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Prospection in Individual and Interpersonal Corruption Dilemmas

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Corruption represents 1 of the main societal challenges of our time. At present, there is no theoretical framework distinguishing the prospective decision-making processes involved in different *acts* of corruption. We differentiate between 2 broad categories of corrupt acts that have different implications for prospective cognition: individual corrupt acts, which refer to a power holder individually abusing entrusted power; and interpersonal corrupt acts, which refer to a power holder abusing entrusted power in collaboration with other corrupt agents. We model the decision structure as 2 inherently different social dilemmas: individual corruption requires a power holder to prospect own and collective consequences, whereas interpersonal corruption requires a prospection of self-interest, the interest of corrupt partner(s) conflict and collective interests (nested social dilemma). Individual and interpersonal corruption rest on different prospective decision-making processes, which we illustrate along intrapersonal factors (prospection of costs and benefits, self-control, guilt) and interpersonal factors (social norms, trust). We explore the advantages of this novel distinction for theory development, experimental corruption research, as well as anticorruption efforts.

Keywords: individual corruption, interpersonal corruption, prospection, common pool resources, social dilemma

On the 12th of January 2010 an earthquake shattered Haiti. In the aftermath, death tolls far exceeded 100,000. In an attempt to explain these atrocious consequences, researchers argued that it was not the mere magnitude of the earthquake but the rampant level of corruption that was responsible for the high number of casualties (Ambraseys & Bilham, 2011). Corruption eroded the quality of the buildings, the infrastructure and the medical care system. Yet, it does not take earthquakes to illustrate the devastating effects caused by corruption around the world. Corruption is in fact one of the most serious and complex societal problems that nations, societies, and organizations face today. It undermines democracy, trust, and state development (Lee-Chai & Bargh, 2001; Mauro, 1995), increases inequality in societies (Stiglitz, 2012), and causes degradation and overexploitation of the environment (Ostrom, 2000; Rothstein, 2011).

Not surprisingly, corruption has spurred extensive scientific interest (Serra & Wantchekon, 2012). However, at the very core of the understanding of what actually constitutes corrupt behavior and how corrupt decision-making draws on prospective thinking yawns a void. Laypersons and scientists alike refer to essentially different *behaviors* when talking about "corruption": the same word can refer to a cleptocratic state leader embezzling public funds, gift exchanges between public officials and citizens, or an accountant in a private company cooking the books—and many more behaviors that classify as "abuse of entrusted power for private gains" (Graycar & Smith, 2011). As we will outline, such lumping together of various distinct forms of corrupt behaviors undermines scientific progress and hinders the understanding of the causes of corruption because the prospective processes involved in different forms of corruption vary substantially—most importantly along the division line of individual versus interpersonal corruption dilemmas.

The present article advances a psychological analysis of corruption by focusing on the prospection processes involved in these different acts of corruption. Prospection refers to the ability to mentally simulate and preexperience future events (Buckner & Carroll, 2007; Gilbert, 2006) and, as such, plays a central role for corruption. Humans are uniquely equipped to preexperience the hedonic value of events that might be far removed in the future, and even of events that they have never experienced themselves (Gilbert & Wilson, 2007). Whether this simulation of the potential event appears pleasurable or painful crucially influences whether a person choses a particular course of action (Schwarz & Strack, 1999).

To take a closer look at the metal forecasting dynamics involved in corruption, we model corruption as a social dilemma, broadly defined as situations in which short-term self-interest is at odds with longer-term collective interests (Van Lange, Joireman, Parks, & Van Dijk, 2013). In the context of corruption, a power holder faces a conflict between abusing power and using the power responsibly: corruption (power abuse) serves short-term self-interest and no corruption (using power responsibly) serves long-

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term collective interest (Blau, 2009). Furthermore, to understand the complex dynamics involved in corruption, we additionally outline a distinction between individual and interpersonal corruption. As we will describe, each of them entails different decision-making processes regarding the mental representation of expected future outcomes.

Individual corruption describes corrupt acts in which one agent single-handedly abuses entrusted power for private gains (e.g., embezzlement and public theft), whereas interpersonal corruption refers to corrupt acts in which *multiple* agents abuse entrusted power for private gains in collaboration (e.g., bribery, kick-back payments and established corrupt networks). With the help of this distinction, we discuss the most important psychological factors of corruption to illustrate how anticipating consequences of corruption differs between individual and interpersonal corruption (see Figure 1).[1]

To illustrate these differences in prospective cognition between individual and interpersonal corruption and to emphasize the importance of the novel distinction, consider the following examples: Imagine a public administrator who is entrusted with the power to manage the education budget of a local municipality. The administrator detects a loophole in the accounting system that allows the misreporting of the actual education fund and enables the administrator to pocket parts of the funds. The administrator now faces a social dilemma, in which he or she has to foresee the cost and benefits of embezzling the money versus allocating it to the designated recipient, such as the schools. This form of *individual corruption* becomes more likely if the administrator anticipates low chances of formal punishment and low psychological costs such as the feeling of guilt toward the victims of that corrupt act, that is, the designated recipient of the education funds.

On the contrary, in *interpersonal corruption*, the public administrator requires help from the accountant to divert the public funds. This time, both people need to arrange a corrupt collaboration (Weisel & Shalvi, 2015). If the accountant instigates the corrupt deal, the administrator faces a nested social dilemma between acting according to self-interest, the accountant's interest or the collective interest—a decision that involves more complexity considering future consequences. Here, the expected behavior of the accountant influences the cost/benefit analysis (e.g., there is an increased chance of detection through whistle-blowing). Furthermore, the administrator faces an intricate decision in which a moral-tradeoff between fairness principles ("be fair, allocate the funds in the collective interest") and loyalty principles exists ("be loyal, act in the interest of the corrupt dyad"; Dungan, Waytz, & Young, 2014). If the later trumps the former, the administrator expects to feel guilty for *not* engaging in interpersonal corruption. Thus, as we will outline in more detail, the considerations of future consequences for interpersonal corruption dilemmas are characterized by more complexity than for individual corruption dilemmas because more corrupt agents are directly involved.

Individual and interpersonal corruption thus mark essentially different forms of corrupt behavior and draw on different psychological decision-making processes. Although distinctions between different forms of criminal activity (Clinard & Quinney, 1973; Finney & Lesieur, 1982) and corruption (e.g., Amundsen, 1999; Heidenheimer, 1970; Pinto, Leana, & Pil, 2008) exist, a theoretical framework to focus on these processes is lacking. This lack is partially attributable to a relative neglect of corruption in the fields of personality, moral, and social psychology, which is surprising given the immense societal relevance of corruption and its multifaceted prospective decision-making processes. In the following sections, we first explain the social dilemma structure inherent to corruption. We use this social dilemma framework to describe the general psychological mechanism involved in all forms of corruption. We then highlight the profound differences in prospective cognition between individual and interpersonal corruption along five of the most important psychological factors involved in corruption.

