Grand Theory of Antisocial and Destructive Behavior

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Triggered by personal experience, an interdisciplinary literature review was conducted of characteristics, factors (annexed their mutual correlations) and dynamics of antisocial (A) and destructive (D) – hostile, abusive, irresponsible … – behavior inside and outside the workplace, among others characterized by their obstructive and toxic features. AD behavior seems to be on the rise (cf. bullying at work, traffic aggression, right-wing political thinking), not only against subordinates (downwards), against colleagues (horizontal) or against the school organization in general but also against headmasters/principals (upwards), which is a specific and often ignored form of hostile behavior (known as 'employees' upwards hostility' (Camps 2015)). Although the academic disciplines of (social) psychology, sociology, criminology, (social) anthropology, (moral) philosophy, ethics, communication science, neuroscience (…) all appear to offer very interesting notions, concepts, theories and models of explanation, they remain very fragmented in their analysis of AD behavior. However, these studies generally point in the same direction. In this article, we attempt to combine a wide range of approaches and explanations into one overarching theoretical model: a Grand Theory of AD behavior. This way we hope to contribute to better understanding of what consciously or unconsciously leads people to antisocial, destructive and irresponsible behavior, in everyday as well as in professional life. Herewith, the article responds to insight that scientific discipline of (applied) ethics may need to pay more attention to negative, irresponsible behavior, what it causes and how it works, rather than to examples of prosocial and constructive behavior if it is to contribute better to responsible behavior between the average citizen and staff. The Grand Theory offers more insight into why destructive people do what they do – 'a person's failure to acknowledge what is too obvious to miss' (Bok 1989) – and cues to recognize destructive and 'evil' behavior as a whole. Herewith, the Grand Theory opens perspectives on a new interpretation as well as a new approach (management) of antisocial and destructive behavior within organizations. Also in school organizations, leaders (e.g., headmasters and principals, members of the board) are confronted with antisocial and destructive behavior, not only by pupils/students or their parents but also by staff members, sometimes middle managers. For school organizations too, the Grand Theory of AD Behavior offers an impetus to an adapted policy for which we offer some suggestions.

Keywords: antisocial, destructive, behavior, organizations

Personal experience with what Camps (2015) calls 'employees' upwards hostility' prompted us in 2015 to start up a thorough literature study of how and – above all – why this kind of behavior appears: why do hierarchical subordinates behave opposingly (obstructively), aggressively and destructively towards a hierarchical superior, (precisely) when their superior pursues a responsible policy and management (an additional sub-aspect in our research). Regrettably, our search illustrated that literature on (professional and organizational) ethics and many other scientific sub-disciplines has not yet provided a comprehensive and consistent answer to the question(s) of what and why related to antisocial, obstructive and destructive behavior, especially not when it concerns the upwards format. In many scientific disciplines, we do find partial analyses of hostility in general or of leader-subordinate hostility. Unfortunately, it is (still) impossible to refer to an exclusive and complete analysis of 'upwards hostility,' i.e. of subordinate leader-subordinate hostility, in the literature (of any scientific discipline).

What else can drive individuals to defy risks of serious sanctions such as dismissal and prosecution when this is not a clear reaction to the so-called destructive or abusive leadership of their superior, although even the knowledge of abusive leadership can help us understand the nature of the AD behavior phenomenon in general? In the past, Tepper's research (2000; Park, Simon, and Tepper 2017), along with many others, triggered the specific study of abusive supervision instead of the positive traits of good leadership. Herewith the leader is denoted silently and automatically as the origin and cause of obstructive and destructive behavior, a failing organization and a lot of negative consequences (a/o job satisfaction, employees' deviancy, intentions to quit etc.). Also De Cremer et al.'s (2011) study employee hostility and deviant behavior towards leaders from the basic assumption that it all starts with mistreatment of employees by their leader. Organization-directed, as well as superior-directed deviance (clearly connected) is considered to be the exclusive result of abusive supervision and negative affection and competence uncertainty among employees. When employees feel abused, especially when they are self-uncertain, they will be more likely to engage in deviant behavior (Ambrose and Mitchell 2007), whether positive or negative.

However, by applying this 'old school' approach of abusive leadership, we can also interpret abusive leadership by middle managers (first-line supervisors) and by informal leaders towards the
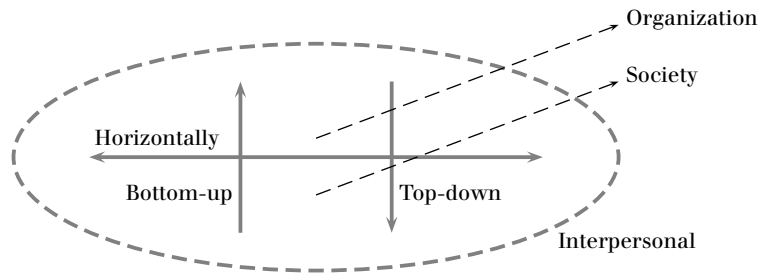
FIGURE 1   Different Formats of hostile behavior

other group members, even by everyone in general towards others downwards, horizontal and upwards (see figure 1): abusive behavior as 'victims' perceptions of the extent to which perpetrator(s) engage in a sustained display of hostile verbal and nonverbal behaviors.'[1] This definition can even help us to define destructive behavior towards the organization as a whole and within society outside the professional world. But, for the time being, the question remains to what extent our knowledge of abusive leadership – always defined as abusive behavior of a superior towards his employees (downwards) – is also valid for abusive behavior of employees towards their superior (upwards), even if these employees themselves are also functioning as middle managers or as informal leaders of a group of employees.

For some years now, against 'old school' approach researchers have been making room for deviant behavior by employees towards their organizations (Brown et al. 2014; Hurst et al. 2015), mostly called 'counterproductive work behavior' (CWB, as the opposite to 'organizational citizenship behavior,' OCB). Also, Park, Simon, and Tepper (2017) point out that even in the case of an abusive supervisor, this can be the result of abusive behavior from subordinates, at least based on the supervisor's impression of their performance ('victim precipitation theory' and 'moral exclusion theory'). Although they still connect the abusive behavior with the supervisor, they already leave the door open to deviant and abusive behavior coming from employees. And Pundt (2014) explains supervisors' abusive behavior based on the fact that employees are provoking their sense of self-worth. Camps' (2015) notion of

[1] We see no reason to exclude physical contacts, as Tepper (2000) does at the end of this definition of abusive leadership, insofar these can be aggressive and violent and thus very hostile too.

'employees' upwards hostility' fits within an open framework of a multiple, multi-motive and multi-stakeholder approach of abusive and destructive behavior. We agree with this approach of antisocial and destructive behavior, whatever its intent or direction.

So, we can find a lot of partial answers – theories, models, concepts – in a multitude of scientific disciplines and sub-disciplines: (social) psychology, sociology, criminology, (social) anthropology, (moral) philosophy, ethics, HRM, communication sciences, neuroscience and so on. A thorough multidisciplinary literature study has consulted several hundreds of scientific articles and books, each of which offers a piece of the entire puzzle. Nowhere, however, we could find a summarizing overall picture; there is no comprehensive answer being formulated to answer the central question that has kept us going for the past years. Especially not when it comes to the sub-research question of the how and why related to antisocial, obstructive and destructive behavior of subordinates towards their formal hierarchical superior who tries to conduct an ethical policy and management. So we were propelled in direction of complementing our initial research with a secondary objective of building up such an overview: a 'grand theory' of antisocial and destructive behavior (AD behavior). It would be impossible to exclusively discuss just one specific form of AD behavior, i.e. the upwards form. As so far this form is a specific form of AD behavior, we should, first of all, try to gain insight into AD behavior in general. Only in the second phase of research (at a later stage), specific characteristics of 'upwards hostility' from subordinates towards their superiors can be addressed, specifically where it fits within the conduct of an ethically inspired and intended policy and management (and this may be precisely the reason and cause of antisocial, obstructive and destructive actions of the subordinates). Although this is not (yet) the subject of this article (Siebens 2018), we will, where possible, already point out the implications for 'employees' upwards hostility,' specifically towards an ethically motivated superior.

We believe that such a grand theory can make an important contribution to our understanding of irresponsible behavior – and therefore also of what responsible behavior means – but can also make a major contribution to avoiding and combating such behavior in professional organizations and relationships, among other from subordinates towards their formal superiors. In the meantime, it also allows us to create a positive definition of prosocial, constructive, responsible behavior (ethics). Herewith, we see

many theoretical and practical (management) added values to our research, for instance how antisocial and destructive behavior can be prevented or tackled (management). A question to which we will briefly return by way of conclusion.

Irresponsible Behavior: First Analysis

Greenbaum, Kuenzi, and Mayer (2010) take note of the fact that 'there are alarming statistics regarding the amount of unethical behavior.' Vartia-Väänänen (2013) mentions a survey of 2007 within the EU-27 area illustrating that 53% of respondents think that violence, mobbing and harassment represent an important occupational health concern in their country (74% within the old EU-15 area). Bourdeaud'hui, Janssens and Vanderhaeghe (2018) studied the impact of sexually transgressive behavior, violence and mobbing on superiors. Their research found out that 7.6% notice mobbing, 4.3% physical violence and aggression, and 16.8% intimidation and threats. Although these results are lower compared to employees in a non-leading function concerning mobbing and concerning violence and aggression (resp. 9.6% and 5.3%) they are higher for intimidation and threats (only 15.6% with not-leading employees).

The impact of antisocial, destructive and therefore hostile behavior is large and significant. In addition to clear impact on physical (such as stomach and intestinal complaints, heart problems and attacks) and mental level (such as depression, nightmares, anxiety attacks, burn-out), the victim also experiences social consequences (including shame, social relationships disappearing, damage to social reputation, gossip, tension with so-called friends), relational consequences (such as tensions in relationship with the partner and children, difficult relationship with family members, even leading to divorce), professional consequences (isolation, loss of professional reputation and reliability, loss of employment, irreparable damage to the career) and financial consequences (including serious loss of income, high litigation costs). In short, AD behavior leads to far-reaching and often lasting changes in the professional situation, but also in life and even in the personality of the victim. Ultimately, it even leads to suicide (attempts).

What causes such destructive behavior? We only mention two theories, the most influencing ones and close to each other.

A lot of research has tried to find out characteristics of anti-

social, destructive, hostile or irresponsible behavior at the workplace. Where Galperin (2002) defines constructive deviant behavior as 'voluntary behavior that violates significant organizational norms and thus contributes to the well-being of an organization, its members, or both,' Bennet and Robinson (1995; 1997; 2000) define destructive deviant behavior as a voluntary act of violating organizational norms, aiming to harm others and/or the organization. Both definitions focus on voluntary character of the act of violating group/organizational norms (morals) and its impact, harming or not. Though Bennet and Robinson (1995) with Lewis (1985) state that there is a distinction between deviant behavior and (un) ethical behavior, with the former measured by organizational norms and the latter by law, justice or social norms, it's our opinion that in all cases the basic line is the same: whether or not individuals, groups or whole organizations behave according to one or another internal or external norm of conduct. Herewith deviancy is defined as transgression: deviant behavior is transgressive behavior. Nevertheless, though deviant behavior is de facto always transgressive to social or cultural norms, rules and basic laws, deviant behavior can also actualize some positive effects we should not forget: it resists simple 'bureaucracy' (legalistic behavior, acting by the book without any critical reflection), it gives voice to negative thoughts of employees, it can help to fine-tune norms and rules in the organization and, of course, it is a signal that something is going wrong.

Besides unethical and destructive leadership, other characteristics can cause negative deviant behavior with subordinates, among them job characteristics, organisational culture and exposure to toxic colleagues. Some of these aspects are obviously not caused by or the responsibility of the formal leader, but of the whole organisation and/or the employees themselves. Also the reverse of organisational citizenship behavior (OCB), destructive or counterproductive work behavior (CWB) offers some interesting insights. Although we already know a long list of antecedents causing CWB, we have to notice that almost all of them are situated with the organization and/or the leader. What about individual characteristics? Alpkan and Yildiz (2015) point out that important role alienation could be noticed between these antecedents and the fact of CWB itself. According to Suarez-Mendoza and Zoghbi-Manrique-de-Lara (2008), alienation is a loss of capacity to express oneself at work and can be recognized by lack of concern, interest and attachment (commitment) to one's work (Kanten and

Ülker 2014). Therefore, an alienated person is a person lacking involvement in work role and disengaging from his work (Ceylan, Kaynak, and Sulu 2010). The authors relate alienation with some predictors on the one hand (such as work alienation, organizational climate, ethical disengagement, negative effect, organizational commitment, organizational justice, ethical climate, organizational structure, organizational culture, guilt proneness, ethical ideology, Machiavellianism, ethical orientation, personality traits, perceived fairness, negative emotions, management style and practises, job characteristics, lack of decision-making, limited control over the job, job involvement, performance related pressure) and with all kinds of destructive organisational behaviors on the other hand (such as low turnover intention, professional minimalism, dissatisfaction, counterproductive workplace behavior). Besides, professional minimalism and careerist orientation can also cause counterproductive work behavior (Adams 2011).

