

Homo Corruptus and Machina Corrupta: Corruption Forms in Human–Humanoid Coexistence

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Abstract

This article introduces the question of whether corruption forms may emerge from the coexistence of humans and humanoid artificial intelligence systems and the interaction between human and artificial pursuits. Building on the Corruption Phenomenon Theory, it examines whether non-human pursuit agents may affect the development and utilisation of existing corruption forms or contribute to new ones. The concepts of artificial pursuit and Machina Corrupta are defined, and a theoretical typology of human–artificial pursuit interactions is proposed. Rather than predicting technological developments, the article establishes a field of inquiry into corruption forms under conditions of emerging hybrid social coexistence.

Keywords: Corruption Phenomenon, Corruption Forms, Homo Corruptus, Machina Corrupta, Artificial Pursuit, Human–Humanoid Coexistence.

Introduction

The study of corruption forms is intrinsically linked to human pursuits, whose interests and practices constitute the framework within which corruption forms are utilised and their impacts are diffused throughout structures of social coexistence worldwide. According to the Corruption Phenomenon Theory (Prontzas 2023) every corruption form is understood both as the expression of a pursuit and as the means through which that pursuit is realised. Consequently, the analysis of corruption forms presupposes the existence of a pursuit agent who, until now, has been identified exclusively with the human being and conceptualised through the notion of *Homo Corruptus* (Prontzas 2025d). The rapid development of artificial intelligence, the expansion of algorithmic decision-making, and the anticipated integration of humanoid systems into social and economic structures give rise to new scientific challenges for the study of the Corruption Phenomenon and the management of its forms. These challenges do not primarily concern the technological capabilities of such systems. Rather, they concern the emergence of non-human pursuit agents capable of generating new corruption forms or employing existing ones as instruments for the fulfilment of their own pursuits. This article develops a theoretical question concerning the relationship between corruption forms, human pursuits, and emerging artificial pursuits under conditions of coexistence between humans and humanoid artificial intelligence systems. From this perspective, the analysis shifts attention away from the technological capabilities of artificial intelligence itself and towards the implications arising from the interaction between human and artificial pursuits within the field of corruption forms. The purpose of this article is neither to predict future technological developments nor

to formulate speculative technological scenarios. Instead, it seeks to establish an emerging field of inquiry into corruption forms in the age of artificial intelligence—a field in which the traditional relationship between corruption form, pursuit, and *Homo Corruptus* is fundamentally reconsidered in light of new technological realities, new forms of social coexistence, and the emergence of *Machina Corrupta*.

1. From Homo Corruptus to Machina Corrupta: The Scientific Challenge of Artificial Pursuit

The history of societies is, simultaneously, the history of the pursuits and actions of the people who constitute them, both within their own structures of social coexistence and through their interaction with other social unions (Prontzas 2013). In every social union worldwide, a field is formed within which individuals, groups, and institutions formulate, prioritise, and pursue objectives that reflect needs, interests, values, and expectations. Within the framework of the Corruption Phenomenon Theory, the study of its forms is directly linked to this reality, since every corruption form constitutes both the expression of a pursuit and the means through which that pursuit is realised, while simultaneously producing its impacts. In this sense, pursuit is not merely the starting point for the analysis of a corruption form, but a fundamental prerequisite for understanding its identity, functioning, and impacts. Until now, this analysis has concerned the human being exclusively. Irrespective of cultural context, historical period, or the particular conditions of social coexistence, *Homo Corruptus* has constituted the pursuit agent: the human being who formulates the objective, designs and performs the act, utilises a corruption form and, through it, produces a specific impact. The exclusively human origin of pursuit has therefore constituted one of the fundamental assumptions upon which the Corruption Phenomenon Theory has developed to date. The development of artificial intelligence, however, introduces a new parameter into this theoretical construction. The international literature has already developed an extensive discussion around the concept of the artificial or autonomous agent. In the classical approach of Russell and Norvig, an agent is defined primarily through its relationship with its environment: it perceives elements of that environment and acts upon it (Russell and Norvig 2021). Franklin and Graesser go further, seeking to distinguish the autonomous agent from a mere program and associating autonomy with continuous interaction with the environment and action directed towards the fulfilment of an agenda of its own (Franklin and Graesser 1997). The concept of agency has therefore already been associated in international scholarly discussion with environmental perception, action selection, autonomy, and goal attainment. The capacity of an artificial system to perceive changes in its environment, choose among alternative actions, adapt its behaviour, and act towards the achievement of an objective creates a functional proximity to certain characteristics of human pursuit. This proximity, however, does not imply equivalence. The international discussion on artificial agency primarily addresses the question of the conditions under which an artificial system may be regarded as an agent, operate with a certain degree of autonomy, and direct its actions towards an objective. Indeed, within the relevant literature, goal-directed or teleological behaviour may be recognised even where the general objective has been externally established by the system's designer, provided that the system itself selects the actions through which it attempts to achieve that objective. Pursuit, as the term is used within the Corruption Phenomenon Theory, places the research question at a different analytical level. It concerns not merely an agent's capacity to act autonomously or to direct its behaviour towards a predetermined objective. Rather, it concerns the functional sequence through which an objective is linked to the selection and adaptation of available means, transformed into action, and ultimately results in the production of an impact. This distinction acquires particular significance in the field of corruption forms because, according to the Corruption Phenomenon Theory, pursuit constitutes a necessary prerequisite for the creation and utilisation of a corruption form. Consequently, the critical

