?

To talk about subjective characteristics of a group, there must be considered that there is a third level of the unconscious, actually a layer of elements between the personal and the collective unconscious, which is the cultural unconscious. Joseph Henderson is regarded as one of the first Jungians to speak about this layer of the cultural unconscious (SINGER, 2012), in the 60s. However, it was a Brazilian called Arthur Ramos, who came up with this concept in the 30s, influenced by Jung's ideas (ARAÚJO, 2002). Nonetheless, he named the cultural layer as *folkloric unconscious*. These three unconscious layers allow us to analyse the phenomenon of corruption in a subjective point of view that are not accessed by other sciences.

3.1. Definitions

We can state that culture corrupts, even if we are talking about the company's culture in which the subject works or the country in which he/she was born, because the relationship an individual has with corruption is not the same if he/she lives in a place where corruption is endemic or in another where corruption is under control. Corruption is then relative: it varies according to time and space. That is, what was considered a favour in the past might now be considered corruption. What is considered corruption here may not be in another country. In this level of analysis, *corruption is a social construct*.

Why do Brazilians complain so much about corruption? Phrases like: "Brazilians are corrupt"; "This could only happen in Brazil"; "The fault is on the Brazilian way" are commonplace. But, are Brazilians really corrupt? Are they immoral? Before I answer these questions, it is important to first think about what does it mean to be a Brazilian. All features that may come to

mind when Brazilians question themselves are not necessarily linked to being corrupt. Many people connect the Brazilian way (the *jeitinho brasileiro*) to corruption, but this might be an unfair connection. Roberto DaMatta (1986) defines *jeitinho* as a "social navigation mode", "a way to satisfy our drives and desires, even if it goes against the rules of common sense and the community in general". Nonetheless the Brazilian way does not only serve to manipulate others. The *jeitinho* is also what is behind the saying "where one eats, two eat" ("*onde come um, comem dois*"). It is the Brazilian way to survive, which is linked to the Brazilian's resilience in the face of hunger, poverty, and lack of resources (NOVAES, 2016).

3.2. Causes

Several Jungian authors have analysed Brazil's social problems by examining the "Brazilian soul" (BOECHAT, 2014; GAMBINI, 2000; 2004; BRIZA, 2006). However, this expression has been used with different meanings among the authors: Brazilian collective psyche, Brazilian cultural unconscious and the Brazil's group Self.

The concept that Jungians are currently using to refer to social phenomena is the *cultural complex*, which refers to

[...] an emotionally charged aggregate of historical memories, emotions, ideas, images and behaviors that tend to cluster around an archetypal core that lives in the psyche of a group and is shared by individuals within that identified collective. (SINGER, 2012, p. 5)

Therefore it could then be said that the causes of corruption in our culture are linked to the constellation of cultural complexes. Since Jung says the origin of a complex is a trauma (JUNG, 2014, v. 8, par. 204), another cause of corruption would then be the collective traumas suffered by Brazilians throughout history. A third cause would be Brazil's psychological type, as will be shown in the following paragraphs.

Some Brazilian Jungians have already diagnosed Brazil's cultural complexes. They relate these complexes to different Brazilian problems, but they are all related to the problem of corruption. Here are some examples.

According to Boechat (2014, p. 72), we are "a country in search of an identity", and "the Brazilian soul is in a dynamic forming process, not a finished whole". According to Briza (2006), "our cultural ego is still fragile, is still developing". The Brazilian identity complex can be represented by a figure known as *the sleeping giant* extracted from our national anthem: "A giant by thine own nature [...] Eternally lain on a splendid cradle" (DAMATTA, 1991, p. 3). This figure is popularly associated with the Brazilian citizens who remain "asleep", oblivious to the country's political issues. With continental dimensions, Brazil is the fifth biggest and seventh wealthiest country in the world, but is nowhere near of reaching its full potential. The collective ego often seems to be in a lethargic state, as opposed to the image of great strength and potentiality of the American eagle or the Asian tiger, for example.

