

POLICY AND GOVERNANCE

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ivilizing techniques:
Transparency
International and the
spread of anti-corruption

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Abstract

Transparency International (TI) is an international non government organisation founded in 1993 to combat corruption in international business activities. The paper looks at TI both as an agent and critic of 'market civilisation', paying particular attention to some of the techniques has developed including: networking; the franchising of national chapters; the publication of an annual 'Corruption Perceptions Index'; the publication of a 'Source Book' on the web; and the development of Business Principles for Countering Bribery. Civilisation may be a coercive process, and the paper is particularly concerned with the kinds of power deployed in these techniques. It analyses them as examples of 'policy transfer' and as the results of processes of mimicry and professionalisation that lead to 'institutional isomorphism', and draws some conclusions about the spread of civilisation.

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Abstract

Transparency International (TI) is an international non government organisation founded in 1993 to combat corruption in international business activities. The paper looks at TI both as an agent and critic of 'market civilisation', paying particular attention to some of the techniques has developed including: networking; the franchising of national chapters; the publication of an annual 'Corruption Perceptions Index'; the publication of a 'Source Book' on the web; and the development of Business Principles for Countering Bribery. Civilisation may be a coercive process, and the paper is particularly concerned with the kinds of power deployed in these techniques. It analyses them as examples of 'policy transfer' and as the results of processes of mimicry and professionalisation that lead to 'institutional isomorphism', and draws some conclusions about the spread of civilisation

Transparency International (TI) is the largest and best known international non-government organisation dedicated to fighting corruption. This paper uses the anti-corruption movement as an example of a 'civilizing project', of which TI is an agent. By looking at some of TI's techniques it aims to show how such projects work, particularly the role of different kinds of power, and other social processes, in them¹.

TI was created in 1993 to reduce corruption in international business transactions. Its founders considered several names for it, including 'International Business Monitor', before settling on 'Transparency International'. The initiative came from Peter Eigen, a World Bank official who had become disillusioned by the Bank's reluctance to confront corruption in projects it funded in Africa. Eigen became the first Chairman, and Jeremy Pope, who had been a senior official in the Commonwealth secretariat, became Managing Director. Other founding members included former Ministers from developing countries, a retired businessman, a development economist, and an American 'global security expert'² They looked to funding from the Ford Foundation, and lobbied at the World Economic Forum at Davos – the commanding heights of 'market civilization'. Their strategy was to persuade rather than confront.

¹ An earlier version of this paper was presented at the International Studies Association in Hawaii in March 2005, and is being revised to take into account the comments of the panelists for publication in a book being edited by Len Seabrooke and Brett Bowden called 'Global Standards of Market Civilisation'. This intermediate revision takes into account comments from Barry Hindess and Peter Rooke, of TI, though neither is responsible for the content. The research was funded by an Australia Research Council grant and is based on interviews with TI officials and others during May- September 2004. We are very grateful to TI Berlin for access, and to the individuals who agreed to be interviewed. Declaring an interest, the author is a member of TI Australia, and coordinated its study of National Integrity Systems in Pacific Island States, which was funded by AusAID.

² <http://www.michaelhershman.us/index.shtml>

Their immediate concern was with international corruption, particularly the way Western firms bribed officials and politicians in developing countries, while international organisations kept silent about it. They had evidence in a book published by a supporter, a retired businessman called George Moody Stuart, which listed dollar amounts exporters typically paid to bribe ministers and senior officials (1997). He called this 'grand corruption' to distinguish it from the petty corruption of underpaid junior officials accepting bribes to do their jobs. TI was keen to deflate what it saw as Western claims to moral superiority in matters of corruption. It was also critical of the prevailing international relativism that had excused corruption in developing countries as 'the way they do things over there' (Transparency International 2005).

TI currently defines itself on its website as a 'Global Non Government Organisation'. One its founding fathers saw its early manifestations as more *sui generis*, personal, and opportunistic than an 'NGO'. It was a 'ginger group' (Transparency International 2005: 2) rather than the bureaucratic organisation its Berlin Secretariat has since become. TI also now describes itself as both a 'movement' and a 'coalition' (Sampson in press, and for the literature on international movements see Eschle and Stammers 2004). From another perspective, watching its annual general meetings, TI also sometimes looks depressingly like the intergovernmental organisations some of its founders came from, with their national delegations, regional groupings, caucusing, appeals to points of order, and rifts between North and South. Its Secretariat is distinct from its national chapters, many of which reproduce the insiderish, non-confrontational style of its founders (de Sousa forthcoming).