Corruption as a Social Dilemma

From the perspective of a power holder a potentially corruption situation represents a social dilemma because a conflict between (often short-term) self-interest versus (often longer-term) collective interest occurs (Blau, 2009; Van Lange, Joireman, Parks, & Van Dijk, 2013). When facing such a "corruption dilemma," the power holder forms a mental representation of the expected consequences of corruption. This means the power holder engages in prospection.[2]

To better understand the prospective cognition involved in corruption let us take a closer look at the specific circumstances in which corruption occurs. Because corruption entails power asymmetry over shared resources, we formalize corruption dilemmas as an extension to social dilemmas dealing with shared resources, that is, common pool resource dilemmas (Ostrom, Burger, Field, Norgaard, & Policansky, 1999). These common pool resource dilemmas can take the form of take-some dilemmas (common resource dilemmas) or give-some dilemmas (public goods dilemmas).

In a common resource dilemma, a group extracts from a shared resource—for example common fishery (Ostrom, 2000). The group seeks to avoid overuse so that the resource will not be depleted (Hardin, 1968). Conversely, in a public goods dilemma, a group of people contributes to the provision or maintenance of a shared good—for example tax payments to sponsor the public infrastructure (Fehr & Gächter, 2000). The group has to ensure tax payments and avoid free riding so that the common contribution can sustain the public infrastructure.

In the original formulations of these two common pool resource dilemmas, each member of the group decides individually and freely how much to contribute and/or how much to use of the common good (Hardin, 1968; Olson, 1965). Extensive research shows that free decisional structures lead to common resource depletion (Fehr & Gächter, 2000). One crucial reason for this "tragedy of the commons" (Hardin, 1968) lies in the incapability of each individual to adequately foresee the long-term collective costs that are caused by pursing immediate self-interest—for example, to overfish the common fishery grounds.

[1] Although we acknowledge that all forms of corruption involve a social network at some level, we argue that the act of corruption itself can be either individual—involving only the corrupt agent—or interpersonal, hence involving multiple corrupt agents.

[2] In our theoretical model we focus solely on the power holder. We thank an anonymous reviewer for pointing out the important role that non–power holders play in corruption. Frequently a briber who is not in a power position might instigate the corrupt transaction. However, we argue that corruption only occurs if the power holder accepts this bribe. Therefore, the act of corruption requires a power holder abusing power.

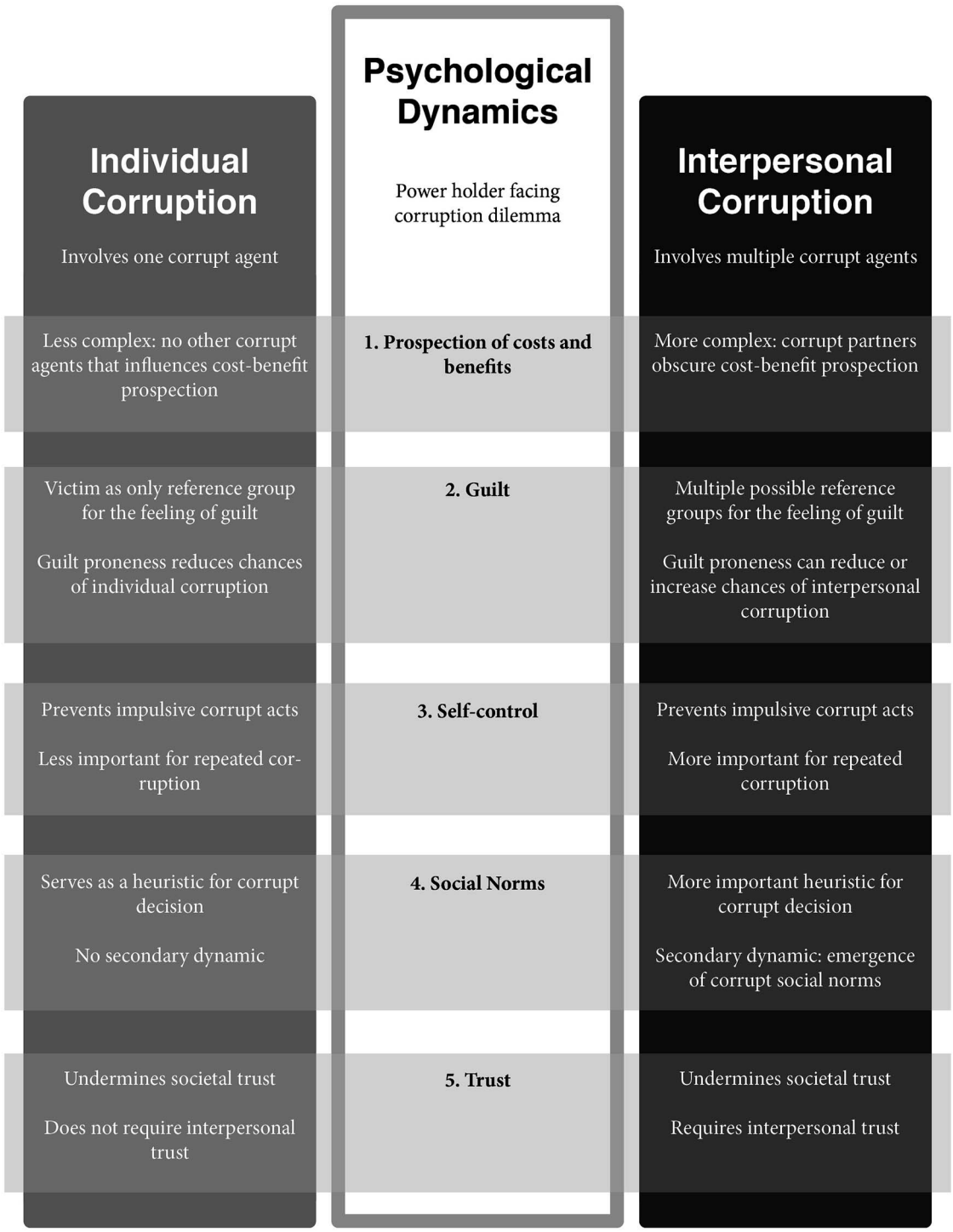

Figure 1. Illustration of the intra- and interpersonal dynamics of corruption and how they differ for individual and interpersonal corruption.

Although on an individual level, myopia seems to trump long-term planning, humans are at the same time uniquely equipped to collectively foresee how each individual's selfish urges lead to undesirable outcomes for the collective (Seligman, Railton, Baumeister, & Sripada, 2013). Therefore, institutional arrangements have emerged to collectively curb people's short-term interest and promote better common resource use (Crawford & Ostrom, 1995; Ostrom, 2000). Indeed, laws, rules, and norms exist to avoid resource overuse in the case of a common resource dilemma (e.g., fishery regulations), and to enforce contribution in

a public goods dilemma (e.g., legal enforcement of tax payments). Individuals, groups, and firms are entrusted with power to manage a common resource in the interest of all members of the group (e.g., fishery regulators and tax collectors; Ostrom, 2000)—thus to ensure that people act in the collective interest.