Further, many studies (Hackman, Lawler, and Porter 1974; Black and Gregersen 1997; Chen, Lam, and Schaubroeck 2002; Nassehi 2005; Gilbert, Laschinger, and Leither 2010) illustrate a clear correlation between the degree of participation in decision-making and the level of performance and counterproductive work behavior: low participation relates to low performance and high counterproductive work behavior, high participation relates to high performance and low counterproductive work behavior. Overall, alienation could be a very crucial feeling, mediating between individual, job and organisation characteristics on the one hand and counterproductive attitudes and work behavior on the other hand. Alpkan and Yildiz designate and analyze three specific antecedents causing the feeling of alienation: poor level of person-organization-fit (Azura Dahalan, Rahim, and Sharkawi 2013), careerism (Adams 2011; Chiaburu, De Vos, and Diaz 2013) and lack of participative decision-making (Black and Gregersen 1997). In the meantime, Organ's (1988) model of five determinants as basic model for OCB is largely accepted: (1) altruism, (2) courtesy (an attitude of concern for the welfare of others, of helping others in their work, and of considerate and respectful behavior), (3) sportsmanship (the non-complaining attitude when things do not go as one wanted, not being offended when others do not follow one's suggestion, being willing to sacrifice one's personal interests for the good of the group or the organization), (4) consciousness and (5) civic virtue (commitment to the organization as a whole and common good of the society, the willingness to parti-

cipate actively in the governance of the organization, to look out for its best interests and to monitor the environment for threats). Later on, Organ (1997) decided on three main dimensions: helping, courtesy and conscientiousness. Herewith, a basic model of negative and destructive person-organisation-fit can be defined, running parallel to Blau's (1964) traditional social exchange theory: self-directedness on one's own needs and interests, lack of courtesy towards others, negligence and lack of commitment.

From above-mentioned scientific disciplines, a long list of phenomena can be drawn up, illustrating and explaining aspects and characteristics of antisocial, destructive, hostile and irresponsible behavior. All scientific theories, models and concepts directly or indirectly studying the subject of destructive behavior at the workplace can be catalogued in three different areas, influencing the (in this case antisocial, obstructive and destructive) behavior of individuals at work: individual traits (or character, personality), the work environment and the social environment. Behind these areas some specific aspects can be defined, such as upbringing and education, genetic characteristics, organizational culture and social culture, or even destructive leadership (see figure 2). Herewith, unethical behavior, attitudes and situations are a clear example of the 'many hands problem' (Kaptein 1998), as well as of shared responsibility. Herewith, an exclusive approach or explanation of phenomena, e.g. burnout, is just wrong. When managers explain the number of cases of burnout in their organization as an exclusive effect of the way their employees organize their private life and their free time, they are fundamentally mistaken and clearly trying to avoid their personal responsibility for the situation (see ethical disengagement). When, in their turn, labour unions are explaining the same phenomenon as the sole outcome of bad work organization and leadership, they too are mistaken and clearly not willing to take the whole image seriously.

We may conclude that also in school institutions antisocial, destructive and unethical behavior can and will result in variety and mix of causes which can be assigned to the school environment (social and culture characteristics of neighbourhood and town, society at as whole, social culture), work environment (e.g. job characteristics of a teacher, school culture, toxic colleagues, a destructive principal, bystanders) as well as individual characteristics of the people being part of it (e.g. alienation of the educational value of the job, careerism, personal ethics, professional minimalism, lack of teacher's participation). This also means that pointing

Individual characteristics
Genetic traits •
Upbringing and education •
Ethical ideology •

Behavior

Work and work environment
• Group/team culture
• Organizational culture
• Exposure to toxic colleagues
• Job characteristics
• Destructive leadership
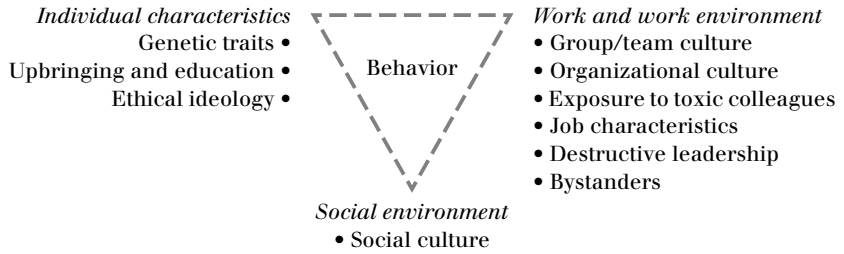• Bystanders

Social environment
• Social culture

FIGURE 2   Factors Influencing Behavior

at destructive leadership style of the principal, directly or indirectly, is at least an incomplete analysis of the situation at hand. To dig deeper into the phenomenon of antisocial and destructive behavior, we also have to pay attention to personal, interpersonal and group dynamics and to organizational environment in which this is taking place.

Irresponsible Behavior, in So Far As Synonymous with 'Evil'

The issue of AD behavior leads us directly back to everlasting but crucial philosophical question of how can we ultimately define and understand evil (behavior). On what basis can we decide what is right and wrong, that right is right and wrong is wrong? Is our western society indeed increasingly divided and indifferent about this issue of good and evil (ethical relativism)? Is there an absolute knowledge about good and evil or is it ultimately subjective and relative? Are our insights into good and evil fading because our education is shifting from a long educational tradition including philosophy and religion, arts and humanities, to a STEM-oriented education of science, technology, engineering and mathematics? These questions, however fascinating they may be, fall outside the scope of this article, but some philosophical remarks in this respect can help us to further grasp the essence of AD behavior.

According to Kant (1788), evil must be defined as a conscious human act (by nature), based on free will (not because of intrinsic limitations of every individual). This point of view, however confirming the fact of perpetrator's responsibility is not in line with the General Aggression Model (GAM), one of the basic theoretical models of criminology. GAM relates the essence of criminal behavior to absence of self-regulation and the lack of self-control.

Besides, Kant's viewpoint does not explain what is really driving the perpetrator in his free act(s). Do all causes behind all differ-

ent forms of antisocial and destructive behavior, among them opposition against a formal supervisor, have the same driving force in common? Behind it, we find a personality retreating in a position of resistance against losing a privileged, secure and safe situation without being certain that the new situation will offer similar guarantees. Considering all this, it is about fulfilment of one's needs and interests against concern for needs and interests of other stakeholders and the common good of organization and society as a whole (Banaji, Bazerman, and Chugh 2005 call it 'egocentric ethics;' Furnham, Paulhus, and Richards 2013). For the perpetrator involved it is about (avoiding) a negative balance sheet. It is about losing positive situation and security, about losing control over the situation and losing the power to realize this control. Finally, it is about losing control under the threat of a negative outcome/evolution. As a conclusion, evil behavior should be understood as self-centered and self-regarding behavior, focused on one's own needs and interests, preferences and wishes, and rights. This is the essential characteristic of antisocial and destructive behavior (and of psychopathy, that can be considered as the extreme of irresponsible behavior). This definition implies that an evil personality cannot and will not take into account the needs and interests of the Other(s) or the common good of the organization or the society as a whole. The actual social phenomena of NIMBY (not in my backyard) and nationalism are illustrating this description of evil. They illustrate the fact that our Western societies are recently shifting towards neo-liberal, in fact social-Darwinist point of view in which empathy (and consequently compassion and altruism) are fading away.

Utilising this description, the good – as the opposite of evil – can be defined as taking the Other into account (cf. Lévinas 1961; 1972; 1974; 1985; 1991; 2003), his concerns – needs and interests, as well as risks – and the common good of the organization and the society as a whole. In line with this distinction between good and evil, we can distinguish both also by using the distinction between a small scope of discussion ('one-issue') versus holistic thinking. This includes open-mindedness (empathy), mental flexibility (creativity) and (self-) critical thinking. Parallel runs the distinction between taking into account the short term exclusively versus taking into account consequences and impact in the long term as well.

A lot of other philosophical question marks are popping up. Is evil reality, just the absence of good or a purely subjective interpretation? Does free will really exist, or to what extent does it

exist? What are the limits of our free will? Is there really an op-position between self-centered and self-regarding behavior and responsible behavior, given self-care as a basic responsibility to-ward our Self? Do we not have a first and basic responsibility to-wards our own community (communautarianism)? Do definitions of good and evil imply altruistic behavior to be the ideal? And so forth. Within the limited scope of this article we can only refer to renowned authors, among others Arendt (1963; 1969; 1970; 1971) and Fromm (1964; 1973; 1997).

Philosophical reflections of evil teach that human behavior can be interpreted and described as a continuum between two ex-tremes: on the one hand self-centered and self-regarding, here-with obstructive, destructive and toxic, sometimes even psycho-pathic and Machiavellian behavior and, on the other hand em-pathic, concerning (compassionate) and altruistic behavior (Ri-card 2013). As often in life, both extremes come close to each oth-er.

We briefly point out that we define responsible action in terms of stakeholder thinking ourselves (Siebens 1994; 2010; 2013; 2019). Besides Freeman (1984) we also rely on Lévinas (1961; 1972; 1974; 1985; 1991; 2003) (regarding the philosophical basis of the case), Sen (1979; 1987; 1992; 2009) and Nussbaum and Sen (1993) (for their emphasis on capability) and Habermas (1981; 1984) (con-cerning communication and dialogue). In doing so, we make a sharp distinction between moral and ethical approach to the issue of responsibility, arguing for an autonomous approach to respons-ibility (as an added fourth phase to Kohlberg's (1969; 1976; 1981; 1984) model of ethical development).

Madore (2011) is warning about a purely individualistic inter-pretation of evil and pointing at the mediating and instrumental role of the group, organization and society in relation to conscious and blatant evil.

Herewith also the issue of the worldview of people and society (politics, economics, and last but not the least, social relations) is put forward. According to the point of view, two above-mentioned oppositional worldviews can be defined. The one can be described as rooted in a simplistic (because not original) Darwinist view on nature and its social equivalent known as social-Darwinism (the 'homo economicus'). In line with Nietzsche's philosophy, power and will are the basic notions to understand how nature is work-ing and only a society that adapts to its basic rule of the survival of the fittest will flourish. This approach is based on the belief that

the human being fundamentally is egocentric (probable derailments of the economic system to the detriment of social life would be corrected automatically by an 'invisible hand'). The oppositional worldview points at the complex interweaving of all things, plants, animals and (!) humans in eco-systems. Within these systems, each of the individual elements supports the survival of the others and survives with support of all others. The impact and consequences of our human activities on the environment, in general defined as 'global warming,' illustrate this complex interweaving. Though a minority clearly is fundamentally egocentric (according to Ricard (2013) about 20%), another minority (also about 20%) is fundamentally altruistic (the other 60% follows the opinions and attitudes in power and can merely be described as opportunistic bystanders). Nature itself shows us a rather confusing mix of both. Though a choice between both frames of reference and according basic attitudes in life is finally a matter of a very personal existential choice, built on personal life experiences, our world view (and view on humans) is also built on our upbringing and education, and the culture of groups and organizations we're participating in during our lifetime. Herewith a new link to education is popping up: it is up to schools to educate children, youngsters and students about this existential choice between both world views. In this respect, the role of and educating about social media and the phenomenon recently called 'alternative facts' and 'fake news' are becoming of paramount importance.

Digging Deeper: What Other Disciplines Teach Us

Since there has not yet been one overarching theoretical model of antisocial and destructive behavior, we have to look at concepts, models and theories presenting partial insights and interpretations, e.g. Social Exchange Theory, the ethical hero, self-deception, denial, the scapegoat, psychological and moral disengagement, choice supportive memory distortion, self-censure, positive illusion, moralization, Self-perception Theory, (social) ostracism, in-group prototypes, dehumanization, Upper Echelons Theory, dark personality traits, the bystander effect, organizational citizenship behavior versus counterproductive work behavior, perceived organizational support, psychological dissonance, Cognitive Dissonance Theory and the General Aggression Model. It is, of course, impossible to go into details of each in a limited article. Therefore, we will only touch on the most important elements in

different disciplines, especially given their interconnections and the philosophical and ethical questions they often raise.