While constitutionally TI's Berlin Secretariat is a German NGO, it is financed overwhelmingly by governments. Its 2004 audit report listed and grouped donors: 79% of the total Euro 5.7 million came from government agencies (the largest being the EC, followed by the Finnish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, then the German and then the German ministry for development cooperation and USAID). Only 5.5% came from corporate donors, the largest being Sovereign Asset Management, Norsk Hydro, Shell, Anglo American and Deutsche Bank. The rest came from various foundations and multilateral development organisations. TI's National Chapters find their own sources of funding, though TI occasionally provides seed money, and TI Germany provides a grant to the Secretariat.

TI has been very successful in creating awareness of corruption within the international system of the 1990s. It has expanded its original definition of 'corruption' from 'the use of public office for private gain' to include 'the misuse of entrusted power for private benefit'. It takes a greater interest in political corruption, acknowledging differences between popular concerns and the worries of foreign investors. It is going through generational changes as its founding fathers step aside, as Peter Eigen seems to be doing, or secede, like Jeremy Pope and Fredrik Galtung have done, to found a new organisation called TIRI claiming it is part of a 'third phase' of anti corruption activity, but regaining some of the amateur enthusiasm of the first. Meanwhile, in 2003 TI adopted a more expansive mission to 'create change towards a world free of corruption'.

TI can be characterised as an instrument of market civilisation, promoting principles of transparency and a level playing field between domestic and foreign companies. It can also be characterised as a critic, nagging governments to outlaw the bribery of

foreign officials. Or it may be something in between, ‘embodying its contradictions’. An ambivalent relationship with business and government is not unusual among contemporary NGOs and their activist officials or members. Their roles seem to be expanding as a side effect of the rhetorical attack on states as ‘rent seeking’, ‘predatory’ or ‘failing’. Certainties about Left and Right, and the values of professions, are undermined by neoliberal rhetoric about competition, choice and clients. Tasks that governments used to do are being contracted out to them. The personal political beliefs of its officials do not necessarily square with its doctrine, of the ideologies of its financial supporters. TI’s strategy of engagement and coalition building predispose it to doctrinal compromise. In these ways it is rather like political party.

Rather than trying to pin it down, this paper asks how it works: what are some of the techniques it uses to promote the values it espouses, and what kinds of power are deployed in them. It is based on interviews with TI officials and documents on its websites. We analyse some of TI’s techniques in terms of two theoretical frameworks: ‘policy transfer’, and ‘institutional isomorphism’. The first framework comes from political scientists, attentive to the way that OCED countries were increasingly borrowing ideas about economic and social policy from each other. These ideas were spread by international organisations. The second comes from the sociology of institutions, particularly the recognition that states were surprisingly similar in form, in spite of huge differences in their size and wealth. But first we look at the ‘civilization’ side of market civilization.

Civilising Projects

Both ‘civilisation’ and ‘corruption’ are spacious, normative ideas. In one sense they are opposed. Corrupt governments must be persuaded to become more like civilised ones, using techniques like TI’s. Yet there is also a strand of thinking about corruption that sees corruption as an effect or consequence of civilisation – opposed by the simpler values of the desert or the mountains. Higher order ‘civilisation’ has often been contrasted with lower order ‘culture’. TI originally blamed the West for corruption in developing countries, while its TI’s Source Book of best practice talks about ‘the myth of culture’ to reject ‘cultural’ defenses against charges of corruption (Pope 1996).