Corruption happens when this entrusted power is abused for private gains (Eigen, 2002; Lambsdorff, 1999; Nye, 1967). In that sense, corruption describes the peculiar phenomenon of institutional power that is set up to curb selfishness in turn being abused for selfish interests. Consider for example a public official who is entrusted with the power to restrict access to fishing rights only to authorized fishers. Corruption occurs if the public official grants these fishing rights to unauthorized fishers because of private interests (e.g., bribe payments). Similarly, in the context of public goods dilemmas, corruption occurs if a tax collector permits tax evasion in exchange for private favors (e.g., job promotion).[3]

This has implications for the actual prospective cognition that is involved in corruption dilemmas. Corruption prospection involves at least two parties. For one, a power holder who faces a corruption dilemma mentally forecasts the *own* outcomes. Second, because of the entrusted power over shared resources, a power holder also prospects the *collective* outcomes, which importantly include the power holder as well (Blau, 2009). For example, a corrupt police officer benefits from a bribery transaction in the short-run but suffers from a less trustworthy police force in the long-run.

Psychologically, one's own immediate consequences are plotted against collective long-term consequences. Because of temporal discounting (Joireman et al., 2006; Mischel, Shoda, & Rodriguez, 1989), the negative long-term consequences for the collective are generally discounted in comparison to the immediate consequences for oneself. This temporal dilemma is at the heart of all forms of corruption and underlines the important role of prospective cognition in corrupt decision-making.

Difference Between Individual and Interpersonal Corruption Dilemmas

Besides these basic commonalities, there is a profound difference between the social dilemmas of individual and interpersonal corruption: the number of corrupt agents that are directly involved in the corrupt act. Individual corruption entails a trade-off between two parties (power holder vs. collective). Yet, interpersonal corruption represents a nested social dilemma in which three parties' interests are at odds with each other (power holder vs. corrupt partner(s) vs. collective). Besides the dilemma between collective and self-interest, interpersonal corruption additionally contains a subdilemma between the corrupt partners. This subdilemma adds complexity to the forecasting involved in corrupt decision-making.

The following example elucidates the complex social dynamics of interpersonal corruption dilemmas in more detail: consider a businessperson who offers a bribe to a politician in return for insider information. In this example, the exchange resembles a sequential prisoner's dilemma with the bribing businessperson being the first mover.[4] The politician now faces the aforementioned nested social dilemma and has to predict the consequences of the potential corrupt deal for the three parties: the self, the corrupt partner, and the collective. Pocketing the bribe without providing the insider information would maximize the short-term benefit for the self. This option is especially appealing when the politician does not expect to interact with the businessperson again because in such one-shot encounters the likelihood of retaliation by the corrupt partner is low. A successful corrupt transaction would create the best outcome for the businessperson and the politician but creates negative effects for the collective. As the complex decision making structure shows, engaging in corruption entails multiple prospective elements.

Psychological Processes

We draw on the rich literature on social dilemmas (Parks, Joireman, & Van Lange, 2013; Van Lange et al., 2013) and existing experimental corruption research (Serra & Wantchekon, 2012), to identify some of the most important psychological factors involved in corruption dilemmas. Along these intrapersonal (cost-benefit calculations, self-control, guilt) and interpersonal psychological factors (social norms, trust), we discuss crucial differences in the prospection involved in corrupt decision-making between individual and interpersonal corruption.

Intrapersonal Dynamics of Corruption

Prospected costs and benefits. Power holders confronted with a corruption dilemma attempt to predict the material, legal, moral, and social consequences (Messick & Bazerman, 1996). Because of the multiple corrupt agents involved, the consequences of interpersonal corruption are less predictable and thus require more prospective thinking. Frequently, the corrupt partners can pose a threat to each other by potentially undermining the corrupt transaction, for example by defection, cheating a bribe (i.e., pocketing a bribe without reciprocating) or whistle-blowing (Lambsdorff, 2012). Especially in one-shot interpersonal corrupt transactions, a corrupt agent has to include this *interpersonal threat* as an additional variable in the cost-benefit calculation.

To elaborate further on this point, before entering a corrupt transaction, a corrupt agent has to estimate the "corruptibility" (Abbink, 2004) of the potential partner. Making a corrupt offer to a noncorrupt agent can lead to trouble: Probability of detection is high and the corrupt agent runs the risk of punishment—especially in low corruption environments (i.e., contexts in which corruption only seldom occurs). Here, detection of corruption likely results in (severe) punishments. But even if the deal has been agreed on, both corrupt partners have to remain careful and assess whether the other corrupt agent is likely to cheat the bribe (Lambsdorff, 2012) or to blow the whistle (Armantier & Boly, 2012; Glazer & Glazer, 1989).

There is twofold support for the theorized link between number of corrupt agents involved and complexity of the prospection of cost and benefits: First, social dilemma research shows that outcome complexity of any social dilemma situation increases with the number of parties involved (Kelley et al., 2003). Second, criminological research shows that collaborative crimes are gen-

[3] It is beyond the scope of this contribution to discuss what constitutes such an abuse of entrusted power; for a more thorough discussion see Kurer (2005).

[4] The sequential prisoners' dilemma is a version of the prisoners' dilemma, in which one player decides first whether to cooperate or to defect. The second player knows the decision of the first player and then decides himself or herself whether to cooperate or not.

erally more risky than individual crimes (Nguyen & McGloin, 2013). To conclude, future cost–benefit calculations in interpersonal corruption entail a higher level of complexity, uncertainty, and unpredictability compared with individual corruption. As we will outline in more detail below, interpersonal corruption dilemmas frequently include several interpersonal dynamics (e.g., trust, reciprocity, communication) to facilitate the corrupt collaboration.

Anticipated guilt. As the literature on social and moral dilemmas suggests, the decision to engage in corruption is not only determined by the rational precalculation of cost and benefits but also by the way power holders "pre-feel" the consequences (Epley & Caruso, 2004; Haidt, 2001, 2003; Tangney, Stuewig, & Mashek, 2007). Corruption research has largely neglected the role played by moral emotions in corrupt decision-making, although (expected) emotions matter for both individual and interpersonal corruption.

Previous research suggests that emotional reactions that are triggered by an imagination of a prospective act serve as a benchmark to make a decision (Schwarz & Strack, 1999). With regard to corruption, a power holder might prefeel positive emotions caused by the potential gain or the self-satisfaction stemming from the "cheaters high", that is, the positive affective response after getting away with unethical behavior (Ruedy, Moore, Gino, & Schweitzer, 2013). These expected positive emotions pull the power holder toward engaging in corruption. This tendency further increases if the potential corrupt act appears like a one-time "golden opportunity" (Köbis, van Prooijen, Righetti, & Van Lange, 2016).

On the flipside, corruption always has a victim which can range from a concrete other (known) person to the entire society or abstract constructs like public trust (Rothstein, 2000). Harming the victim triggers expected negative emotions such as shame and guilt. In contrast to the positive emotions associated with the potential gain, the affective forecasting of negative emotions push power holders away from corruption.

Guilt deserves special attention as it is the most commonly experienced emotion in response to ethical transgressions (Baumeister, Stillwell, & Heatherton, 1994; Posner & Rasmusen, 1999). Guilt is shaped by upbringing, individual experiences, and social as well as cultural background (Haidt & Joseph, 2008). Therefore, there is interindividual variance in the propensity to feel guilt, which is called guilt-proneness (Tangney, 1995). Guilt-prone individuals expect to feel guilty more frequently.

Extensive research links guilt-proneness to lower levels of a wide range of unethical behaviors: Guilt-prone adolescents engage less frequently in delinquent behavior (Stuewig & McCloskey, 2005); guilt-prone adults indicate a lower willingness to steal (Tangney, 1994) and report less criminal activity (Tibbetts, 2003); guilt-prone individuals generally value moral traits (Cohen et al., 2012) and guilt-proneness increases moral norm conformity (Pinter et al., 2007).