Psychology

In our attempt to understand what drives antisocial and destructive behavior with its obstructive and toxic side effects, psychology and social psychology are important sources of knowledge. For a long time, psychology has been revealing phenomena such as priming effect, repeated experience, positive framing, halo effect, WYSIATI, overconfidence, laziness of our reflective ability, loss/risk aversion, endowment effect etc. In addition, (social) psychology also teaches us the 'Madison Avenue mentality' (Sims 1992) in which behavior is considered ethically acceptable if it is socially accepted. Furthermore, these disciplines study the differences between the effect and the role of shame, guilt and remorse (Eisenberg 2000) and their relationship to empathy, anger and hatred, and aggression. In recent decades, social psychology has devoted a great deal of attention to characteristics of positive OCB (organizational citizenship behavior) and the opposite, CWB (counterproductive work behavior). Alpkan and Yildiz (2015) establish a connection with alienation, with self-control, and with participation. But (social) psychology also shows that identification makes people vulnerable. Emphasis is also given to negative attention and the difference in expectations. In a positive sense, these disciplines point to proximity as an important factor in our sensitivity of responsibility (Brown and Trevino 2006). Castano and Leidner (2012) point to the impact of the threat on shifting group norms. Of course, social psychology pays a great deal of attention to the factor of morality, such as group norms and group culture – as mechanisms of social regulation – and the relationship to and effects of the outside world outside the group, such as confirmation bias, motivated inaccuracy and self-deception. This brings us close to the cognitive dissonance theory, known in ethics as the is/ought-gap (or Ist/Soll-gap). It also brings us to the research by Bandura (Bandura 1990; Bandura et al. 1996) of 'moral (ethical) disengagement,' which in turn fits in with phenomena of ethical fading, cynicism, the scapegoat, we-against-them thinking, dehumanization, victimization and violence (social ostracism). Byington, Felps, and Mitchell (2006) analyze the process aspect of it. From an ethical point of view, many of these phenomena raise critical objections, among others by the notions of

'parrhèsia' (Foucault 2009), ethical hero/rebel and whistleblowing. It seems that for the ethicist, the role of ethical disengagement cannot be overestimated.

These scientific disciplines have tried to reduce their knowledge to a schema of personality types. The Big Five and the extensive Hexaco model are now widely known and used in assessments. Based on the traits of the Big Five (Six) psychology has detected three, recently (Farb et al. 2018) four types of personality. We note here the 'self-centered' type. For the ethicist, it is also interesting to see that this part of the research is revealing that high giftedness is primarily characterized by a strong ethical sensitivity (sense of justice).

Research on personality types (their mutual correlations and correlations between their sub-aspects) has, among other things, led to development of the notion of 'dark personality' (or 'Dark Triad') (Paulhus 2014; Kenrick 2014). There is clear evidence that antisocial behavior in general has genetic roots (defects in the brain, among other in the pre-frontal cortex and the amygdala), although it only becomes apparent within a specific environment (social circumstances). Countless studies of the combination of Machiavellianism, narcissism and psychopathy teach us that correlations between these three are very high, that Machiavellianism and psychopathy are very strongly related (hence the title 'Dark Dyad:' on the one hand narcissism, on the other hand psychopathy-Machiavellianism), and that sadism should be considered as an independent fourth factor ('Dark Tetrad') (Reidy, Seibert, and Zeichner 2011; Buckels, Jones, and Paulhus 2013). Characteristics of psychopathic behavior – also the known 'light psychopathy' of many (formal and informal, high and middle) managers – are, among other, lack of affective empathy, strong self-mindedness, manipulation, impulsiveness, superficiality and lack of shame, guilt or remorse.

Besides, some researchers (Kowalski, Schermer, and Vernon 2016) even defend the position of 'Big One.' The General Factor of Personality (GFP) is a positive trait. It is strongly negatively correlated with psychopathy and Machiavellianism and not significantly correlated with narcissism. It is a meaningful construct of social competence, with emotional stability (0.64), consciousness (0.36), agreeableness (0.19) and extraversion (0.13) as main aspects (Kowalski, Schermer, and Vernon 2016). Characteristics common for psychopathy and Machiavellianism explain why also cynicism – among other, the notion of cynicism means great in-

sensitivity to consequences of one's actions – can be considered as one of the main characteristics of the dark personality. So, this lack of sensitivity runs parallel to lack of attentiveness for another person's vulnerability. Further also (dis)agreeableness (Egan and Jakobwitz 2006; Egan and McCorkindale 2007), absence of honesty and humility (6th element of the Hexaco-model), callouness (lack of sensitivity) (Ali, Amorim, and Chamorro-Premuzic 2009; Jones and Paulhus 2011; Bore, Douglas, and Munro 2012) and interpersonal antagonism are nominated as main characteristics. And there is also the characteristic of lack of empathy (Glaser 2013), leading to social aversiveness. According to the research by Edens, Fulton, and Marcus (2012) 'disinhibition' – lack of self-control – is the main component.

Four basic aspects of the dark personality can be articulated as follows:

- How great is the longing for power with the person concerned? How much flexibility does the person concerned have towards opinions and visions of others?
- How great is the person's capacity to empathize with feelings and visions of others?
- What is his/her need for recognition? How difficult is it for the person concerned to praise others?
- How easy and quickly the person concerned uses one or another form of aggression or violence (verbal, physical, sexual, etc.)? How great is his/her concern for the person when others suffer and are in pain?

Kurtulmus (2019) suggests discussing ethical leadership alongside characteristics of dark leadership i.e. dark personality. This leads us to the following four characteristics of ethical leadership:

- Is the leader concerned able to share his power? Is he/she capable of making decisions through discussions and collective decision-making?
- Is he/she capable of empathizing with others, their opinions and arguments as well as their feelings and concerns?
- Is he/she able to give credits to the group member who actually articulated the idea or did the hard job?
- Does he/she avoid every kind of pressure, aggression of violence towards other stakeholders, whether internally or externally?

To the extent that psychopathy can be considered as a clear and central personality factor, the *Psychopathy Checklist-Revised* (PCL-R) by Hare (2003) – used worldwide as a measuring instrument for psychopathy – can also serve ethics well as an indicator and description of antisocial, destructive and therefore irresponsible behavior.

Neuroscience

The research of how our brains are working, which parts of them are responsible for a certain function and how they interact with each other has progressed considerably over the past decades, but still has many questions to answer. For about two centuries, the question of whether, how, where and to what extent the functioning of our brains determines our sense of responsibility has been an important topic within this scientific discipline (Verplaetse 2006; Haidt 2008). Nevertheless, the latest technologies (fMRI, EEG, MEG, etc.) have during recent years resulted in enormous progress as far as our insights in this area. Awareness of responsibility – ethical sensitivity – appears to be the result of an extremely complex collaboration of more than ten specific brain parts. Remarkably, it appears to be strongly related to our ability to take perspective, i.e. to empathy – which turns out to be central and crucial factor of responsibility – versus superficiality and self-centeredness. Ethical awareness also appears to be related to self-control. We can conclude that failure of self-regulation or self-control is all about what it literally means: a person losing control, ability to regulate one's Self, so that he systematically prefers the pursuit of his perspectives, needs and interests instead of taking into account perspectives, needs and interests of the other(s) and the common good of the whole (organization and society).

Here, the eternal question remains open as to whether lack of sense of responsibility should remain attributed solely to 'defects' in the brain (Davidson, Larson, and Putnam 2000) or to a conscious act by the person in question, to his free will. In this discussion, the philosopher and the ethicist are stressing the existence and the role of individual freedom in our actions.

Anthropology

The overall conclusions of anthropological research confirm the philosophical standpoint concerning our free will. To put it in ethical terms: we cannot disregard obstructive and destructive, viol-

ent and evil behavior by externalizing it to our human nature, but we will have to accept our responsibility for its intentions and outcomes (Neckebrouck 2017).

One of the main topics of anthropology is the role of identity. On the one hand, identity is a natural, even inescapable and unavoidable aspect of each (sub-) group (organization, society). Against this background, anthropologists refer to the insights concerning ethnocentrism. 'Ethnocentrism is the technical name for the view of things in which one's group is the centre of everything, and all others are scaled and rated by referring to it' (Sumner 1906). And: 'Ethnocentrism is an attitude of mind characteristic of those who regard their own cultural values as the only valid ones. (It is) the uncritical preference for one's own mores and culture' (Bidney 1959). And so: 'Ethnocentrisme is the belief in the superiority of one's own culture' (Bodley 1975), including 'l'attitude qui consiste à rejeter tous les modèles culturels qui nous sont étrangers ou tout simplement qui sont différents de ceux auxquels nous nous sommes identifiés depuis notre petite enfance' (Laplantine 1974). For many decades, anthropology has known a large and heavy discussion whether ethnocentrism is, yes or no, a universal syndrome, thus found in all societies and groups. With Neckebrouck (2017), we can conclude that it is not universal, but indeed widespread. It includes the tendency to define the in-group members as 'fully human' and 'fully developed,' versus out-group members as inferior and savage, even animal-like. So, it is in ethnocentric thinking that we find the real roots of dehumanization processes, typical for the way groups are looking at each other and treating out-groups and deviant individuals, e.g. in cases of discussion and conflict.

Sociology, Social Psychology and Social Anthropology

Baumeister and Heatherton (1996), studying the phenomenon of self-regulation failure, also point at the influence of the sub/group culture considering what members believe to be appropriate, reasonable and desirable, in short – ethical. The impact of the group, organization and society on individual members through their culture, cannot be overestimated. This refers to paternalism, in its negative (prohibitions, bans and taboos; duties) as well as in its positive (proscriptions; obligations and rights) meaning. The underlying social identification implies self-categorization, commitment and loyalty to the group, self-esteem. It forces a social

filter, brainwashing and social selection in reactions of the group members.

However, this identification also leads to us-against-them thinking, scapegoating, racism and violence against other groups. The in-group versus the out-group. Ardrey (1966) and Bakker (1973) develop the 'territory theory' as an explanation. Fromm (1997) speaks of tribalism. Busch (2017) outlines the 'diabolical transition process' within a group, leading to that tribalism. Phenomena of persistent ethical illusions ('cognitively impenetrable,' dixit Pylyshyn (1999) and of 'out-group homogeneity bias' (Jones and Quattrone 1980; Badea and Rubin 2012) (see below) go hand in hand with strong group culture. We have (Siebens 2004) launched the notion of 'cultural standard deviation,' which describes the distinction between a strong and a weak form of culture.

An important and interesting factor here is the 'in-group member prototype:' whoever is the most in tune with the abstract, subconscious prototype of the group member, has the most success and authority within the group. This is a determining factor for informal leadership (conversely, that person determines the actual meaning of the prototype more than the others). In a negative sense, it is the factor that leads to self-control and self-censorship, social sanctioning, ostracism and exclusion for those who do not or insufficiently comply with that prototype. It leads to generalizations, rationalizations (of behavior considered being normal), half-truth or false information, fantasies which are not and cannot be questioned inside the group. Fromm (1964; 1973) points to the impact of group narcissism and explains that collective/group narcissism is contradictory to the 'scientific method' of doubt, facts and figures, proof and open argumentation. Phenomenon of fake news, alternative facts and fact-free opinions illustrates this fully. These analyses run parallel to 'ethical disengagement' strategies adopted by, among others, Bandura.

Antisocial, destructive behavior can be analyzed as an assessment (by the group, organization or society) of the individual behavior as being deviant from its 'member prototype.' Ackroyd and Thompson (1999) are convinced that qualification of '(professional) misconduct' only points at the difference between this conduct and the conduct expected by the management: 'anything you do at work you are not supposed to do.' However, herewith AD behavior is reduced to morality (culture) of a specific group, organization or society, which fundamentally differs from the question of a broader and deeper ethical assessment. O'Leary-Kelly and Robin-

son (1998) clearly show that individual antisocial behavior can be explained by collective antisocial behavior of the group. This sociological finding explains why AD behavior has a toxic effect.