Brazilians have a significant inferiority complex. This complex was first "diagnosed" by Nelson Rodrigues:

By "stray dog complex" (*complexo de vira-lata*) I understand the inferiority position in which Brazilians put themselves voluntarily in the face of the world. This happens in all sectors and especially in football. To say that we judge ourselves as "superiors" is a cynical untruth. (RODRIGUES, 1993, p. 62)

Among Jungians this complex has also been described by Denise Ramos (2004), Byington (2013) and Câmara (2013), which ratified the name given by Nelson Rodrigues. The term *vira-lata* inspires simplicity, passivity and little value (CÂMARA, 2013), however it also has characteristics of resistance and a strong survival instinct. Other names have been suggested (with similar characteristics), like "*cucaracha* complex" by

Denise Ramos (2004) and "southern complex" by Gustavo Barcellos (2012). Brazilians share this inferiority complex with other countries in Latin America, but there they have different names because of their distinct historical roots.

Brazilians' self-esteem is generally low, which makes them believe that they cannot compete with rich countries. A stereotypical view of ourselves makes us only see negative characteristics: inertia, obliviousness, dishonesty, incompetence, individualism and more, which led Nelson Rodrigues to coin the famous expression: Brazilians are "an inverted narcissus, spitting on his own image" (RODRIGUES, 1993, p. 60). But we do have several positive aspects too: persistence, unity, joy, hospitality, creativity, among others. However, Brazilians oscillate between pride and shame of being Brazilian, of being who they are.

The inferiority complex is mixed with a racial complex in Brazil. *Vira-lata* is a dog without pedigree, a mixture of races. So are Brazilians, who often carry their own miscegenation as a stigma. There is no racial democracy in Brazil, but Brazilians do not recognise themselves as racists. Brazilians' prejudice is quite peculiar because it is disguised. One of the researchers who diagnosed this cultural complex was Walter Boechat (2012), who called it "cordial racism", as well as Roberto Leal (2009), who denominated it the "archetype of the mestizo". For example, Brazil still lives a reality where it is possible to have one (or more) domestic servants (maids) at home, a surviving trace from slavery times. They work too much to sustain a way of life that is not a reality in any rich country. The "DIY" concept has not yet developed in Brazil. For example, Brazil's middle and upper class do not do house chores themselves, they hire someone to do the chores for them, as the labour force is cheap, although unqualified. Social disparities are still very large in Brazil.

Brazilians still see their country as the country of the future, a *puer*. Compared to "old Europe", Brazil is really a young country at the height

of its youth. According to Briza, “our country has not yet made its effective passage to adulthood” and still lives in a stage of magical dimensions, because “people ask for magical solutions and transformations” (BRIZA, 2006). Brazil’s political immaturity reflects this *puer* complex. However, the old grumpy, the *senex*, has indicated that he begins to emerge in the consciousness of Brazilians, as the complaints about the country’s political situation has grown lately. But do Brazilians need to lose the joy in order to become civilized?

The trickster has no civilized characteristics. He is the thief, a con man, the swindler. The trickster is an expression of unconscious psychic tendencies common to all mankind related to the change in the existing order of things, confusion, joke, deception, chaos, disorder, trickery, cunning, communication and movement. Similar characteristics are found in figures of the Brazilian imaginary, as the Saci Pererê, Zé Carioca, Macunaíma, the Amazon River Dolphin, Zé Pelintra, trickster and Didi Mocó.

The Brazilian version of the trickster, the *malandro*, would be similar to what Wotan represents for the Germans. Jung presented the archetype of Wotan to describe a phenomenon that was oppressing Germany (JUNG, 2014, v. 10). However, this does not seem to be the best name for this phenomenon. On the one hand the concept “archetypal constellation” with all its strength and numinosity justifies its application, the idea that Wotan is specific to the German culture (therefore it cannot manifest itself in the same way in Brazil) makes it unfeasible to name it as an archetype. Wotan could be called a cultural complex nowadays. Brazil’s *malandragem* (trickery) is a typical cultural and local expression of the universal archetype of the trickster.