Most of the studies that explore the relationship between unethical behavior and guilt conceptualize unethical behavior as a decision between right and wrong, for example between acting honestly versus cheating. A similar decision structure occurs in individual corruption where the power holder has to forecast the consequences of being corrupt, which means harming the victim, versus acting in the interest of the collective. Hence, the aforementioned findings of guilt-proneness being negatively related to crime likely translate to individual corruption. Guilt-prone individuals preexperience guilt when faced with an individual corruption dilemma and are thus less likely to commit such acts than less guilt-prone individuals—especially if the victim of corruption is salient and concrete.

However, in interpersonal corruption guilt unfolds more complex dynamics. In contrast to individual corruption, in interpersonal corruption different moral principles frequently clash. Most notably, interpersonal corruption often constitutes a conflict between fairness and loyalty principles (Dungan et al., 2014)—both of them being basic moral values (Haidt, 2007, 2013; Henrich et al., 2010). Whereas fairness essentially requires an equal treatment to all persons and groups, loyalty dictates a preferential treatment of one's own in-group over other groups (Waytz, Dungan, & Young, 2013). Loyalty has evolved as a mean to ensure continued cooperation among close kin groups (Haidt, 2007) and thus has a strong prospect for the future—it enables in-group members to ensure future cooperation with their kin.

In many instances of interpersonal corruption, fairness principles conflict with loyalty principles—a person has to decide whether to be loyal toward the corrupt partner(s) (i.e., be corrupt) or to act fairly (i.e., act in the collective interest). The experience of guilt then depends either on which moral principle (fairness or loyalty) trumps or on the salience of the reference group of guilt (i.e., whom to feel guilty toward, Ketelaar & Tung Au, 2003). Hence, an individual who values loyalty over fairness might preexperience guilt when considering to *not* engage in interpersonal corruption (e.g., letting down corrupt partners, patronage, or family members, Pinter et al., 2007). Because corrupt cooperation latches on to loyalty norms, it can therefore foster interpersonal corrupt acts. Put differently, the prospect of letting down the corrupt partner(s) triggers guilt.

Various theoretical elaborations and empirical findings support the idea that guilt (proneness) may potentially increase interpersonal corruption. First, people generally expect to feel guilty toward people who are visibly affected by their actions (Baumeister et al., 1994). In the nested dilemma of interpersonal corruption, the corrupt partner is usually more proximate and more visibly affected than the victim (Wit & Kerr, 2002). Hence, the anticipated guilt toward potential corrupt partners likely overshadows the anticipated guilt toward the victim. The fact that the victim is usually nonvisible, abstract and affected in the temporal distance further fosters this tendency.

Second, guilt fosters cooperation (de Hooge, Zeelenberg, & Breugelmans, 2007; Ketelaar & Tung Au, 2003) especially among in-group members (Gouldner, 1960; Thibaut & Walker, 1975). Because interpersonal corruption requires corrupt collaboration (Shalvi, Weisel, Kochavi-Gamliel, & Leib, 2016; Weisel & Shalvi, 2015) and because of the importance of the aforementioned loyalty norms among in-group members, failing to cooperate with corrupt partners triggers negative moral emotions. Thus, people may often experience guilt when not cooperating with the salient corrupt partner(s).

The power asymmetry inherent to corruption can further augment this tendency. Previous research suggests that the chances of corrupt cooperation likely increase when instigated by the power holders as people frequently feel guilt when not adhering to authority (Messick & Bazerman, 1996). For example, an official might feel such emotional distress when not agreeing to a corrupt deal that the supervisor instigates. Interestingly, this tendency of obedience to authority is strongest for agreeable individuals—for

those who value kindness, sympathy and warmth, and hence do not want to disappoint the authority (Bègue et al., 2015). Otherwise desirable traits, such as agreeableness and guilt-proneness, can unfold unexpected negative effects in interpersonal corruption dilemmas.

Third, the fact that the other corrupt agent(s) stand to gain from the corrupt act facilitates the justification process and additionally alleviates guilt toward the victim (Ayal & Gino, 2011; Mazar, Amir, & Ariely, 2008; Shalvi et al., 2016). Extensive research reveals that the (salient) membership (e.g., kinship, friendship) affects distributive fairness decisions (cf. Greene, 2014) and indicates that people readily violate fairness norms when the own in-group can gain from it (Gino, Ayal, & Ariely, 2013). This trend increases when the in-group has to compete with an out-group over scarce resources (cf. parochial altruism, Balliet, Wu, & De Dreu, 2014; Bernhard, Fischbacher, & Fehr, 2006; Shalvi & De Dreu, 2014). The number of partners involved in a corrupt network additionally amplifies this effect as the other network members provide a shield of anonymity (Schopler et al., 1995) and increase diffusion of responsibility (Bandura, 1999; Darley & Latané, 1968). Put differently, in big and established corrupt networks, each corrupt agent feels less responsible for the negative externalities caused by corruption compared to smaller corrupt networks. This tendency minimizes the anticipation of guilt.

With the harmful externalities far removed and the mutual personal benefits for the corrupt partners immediate, interpersonal corruption deals might appear like a "win–win situation" (Nielsen, 2003), or even like a "victimless crime" (Azfar, Lee, & Swamy, 2001). As each involved corrupt partner has an interest in reducing potential distress caused by guilt they might mutually reinforce the tendency to mentally construe the victim in the most abstract and distant way possible. Hence, through abstract mental representation of a potential victim, guilt toward the victim might be obliterated altogether—an assertion supported by existing research on construal level theory (Conway & Peetz, 2012; Liberman, Sagristano, & Trope, 2002). Reducing the salience of the victim helps the corrupt partners to ignore the fact that interpersonal corruption, in reality, represents a win–win–*lose* situation.

Taken together, anticipated guilt and guilt-proneness might create opposing effects for individual and interpersonal corruption. Anticipation of guilt toward the victim *reduces* the likelihood of individual corrupt acts. However, depending on the salience of the reference group and the moral principle, anticipation of guilt may often *increase* the likelihood of interpersonal corrupt acts.

Self-control. Even in situations in which the odds of success are low, the likelihood of punishment almost certain, and the prospect of feeling guilty on the horizon, people nonetheless engage in corruption. In these cases, vivid mental simulations of the benefits of corruption spur a corrupt temptation and can override the expected costs of corruption. Philosophical thinking dating back to Aristotle (Aristotle, 1980; Horstkötter, 2015) as well as a wealth of social psychological research propose self-control to be the prime candidate to explain why some people give into these temptations while others resist (Baumeister, Heatherton, & Tice, 1994; Baumeister & Tierney, 2011; Baumeister, Vohs, & Tice, 2007).

Self-control describes the "the capacity for altering one's own responses, especially to bring them into line with standards such as ideals, values, morals, and social expectations, and to support the pursuit of long-term goals" (Baumeister et al., 2007, p. 351). A power holder who disapproves of corruption and, thus formed the long-term goal to remain noncorrupt, needs high self-control capacities to recognize the corruption dilemma and to resist the corrupt temptation.