Communication Sciences

Cognitive dissonance, microcosmos or 'the bubble,' all three notions express the phenomenon of the cognitive consistency principle: when facts or data create dissonance (conflict) to our beliefs and opinions we do not change our beliefs and opinions but reinterpret the facts and figures, just ignore their existence or search for new facts or data. The most common appearance of this phenomenon is in denial and rejection of new, contradictory information. It can lead to a 'backfire effect' in which given evidence against one's opinions and beliefs is rejected and even makes one's opinions and beliefs stronger (Silverman 2011). Running parallel, we know the 'continued influence effect' in which earlier misinformation still influences one's opinions and beliefs after it has been corrected by new information (Colleen and Johnson 1994). The bias is stronger in case of information and situations with a clear emotional content. It 'increases with the degree to which the evidence relates directly to a dispute in which one has a personal stake' (Nickerson 1998).

Besides, 'framing' is consciously and subconsciously used technique of combining and picturing information to confirm one's opinion, to build a specific schema of interpretation functioning as a mental filter. Besides the objective of convincing others – up to manipulation – it can also be used to convince oneself of earlier adopted opinions and evaluations (prejudices). New, critical and provocative information, and alternative opinions and solutions are threatening one's self-esteem, and psychological and social safety. So, this tendency is leading to drive for consistency, a conservative reflex ('self-verification,' 'self-enhancement') to defend our fixed mindset, our Self-schemata (being the conscious or subconscious construction of cognitive generalizations about our Self that organizes and guides the processing of self-relating information in our social experience) (Markus 1977).

Criminology

Insofar antisocial, destructive and abusive behavior is often also illegal and thus criminal, criminology can help us understand what

is going on in perpetrators' minds. Crucial for the modern understanding of aggression, cruelty and violence is the article of Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990), where the authors develop their 'general theory of crime' centered on the notion of self-control (self-regulation; impulsivity). Not that the former 'theory of the broken windows' (Kelling and Wilson 1982) would be incorrect – a negative process down the 'slippery slope,' known within the discipline of ethics as the 'ethics degeneration law' – but criminologists recently often refer to the General Aggression Model (GAM) by Anderson and Bushman (2002). This model of aggression is built on the basic ideas and building blocks of other theories about the origins of aggression (as cognitive neo-association theory, social learning theory, script theory, social interaction theory). Among others, the research by Daffern and Gilbert (2011) illustrates the relation between personality disorders as narcissism and the tendency to violence, especially concerning the influence on arousals to violent behavior of cognitions creating cognitive structures and behavioral scripts repeatedly retrieved and used. These structures and scripts serve as definition and interpretation schemes of situations and as a guide for behavior (frames of reference). In other words, whether a person engages in obstructive, destructive or violent behaviour, one is inhibited in belief of the perceived appropriateness of such behavior.

Within the GAM-interpretation aggression, there is a way of coping with experienced imbalance, aiming to restore the internal state of equilibrium and rest. Crime is constituted by the promise of immediate and easy gratification of desires in short term, without any consideration of long-term negative consequences for the offender himself. So, central to the GAM-model is the idea of self-control or self-regulation. According to Gottfredson and Hirschi's definition (1994), absence of the self-control attitude is the general heart of counterproductive work behavior. It seems that self-regulation failure or the absence of self-control is essentially the absence of control over Self, so that self-regarding or self-centered perspectives, needs and interests, preferences and wishes, and one's rights are overruling empathic feelings for the other and the perspectives, needs and interests of the common good. Herewith, responsible behavior can be defined as self-transcendence (Cieciuch and Rogoza 2018), being the opposite of self-centeredness. The GAM-model for aggression and violence points at disruption of downwards processes in the phenomenon of violence by taking some time for (self-) reflection.

Philosophy

With the discipline of philosophy, we enter the domain of reflection on Evil. Central to this is the question of whether evil is an objective reality in itself or only the subjective experience of the absence of the good. In short: is antisocial, destructive, i.e. irresponsible action a reality in itself or just the absence of social, constructive, i.e. responsible action? In this context, since Kant, philosophy has also discussed the nature of free will: determinism versus responsibility. In his 'ethics of proximity' Lévinas (1961; 1972; 1974; 1985; 1991; 2003) entitles the 'appeal in the Image of the Other' as the founding element of responsible behavior. In doing so, he argues that our responsibility is a heteronomous experience: it is the Other who places us in front of our responsibility. Frankfurt (1988; 1999) seems, at a first sight, to have a different approach. According to this author, free will is an independent faculty of the human being, who is a (self-) reflexive being, able to reflect on his desires, what is also applicable when the person involved has no choice and therefore must not count on one's intelligibility. One's free will – autonomy, self-control and self-determination – is based on fundamental desires ('second/higher order desires'). The essence, according to Frankfurt, is not the reflexive intelligibility of a human being, but his will to act with his consent by his deepest desires. This is what Frankfurt calls 'autonomy.' The philosophical discussion thus revolves around the opposition (or combination?) between autonomy and heteronomy in human existence.

Over decades, Arendt's statement (1963) that evil behavior of Eichmann was 'banal' caused frustration and discussion. Arendt means that we all are capable of doing this kind of violent deeds if we find ourselves in exactly the same kind of conditions, situations and environment. This implies that evil indeed is partially a 'banal,' structural element. Nonetheless, partially. Never can the individual escape from his personal responsibility to question his position and collaboration to the obviousness of his group and organization. Arendt (1971) states: 'A good conscience does not exist except as the absence of a bad one.'

(Applied) Ethics and Moral Philosophy

Fundamental to the ethical reflection on antisocial, destructive, in short – irresponsible behavior are the distinction between ascertainable facts versus intentions behind it and the distinction between an evaluation based on social norms (morality) versus

generally applicable values, principles and arguments (ethics). It is appropriate to consider that good intentions cannot justify wrong outcomes, just as good outcomes cannot cover up wrong intentions. Harms, Lebreton, and Spain (2013) therefore make a difference between intention and outcome of a person and define 'dark personality' by the fact that intention of self-centredness itself, whatever the outcome, is destructive, malicious, aiming to harm others or at least accepting that harm and damage will happen when attempting to elevate oneself or fulfilling own perspectives, needs and interests. Seems all three profiles of the dark personality (Dark Triad) have self-centeredness as their final purpose (intention), whatever the concrete content of this self-centred behavior. Thus, the common core is the self-centered fulfilment of one's perspectives, needs and interests, making it an intrinsic destructive way of behaving.

To the extent that antisocial, destructive behavior can ethically be defined as egocentric, self-directed (as opposed to the stakeholder thinking that one should take into account all those involved), an increase in this behavior in today's Western societies is not a coincidence. Where society is shifting towards social-Darwinist (or neo-liberal) thinking, what emerges is what Sander-Staudt's (2011) characterizes and defines as 'a culture of neglect.' This is nothing new, as it is in line with numerous theological and philosophical points of view. This is reflected in ethical phenomena such as the free rider, the single/one-issue/party/organization (particularism), NIMBY or the bystander effect. At the ideological level, we see a tendency towards 'ethical ideology:' a closed mind with a strong conviction, limited to a single view, due to lack of openness to counter-arguments.

From the research of Brown, Cosme, and Pepino (2014) we now know that ethical ideology/philosophy is probably strongly related to one's political ideology. According to the authors, a more liberal ideology strongly correlates with empathic feelings, tolerance, open-mindedness and inclusion; a conservative ideology, on the contrary, correlates strongly with authoritarian beliefs, intolerance and less empathy, but also discriminatory opinions and exclusivity. What is lacking in each of these phenomena is also a healthy dose of self-critical sense. However, this requires mental openness and flexibility. Altogether, ethical personality can be determined by notion of open-mindedness towards the stakeholders, and to the whole of the environment of the person or organization – 'organization-environment-fit' – and in the long term. We

can ground this open-mindedness first in Lévinas' theory on the heteronomous encounter with the Other and in Freeman's idea of taking all stakeholders into account. To put it simply, ethical personality is about competence to relativize or even disregard oneself and to take into account the other(s), to put oneself into perspective with the others and the common good.

Many social factors and partial aspects in various scientific disciplines also explain toxic effect of antisocial, destructive behavior. The rule that 'evil is stronger than good' does all the rest … Intoxication takes place on individual, collective and organizational level, as well as on cultural and structural level. As far as 'employees' upwards hostility' is concerned, this explains why informal and middle management leaders, focused on personal interests and ambitions, benefits and concerns manage to get support by other employees for their antisocial and destructive behavior, including their obstructive and dissident behavior towards their formal, hierarchical superior. The fact that this often involves ethical requirements of the formal leader in terms of commitment, quality assurance, customer focus, integrity and respect, etc. may not be a surprise given that the leader is actually the one pursuing ethical policy and management that can become the target of individual or collective upwards hostility.

In addition to the toxic effect of antisocial and destructive behavior we must point out severe destructive impact of such behavior on individual colleagues (stress, burn-out, dismissal, up to suicide) and on professional organization in which they work (decrease in positive climate at work, demotivation, declining performance, increase in staff turnover, negative reputation, increased risks, financial losses, etc.). Negative effects are often enormous, and victims deal with consequences such as PTSD and burnout for a long time.

The long and diverse list of phenomena related to the main topic, employees' upwards hostility, makes us wonder whether there is a way to create an overview. Fritz-Morgenthal, Posch, and Rafeld (2018) present a global scheme based on three main areas: the individual, the collective (group) and the organisation. Park, Simon, and Tepper (2017) make a comparable distinction between behavior of the perpetrator, characteristics of the victim and contextual factors. In case of attempting to minimize cognitive dissonance, a combination of these aspects will, finally, lead to organizational misbehavior. It's our aim to integrate all information on AD-behavior into one model called The Grand Theory.
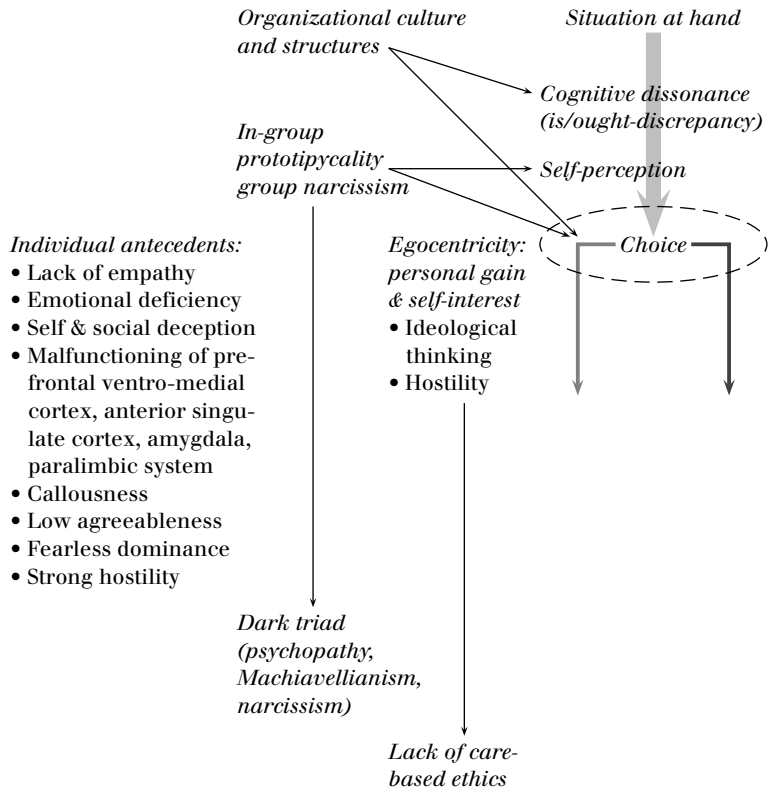
*Organizational culture
and structures*

Situation at hand

*Cognitive dissonance
(is/ought-discrepancy)*

*In-group
prototipycality
group narcissism*

Self-perception

Individual antecedents:
- Lack of empathy
- Emotional deficiency
- Self & social deception
- Malfunctioning of pre-
  frontal ventro-medial
  cortex, anterior singu-
  late cortex, amygdala,
  paralimbic system
- Callousness
- Low agreeableness
- Fearless dominance
- Strong hostility

*Egocentricity:
personal gain
& self-interest*
- Ideological
  thinking
- Hostility

Choice

*Dark triad
(psychopathy,
Machiavellianism,
narcissism)*

*Lack of care-
based ethics*

FIGURE 3   Preceding the Moment of Choice (Part 1)