Civilisation can refer to an entity (“Western civilization”) or a process. Here we are interested in the processes by which civilisations maintain themselves against decay or dissent, or seek to convert or inspire others. In his discussion of the history of civilisations, Ferdinand Braudel (1980: 202-30) identified two such processes: borrowing and refusals. He characterised civilisations as loosely bounded ‘culture areas’, engaged in continual exporting and borrowing of cultural goods, like the design of houses, recipes, and technologies. Nineteenth century Japan, for example, deliberately borrowed institutional forms from the West (Westney 1987). Japanese business practices were copied by Western companies in the 1960s and 1970s. But civilisations also engaged in refusals, deliberate or implicit. They rejected ideas or reforms from abroad. Contemporary China, for example, is borrowing Western business practices, but rejecting Western democratic institutions. Japanese business practices have become less admired as the Japanese economy has stagnated in the 1990s. Renault now revives the ailing Nissan car company.

Braudel's account, and the examples of China, Japan and the West suggest a rough equality between civilisations, and the capacity to borrow and refuse. Often, though, the process is less symmetrical. 'Civilizing missions' are usually associated with European colonialism but Stephen Harrell writes about China's policies towards its minorities as 'civilizing projects' in which the civilizing centre believes it is helping the peripheral people it dominates 'to attain or at least approach the superior cultural, religious, and moral qualities of the centre itself'. Civilizing projects were distinguished from outright conquest and subjugation by their ideology ('we are here to help'- and differed among themselves according to the degree of complicity among those being civilised. Conquest and attempts to civilize might also run together ('winning hearts and minds' in Vietnam). Civilising projects might follow military success, for example after the Allied defeat of Germany in 1945. In a more complex way, civilizers may promote their own values, but also admire the sturdy independence and warrior attributes of those they are trying to incorporate and defeat. Aspects of peripheral culture may become fashionable in the civilizing centre (like indigenous art) and peripheral warriors guard its security (like ghurkas).

The word 'civilization' does not appear on TI's website, and its officials would likely reject it as undiplomatic, and redolent of colonialism. Brett Bowden (2004) found that the idea of a 'standard of civilization', distinguishing civilised from uncivilised states, fell into disuse and disrepute after the Second World War. However he finds it, and ideas like it, to have revived in the triumph of the West after the end of the Cold War, and in Western projects to promote democracy or prevent state failure in what used to be called the third or developing world. Anti-corruption has become an integral part of many of these 'good governance' projects, and many of TI's national chapters have benefited from them.

Policy transfer

TI's Secretariat is particularly involved in 'policy transfer'. It assembles and promulgates 'best practice', and facilitates the sharing of ideas among its National Chapters. It is also involved in promoting institutional isomorphism. It has replicated itself in over 85 national chapters; and it is setting minimum standards for their behaviour. It also endorses the international spread of other institutions, such as Independent Commissions Against Corruption, though it would caution that these need to be adapted to suit local circumstances.

The main problematic in the policy transfer approach has been 'power'. Borrowings among OECD countries seemed fairly innocent of power. However Dolowitz and Marsh's (2000) review went on to scale 'transfer' along a dimension running from voluntary adoption at one end, though to imposition by military defeat on the other. In between were processes such as conditionality, whereby someone agrees to do something it would rather not in exchange for a loan or membership of an international organisation. Harrell's idea of the civilising project might fit somewhere in the middle of this scale: something less than voluntary, often involving complicity, but perhaps falling short of outright conquest.

Much then depends on what is meant by 'power'. TI, as a non-government organisation does not have direct access to power in Stephen Lukes' first sense of A getting B to do something they would not otherwise want to (Lukes 1974). However it

may get its pet ideas attached to conditionality frameworks imposed by donors as conditions for loans or access to membership of valued clubs. Thus, for example, TI may find itself designing or monitoring anti corruption strategies for countries wanting to borrow from the World Bank, or accede to the EU. Here it is piggybacking on the power of others.

However, Lukes (ibid) went on to identify two other dimensions of power at which TI, and other NGOs, are adept. The second was the power to set agendas – to determine what issues were important, and what issues were not. TI has had startling success in getting ‘corruption’ onto the agendas of international organisations like the World Bank and the OECD. And the anti-corruption movement has also influenced national governments in their dealings with developing countries. Australia, for example, now looks at its neighbours through the lens of ‘corruption’, and the admirable tsunami relief effort is precisely designed to avoid money going through a corrupt central government. The trouble with agenda setting is not so much what gets on it (attention to corruption being important) but what thereby gets squeezed off (corruption may not be the only important thing, and attention devoted to corruption has an opportunity cost).