First, previous research shows that recognizing and reasoning through moral dilemmas requires high self-control capacities (Gino, 2016). Conversely, being depleted of self-control capacities undermines the ability to recognize potential negative consequences of one's own behavior. In corruption dilemmas, where the victim is frequently psychologically and temporally distant, this tendency might be especially pronounced. Mentally representing the potential negative consequences of corruption requires conscious deliberation (Fujiwara & Wantchekon, 2013). Without recognition of the possible negative consequences for the collective, the corruption dilemma might not even appear to be a dilemma. As outlined above, especially in interpersonal corruption, other corrupt partners have a vested interest to make corruption appear like a win-win situation or as a victimless crime. Hence, especially the prospection of potential negative consequences in interpersonal corruption requires self-control because the potential negative consequences might be harder to recognize in interpersonal corruption dilemmas compared to individual corruption dilemmas.

In addition to that, resisting corrupt temptations also needs self-control, especially if the option of behaving in a corrupt manner appears unexpectedly. Self-control plays a vital role to explain behavior in situations in which decisions are made impulsively and, contrary to the common perception, many forms of criminal (corrupt) behavior are not well planned and happen unwarily (Gailliot et al., 2007; Gottfredson & Hirschi, 1990). It is thus not surprising that empirical research points in the same direction: Besides being frequently associated with individuals' ability to resist daily temptations, such as binge eating, smoking, and alcohol abuse (Baumeister et al., 2007; Hagger, Wood, Stiff, & Chatzisarantis, 2010), self-control also predicts cheating (Gino, Schweitzer, Mead, & Ariely, 2011; Mead, Baumeister, Gino, Schweitzer, & Ariely, 2009) and other unethical behavior (Shalvi, Eldar, & Bereby-Meyer, 2012). In fact, low levels of self-control are a major contributor to criminal behavior (Gottfredson & Hirschi, 1990; Muraven, Pogarsky, & Shmueli, 2006; Pratt & Cullen, 2000) and one of the strongest predictors of criminal recidivism (Virkkunen, De Jong, Bartko, Goodwin, & Linnoila, 1989).

In individual corruption dilemmas, self-control enables people to resist the temptation of acting in a selfish way that fulfills short-term interest and, instead, to achieve the overarching goal to be fair. Self-control capacities help to explain why some people engage in individual corruption and others do not, especially if the opportunity for corruption occurs unexpectedly. For example, a notary whose responsibility involves the execution of a last will might face the temptation of misrepresenting the actual amount of the heritage and pocket some of the money. Besides the estimation of cost and benefits and the prospected guilt, self-control crucially helps to explain whether the notary will be likely to engage in this act of embezzlement.

Similarly, self-control may also help individuals to abstain from interpersonal corruption. We base this assumption on recent findings linking impulsiveness and cooperation: People under time pressure, hence low in self-control, show higher levels of cooperation than those who have time to deliberate about cooperation

(Rand, Greene, & Nowak, 2012). Because cooperating with a corrupt partner is at the heart of interpersonal corruption, we assume a similar link between low self-control and corrupt cooperation. Studies investigating sacrifices within (romantic) relationships further support this assumption (Righetti, Finkenauer, & Finkel, 2013). Romantic partners who were low in self-control showed a greater willingness to sacrifice for their partner. Similarly, in interpersonal corruption, people's impulsive tendencies might be to comply and cooperate with the corrupt partners, especially if the two individuals are close to each other or have repeatedly engaged in interpersonal corruption together. Taken together, when faced with the decision to engage in individual or interpersonal corruption, we assume a link between low self-control and corruption—especially when this situation occurs unexpectedly (impulsive) or when the corrupt cooperation (in the case of interpersonal corruption) takes place with a well-known corrupt partner.

However, what if the power holder actually has formed the overarching goal to remain in power at all costs and to be corrupted when convenient? In this circumstance, such a power holder actually requires self-control to keep engaging in corruption without being detected. In contrast to situations in which the power holder has the overarching goal of behaving ethically, we argue that motivated and repeated engagement in corruption requires *high* levels of self-control. Because of the societal illegitimacy and illegality of corruption (Rothstein, 2000; Widmalm, 2008), corrupt agents cannot openly disclose their corrupt activities even if they might consider them acceptable themselves. A repeated engagement in corruption therefore forces corrupt agents to deliberately hide their corrupt practices and instead give the impression of being innocent—thus, moral hypocrisy emerges (cf. Batson, Thompson, & Chen, 2002; Batson, Thompson, Seuferling, Whitney, & Strongman, 1999).

In these cases, prolonged corruption becomes part of the corrupt agents' identity. Yet, toward others corrupt agents have to continuously feign an honest appearance and cover up corrupt traces. This way, repeated engagement in corruption implies a management of multiple conflicting identities. This form of deception, double-standard and cognitive dissonance reduction likely requires high levels of self-control (Aquino, Freeman, Reed, Felps, & Lim, 2009; Vohs, Baumeister, & Ciarocco, 2005).

Repeated interpersonal corruption is even more demanding than repeated individual corruption because it requires interaction and cooperation with corrupt partners. First, the corrupt agent has to incorporate the repeated corrupt behavior in the self-concept—through moral disengagement like rationalizations and the aforementioned abstract victim representation, the repeated corrupt transgressor likely reduces cognitive dissonance (Bandura, 1999; Festinger & Carlsmith, 1959; Mazar et al., 2008). Hence, the corrupt agent might have a positive self-view, even in the light of repeated corrupt engagement. Second, toward the corrupt partners, corrupt agents have to appear *corrupt.* They have to adhere to the "codes of the underworld" (Gambetta, 2009), which dictate a willingness to cooperate with corrupt partners. Third, outside of this whelm of corrupt partners, corrupt agents have to give the impression of *not being corrupt*.

Hence, corrupt agents need to manage their impressions in conflicting norm environments (see also Vohs et al., 2005) and upholding this "role distance" (Goffman, 1959) draws on the limited resource of self-control (Vohs, Baumeister, & Ciarocco, 2005; Vohs & Heatherton, 2000)—especially if the corrupt partner(s) stay the same (Joosten et al., 2014). Taken together, continuous engagement in corruption is a taxing task that requires high levels of self-control. That is especially the case for interpersonal corruption, where being corrupt means navigating through different social (and reputational) whelms: one in which to appear like "a gangster" and one in which to appear like "a good citizen."

Interpersonal Dynamics of Corruption

As the discussion so far suggests, the demands of the anticipatory processes involved in interpersonal corruption dilemmas exceed those involved in individual corruption dilemmas. To further illustrate the intricate social dynamics of interpersonal corruption, we take a closer look at the importance and the emergence of "corruption norms" (i.e., the notion that corruption is normal) and show the twofold role that trust plays in interpersonal corruption (i.e., undermining generalized trust while requiring particularized trust). In this discussion we will mostly focus on interpersonal corruption and only briefly mention the relevance of these two factors for individual corruption.