AD Behavior: A Dynamic Process

What Precedes

It all starts with the moment when an individual person sees him-self confronted with a situation he experiences as 'cognitive dissonant' (discrepancy between is and ought) that is threatening his positive self-image and social reputation (see figure 3). Siebens (1996) analyzes this experience as a moment of stress: imbalance between bearing capacity and bearing burden. Since the cause of this imbalance lies with an ethical dilemma, the author introduces a specific concept of 'ethical stress.' Whether, how and to what extent this ethical stress happens, depends on many elements that determine his personality and his position in the specific situation: individual antecedents and personality characteristics, group characteristics and organizational characteristics (Fritz-Morgenthal, Posch, and Rafeld 2018; Rafeld 2018). Discrepancy introduces 'counterfactual reasoning' (Petersen 2019), including the

Macro-level   Organizational culture   System

Meso-level   Group culture   Informal group structure

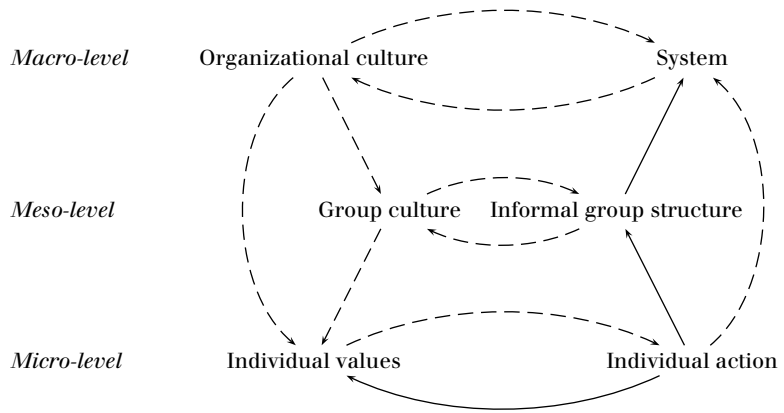Micro-level   Individual values   Individual action

FIGURE 4   From Micro to Macro

phenomenon of retrospective sense making (that is closely related to phenomenon of ethical disengagement). Insofar this leads to unpleasant feeling of discrepancy, it encourages making a fundamental choice. This choice is not only just factual, but also existential.

From Individual Choice to Organizational Impact

Many studies (see above) show that AD behavior – also pro-social, responsible behavior – is not a spontaneous, almost intuitive choice of the moment, but product of a process which is also influenced by the group, organization and environment, albeit often unconsciously. Individual choices, e.g. by prototypical group members (such as the informal leader), are translated into collective attitudes (the so-called group culture), which in turn have a structural impact (the organizational culture). That is why we find that AD behavior – but also pro-social, responsible behavior – has a toxic effect, both from individual to group and from group to organization (see figure 4).

A Choice for Self-Directed Behavior

Although one should hope that no person will choose to do so, there is always a real chance that he or she will prioritize (more or less, consciously or unconsciously, partially or explicitly) his own concerns, needs and interests. Individual traits, group dynamics and organizational aspects can create a process of cognitive distortion (Gibbs, Goldstein, and Potter 1995; Barriga and Gibbs 1996),

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neutralization (Matza and Sykes 1957) and justification of questionable behavior: ethical disengagement (Bandura 1990; Bandura et al. 1996) leads to normalization. Then a process starts – being a 'slippery slope' – in which the characteristics of antisocial and destructive behavior become clearer, step-by-step. Ultimately, this process results in toxic influence on others and on the culture of the organization.

Fortunately for mankind, the choice for self-directed behavior is neither an inescapable nor an irrevocable choice. If the person involved is highly ethically sensitive, the group has an open culture of debate towards questionable behavior and the organization takes care of its culture and functioning in line with ethical standards and norms. A person can withstand the process of normalization and the slippery slope towards antisocial and destructive, self-serving behavior. Self-critical reflection can increase one's ethical sensitivity. And antisocial and destructive behavior, with all its components, can – if not deeply infected by psychopathy or Machiavellianism – evoke shame, guilt and/or remorse. In these cases, the door can open for a new, alternative choice. Here the issue of the personal free will is paramount.

We want to emphasize that in our approach we do not only see responsible/irresponsible behavior and responsible/irresponsible leadership as an individual, personal phenomenon related to the leader. As abundantly demonstrated by studies within the approaches of the leader-member exchange theory and the institutional theory, behavior of the leader and that of members of the group/team residing under his/her leadership is strongly intertwined: both strongly influence each other. In this respect, bad leadership can be the output of the dark i.e. antisocial and destructive personality of the leader as well as of the group members individually (such as an informal leader) or the group as a whole (its group culture). Or both. Moreover, this dyad functions within structural, institutional context of an organization that may or may not, clearly or unclearly, set less or more flexible rules and standards for the behavior of all employees at all hierarchical levels. Micro-, meso- and macro-level are strongly interrelated.

This brings us seamlessly to another well-known characteristic of dark personalities' behavior: they are toxic. Their behavior has a contagious effect on colleagues and thus creates a 'dark' group/organizational culture, which in turn influences the institutional context (structures, norms and rules etc.). In the reverse direction, the institutional context will influence the group cul-

ture, which in turn will have its influence at the level of individual behavior. Interpretation of the leader-member exchange in terms of toxicity leads us to Dekker's (1990) notion of the 'ethics degeneration law,' but also to the opposite dynamics of the 'ethics generation process.' Where the former points to spontaneous downward pressure of unethical actions on other individuals, groups or organizations, the latter points to a possibly positive process (however, this second possibility implies that there is a conscious and targeted policy to uphold ethics by means of exemplary behavior of integrity ('walk the talk'), ethical codes, policies concerning whistleblowing, policy concerning bullying and hostility etc.).

Thus, concerning 'employees' upwards hostility' as a specific and extreme example of antisocial and destructive behavior, we cannot simply consider the individual vicious behavior of a single person towards his hierarchical superior. To the extent that this interindividual aspect fits within a larger whole of toxicity, of group and organizational culture, and of institutional influences, antisocial and destructive behavior is not an exclusivity of a single individual and does not necessarily target only the superior. Antisocial and destructive behavior can and probably will also be directed against the group and against the whole organization.

Through our research of the phenomenon of obstructive and destructive, and consequently also of toxic behavior of employees, we have noticed some fundamental (cor)relations between very different phenomena, namely:

- Negative and destructive behavior has some characteristics, among others a reduced level of perspective taking and empathic feelings, common to psychopathy;
- Negative and destructive behavior is characterized by a reduced level of self-control ('self-regulation failure'), related to a reduced level of perspective taking and empathic feelings and to psychopathy;
- Negative and destructive behavior often goes accompanied by ethical disengagement, what is in turn related to as well reduced self-control/regulation, reduced perspective taking and empathy, and some degree of psychopathy;
- Ethical disengagement is also related to the absence of pro-social, responsible (ethical) behavior;
- Absence of self-control/regulation is related to a low degree of pro-social, responsible (ethical) behavior;
- Malfunctioning of the ventro-medial prefrontal cortex and

Egocentricity:personal — ⌐ Choice ⌐
gain & self-interest

Ethical   Euphemismus
fading   Slippery slope of decision-making
                 Errors in perceptual causation
                 Constraints by representations
                 of the self

Bystander ← Motivated inaccuracy
effect   Ethical disengagement
               Lack of consciousness

               Cynicism
               Ethical relativism

Emotion- ← Self-regulation failure ←
related   Impulsivity
behavior   Alienation

Anti-social behavior – – – – – – → Feelings of emba-
• Aggression   rassment, shame,
• Social ostracism   guilt, or remorse
• Dehumanization
• Deviant behavior
• Obstructive & destructive behavior
• Counterproductive actions
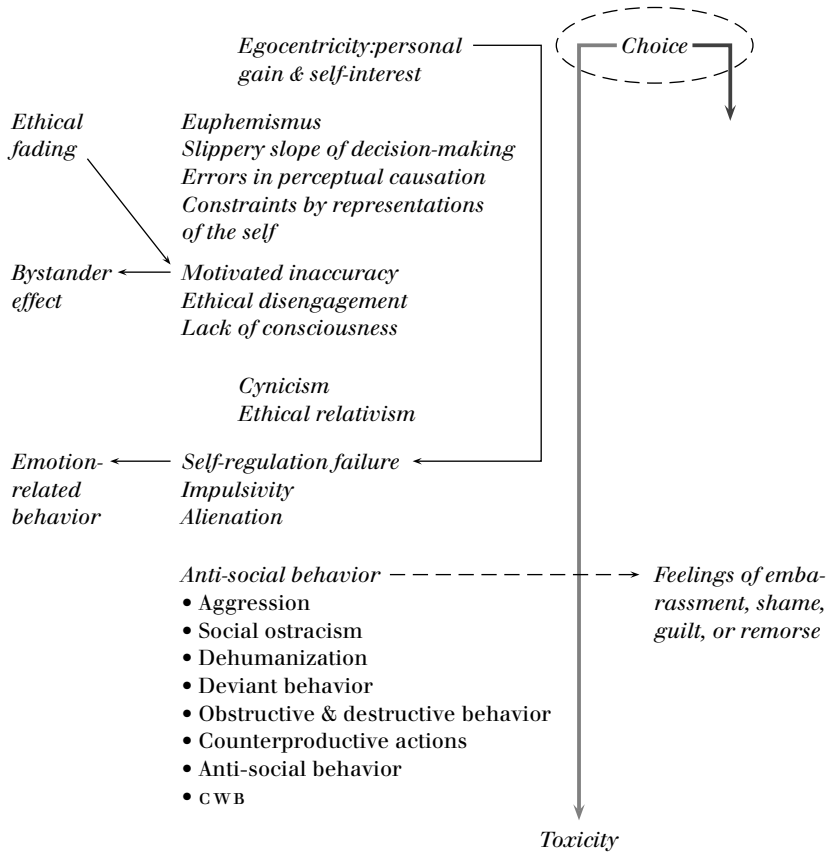• Anti-social behavior
• CWB

Toxicity

FIGURE 5   Process When Choosing for Self-Directed Behavior (Part 2)

the amygdala is related to ethical disengagement and results
in a low degree of self-control/regulation and a low degree
of perspective taking and empathy.

Further, concerning AD behavior towards a superior or the
organization as a whole, we can differentiate between hesita-
tion, resistance, opposition and revolt, distinguished by means of
whether it is (un)conscious behavior, whether it is individual or
collective acting, the level of impact, whether it is incidental or
structural, whether it is directed towards a situation or a person,
and the level of violence used. These criteria allow us to situate
the four levels of hostile behavior, from hesitation to revolt, in the
whole developmental process.

Overall, all aspects and elements of ethical (responsible) and of
antisocial and destructive (hostile) behavior can be summarized

Compassion/concern: severity of need

Choice — Open thinking
Feelings of connectedness
and commitment (oneness)

Ethical identity: ————————————————→ GFP
• Cognitive ethical development
• Emotional intelligence
• Mental flexibility
• Consciousness   Big Five/Texaco
• Agreeableness
• Ethical courage
• Idealism

Perspective taking
Emphatic feelings

Feelings of embarassment,
    shame, guilt, or remorse

Self-regulation/self-control
Change of behavior

Pro-social behavior:
• Compassion
• Care
• Altruism & psychological ownership
• Commitment
• Willingness to sacrifice
• OCB

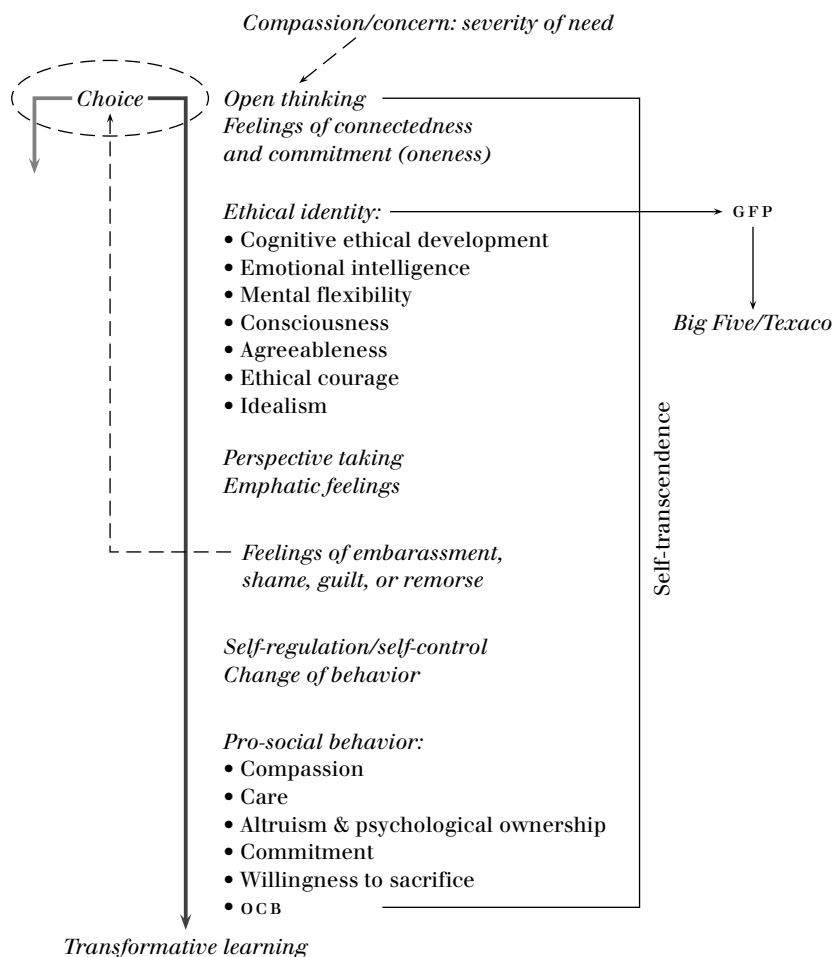Self-transcendence

Transformative learning

FIGURE 6   Choice of Self-Transcendent Behavior (Part 3)

in a general process (figure 5) illuminating the processes of the individual, its group and the organisational context, their mutual (intoxicating) connections and the different degrees of hostility: the 'Grand Theory of AD Behavior.'