Lukes third dimension of power was ideology – the ability to affect hearts and minds – reflected in training and propaganda, but the more effective the less visibly it was exercised. Here again TI and its chapters devote effort to ‘awareness raising’ but the effort is sometimes paradoxical. Unlike say AIDS or global warming, ‘corruption’ is something most people are acutely aware of, though they may disagree about what counts as instances of it. ‘Corruption’ is a regular feature of newspaper comment, and a regular explanation available to victors in an election, or a successful coup d etat (‘We got rid of our corrupt predecessors’). So much so that the 1990s anti corruption movement in formerly socialist countries of Eastern Europe have been accused of hyping the problem up (Krastev 2004, Kotkin and Sajo 2002). Martin Tisne and Daniel Smilov found anticorruption rhetoric had been used to get support for reform, but lack of visible results was ‘fuelling public distrust in government and the democratic political process, and creating a fertile ground for unconstructive populist critics of reform’ (2004: 14)

Lukes’ three dimensions do not exhaust understandings of power and the way a non-government organisation like TI may deploy it. Gill’s (1995) article on ‘market civilisation’ draws on ideas from Gramsci about ‘hegemonic ideas’, sustaining economic power, and the role of intellectuals in promoting those ideas. He writes of a global crisis of authority in which a transnational free enterprise system, centred on the G 7 struggles to manage and contain opposition to it. The system is a mixture of public, private and other non-government actors. It is ‘supremacist’ rather than ‘hegemonic’, i.e. it is not necessarily winning. TI is funded by business, NGOs and governments (overwhelmingly the latter), and its strategy is to create coalitions between these three sectors.

Alain Desrosieres (1998) history of statistics describes the controversies around statistical comparisons of unemployment, inflation growth, and poverty. The controversy over measuring corruption is only a more recent example. In this ‘politics of large numbers’ the objectification of data was linked to the growing power and reach of states (Desrosieres 1998). TI’s CPI is part of a line of indices, from the

World Bank and the UNDP, that are linked to the growing influence of international organisations.

Barry Hindess also draws on Foucault for his emphasis on the dispersed and decentred character of power in a liberal regime that relies on inculcating responsibility and self-management (Hindess 2004a). It is rather like Norbert Elias's idea of civilisation as 'the social constraint towards self-constraint' (in Mennell and Goudsblom eds 1998: 49). Hindess' paper on TI (2004b) questions the direct, instrumental effectiveness of TI's non-confrontational anti corruption strategies, but sees the attack on corruption performing an indirect, latent function of inculcating values that suit liberal regimes of self management.

Institutional Isomorphism

Power is not the only issue in borrowing and refusal. Sociologists Di Maggio and Powell (1983) identified two other processes of what they called 'institutional isomorphism' – the tendency of institutions to look the same, wherever they are.

The first was irrational mimicry. Faced with uncertainty, they argued, organisations would copy the forms of prestigious others. A good example is the 'Westminster' constitution, which has been emulated around the world. Corruption involves high degrees of uncertainty that creates fertile ground for irrational copying. There are disagreements about what counts as corruption, and about what causes it. Corrupt acts often take place in secret. Governments uncertain about what to do about corruption often turn to the model of Hong Kong's Independent Commission Against Corruption. Its three pronged approach (prevention, prosecution and education) has been mimicked in very different circumstances in Australia and Korea. TI has replicated itself, and the involvement of international organisations in anti corruption activity has tended to produce national action plans that look remarkably like each other. However Bryane Michael's analysis of the evolution of anti corruption industry suggests that, over time, a process of natural selection will lead to more international variety as locally appropriate plans and organisations survive, and inappropriate ones falter and become extinct (2004: 1080).

TI has an ambiguous relationship with the third source of isomorphism which Di Maggio and Powell identified with the professionalisation of work. Overseas training, foreign consultancy or expatriate workers are a powerful source of standardised models of 'best practice'. They may also produce a stream of 'solutions looking for problems' - well intended ideas, familiar to their proponents, but irrelevant to the local problems they are called upon to solve (Larmour 2005). Historically, the most promiscuous borrowers have been lawyers (Watson 1974). Much of TI's international success has been the field of international legal conventions. Economists in the World Bank or Asian Development Bank, and accountants in international firms like KPMG now also promote best practice. Some political scientists are involved in the transfer of electoral systems, and TI has also promoted electoral system reform in PNG (Larmour 2003).