Tom Jobim, a famous Brazilian musician, described Brazil in a way that has persisted over the years: “Brazil is not for beginners” and said that “Brazil is an upside down country, and if you say it is upside down, they put upside down, so you see it is right-side up”. It is this aspect of

the trickster that explains the fact that the second most voted congressman in the country has been a semi-literate clown, Tiririca. The cultural trickster complex was constellated as a defence against oppression (from the Portuguese colonizers, bureaucracy, poverty). However, *malandragem* is not a synonym for corruption, because the trickster is not immoral or criminal (SAMUELS, 2004), he just acts without consequences because of pure unconsciousness. But the trickster does not like to work and in Brazil he became a professional *malandro*: the white-collar criminal.

Boechat briefly describes the Brazilian trickster, although he does not specifically call it a cultural complex. “The *malandro* appears as in a spectrum ranging from the dangerous psychopath to extremely positive characters” (2014, p. 13).

The trickster can also be seen as a metaphor to analyse the political system. Andrew Samuels (2001, p. 93) says politics needs “ingenuity, improvisation, flexibility, rule-breaking, seeing things differently, doing things differently, not being hidebound and being open to change”, trickster features. For Helena Bassil-Morozow (2015), the trickster is the solution to very rigid political systems, as in the Soviet Union. Therein lies the *malandro*’s biggest prank: these solutions do not apply to Brazil! The Brazilian system already has too much flexibility and improvisation! So Brazilians must see the trickster as the ability to change, to turn the game around. In this case it means to bring more organization to what is chaotic, but without losing the joy, or their “Brazilianness”. Brazilians have the great ability to find creative solutions to day-to-day problems, but the application of this ability to politics in a productive way remains to be done.

The second cause is linked to Brazilian cultural traumas, that have dissociative effects on the Brazilian psyche. Cultural traumas are like phantom narratives, echoing through the following generations. It is possible to identify at least four major traumas in Brazil throughout its history. Colonization (or, the *invasion* by the

Portuguese), slavery, dictatorship and the oppression due to poverty and hunger.

The third cause is linked to Brazil's psychological type. As Jung diagnosed the psychological type of Germans as predominantly introverted thinking and the Swiss as predominantly introverted feeling, it is possible to deduce that the psychological type of Brazilians is predominantly extroverted feeling, as Denise Ramos (2004) also diagnosed. Sérgio Buarque de Holanda (2012) long diagnosed this trait in Brazilians, saying that "Brazilians are cordial". Cordial here does not refer to the politeness of Brazilians, but to the emotional tone of their relations, as for Brazilians everything is personal. Brazilians show hospitality, generosity and kindness in relationships, even in business, however they misuse their personal relationship system. Cordial Brazilians act and think with their hearts, but do not like to follow rules. This feature appears in nepotism, for example. Although cordials, Brazilians can be extremely cold. In this way, Brazilians can close their eyes to social despairs. According to Von Franz (2007), the individual who has the introverted thinking as inferior function does not like to think, especially to philosophise situations and is contemptuous: his thinking is negative and rude.

3.3. Consequences

The consequences of corruption at the cultural level are a deep-rooted phenomenon in Brazilian culture that discourages Brazilians to fight for a common good. Worse, it is possible to see passive characteristics, but the population ends up doing whatever they want in order to get benefits. Cultural complexes and collective traumas tend to threaten the coherence of the group Self due to the nation's young age and immaturity.

4. Collective level of corruption¹

According to Dion (2010, p. 246), "corruption is not only a social construct, but an integral part

of the human culture itself". Similarly, Rabl states that

corruption in one form or another has been present throughout history. It can be found everywhere, in every society and every economic system, even if the manifestations, the frequencies, the hierarchical levels and the degree of cultural capture change. (RABL, 2008, p. 17)

These collective features of corruption point to archetypal tendencies. In this level of analysis, *the corrupt behaviour is connected to the corruption of human nature itself*. Here I will focus on the relationship of corruption with good and evil, absolute opposites that cannot be culturally relativized.

