

Edited by Jonathan Mendilow, Eric Phélippeau

# Political Corruption in a World in Transition

SERIES IN POLITICS

*"This timely and provocative book will disrupt current debates on corruption and reform in useful ways. It takes up new and important issues such as populism and "legal corruption" in the context of cases that have long deserved more scholarly attention, yet links them effectively to longer-standing theories and concepts. Populists and international aid programs are shown to require fresh and careful thought. The language and appearances associated with corruption issues are considered in innovative ways. Corruption scholarship and reform thinking, seemingly frozen in time for a generation, are beginning to move in new directions, and this book will give those trends added impetus."*

**Michael Johnston**

Charles A. Dana Professor of Political Science, Emeritus  
Colgate University

## Summary

This book argues that the mainstream definitions of corruption, and the key expectations they embed concerning the relationship between corruption, democracy, and the process of democratization, require reexamination. Even critics who did not consider stable institutions and legal clarity of veteran democracies as a cure-all, assumed that the process of widening the influence on government decision making and implementation allows non-elites to defend their interests, define the acceptable sources and uses of wealth, and demand government accountability. This had proved correct, especially insofar as 'petty corruption' is involved. But the assumption that corruption necessarily involves the evasion of democratic principles and a 'market approach' in which the corrupt seek to maximize profit does not exhaust the possible incentives for corruption, the types of behaviors involved (for obvious reasons, the tendency in the literature is to focus on bribery), or the range of situations that 'permit' corruption in

democracies. In the effort to identify some of the problems that require recognition, and to offer a more exhaustive alternative, the chapters in this book focus on corruption in democratic settings (including NGOs and the United Nations which were largely so far ignored), while focusing mainly on behaviors other than bribery.



## About the editor

**Jonathan Mendilow** is professor of political science and global studies at Rider University in Laurenceville, New Jersey. He serves as the current chair of the IPSA Research Committee on 'Political Finance and Political Corruption'. He has published extensively on political finance, party competition, Middle Eastern politics and modern political theory.

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