However TI's Berlin Secretariat does not make a strong claim to professional expertise in fields traditionally associated with corruption – law, police or justice. It does not hire ex- policemen or jurists, though these professions are better represented

in some national chapters. Nor, as a matter of policy, does it engage in consultancy work. Instead its professional skills lie in the promotion or dissemination of ideas in other ways: through lobbying, websites and the media. Its early membership was a loose network of influential people who could get access to leaders. Expertise, when needed, was drawn in ad hoc. However TIRI – the ‘governance-access-learning network’ founded in 2003 as a breakaway from TI - proposes closer involvement in the training of specific professions, like judges, which would have the effect of homogenising anti corruption practice.

TI has several techniques of promoting transfer or isomorphism. Next we look at a selection of five of them: networking; the franchising of national chapters; the annual publication of a controversial Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI); the Source book of best practice, which led to surveys of National Integrity Systems; and the Business Principles for Countering Bribery.

1. Networking

TI puts so much store by networking that it is worth treating as a technique in its own right. High points of the TI Secretariat’s activity are the bi- annual global conferences it organises, described by Sampson (in press). It trades on the networks its founders brought with them – Peter Eigen’s relationship with the World Bank’s network was initially confrontational, until James Wolfensohn took over. Jeremy Pope drew on his background in the Commonwealth, the quintessential network, with its copying of the prestigious Westminster model, and its dissemination of best practice through professional networks. TI’s networks have now expanded and become more autonomous of their original sponsors. This global networking is reproduced at national level, expressed in TI’s doctrine of public/private/NGO coalitions. Networking is flexible, opportunistic, and light on administrative overhead. But it is also unaccountable, self-selecting, and open to the kind of nepotism and patron-client relationships that an anti-corruption NGO is meant to oppose. There is a weird institutional isomorphism between the corrupt networks – dependent on face to face contacts, trust, and a shared background - and the anti-corruption networks opposed to them.

2. Franchising National Chapters

TI’s founders were initially reluctant to create or recognize national TI groups, but were persuaded by arguments that an anti corruption movement would have to address day to day corruption concerns if it was to mobilize support for its founding preoccupation with international business transactions. Now TI has recognized over 85 ‘national chapters’, but relationships between them and the Secretariat in Berlin often seem strained. A long running issue has been the constitutional equality that national chapters have with the members of the founders’ ad hoc network of influential individuals. There has been annual tension as TI releases its CPI, and national chapters have to cop criticism from national governments that rate badly.

TI Berlin does not fund national chapters, beyond occasional seeding grants. Only one of the national chapters – TI Germany – funds TI’s Secretariat in Berlin. In fact chapters may be competing for funds from donors who may prefer to fund activities in developing countries. Instead TI Berlin has often had to adjudicate between local

groups, or individuals, vying to take on what has become an increasingly valuable brand name, 'Transparency International'. Its task has become one of brand management – ensuring that particular national chapters, or people acting in its name, do not tarnish its reputation, and have some local accountability. It is now rolling out a program of reaccreditation. Already one troubled chapter, in Hungary, has decided to give up its franchise. Part of the strength of the brand comes from the CPI.

3. The Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI)

TI's CPI purports to rank countries according to perceptions of their corruption. It does not claim to assess the underlying rate. The perceptions are those of businessmen, journalists, academics, investment analysts and risk assessors. These perceptions are surveyed by other organisations independent of TI. So the CPI is a kind of poll of polls (Lambsdorff 2004). It is TI's signature product, but many of its officials and the national chapters remain deeply uneasy about its methodology and impact. It started as an experiment, leaked to the German news magazine *Der Spiegel*, forcing TI's leadership to decide whether or not to disavow or embrace it (Lundberg 2002).

Ranking is a classic piece of indirect governance. By naming and shaming it is meant to encourage governments to improve their performance. They are not forced to do it. But if they do not they will face embarrassment, loss of investment and so on (the Malaysian government is said to have reacted at first with hostility, and then engagement with TI to see what it should do to improve its ranking).