The role of evil in the psyche was extensively examined by Jung, especially through the concept of opposites. For him, good and evil are ineffable and atemporal concepts. Consequently, no one knows what they really are, but they are recognisable abstractly. They are understood only in comparison to certain standards in certain places: "something that appears evil to one nation may be regarded as good by another nation", says Jung about the relative character of good and evil (JUNG, 2014, v. 10, par. 862). Even though good and evil are considered by Jung as principles that result from ethical judgement, he also conceives them, in their anthropological roots, as aspects of God, which have a *numinous character*. Good and evil are supra-ordinated, therefore, bigger than a single human being. In this sense, good and evil are not relative. Corruption is not much different from any other harm caused by humans, it is only a particular expression of evil. Brazilians think they are cursing this or that political party, when in fact they are talking about the evil that exists within themselves, within each human being.

By using Jung's theory of opposites, the opposite of corruption must be analysed in order to understand it. Among its antonyms are: honesty, moral, ethic, purity, integrity, and, conscience.

Within these, I will focus on two: integrity and conscience.

John Beebe (1992) gave to integrity a higher status in Analytical Psychology, posing it as a moral objective to be achieved by the individual, somehow similar to the process of individuation. Integrity would then be more than a movement toward wholeness, but toward a *moral wholeness*. Integrity concerns what is whole, intact, undivided. Integrity is a complex concept and contains different elements such as:

responsibility, uprightness, standing tall, being untouched, staying intact, completeness, perfection, honesty, moral obligation, delight, inner psychological harmony, continuity, psychological and ethical eros, sincerity, chastity, virginity, obedience, conscience, prudence, purity, constancy, amiability, and holiness. (ibid., 1992)

Within this list, a few more elements can be added that are also related to integrity: whole, unity, coherence, truthfulness, not broken, undamaged. Most of those elements can be found in its opposite characterisation, in the idea of corruption: irresponsibility, shame, maculation, fragmentation, putrefaction, rupture, imperfection, dishonesty, immorality, dissociation, deceit, violation, unconsciousness, risk-taking, impurity, evilness and so on.

For Beebe, on one side is the idea that integrity presupposes a conscience uncontaminated by concern for political advantage. On the other side, integrity cannot be separated from personal ambition from approval (the right way to win approval). “Anyone who aspires to integrity has somehow been wounded by time, has somehow failed by wanting too much to succeed in a particular moment” (ibid. p. 12). This paradox is a moral inversion.

According to Tony Dungy (2011), integrity is the choice between what is convenient and what is right, “integrity is what you do when no one is watching; it’s doing the right thing all the time, even if it may work your disadvantage”. In comparison,

corruption is found at the end of what is convenient, not of what is right. Corruption is then related to succumbing to natural human weaknesses. In the same way, Celia Moore (2009, p. 37) believes corruption can be defined as a “process which perverts the original nature of an individual or group from a more pure state to a less pure state”. For Moore, corruption is a “moral deterioration”, as well as a “perversion or destruction of integrity”. The *tendency towards integrity* would then be a movement opposed to the *tendency towards rupture*. Integrity and corruption seem to hold certain similarity with Jung’s concepts of progression and regression of the libido and Freud’s concepts of life and death instincts. So, we would be touching here the moral aspects of those concepts.

Conscience stands as another antonym to the word corruption. It was described by Jung as an autonomous psychic factor (2014, v. 10, par. 842) and represents a special form of knowledge or consciousness (ibid., p. 825). Curiously, in Portuguese there is only one word for both concepts: *Consciousness* (originally *Bewusstsein* in German) and *conscience* (*Gewissen* in German) are translated to the word *consciência*. While in German and English the separation between these concepts is very clear in Latin languages there is no such distinction. This might indicate that one cannot be conceived without the other, which could be indorsed by Murray Stein’s (1995, p. 23) description of conscience: it “is an autonomous function of the psyche and is probably strongly related to the innate function of consciousness to make discriminations about reality”.