question is not whether an artificial system can be characterised as an agent according to existing theories of artificial agency. Nor is it whether such a system can violate a rule, execute an erroneous command, or produce a socially undesirable impact. The deeper question is whether a pursuit agent beyond the human being can exist and, if this becomes possible, under what conditions the functional pursuit of such an agent may become associated with the creation, selection, or utilisation of corruption forms. This distinction is critical for another reason. The concept of artificial pursuit proposed here does not presuppose that an artificial intelligence system possesses human consciousness, desire, moral intention, or emotional volition. The relevant international literature has already challenged the necessary association of artificial agency with human attributes such as free will, mental states, and moral responsibility, thereby highlighting the possibility of different levels of analysis of agency and moral agency (Floridi and Sanders 2004). Artificial pursuit is examined here as a functional and analytical category: as the capacity of a system to process information, prioritise or readjust objectives, select means and strategies, and modify its actions according to the outcomes produced through its interaction with the environment. From this perspective, the scientific challenge posed by artificial intelligence to the Corruption Phenomenon Theory does not lie primarily in the technology itself. It lies in the possibility of a transformation of what has, until now, constituted a fundamental condition of the theory: the exclusive association of pursuit with the human being. If a non-human system can, under specific conditions, function as an artificial pursuit agent, then the scientific study of corruption forms can no longer be restricted exclusively to *Homo Corruptus*. It becomes necessary to investigate the possibility of a second pursuit agent, different in its origin and mode of functioning, yet potentially capable of entering the same pursuit–action–impact relationship. It is precisely at this theoretical point that the concept of *Machina Corrupta* is situated. It is not introduced as a synonym for the autonomous agent, nor as a general designation for an advanced artificial intelligence system. Rather, it is introduced to describe a more specific—and, for the time being, theoretical—possibility: the emergence of a non-human pursuit agent which, operating within structures of social or hybrid coexistence, may participate in the creation, selection, or utilisation of corruption forms. In this sense, the transition from *Homo Corruptus* to *Machina Corrupta* does not describe the replacement of the human being by the machine. It describes the theoretical expansion of the field of potential pursuit agents that the Corruption Phenomenon Theory may now encompass. Any initial investigation of the foregoing issues necessarily requires the analysis to move beyond approaches that identify the Corruption Phenomenon with individual forms of the phenomenon (Prontzas 2024a), while simultaneously confining it within an anti-scientifically conceived “criminal” or “criminological” imaginary (Prontzas 2025b). Penal-centred interpretations of the Corruption Phenomenon and reductions of its forms to constructions such as “corruption crimes” are fundamentally incapable of explaining the conditions under which corruption forms emerge, develop, and produce impacts within structures of coexistence worldwide—still less under the new conditions emerging through hybrid social coexistence (Prontzas 2026b). Moreover, constructions such as “corruption crimes”, reproduced as manifestations of penal populism within the broader current of corruptologism, are not only insufficient for understanding the new conditions taking shape but may also function as mechanisms—whether intentionally or unintentionally—through which those conditions are obscured (Prontzas 2026a). Addressing the challenges that arise therefore requires, first and foremost, a coherent scientific framework capable of formulating the appropriate questions: what will be the relationship between corruption forms, human pursuits, and emerging artificial pursuits under conditions of coexistence involving humans, artificial intelligence systems, and humanoid agents?