The methodological arguments about the index, whether it imperfectly reflects reality, or elaborately constructs it, are part of a long running debate in the social sciences between positivists and constructionists (my own instincts are for the latter). The main criticisms of its impact are that it reinforces prejudices, and fails to reflect improvements when they have taken place (Sik 2002, Galtung in press). One TI official described it as a kind of 'bait and switch' – it attracted media attention that might then be pointed to more creditable activities.

4. The Source Book

The source book is a mixture of argument, exhortation, and statements of best practice (Pope 1996). Its length, continuing evolution and the variety of influences it acknowledges make hard to summarise. A central idea is of a 'National Integrity System' (NIS), described as 'an holistic approach to transparency and accountability and embracing a range of accountability "pillars", democratic, judicial, media and civil society' (Transparency International 2005). The categories of the Source book have provided the framework for surveys of National Integrity Systems that are intended to capture national differences, and opportunities for reform about which the CPI is silent.

The idea of a 'system' counters the idea that anti-corruption is the responsibility of a single agency. It embodies the idea (from Montesquieu, Madison and the US constitution) that potentially corrupt institutions may provide checks and balances against the excesses of each other, and remove the need for a presumably incorruptible sovereign to rule over them all. TI would draw civil society and the private sector into this structure of mutual supervision. The NIS is also systemic in

TI's tactical sense of avoiding criticisms of individuals. It connects easily with the New Institutional approach to corruption now influential in the World Bank. One of TI's founders commends Pope, its author, for being an institutionalist before that became fashionable among aid agencies.

Michael Bryane criticises systemic approaches, including TI's, for committing the 'functionalist fallacy' (2004: 1070 and fn 6) which is the assumption that because a trait, or role, or organisation exists, it serves some useful higher purpose.

Certainly, institutions do not necessarily work, as they are supposed, or together for any particular purpose. The language of the Source Book shifts between description and exhortation, and subsequent studies of National Integrity Systems expect to find a gap between the formal system, and what actually happens (Doig and McIvor 2003, Larmour and Barcham 2004). Explanations for that gap tend to step outside the institutionalist framework, for example into something more personal and evanescent called 'political will'.

The Source Book has been translated into many languages – versions in Albanian, Brazilian, Romanian, Serbian, Spanish and French are on the web. TI is also concerned to adapt it to particular legal, cultural and religious traditions. Yet there is often a tension between 'best practice' and 'best fit'. In one project to adapt the source book, local advisers are concerned that the translation should retain fidelity to Pope's original.

5. Business Principles for Combating Bribery

TI's efforts to develop business principles are particularly interesting for arguments about 'market civilisation'. Corruption is a fuzzy 'standard of civilization'. We don't know how much corruption there 'really is', and the CPI relies on a treadmill of reputations that always puts someone at the bottom.

The International Organization for Standardization has not yet produced an international standard for anti-corruption. However it is working on proposals for a voluntary standard on 'social responsibility' which will 'promote and maintain greater transparency and fairness in organizations' and draw on sources including TI's 'Business Principles for Countering Bribery' (International Standards Organisation 2005). The latter were devised by a committee including representatives of large international companies, some from transition and developing countries, chaired by TI and Social Accountability International, which is US NGO dedicated to creating a standard of 'improve workplaces and combat sweatshops' (www.ceepa.org). The document they produced is meant to "to provide practical guidance for countering bribery, creating a level playing field and providing a long-term business advantage". It sets out the main principle, that 'the enterprise shall prohibit bribery in any form, whether direct or indirect', then provides advice about how a firm should implement this principle, for example in dealings with subsidiaries, agents and clients (http://transparency.org/building_coalitions/private_sector/business_principles/dnld/business_principles2.pdf).