Conscience must be understood not just in its psychological aspect, but also in the theological aspect. Conscience can be understood as the *voice of God*, a numinous imperative. According to Jung, if we consider that there is a “right” kind of conscience, there would also exist “[...] one, which exaggerates, perverts, and twists evil into good and good into evil just as our own scruples do; and it does so with the same compulsiveness and with the same emotional consequences as the ‘right’ kind of conscience” (JUNG, 2014,

v. 10, par. 835). Corruption is then what happens when the individual does not listen to the voice of conscience, the voice of God, but the voice of the devil.

5. Conclusion

As a contribution to the study of corruption from the point of view of Jungian psychology, I propose definitions in the three unconscious levels. At the individual level, corruption is an archetypal tendency of ego towards inflation and transgression of social norms at the expense of the collective; a kind of neurotic dissociation in face of a moral dilemma (a conflict with the shadow); and a defence mechanism, but also a refusal to individuation as an ethical goal. On the cultural level, it is a symptom due to complexes and trans-

generational traumas faced by Brazilians; and an expression of the collective inferior function. At the collective level, corruption is a propensity to rupture; a contrary tendency to moral integrity; and an expression of evil in society.

The immediate benefits of corruption can be easily visualized in the form of enrichment and power. However, understanding the long-term benefits is still to come. Corruption is a necessary evil for the maturing of Brazilian society. Understanding ethical obligations requires a conscious process of moral development. ■

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¹ In this level of the unconscious it's not possible to talk about causes or consequences, because of the acausality phenomenon.

Resumo

Corrupção no Brasil: uma visão da psicologia analítica

Nos últimos anos, a mídia internacional expôs vários escândalos relacionados à corrupção, que demonstraram não só a fragilidade dos sistemas políticos mas também a escala global da corrupção. A corrupção não é apenas um tema da moda, mas um fenômeno global gravíssimo que parece ter peculiaridades entre os países. No Brasil, a corrupção é um problema que oprime a sociedade, mas que parece estar diretamente relacionado à identidade coletiva do brasileiro e, para muitos, ela é intrínseca ao “jeitinho brasileiro”.

Apesar de a corrupção ser um assunto de discussão recorrente para diferentes campos de estudo, a maioria das teorias existentes sobre a corrupção é unilateral e parcial. Elas se concentram em apenas uma parte do problema, colocando a responsabilidade ou na falta de moralidade de brasileiros e seus políticos ou na ineficiência do sistema judiciário. A opinião do público leigo é superficial e tende a concluir de maneira projetiva que a corrupção é responsável por todos

os problemas do país. A psicologia analítica pode contribuir com novas abordagens para o estudo do fenômeno da corrupção. Aplicando valores psicoterapêuticos a questões políticas, esta pesquisa pode vir a ajudar psicoterapeutas a abrir um caminho de duas vias entre “realidades internas” e o “mundo da política”, como propõe Andrew Samuels. Propõe-se aqui um olhar mais atento para a relação entre a realidade interna do povo brasileiro e o mundo da política no Brasil, particularmente a corrupção brasileira.

O objetivo deste artigo é analisar a corrupção em seus três diferentes (mas complementares) níveis: individual, cultural e coletivo. Discutimos os complexos culturais brasileiros e traumas culturais que já foram identificados por junguianos brasileiros e que possam estar relacionados ao atual cenário político-social do país, especialmente a versão brasileira do arquétipo do trickster (que parece estar oprimindo a psique brasileira) e o complexo cultural do malandro, que não foi

ainda analisado em detalhe. Argumenta-se também que a corrupção política deve ser vista não apenas como um ato egoísta de um indivíduo, mas

de forma mais ampla, como um construto social e também como algo relacionado à corrupção da própria natureza humana. ■

Palavras-chave: Corrupção, complexo cultural, trauma cultural, malandro, bem e mal.

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