Social norms. One of the most important benchmarks for predicting the future consequences of corrupt behavior are social norms (Banuri & Eckel, 2012; Barr & Serra, 2010; Dong, Dulleck, & Torgler, 2012; Fisman & Miguel, 2007). Social norms describe shared understandings about actions that are obligatory, permitted, or forbidden (Crawford & Ostrom, 1995). Predictions about the (corrupt) behavior of others rest on perceived norms (Köbis, van Prooijen, Righetti, & Van Lange, 2015; Rothstein, 2000). As such, two main types of social norms exist—injunctive norms and descriptive norms (Cialdini, Reno, & Kallgren, 1990; Reno, Cialdini, & Kallgren, 1993; see for similar distinctions in economics and sociology Bicchieri, 2005; Goffman, 1969). An anticipated corrupt act can be evaluated according to whether it is permissible (injunctive norms) and whether others engage in it as well (descriptive norms).

As previously mentioned, corruption is a behavior that is disapproved, even in high corruption contexts (Widmalm, 2008). As a case in point, power holders virtually never publicly admit their own corrupt behavior. Hence, injunctive norms about corruption frequently trigger negative preexperiences, such as anticipated guilt or shame. However, descriptive norms can work against these corruption-curbing mental simulations. The perception that the majority engages in corruption alleviates the negative preexperience of corruption. Descriptive norms can thus serve as a rationalization—"I know it is wrong but everybody does it" (Köbis et al., 2015). These rationalizations for selfish behavior are frequently construed prior to the actual engagement in the behavior (Gino & Ariely, 2012) and reduce anticipated guilt and shame.

Especially the prospective element in these norms representations—"if I don't do it, somebody else will"—pave the way for corruption. Because most people have an inflated moral self-view (Messick & Bazerman, 1996; Van Lange, 1991) this "other" potential corrupt agent is likely represented as a less moral person and is thought to be likely to behave in a corrupt manner.

As such, social norms matter for individual and interpersonal corruption, yet to varying degrees. For individual corruption, perceived social norms serve as a decisional benchmark that influence

corrupt decisions in ways outlined above. That is, perceiving that a certain corrupt behavior is common and accepted—an assessment that is often skewed toward selfish interests—drastically increases the likelihood of the respective individual corrupt behavior to occur (Köbis et al., 2015). For example, if a tax collector perceives embezzlement to be normal, chances are that he or she will act likewise.

In interpersonal corruption, perceived norms bear even more importance as they directly affect the expected success of corrupt transactions. Especially perceived descriptive norms convey crucial information about the chances of success for a corrupt transaction. Think for example of the practice of bribing a police officer after having violated a traffic rule. If the traffic offender believes that corruption is widespread, initiating a bribe payment, (e.g., by slipping a note into your driver's license) might help to avoid a hefty fine. In this context, the expected value of the police officer accepting the bribe outweighs the expected punishment. However, if the traffic offender believes that corruption hardly ever occurs, such a practice might cause bigger trouble than just the speeding fine. In this second scenario, the potential punishment for attempting a bribe outweighs the expected value of bribe acceptance.

Besides shaping the prospections about the behavior of potential corrupt partners, a second dynamic of norms can evolve. Repeated corrupt transactions with the same corrupt partners can lead to the formation of established corrupt networks. Within these emerging (corrupt) networks the norms among its members shift (Pinter et al., 2007; Wilder, 1986) and corruption becomes the behavioral standard (see normalization of corruption; Ashforth & Anand, 2003). Thus, once corrupt transactions have been repeatedly carried out, new local "corrupt norms" may emerge, resulting in a normative pressure to benefit the corrupt in-group (Cohen et al., 2006; Wildschut & Insko, 2006). Corruption norms dictate corrupt cooperation while sanctioning noncooperation within a corrupt network (Gambetta, 2009). These norms facilitate the prospective decisions for each involved agents as they signal mutual cooperation. Through such corruption norms, corrupt collaborations become more predictable—a highly relevant feature for interpersonal transactions (Van Lange & Joireman, 2008).

One example for this complex social dynamic is the codex of Omertá among Mafia members. Omertá dictates cooperation among its members and prohibits information about illegal transactions to surface by threatening severe punishments upon misconduct (Oudemans, 2008). Needless to say, these norms within the Mafia network conflict with general societal norms and as outlined above, managing the impressions in conflicting norm environments requires self-control on the part of the corrupt agents. These corrupt norms serve another important purpose among corrupt network members: they nurture trust.

Trust. Trust is another crucial interpersonal ingredient of corruption that shapes the prospective decision-making process. It plays two important yet entirely different roles in corruption. On the one hand, the formation and maintenance of interpersonal corrupt transactions requires trust between the corrupt partners (i.e., particularized trust; Lambsdorff & Frank, 2011; Pinker, Nowak, & Lee, 2008; Uslaner, 2005). On the other hand, both forms of corruption—individual and interpersonal corruption—generally undermine the public's trust in the society (i.e., generalized trust; Rothstein & Uslaner, 2005).

Let us first illuminate the dynamics of particularized trust—the belief that another person is positively concerned about the outcomes for oneself (Balliet & Van Lange, 2013). Similar to generic cooperative situations (Wright, 2001), corrupt cooperation requires trust (Lambsdorff & Frank, 2011; Lambsdorff, 1999; Ryvkin & Serra, 2012). Corrupt agents need to expect that the other(s) reciprocate and not cheat the deal even when tempted to do so (Abbink, 2004; Hunt, 2004). However, the form of particularized trust involved in interpersonal corruption differs from trust in generic cooperative situations in two important ways.

First, the illegitimacy (and illegality) of corruption prevents a formal or legal enforcement of corrupt deals (Gambetta, 2009). A corrupt agent cannot file a lawsuit if the corrupt partner did not provide the promised service or cheats a bribe. Therefore, anticipating whether the corrupt partner reciprocates relies more heavily on trust than generic forms of cooperation do. Second, because of the nested social dilemma structure of interpersonal corruption, trust between corrupt agents implies also a willingness to harm the collective. Although cooperation is generally deemed desirable—one of the main requirements for any sort of society (Szathmáry & Smith, 1995)—corrupt cooperation produces negative outcomes for the collective (Rothstein, 2011). It reflects a type of "negative cooperation."

To elucidate this point, particularized trust in interpersonal corruption entails the belief that corrupt partners care about the *positive* outcomes for each other, but at the same time disregard the *negative* outcomes for the victim. A corrupt deal thus requires a form of "corrupt trust," as corrupt partners have to mutually anticipate corrupt behavior (Platteau, 1994). For example, a student who offers a teacher a bribe in exchange for a better grade has to prospect that the teacher will care about the positive outcome for the student and will reciprocate. Importantly, though, the student also has to prospect that the teacher ignores the negative outcomes that this transaction creates for the other students in the class. Recent empirical research confirms the assertion that particularized trust fosters corrupt cooperation (Jiang, Lindemans, & Bicchieri, 2015).

The outlined intricacy of trust involved in interpersonal corruption raises the question: how do corrupt partners ensure particularized trust? Communication is one way for corrupt partners to increase trust and thus to reduce the prospective complexity (Balliet, 2010). Indirect speech acts are frequently used in the initial stages of novel corrupt transactions (Pinker et al., 2008; Pinker, 2007). To elucidate how indirect language fosters especially novel interpersonal corruption: when instigating a corrupt transaction, both potentially corrupt agents face the challenge to convey the willingness to engage in corruption without (a) accusing the other of being corrupt or (b) stepping into dangerous legal territory of admitting the own corruptibility (Gambetta, 2009). People willing to engage in interpersonal corruption can achieve this balancing act by using indirect language as it transmits a willingness to engage in corruption while granting plausible deniability (Pinker et al., 2008; Pinker, 2007).