A Choice for Self-Transcendence

Nevertheless, the moment of choice may also encourage the person concerned to take a broader approach to situation, taking into account not only their own concerns, needs and interests, but those of all stakeholders (cf. stakeholder-imperative (Siebens 1994; 2010; 2013; 2019)) and the common good. This choice, based

on holistic thinking, if maintained, will lead to pro-social and constructive behavior: compassion, care, altruism. In organizational terms, we see commitment, loyalty and organizational citizenship behavior (OCB).

The choice to make a decision and act in a way that goes beyond the exclusive choice of one's own concerns, needs and interests and also to take into account the concerns, needs and interests of all other stakeholders, e.g. from emotions of compassion and the common good will evoke a feeling of belonging and unity. In the background, the choice is supported by an ethical identity based on a construct of ethical sensitivity and of social competence, with emotional stability, consciousness, agreeableness and extraversion as main aspects (Kowalski, Schermer, and Vernon 2016). Within this choice, self-control and self-regulation play a crucial role. Pro-social and constructive behavior ultimately leads to transformative learning.

The whole implies that the individual succeeds in broadening and transcending his own Self: self-transcendence (figure 6).

AD *Versus Pro-Social Behavior*

Ultimately, the main characteristics of AD, namely irresponsible, unethical or 'evil' behavior can be presented in an overview. This can be mirrored to become a basic scheme about pro-social, responsible, in short ethical behavior. Finally, it's all about:

- short-sightedness (number of stakeholders taken into account)
- timescale taken into account (short versus long term)
- subject of discussion ('one-issue' versus open-mindedness and holistic thinking)

Here, points of view (frames of reference).

A Grand Theory of AD *Behavior*

Taken together, all this allows us to sketch the dynamic picture of irresponsible and responsible behavior (figure 7).

The Position of the Victim

We already mentioned various and severe effects of AD behavior on the laughed-at victim. Often a lack of empathy prevents
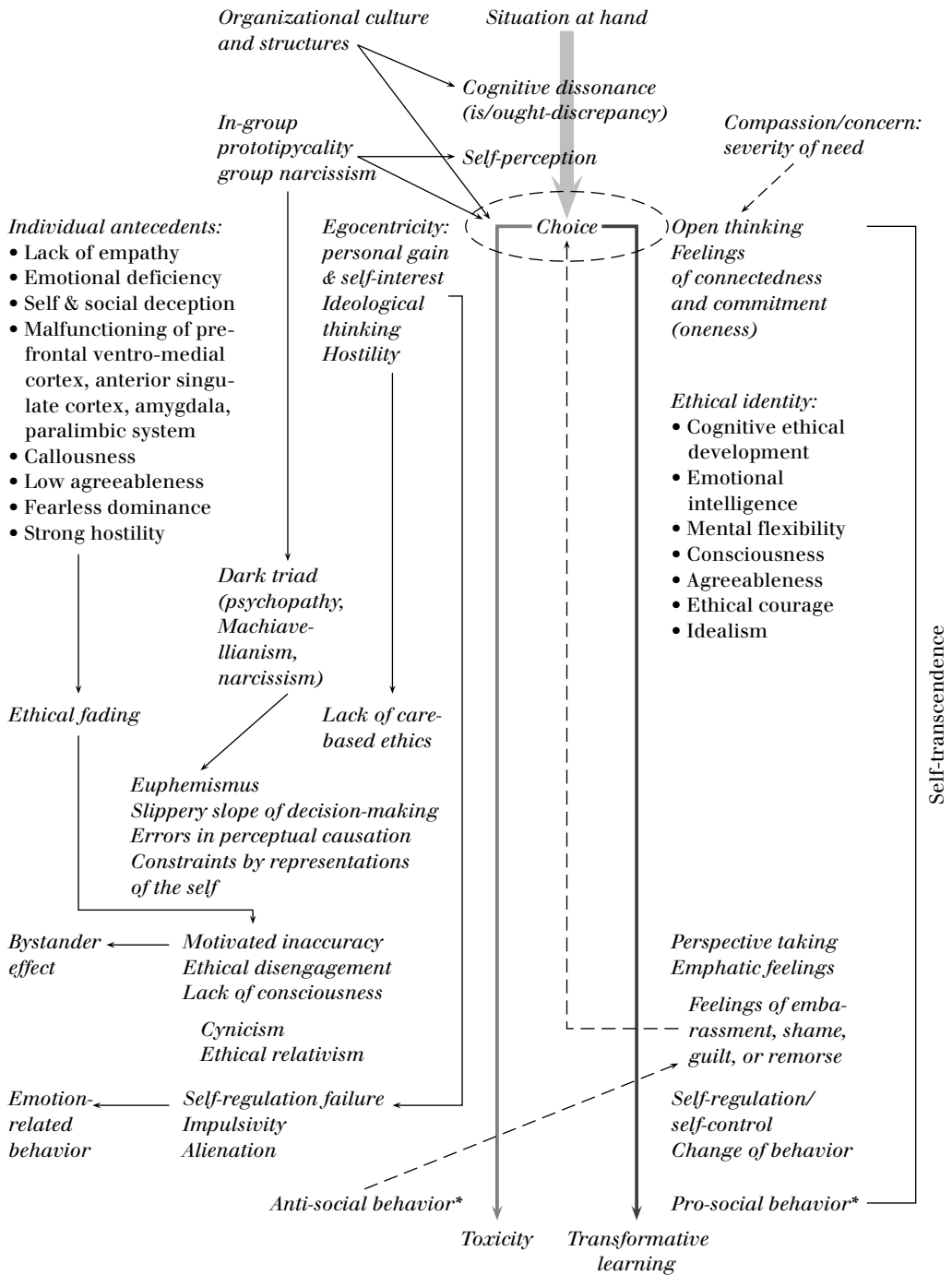
Organizational culture and structures

Situation at hand

Cognitive dissonance (is/ought-discrepancy)

In-group prototipycality group narcissism

Self-perception

Compassion/concern: severity of need

Individual antecedents:
- Lack of empathy
- Emotional deficiency
- Self & social deception
- Malfunctioning of pre-frontal ventro-medial cortex, anterior singulate cortex, amygdala, paralimbic system
- Callousness
- Low agreeableness
- Fearless dominance
- Strong hostility

Egocentricity: personal gain & self-interest

Ideological thinking

Hostility

Choice

Open thinking
Feelings of connectedness and commitment (oneness)

Ethical identity:
- Cognitive ethical development
- Emotional intelligence
- Mental flexibility
- Consciousness
- Agreeableness
- Ethical courage
- Idealism

Dark triad (psychopathy, Machiavellianism, narcissism)

Ethical fading

Lack of care-based ethics

Euphemismus
Slippery slope of decision-making
Errors in perceptual causation
Constraints by representations of the self

Bystander effect

Motivated inaccuracy
Ethical disengagement
Lack of consciousness

Cynicism
Ethical relativism

Perspective taking
Emphatic feelings

Feelings of embarassment, shame, guilt, or remorse

Emotion-related behavior

Self-regulation failure
Impulsivity
Alienation

Self-regulation/self-control
Change of behavior

Anti-social behavior*

Pro-social behavior*

Toxicity

Transformative learning

Self-transcendence

FIGURE 7 Grand Theory of AD Behavior (* see figures 5 and 6)

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the perpetrator from experiencing or seeing this. His/her lack of shame, guilt and repentance means that the perpetrator does not feel bad about it and does not realize that his/her behavior needs to be stopped urgently. But is the victim, as a directly involved party, completely helpless and powerless? This aspect of AD behavior also represents a separate chapter in the story, outside the scope of this article. The only thing we can say here is that the victim has to fight his or her own battle to overcome the feeling of powerlessness and great shame in relation to third parties, which compensates for shamelessness of the perpetrator. After all, unlike the perpetrator, it is the victim who considers himself guilty and therefore expects third parties to assess him/her as such. It is part of the social and professional isolation that often arises from the perpetrator's AD behavior and that, intentionally or unintentionally, forms an intrinsic part of his/her behavior towards the victim. Seeking help from superiors or external specialized services, requesting legal protection from competent services (such as an external prevention service or police) are therefore the appropriate steps for the victim to break through the invisible psychological threads of manipulation, submission and powerlessness. This is the only way for the victim to regain control of his own life.

The Bystander As Third Party

How can an individual school employee, a school principal or a member of a school board cope with AD behavior, especially if it takes on serious and toxic forms (as in the case of the perpetrator in question who clearly shows signs of a 'dark personality:' psychopathic, Macchiavellian, narcissistic and sadistic)? At this moment we only see three possibilities to escape the inevitable outcome of a dysfunctional and 'failing' organization: bystanders who leave their neutral position and become 'noble natures' (Arendt 1971; 2003), hierarchical superiors (principals as well as members of the board) who take position and overpower the destructive power of hostile employees, and qualitative legal and juridical system that can provide the victim real and effective protection. In any case, solution is courage: the courage to do what one has to do. Ethical courage therefore, perhaps also of the victim, but certainly that of the 'outsiders.'

The position and role of the 'bystander' – possibly in the role of a whistleblower – is in itself worth more study than it has received so far in scientific literature. According to Fonagy, Sacco,

and Twemlow (2004) there are 'bully bystanders' (who become involved in harassment/mobbing practices after a while), 'avoidant bystanders' (who deny their responsibility in the situation), 'victim bystanders' (who become victimized themselves during the process) and 'helpful bystanders' (who attempt to defuse the situation). Van Heugten (2010) distinguishes between allies of the bullies, passive bystanders and hesitant supporters of the victim. They can therefore fit different profiles. For example, they can keep their distance and only act as neutral spectators. This phenomenon is known as 'bystander effect.' This, however, gives them specific and valuable insight into the situation in question. It is fair to say that such neutrality is an illusion. As stated by Madore (2011): 'Indifference, so to speak, is never innocent, but the behavioral act of ... not acting.' They can also engage. On the one hand, they can side with the perpetrator, even if only for preservation (as is often the case with bullying). However, they can also support the victim. From an attitude of 'intelligent disobedience' (Chaleff 2015) and 'helpless helpfulness' (Van Heugten 2010) they then become 'ethical hero' (Arendt 1971; 2003). This attitude often goes hand in hand with an act of whistleblowing and is, of course, not without danger. The fact that the bystander always adopts a detached attitude is therefore not essentially the case. The most important is that one has the fundamental choice between being distanced and being engaged. In so far as the bystander is able to choose showing solidarity with his victim, he shall become a 'solidary stakeholder' (Siebens 1994; 2010; 2018) instead of a neutral, observing 'third party.' This is a crucial moment of ethical choice for the bystander, which is just as existential and essential as the choice mentioned for the perpetrator and for his victim.