Other techniques

These five techniques do not exhaust TI's repertoire. Others include the Bribe Payers Index, devised in response to the charge that the CPI unfairly targeted the victims of corruption, not the foreign companies that bribed them. A survey asked senior executives of domestic and foreign companies about their perceptions of foreign companies' willingness to bribe to local officials. The 2002 survey found companies from Russia, China and Taiwan were thought most likely to offer bribes. Public Works/construction, defence and oil and gas were the sectors in which bribes were thought to be offered most. (<http://transparency.org/cpi/2002/bpi2002.en.html>)

The Global Corruption Barometer taps popular rather than business perceptions, and finds political corruption to be the main concern. It surveyed 40,838 people in 47 countries. Asking people if they had a magic wand to eliminate corruption in particular institutions, which would they choose first, people in three countries out of four nominated 'political parties'. (http://transparency.org/surveys/barometer/dnld/barometer2003_release.en.pdf)

Conclusions: TI and the Spread of Civilisation

So what can a study of TI tell us about the spread of civilisation, and market civilisation in particular?

None of the five techniques for promoting transfer or achieving isomorphism is limited or specific to 'corruption' as such. For example, an NGO devoted to environmental protection might easily engage in networking; franchise national groups of 'Protection International'; produce a ranking of countries according to expert perceptions of the degree to which they protected their environment; produce assessments of countries 'National Protection Systems'; and devise business principles for protecting the environment. It could be promoting anything – and indeed many of TI's officials and techniques could be promoting other good works, or have been doing so at other points in their careers (the new General Manager, for example, comes from Oxfam, and Fredrik Galtung who left to form TIRI joined from another NGO.). As we saw, few of its Berlin Secretariat staff have any particular expertise in corruption, and its prevention, though such professionals play a greater role in some national chapters (de Sousa forthcoming). The professional skills evident at TI's Secretariat are in publicity, lobbying, running conferences and workshops, fund raising, websites, and drafting legislation. This is not to belittle these skills, but to point to their centrality to TI's purposes.

TI's techniques can be seen as ways of promoting ideas and values. What can they tell us about intercivilisational 'borrowing and refusal', or civilising projects?

First, TI as an NGO can't force anyone to do things they don't want to, but its techniques are not completely innocent of 'power' in several broader senses, particularly agenda setting, and the disciplinary power expressed in indices. That, as Foucault argued, might simply be part of life – all our relationships, he suggested, are saturated with power and resistance. But it does then raise questions of responsibility, accountability and internal democracy, expressed for example in the long running debate about whether early individual contributors to the movement should continue to have voting equality with chapters claiming to stand for nation states.

Second, we don't yet know much about the refusals. TI's earliest opponent was the World Bank. Its legal department opposed financial support for TI on the grounds that it might be involving itself in defamation. TI's website describes how World Bank opposition came when TI proposed that companies sign 'integrity pacts' before being qualified to bid for projects.

We were told it was anti-competitive bidding... and an attempt to introduce it in Nepal was blocked by an edict from Washington to the Finance Ministry in Kathmandu (Transparency International 2005: 2)

Relations between TI and the Bank became smoother after James Wolfensohn took over the latter. However Steve Sampson (in press) notices that no one speaks for corruption, in the way that the environmental movement must engage with pro-development lobbies. There are, he says, 'no procumptions forces'. Refusal is typically identified with politicians and the absence of 'political will' or reflected in 'problems of implementation'.

Third, the flow of anti-corruption ideas has not simply been from the centre to the periphery, as the model of a civilising project suggests. The model for the ICAC, often commended by TI, for example, comes from colonial Hong Kong in the 1970s. Integrity pacts are being developed most thoroughly in Latin America. Civilising may mean moving ideas around the periphery as well as exporting prestigious models from the centre. Or there may be a persistent double standard within 'civilisation' – perhaps an ante room where aspirants to civilisation are told– 'you need anti corruption agencies that those of us in the heartland can get away with without'

Fourth, TI's history says something about the resurgent legitimacy of 'national' units of activity, in a purportedly globalised world. TI began in the thin air of international organisations and many of its founders were international civil servants, but they had to choose a national base (in Berlin) and allow the creation of national chapters. They also decided to play with nationalist fire, in the release of the CPI, which is supposed to harness volatile emotions of national pride and shame to reform. Now national chapters claim the legitimacy of their national particularity, not any process of election (they were, after all, chosen by TI Berlin). The TI Secretariat diffidently describes itself on its website as the 'servant' of the NCS. Everyone – the founders, new management, the breakaway TIRI - defers to the legitimacy of the national chapters and the idea that the 'real work' of anti corruption must and should take place at a national level.

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