Once a corrupt deal has been agreed on, communication between corrupt partners facilitates particularized corrupt trust by enunciating promises and threats. Speaking to another about the prospective corrupt deal enables corrupt partners to cocreate and share prospections and thus make common plans (Seligman et al., 2013). This way, corrupt partners can mutually reinforce the

positive prospection of the positive consequences resulting from a corrupt deal—"Imagine all the money we can make"—and reduce the salience of a potential victim—"Nobody will be harmed." But, communication can also be used to ensure corrupt trust by menacing force. For example, in order to ensure mutual corrupt collaborations, corrupt partners can trigger concrete mental images of what will happen if the partner elects to defect—one can think of the often gruesome threats and punishments among criminal gangs like the Mafia. Such threats of punishments trigger immediate strong emotional responses, such as fear, which enforces corrupt collaboration. Thus, communicating about the future outcomes of interpersonal corrupt deals augments particularized trust among corrupt partners.

A second important aspect that increases this form of trust is the prospect that a (corrupt) cooperation situation occurs again (Van Lange, Klapwijk, & Van Munster, 2011). The "shadow of the future" (Axelrod & Hamilton, 1981) makes people aware of the fact that certain behavior (e.g., corrupt cooperation) in the present might lead to positive outcomes in the future (e.g., reciprocal payback). Because a longer time horizon enables lasting and healthy relationships (Rusbult & Van Lange, 2003), it allows a prospection of future benefits of corrupt transactions for oneself and the corrupt partners.

A longer time horizon therefore enables trust between corrupt partners to develop. For one, the mental preexperiences of positive future outcomes resulting from ongoing reciprocation are activated (Barclay & Van Vugt, 2015). Accepting and reciprocating a bribe is potentially a first step in an ongoing quid-pro-quo corrupt relationship (Hunt, 2004). Second, expecting repeated transactions also activates the expected threat of potential repercussions when rejecting the corrupt offer. The aforementioned threats and prospects of punishments for not cooperating are most effective when the corrupt partners likely interact again. Empirical support stems from research showing that punishments systems are generally more effective when the time horizon is long (Gächter, Renner, & Sefton, 2008). Taken together, the willingness to engage in interpersonal corruption and the particularized trust among corrupt partners increases if the corrupt partners expect transactions to take place again in the future (Banuri & Eckel, 2012).

Although the act of interpersonal corruption requires high levels of particularized trust, on the societal level, trust and corruption negatively correlate (Guiso, Sapienza, & Zingales, 2004; Rothstein & Uslaner, 2005). Because corruption per definition involves an abuse of en*trusted* power, corruption undermines the level of trust in a society (Graycar & Smith, 2011; Johnson & Mislin, 2011; Platteau, 1994). Especially harmful to the societal trust are interpersonal forms of corruption that involve a transaction between citizens and public officials (Guiso et al., 2004; Rothstein & Uslaner, 2005). Citizens who make first hand experiences with the crookedness of public officials lose their trust in public institutions, politics, and their fellow citizens (Uslaner, 2005). This direct experience with corruption also shapes the aforementioned representations of social norms and hence has a direct influence of what citizens can expect when interacting with public institutions.

The intricate dynamics of trust and corruption become especially apparent when again using the example of the Mafia: within the Mafia, high levels of trust exist to ensure repeated cooperation among its members (Gambetta, 1996). Credible threats, vicarious punishment, and rigid inclusion criteria as well as the aforementioned codex of Omertá ensure that members of the Mafia can expect reciprocation from fellow members. However, having the Mafia in the neighborhood reduces generalized trust among citizens of this area. One of the main reasons for the reduced trust is that the Mafia erodes the functioning of public institutions (Meier, Pierce, & Vaccaro, 2014). The interaction between citizens who are not in the Mafia and public institutions are characterized by uncertainty and unreliability. Citizens cannot count on public service delivery and thus stop trusting the public institutions.

To summarize, trust plays an even more vital part in corrupt transactions than it does in generic cooperative situations. Particularized trust entails the expectation of reciprocity between the corrupt partners, as well as the belief that the corrupt partners are willing to harm the collective. On the societal level, the opposite relationship between trust and corruption exists, with corruption being one of the main contributors to low societal trust.

Trust and Norms—Past, Present, and Future

We have repeatedly touched on the importance of past behavior for the formation of mental representation of future (corrupt) events. Experience with corruption influences the way corrupt acts are anticipated, even more so, because memory and prospection rely on the same brain areas (Spreng, Mar, & Kim, 2009). Based on extensive research on memory bias, it is safe to assume that successful past corrupt acts are frequently represented in more positive light than they actually occurred (Chugh, Bazerman, & Banaji, 2005; Gilbert & Wilson, 2007). For example, corrupt agents remember the victims of corruption less saliently than the gains that they obtained (Bandura, 1999). These distorted memories of past behavior then serve as benchmark for current decisions (Tenbrunsel & Messick, 2004). Even small previous corrupt acts can transform the decision-making process and let corruption appear less problematic (Ashforth & Anand, 2003; Darley, 2005). With repeated experience, deciding whether to engage in corruption or not becomes more automatic and prospection occurs quicker and less deliberately (Lee-Chai & Bargh, 2001). Such forms of implicit corruption rely more heavily on the most salient expected hedonic experience, which because of the aforementioned temporal discounting frequently is the (material) gain that can be obtained through corruption. As a consequence, successful experience with corruption and the distorted memories of these events paves the way for prospections that increase the chances of corruption.

However, past behavior does not automatically result in future behavior. Past experiences and the memories thereof serve as a source that people selectively use to construct prospections (Seligman et al., 2013). Understanding prospection involved in corruption helps to better understand transformative processes of corruption and might offer a synthesis to understand the interplay of the past and the future. While acknowledging the importance of the historic circumstances such as colonialism (Ostrom et al., 1999), and own previous corrupt behavior, a prospective perspective rejects the notion that past behavior necessarily predicts future behavior.

This interplay between past behavior and mental construction of the future can be best illustrated by looking at social norms and trust. As previously mentioned, on a societal level the perceived level of corruption can lead to the formation of "corruption norms"

and undermine the level of trust. Previous experience with corruption and the distorted memories of these acts impacts the anticipations of citizens and can lead to a mental representation of corruption being the "normal thing to do" (Olivier de Sardan, 2015). One famous example underlining the importance of mental representations based on past behavior is a cleverly designed study with UN diplomats in New York (Fisman & Miguel, 2007). The results show that the perceived level of corruption of the diplomat's home country correlates with the diplomat's parking violations. Because diplomats enjoyed legal immunity and did not face legal punishment, "culture" and "corruption norms" seem to explain corrupt behavior.

Yet these mental representations are malleable. Twofold empirical support with regard to trust and norms exists. First, studies show that people migrating from low trust to high trust countries quickly adjust to the new level of societal trust (Dinesen, 2012; Van Lange, 2015). They themselves become more trusting because they adjust their expectations about the behavior of others by comparing it with novel observations (Seligman et al., 2013).