The bystander phenomenon is more complex than many think and raises a lot of questions (however, it is not the intention of this article to cover and answer them thoroughly here). What are bystander's motivations and are there motivations that are ethically acceptable? After all, there are reasons (often of self-interested nature) to remain on the sidelines, to remain neutral and certainly not explicitly take sides with the victim(s). The feeling of powerlessness usually leads to what Bird (1996) calls 'moral silence.' Contrary to hypocrisy, where the person in question camouflages silence with noble intentions, moral silence is simply just silence. At first sight, it seems clear that moral silence cannot receive positive ethical assessment and that ethical assertiveness must be assessed positively. But is this really the case? By looking at the phe-

nomenon of whistleblowing, which is a pronounced form of ethical assertiveness and moral courage, we may be able to picture ourselves the limits of the above-mentioned expectations and even demands towards employees and citizens in situations that seem to imply illegal or unethical actions. The fact that whistleblowing became a right is currently non-questionable and has found legal protection in many laws and regulations. But is it also a requirement, a duty? If it is but only a right, doesn't that mean that every employee or citizen also has the right not to express his opinion, not to take action against alleged illegal or unethical situations, for whatever personal reason (of which possible sanctions are certainly one)? And if so, aren't we also discovering a neutral, perhaps even a positive side to moral silence? The following additional question arises immediately: can we equate moral silence with emptiness, uncritical superficiality, shortsightedness, and indifference, as often associated with the bystander posture? Possibly not. After all, we note that moral silence as lack of necessary ethical courage for ethical assertiveness, says nothing about the underlying reflection of the person in question. He may well have reflected the situation, but came to a reflected and argued ethical conclusion that it is not up to him to act at that moment and in that given situation, either by making his ethical assessment (opinion) known or by actually acting in one way or another. Bird (1996) therefore falls short when he immediately qualifies a reflected silence negatively, as hypocrisy. Moreover, we have in the meantime acquired a great deal of insight into many strategies of 'ethical disengagement' (Bandura 1990; Bandura et al. 1996) by means of which are bystanders, among others, able to justify their neutral, passive attitude to themselves and third parties. Or is the bystander attitude ethically reprehensible always and everywhere? What do legal distinctions between negligence and recklessness, inadvertence and advertence about nuances and gradations, contextual and personal characteristics of a bystander posture teach us? When is the bystander's attitude based on an attitude characterized by indifference, possibly reinforced by thoughtlessness (Arendt 1963; 1968) and short-sightedness, psychological motives and motivations do not seem to significantly differ from those of the perpetrator(s). But is this ground for an ethical, possibly legal conviction of the bystander for 'guilty negligence' of 'helping a person in need'? And to the extent that the bystander shows lack of (self-)critical reflection, the question arises whether it is not precisely here that the fundamental (Kahneman 2011), ethically qualified

difference between responsible and irresponsible behavior lies. Antisocial, obstructive and destructive behavior therefore not only raises questions on the side of the perpetrator(s), but also on the side of the spectator(s).

How To Deal with AD Behavior?

A study of indifference, thoughtlessness and short-sightedness (Siebens 2020), together with the bystander attitude and the phenomenon of ethical disengagement does teach us that the following elements can counteract (manage) the phenomenon of antisocial, obstructive and destructive behavior (however, we do not treat them exhaustively).

Emotional Intelligence and Empathic Competence

Although there is still some scientific discussion, a majority of scientists accept that there is a correlation between competence for empathy on the one hand and compassion and altruism on the other (Ricard 2013). Pro-social behavior is promoted by competence for empathy. And empathy is often mentioned in connection with emotional intelligence.

Although emotional intelligence (EI) has long been recognized as a crucial skill/competence, researchers have still not reached consensus on a definition. Mayer and Salovey (1997) define it as 'the ability to accurately perceive, assess, and express emotions; the ability to experience and/or generate feelings when they facilitate thinking; the ability to understand emotions and emotional knowledge; and the ability to regulate emotions to promote emotional and intellectual growth.' Detweiler-Bedell, Mayer, and Salovey (in Feldman-Barret, Haviland-Jones, and Lewis 2008) describe emotional intelligence as 'the ability to detect and decipher emotions in faces, pictures, voices, and cultural artifacts. It also includes the ability to identify one's own emotions' and as 'a set of competencies concerning the appraisal and expression of feelings, the use of emotions to facilitate cognitive activities, knowledge about emotions, and the regulation of emotion.' It relates to 'the perception of the internal frame of reference of another person with accuracy and with the emotional components and meanings which pertain thereto as if one were the person' (Rogers 1959). So, emotional intelligence includes cognition of the other person, affection for his feelings and performing a behavior that is in line with this cognition and affection. Therefore, it stands for the ability

to assess the relationship with others, which contributes to mutual trust and respect. Conversely, many studies (Oliver 2017) indicate that insensitivity ('cold-heartedness,' indifference) counteracts the sharing of emotions and empathic anxiety. People with an underdeveloped empathic capacity appear to exhibit atypical or inappropriate social behavior (Finger 2016). Thoughtlessness, a lack of (self-) critical thinking, short-sightedness and indifference are counterproductive to pro-social and altruistic behavior (Siebens 2020).

To what extent do empathy and emotional intelligence coincide? Scott (2011) investigates the correlations between the four aspects of empathy according to the IRI (Davis 1983) and the eight aspects of EI as examined by the EQ-i tool of Bar-on (1997) (being: self-esteem, self-control, flexibility, rationality, emotional regulation, interpersonal sensitivity, emotional expression and assertiveness). The empathic factor in emotional intelligence appears first of all to be the matter of taking competence to perspective, to be able to put oneself in place of the other ('imagine-other' perspective). On the other hand, personally experiencing the other person's suffering and stress as if it were your own ('imagine-self perspective'), is hardly a characteristic of emotional intelligence. Scott concludes that EI is characterized by taking perspective and empathic anxiety, although always within a clear distinction between Self and the other, and certainly not by personally experiencing the other person's grief and stress.

Education and training institutions should and can pay more attention to phenomena that cause antisocial behavior. At the same time, however, education must include teaching children and young people that aberrant behavior is not necessarily antisocial. In other words, one must learn to distinguish between constructive, pro-social, constructional critical pro-social (such as appreciation for ethical heroes and for whistleblowing) and antisocial behavior. For older students, appropriate training is needed to make the necessary difference between organizational citizenship behavior and counterproductive work behavior, applied to specific sector(s) in which the students will be professionally active.

We need to ask ourselves what is the best strategy herein: an integrated approach (subject integrated in all other courses) or a separate course. Probably neither option is in itself the right answer. Only the combination of both can be truly successful. Many of these learning objectives can be incorporated into curricula of

different subjects and courses and invite a multidisciplinary approach. But not without taking seriously the remark that each student lives a unique moment when it comes to developing empathy towards 'some others' in 'some' areas of life and within 'certain' ethical views (Maxwell 2005). Education in this field must therefore be individual. So, in addition to a specific course on responsible citizenship (ethics), all other school curricula (such as history, religion, philosophy, applied ethics, etc.) should pay attention to those (and related) subjects in their own way, through role-play, for example.

Harris and Foreman-Peck (2004) analyze conditions for effective role-playing, since most role-plays only serve the imagine-self perspective, in which case the role-play becomes nothing more than a 'fictitious narrative.' A good role-play should (1) be based on real individuals, (2) be based on contextual knowledge and evidence, (3) offer a problem-solving issue and (4) examine perspectives and motivations of those involved.

There is also discussion about what is the right time for the right form of action. Maxwell (2005) advocates the age of primary school, because during adolescence and adulthood one already has a fixed personality, with its own level of cognitive and affective empathy, with its own gaps, limitations and prejudices. Given the development of mirror neurons, some very simple games and role-playing games can train children at a very early age to adopt the point of view of others. Taking the point of view of others as an ethical reference point can be used already from kindergarten on as a basic rule for education and could make a huge difference to development of citizenship in general. On the contrary, neuroscience also teaches that the age of adolescence and late-adolescence is the right age to model an ethical personality, due to the fact that it is at this age precisely that our brains create its more or less definitive theories of mind. Perhaps primary school is the time to learn about affective empathy, while secondary and high school period is the right time to learn more complex, cognitive and theoretical insights about constructive, pro-social and responsible behavior.

This first approach should engage the organization and its leadership (school and management) in creating a warm environment in which empathy and emotional intelligence can thrive, both towards the pupils/students and within the team. It should support organizational culture and climate in which respect and trust prevail, in which there is room for everyone's otherness (diversity)

and in which there is certain room for imperfection and consequently for failure.

The Courage to Blow the Whistle

Since a few decades, phenomenon of whistleblowing about illegal or unethical acts and antisocial behavior has become a relevant subject in professional ethics. Although the phenomenon is probably as old as mankind, it is given more attention due to growth of the problem of professional misconduct, growth of economic impact of this misconduct and attention paid to responsible (professional) conduct since the 1980s. Vinten (1994) defines whistleblowing as 'the unauthorized disclosure of information that an employee reasonably believes is evidence of the contravention of any law, rule or regulation, code of practice, or professional statement, or that involves mismanagement, corruption, abuse of authority, or danger to public or worker health and safety.' Jubb (1999) defines it as 'a deliberate non-obligatory act of disclosure, which gets onto public record and is made by a person who has or had privileged access to data or information of an organization, about non-trivial illegality or other wrongdoing whether actual, suspected or anticipated which implicates and is under the control of that organizations, to an external entity having potential to rectify the wrongdoing.' As Strack (2008) argues, whistleblowers are 'people who no longer silently tolerate illegal activities, maladministration or danger to human beings, the environment or the economy but reveal those abuses within or outside their business, their company, their organization or their bureaucracy.' And Bjorkelo et al. (2008) connect whistleblowing with 'situations where an employee is witnessing something illegal, illegitimate or unethical taking place within their organization, which he or she subsequently decides to take action against, thus trying to eliminate the wrongdoing.' In general, whistleblowing is about situation in a group, organization or even society as a whole that is experienced as unethical (illegal, disrespectful, reckless, dangerous, harmful, irresponsible, etc.) by someone who then decides to make his negative impression (assessment) public with colleagues, friends, a superior or even the press, which, he hopes, will correct the wrongdoing. Chaplin (2004) reminds us that whistleblowing is not about expressing personal dissatisfaction with the policy of a government or company management, but about making facts known. It has to be about 'facts and figures.'

But isn't whistleblowing at odds with the required loyalty within a group or organization? In the first place, loyalty of an employee in a professional context has to go out to the task and the larger whole around it for which he has entered into a contract with his employer. Loyalty is therefore rooted in the organization's mission, core objectives, core values and code of conduct, which sets out where and how the organization wishes to make a contribution to society and individual citizens, possibly with a view to realizing financial gain. This lays down the 'license to operate' of the organization and any violation of it would endanger the performance, reputation and possibly even the continued existence of the organization. This kind of loyalty goes for any personal loyalty to employer or direct superior. Where the employer or superior, possibly the entire organization, fails due to a goal displacement, the original basic loyalty requires that this be denounced.

In general, it can be said that policy and management that want to discourage antisocial and destructive behavior should have a positive and motivating attitude towards whistleblowing, at least when it happens internally. This means that some necessary structural space should be provided, such as guarantee of anonymity, guarantee of freedom from sanctioning measures (against the whistleblower), hotline or ombudsperson, guarantee that every report will be taken seriously and examined.

Dialogue with An Open Mind and Critical Reflection

In line with the previous point, T'Sas (2018) points out the important role of a good conversation – 'exploratory talk.'

The notion of an exploratory talk is very similar to Habermas' notion of an open, non-violent, argumentative dialogue (Habermas 1981; 1984), which runs parallel to the notion of 'stakeholder dialogue' in applied and business ethics. What does it mean to have an open dialogue? Both emphasize that it includes not only the idea that all parties concerned have the right to participate, but also the idea that silent and absent stakeholders (e.g. future generations, the environment, the poor) should be the main focus of this dialogue. Above all, it means that all participants in the dialogue are not locked up in their own concerns, needs and interests, beliefs and opinions, expectations and wishes, but are also open to arguments consisting of concerns, needs and interests, beliefs and opinions, expectations and wishes of all other stakeholders, present and absent, and therefore of the general interest ('com-

mon good') of the whole organization and/or society. This implies open thinking, confrontation with all facts and figures, confrontation with different interpretations and evaluations, willingness to look at data and to accept feedback, willingness to confront reality ('is') with ideals and utopian thinking ('ought'), willingness to change and renewal. Since this dialogue is not based on formal power, but on argumentation, including facts and figures, thus on authority, it is intrinsically free from dominance. Nevertheless, an open and argumentative, domination-free (non-violent) dialogue requires first and foremost some willingness to engage in discussion and to articulate argumentations. Although we believe that 'facts and figures' is indeed the only alternative strategy to ideological argumentation, which is authoritarian by nature, it must be acknowledged that we also have to rely on common ground – culture – to interpret these facts and figures. Open and argumentative dialogue thus encompasses both open (non-ideological) and objective study of all the facts and figures, as well as open and critical dialogue on a common ground in order to interpret and evaluate these facts and figures.

At the same time, this form of dialogue hides a major discussion and problem. After all, it seems to incline towards purely rational and therefore deliberately reflective speaking. What about our intuition, our gut feeling? Kahneman (2011) makes a distinction between a System 1 thinking based on intuition and a System 2 thinking based on rational reflection and emphasizes that both work together and both are necessary. Not only the daily experience, but also the notion of perception (impression) learns that what appears to be a fact is not always the fact. Often things seem to be one or another. Also in terms of social and/or ethical acceptability, things seem responsible or not at first sight already. Through reflection, this perception (impression) must be confirmed, adapted or denied. Besides individual forces, Hagen (2018) also mentions group forces and organizational/structural forces. In addition to specific characteristics of stakeholders, the situation itself (context, structures, culture) is also a crucial characteristic. Based on Kant (1788) we can also distinguish between intellectual knowledge, which can lead to insight, and reflection rooted in reasonableness, which can lead to wisdom. We should conclude that, within an organization, attention should not only be paid to facts and figures (e.g. statistics) – although this is a crucial basis for any open, argumentative dialogue – but above all to intuition and perception by those involved, individually and as a group. In

that case Habermas' dialogue will become more a Socratic dialogue, a collective reflection, a collective way of reasoning.

It may be clear that this form of dialogue within the school walls, both with and towards the pupils/students and within the school team, implies a high level of reflective capacity and a great willingness to be open to all other points of view. This brings us back to the first point of emotional intelligence and empathic competence.

Responsible (School) Policy and Management

Again, this brings organizational culture into our sight. It concerns basic assumptions and beliefs, shared by most of employees of an organization, working unconsciously as 'for granted' (Schein 1997). As Ax et al. (2000) put it, it is about 'the spiritual baggage of a certain group of people.' Shared principles, values and norms, which define what the organization considers to be responsible behavior. According to Kreps (1990), organizational culture functions as the most basic principle(s) in the organization. Therefore, people have to behave according to this/these principle(s) in order to be accepted as members. If not, they could be marginalized or even expelled.

How can one describe a culture of responsibility? Cadbury's report (Committee on the Financial Aspects of Corporate Governance 1992) mentions a culture of openness as the most important characteristic. Pearson (1995) speaks of a 'high-integrity culture.' Groenewegen and Ten Have (2008) mention four characteristics of an 'accountability culture,' i.e. an organizational culture in which responsibility (accountability) is normal practice:

1. communication, in order to create a large support base,
2. support of employees,
3. practice and output as the main weapons of engagement,
4. everyone concerned will be taken into account.

Jacobs (1995) points at a truly participatory culture, based on a sense of We-feelings. For him this is: 'a spirit of solidarity based on common values, common objectives and a common strategy. This impulse creates a detailed structure and tries to add value to the sum of individual efforts.' It presupposes a bottom-up culture in which there is room for the concerns, needs and interests (etc.) and proposals of various parties involved. Kets de Vries (2001; 2006; 2010) concludes: 'At the heart of a great place to work are

trust and mutual respect between senior executives and their employees, and value-driven leadership – performance with purpose. Great places to work show a strong commitment from CEO and senior management (who walk the talk), a genuine belief that people are indispensable for the business, active communication among the entire organization, the perception of a unique culture and identity, a well-expressed vision and values that are lived and experienced at all levels of the organization. Furthermore, "employees" participation and involvement are the key success factors for organizational commitment.' This should create a culture of 'continuous self-renewal.'

In conclusion, we can identify a culture of responsibility by, among other things, the following main characteristics:

- An ethical organizational culture, based on awareness of the vital importance of good organizational fitness, based on awareness of the crucial role of customer concerns, expectations and preferences and the needs, interests and rights of all stakeholders in general. This implies good relationships with all stakeholders, the idea of the public good, within the team, the organization and society at large – an optimal 'organization-environment-fit' – and the pursuit of an optimal balance between efficiency and effectiveness, and caring. These basic ideas also represent concepts of total quality management (TQM), total responsibility management (TRM), and Quality of Work (QOW).

- An open organizational culture in which argumentative dialogue is conducted with all stakeholders based on correct and complete information (facts and figures; data-driven management).

- A dynamic, learning organizational culture in which critical and provocative, creative and innovative thinking and feedback are valued as signals of commitment and intrapreneurship. Mezirow (1990; 1991; 2000; 2009), influenced by Freire and Habermas, refers to such learning culture when describing 'transformative learning' in which participants change their mental frames of reference and thus their points of view and habits. Through transformative learning, individuals and groups/organizations not only learn new knowledge and technical skills, but first and foremost change their personality, their Self. In a way, this kind of organization supports autonomous working and the grow of the individuals'

'person-environment-fit,' both of which are also a crucial remedy for stress and burnout.

Integration of the sense of responsibility towards all stake-holders (ethics) in the culture of the organization is the decis-ive factor in creating a more responsible organization (Freeman 1984; Staessens 1991; Heskett and Kotter 1992; Hogema and Koot 1992; Siebens 1994; 2010; 2013; 2019; Nelson and Trevino 1995; Pearson 1995; Dalla Costa 1999; Dietvorst, Mahieu, and Peene 1999; Van Muijen 1999; Cameron and Quinn 1999; Ax et al. 2000; Koopman and Van Muijen 2000; Goodwin 2000; Crane and Matten 2004; Breye 2005; Cautaert 2006; Webley and Werner 2008; Fullan and St. Germain 2009; Lambrechts 2009; Ardichvili, Jondle, and Mitchell 2009; 2014; Korthagen and Lagerwerf 2010; Burke et al. 2013; Lawton and Páez 2015; Chadegani and Jari 2016) in which the individual employees are encouraged to pro-social behavior and antisocial and destructive behavior is inhibited.

In this context, what is responsible leadership? It may be clear that a responsible leadership style (especially when it clearly wishes to take on a facilitating role) requires a participative organ-izational structure and an organizational culture of responsibility. We endorse the conclusion that 'the romantic, leader-centered perspective that has dominated during the past decades portrayed leaders as having almost heroic abilities and being always there to save the day.

While such a view might be comforting, particularly in times of uncertainty, it also neglects ... important facts' (Camps 2015). Western (2008) observes a paradigm shift towards a post-clear model that even goes beyond the concept of transformative lead-ership. In short, 'the age of hierarchy is over' (Stewart 1989). On the basis of earlier research into the concept of ethical leader-ship (Siebens 2007; 2016), we therefore describe and define the essence of ethical leadership as facilitating, in line with the state-ments of Doppler and Lauterburg (1996) who define the role of the new type of leadership as 'to create the general preconditions that make it possible to co-workers with a normal level of intelligence to perform their tasks autonomously and in an efficient way.' So, we endorse the vision of Daniëls and Fabry (1995) on leadership: 'Talk to people about their purposes and objectives. Help them to get apprehension in their situation and let them determine tar-gets and goals. Then, give them the power over the processes in which they are involved, see to empowerment. And, as manager

and coach, keep an eye on the process – review – without interfering in everything.'

In addition to curriculum, education and training institutions must therefore also pay attention to interrelational and social realm. By paying attention to social realm among pupils, between pupils and school staff, and within the school team (including the school management) the various phenomena discussed can be experienced and learned first-hand. Of course, teaching critical-reflective thinking and open, argumentative, non-violent dialogue à la Habermas is very important in curriculum of our educational institutions, but that will have little or no impact on pupils/students if this is not also the culture used in the school team. Within the school team, active participation of all those involved, based on the stakeholder imperative, and open, argumentative dialogue with (self-) critical questioning, in which one never plays the man, should be the normal course of events. Especially the growing problem of individual and collective harassment – mobbing and bullying – offers distinct opportunities for this.

Discussion and Future Research

It was our objective – to be more precise: our challenge – to create a grand overview of different scientific disciplines interested in the subject of antisocial, destructive (obstructive and toxic) behavior, including the aspects of a 'dark personality,' towards an overarching theoretical model to understand, interpret and analyze this issue, theoretically as well as practically. Indeed, the theoretical model has to be helpful for people who are victims of a situation of upwards hostility, to get more insight in the process behind this behavior and coop with it. But is our research acceptable from a scientific point of view?

Methodologically one could start, of course, with articulating criticisms for each of individual articles/studies used. Specific samples (and their specific cultures) (as criminals, students, children or combinations of these or other distinctions) used by each research, and the differences between research with a natural group (forensic populations) versus research in experimental conditions (clinical populations) can be used as strong points of discussion concerning validity and relevance of results and significance of these results in view of their extrapolation. Also, there is a huge battle going on about measures and tools used, especially concerning measurement of correlations between person-

ality traits and sub-traits – as criticism about use of self-reports and about significant differences in outcomes between research based on self-reports and reseach based on behavorial measures, for example. A much more profound and thorough criticism on many studies is the fact that almost all are based on hypothetical dilemmas and experimental, therefore artificial tests. However, about the subject and issues discussed and analyzed in this work we have no other alternative at the moment than artifical tests and hypothetical dilemmas. Given the importance of avoiding socially desirable answers, the only correct conclusion seems to be that only experimental settings can produce scientifically acceptable results. Finally, there is a distinction to be taken into account between the data, a hypothesized answer to the issue stated and possible alternative explanations for the data. Research within each discipline could undoubtedly be broadened, deepened and supplemented. So, there are always alternative explanations and conclusions. Science is definitely always 'on the road.'

These critiques can be answered partly by the great number of articles and books from many different scientific disciplines integrated in this model. Overall, given a huge number of individual studies we integrated (more than 3500), it is our opinion that they are balancing each other out. In some way this can be interpreted as a kind of 'triangulation.' Nevertheless, regardless of the number of articles and books used, we could not yet explore all aspects and details of the phenomenon. Therefore, this analysis is no more than a first attempt to create a 'grand theory' on AD behavior at the work floor. Overall, we think we did succeed in creating a preliminary systematic overview of the phenomenon of antisocial, destructive behavior, more specifically concerning the phenomenon of 'employees upwards hostility.'

Considering that this article must contribute in attempt to understand and explain AD behavior within a framework of ethical reflection, we should specifically mention that many analyses in various scientific disciplines confronted us with a fundamental distinction between morality and ethics, which we have already discussed elsewhere (Siebens 1994; 2010; 2013; 2019). To the extent that many studies define or approach AD behavior within the context of social, cultural or religious-philosophical norms – morality – the distinction between destructive deviant and constructive deviant behavior threatens to blur, and onsequently phenomena such as whistleblowing, ethical hero ('noble nature') and 'victim bystander' lose their specific meaning and role. Whether or not

such moral norms are bound to the culture of a group, organization or society, they are extremely relative. On the other hand, ethics is an autonomous way of thinking about responsible behavior. Ethics also has its weaknesses, as it can be subjective and also relative, but such thinking in any case transcends the level of a morality that is often dictated by the prototypical individuals of a group, organization or society. This opens the door to self-centered manipulation, which can lead to A D behavior. Ethics, on the other hand, is open to dialogue (open, argumentative and non-violent, as Habermas (1981; 1984) defines it).

There's a lot of open questions left:

- What are the most common motives for A D behavior? (Are there indeed many cases – how great is the risk for a scenario – that not accepted internal candidates are mobbing the newly appointed external formal leader with the objective to get rid if him/her and pave the way for themselves?)
- Are there aspects and scenarios that can be recognized often? For instance the process of victimization, feelings of silence and shame.
- What is the 'critical mass' (quantitative/number and qualitative/degree of destructiveness and degree of collusion) that makes destructive effects emerge within a team?
- Does ethical leadership style indeed contain a specific, supplementary risk factor?
- How is A D behavior dealt with topically and ideally?

Nevertheless, we believe that our multidisciplinary research offers a lot of added-value to our understanding of ethical and unethical behavior in professional and organisational realm. However, further study is also needed to better understand the origins (motivation), scope (both quantitative and qualitative) and working methods (strategies) of A D behavior in the face of superior attempting to conduct ethical policy and management, so that here too the existing taboo can be broken and necessary conclusions can be drawn about a proper preventive and reactive approach to it.

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