Second, an experimental study conducted at a British university with students from various national backgrounds indicates that (a) the level of perceived corruption from the home country does in fact influence corrupt behavior in a corruption game but importantly (b) also show that the time the participants spent in the U.K. mitigates the influence of the home-country's corruption level (Barr & Serra, 2010). In other words, the longer participants from high corruption countries stayed in the U.K., the less likely they were to engage in corruption in the game. This study provides empirical evidence that expectations about corruption are frequently updated and that past behavior does not automatically translate to future behavior. People seem to recognize the "rules of the game" and rapidly adjust to them. It shows that their mental representations are not merely the deterministic result of past behavior and acquired habits but allow room for learning new behavioral patterns.

Corruption and Prospection: Future Issues

Clearly, corruption dilemmas entail complex prospective dynamics, yet to varying degrees. Power holders anticipate the hedonic value of engaging in corruption for oneself and the collective. Besides the intricate prospective decision-making processes involved in all forms of corruption dilemmas, we have outlined how individual and interpersonal corruption dilemmas differ. We discussed five factors—prospection of cost–benefits, guilt, self-control, social norms, and trust—that illustrate how corrupt decision-making differs for individual and interpersonal corruption dilemmas. This distinction between individual and interpersonal corruption dilemmas and the discussion of the respective psychological decision-making processes bring theoretical, empirical, and societal benefits.

Value of New Distinction and Corrupt Prospection

We offer a social dilemma framework to conceptualize corrupt behavior, differentiate between different types of corrupt behavior, and to enable a closer look at the prospective decision making processes. This way we hope to promote consensus among scholars about the definitional properties of different corrupt acts—especially when it comes to the distinction between individual and interpersonal corruption. Currently, some broad definitions include both individual and interpersonal corruption (Amundsen, 1999; Bardhan, 1997; Klitgaard, 1991; Lambsdorff, 1999; Nye, 1967; Transparency International, 2010) and others define corruption more narrowly, thus only interpersonally (Abbink, Irlenbusch, & Renner, 2002; Groenendijk, 1997; Heidenheimer, Johnson, & LeVine, 1989; Mény, 1996; Rabl & Kühlmann, 2008). More refined differentiations mark the first step to avoid referring to essentially different phenomena when using the term corruption (Jain, 2001) and enable a more thorough situation-based analysis of corruption, one in which the prospective cognitions involved in each form of corruption dilemma can be recognized.

The lack of distinction also profoundly influences the *empirical* study of corruption, which becomes especially apparent in the growing field of experimental corruption research. A multitude of corruption games have been developed (Serra & Wantchekon, 2012). These games operationalize corruption at times as an individual act (Abbink & Ellman, 2004; Azfar & Nelson, 2007; Barr, Lindelow, & Serneels, 2009) and at times as an interpersonal act (Abbink et al., 2002; Frank & Schulze, 2000; Lambsdorff & Frank, 2011; Mazar & Aggarwal, 2011; Weisel & Shalvi, 2015), yet without systematic differentiation between the two. Consequently, psychological decision-making dynamics in general and the prospective cognitions in particular involved in each form of corruption are hardly understood.

In fact, contradicting empirical insights exist. A case in point is the link between communal orientation and corruption. On the one hand, empirical studies indicate that communally oriented power holders are less selfish and corrupt than exchange-oriented individuals (Chen, Lee-Chai, & Bargh, 2001). On the other hand, a cross-national study finds a positive link between communal orientation and corruption (Mazar & Aggarwal, 2011). Although the former seems to suggest that a communal orientation curbs corruption, the latter suggest the opposite. Closer examination can resolve this contradiction: communal orientation might positively correlate with interpersonal corruption due to a desire to maintain a positive future relationship with the corruption partner, while being negatively or not related to individual corruption (i.e., being more selfish).

Streamlining the different corruption operationalizations along the basic distinction of individual and interpersonal corruption helps to avoid such empirical confusion and enables an integration of the psychological insights gained about the prospective processes involved in the respective form of corruption. Such conceptual integration also paves the way for analyses of corrupt acts on the aggregate level, such as meta-analyses.

A refined distinction also brings about potential *societal* benefits as it enables the design of tailored anticorruption measures. Recognizing the whereabouts of the corrupt behavior at hand determines the success of anticorruption programs (Klitgaard, 1991). A better understanding of the prospective dynamics underlying corrupt behavior is needed to increase the chances of curbing corruption. Combating individual corruption requires different measures than interpersonal corruption because the prospective cognition involved in both forms of corruption differ. The description of prospective thinking involved in both forms of corruption offers several tentative recommendations. For example, fighting corruption by stimulating whistle-blowing has better chances when targeted at interpersonal corruption than at individual corruption, because the prospective threat of whistleblowing through corrupt partners is more imminent. Gaining a better theoretical understanding of corruption combined with empirical insights

about the prospective psychology of corruption can potentially contribute to building better (public) institutions and reduce corruption.

Our contribution is among the first ones to look at the prospective elements of corrupt decision making. Besides outlining the importance of prospection for corrupt decision making we hope to spur interest of researchers working on prospection to contribute to the corruption literature. Corruption represents an intricate behavior with complex prospective dynamics, of which many facets remain to be investigated empirically: How do power holders mentally represent the prospective threat of formal versus social punishment in interpersonal corruption? How does the situation in which a corrupt dilemma occurs influence the prospections—for example, in a boardroom versus on the golf course? How do corruption prospections differ depending on whether the power holder instigates or receives a corrupt offer? How can the expectations about the corrupt behavior of others be changed? And are there ways to increase the salience of the expected negative consequences for the victims of corruption? These are some of the many relevant questions that deserve attention.

Concluding Remarks

Theoretical models revealing the psychology of corruption are scarce. A theoretical framework that helps to distinguish between different forms of corrupt behavior and to understand the prospective cognition of corruption lacks altogether. This void costs very dear, especially when considering the immense societal relevance of corruption, one example being the horrific consequences of the Haitian earthquake, and the importance of prospection to understand behavior. To fill that void, we advance an analysis of corruption based on the basic principles of social dilemmas, in that corruption entails the main features of common pool resource dilemmas with asymmetric power distribution. Corruption prospection thus rests on a trade-off between own short-term interest and long-term collective interest. We propose an essential distinction between individual and interpersonal corrupt acts: Unlike the individual corruption dilemma, interpersonal corruption dilemmas include a nested social dilemma as corrupt agents collaboratively abuse the entrusted power. This corrupt collaboration is what sets interpersonal corruption apart from individual corruption and increases the complexity of the anticipatory decision-making process involved.

We discussed these differences along five of the most important psychological factors of corruption. Guilt reduces individual corruption, while it potentially increases interpersonal corruption. The effects of self-control depend on the long-term plan that the power holder has formed: It can help to abstain from corrupt temptations but also contribute to successful ongoing engagement in corruption. Besides these intrapersonal factors, especially interpersonal corruption dilemmas entail complex interpersonal dynamics too: We highlighted how social norms and trust serve as important prospective benchmarks. It is unrealistic to expect "one-size-fits-all" solutions to this massive problem but we suggest that advancing a theoretical distinction between individual and interpersonal corruption dilemmas and outlining the prospective cognition involved in each of them, marks a first step toward coherence in the wealth of research findings. It should foster our theoretical understanding of corruption, promote specific research agendas, and eventually help reduce corruption in groups, organizations, and societies at large.

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