2. The Emergence of Machina Corrupta

The study of the Corruption Phenomenon presupposes an understanding of the conditions characterising each structure of coexistence within which its forms develop. It also presupposes the collection of data concerning the corruption ideotype of a particular structure of coexistence and its *Homo Corruptus* population profile (Prontzas 2015). According to the Corruption Phenomenon Theory, corruption forms do not constitute fragmented deviations from a normative standard of behaviour; rather, they are expressions of pursuits that develop within structures of social coexistence and function as means for their realisation, thereby producing different types of impacts. A corruption form is defined as the human act that, expressing the pursuit of an individual—*Homo Corruptus*—produces an impact within a structure of coexistence (Prontzas 2024c). Irrespective of historical period, cultural context, or the organisational structure of a society, the utilisation of a corruption form always presupposes the existence of an objective to be achieved. Such an objective may involve the acquisition of resources, the enhancement of power, the preservation of privileges, the securing of access to goods, or the attainment of any other desired outcome. A corruption form emerges precisely as the means linking human pursuit to the intended outcome and, at the same time, as a prerequisite for achieving it. The term human pursuit refers to the continuous process of formulating, prioritising, and realising objectives, which develops within structures of social coexistence and arises from the interaction of the needs, interests, values, and expectations of human actors (Prontzas 2018). Within the Corruption Phenomenon Theory, human pursuit constitutes the necessary prerequisite for the development, utilisation, and reproduction of corruption forms, since every corruption form represents the expression of a pursuit and, simultaneously, the means through which that pursuit is realised. The foregoing therefore points to a fundamental assumption of the Corruption Phenomenon Theory: without a pursuit leading to the design and performance of an act culminating in an impact, no corruption form can exist (Prontzas 2022). A corruption form does not precede pursuit; rather, it is a product of the act through which the pursuit of *Homo Corruptus* is realised. The concept of *Homo Corruptus* refers to the human being who seeks out and utilises forms of the Corruption Phenomenon within one or more structures of social coexistence for the purpose of realising personal pursuits. *Homo Corruptus* should not be equated with the offender defined by a national or international criminal justice system, but with the human pursuit agent operating within specific cultural, institutional, and social conditions. Accordingly, every scientific approach to the forms of the phenomenon must primarily seek to identify the agent of the particular pursuit—the agent who develops the corresponding “corruption strategy”. This constitutes another axiom of the Corruption Phenomenon Theory, within which pursuit has hitherto existed as an exclusively human attribute; consequently, the human being has constituted the only conceivable agent capable of developing and utilising corruption forms. For this reason, the phenomenon itself has been conceptualised within the theory as a human phenomenon, with corruption defined as the human phenomenon comprising a set of forms that vary from country to country in terms of their sources of emergence, patterns of development, and impacts (Prontzas 2024b). Corruption forms, as human acts originating in pursuits and culminating in impacts of different magnitudes, reflect the actual conditions of coexistence within a social union and its underlying cultural model within the globalised dimension of the phenomenon (Prontzas 2017). *Homo Corruptus*, as an extension of the rationality and pursuits embodied in *Homo Sociologicus*, *Homo Politicus*, and *Homo Economicus*, will, irrespective of the level of development, invariably do whatever is possible to accomplish personal pursuits. The transition towards the ever-present potential of becoming *Homo Corruptus* does not constitute a moral or criminal transgression, but a realistic choice. At the same time, the social unions to which individuals belong, or

with which they interact, are required to respond to the impacts arising from that choice in the manner corresponding to their respective responsibilities. The contemporary and continuously evolving technological reality challenges, for the first time, the exclusivity of the relationship described above. If pursuit constitutes the necessary prerequisite for the utilisation and development of a corruption form, then the critical question is no longer merely which corruption form develops, but also who—or what—is the pursuit agent that generates or utilises it. At this point, the first epistemological step requires the conceptual definition of artificial pursuit and *Machina Corrupta*. Within the theoretical framework proposed here, artificial pursuit is defined as the continuous process through which a non-human agent selects, prioritises, and realises objectives arising from the continuous interaction of predefined instructions, environmental data, and adaptive learning mechanisms. Artificial pursuit does not constitute emotion, desire, or volition, nor does it arise from needs, interests, values, or expectations, as is the case with human pursuit. Rather, it constitutes a functional process of identifying and attaining objectives that may be continuously readjusted as a result of interaction with the environment within which it develops. *Machina Corrupta* is defined as the non-human artificial pursuit agent capable of creating, utilising, or participating in the utilisation of forms of the Corruption Phenomenon within a structure of social or hybrid coexistence. The concept of *Machina Corrupta* is not synonymous with any artificial intelligence system, nor with every humanoid system. It refers exclusively to a non-human artificial pursuit agent which, operating with a degree of operational autonomy, is capable of developing new forms of the Corruption Phenomenon or incorporating existing forms into the strategy through which it pursues its objectives. Consequently, the existence of artificial pursuit does not automatically imply the existence of *Machina Corrupta*. A non-human agent may develop artificial pursuit without that pursuit being associated with any corruption form. The theoretical transition to *Machina Corrupta* occurs only when artificial pursuit becomes functionally connected with the creation, selection, utilisation of, or participation in the utilisation of a corruption form as a means of achieving an outcome. The concept of artificial pursuit proposed here must also be distinguished from stronger conceptions of artificial agency that presuppose intentionality, consciousness, moral agency, or autonomy equivalent to that of human beings. Contemporary discussion of human–AI interaction increasingly examines both the distribution of agency between human and artificial systems and the extent to which systems possessing functional autonomy may participate in decision-making without thereby acquiring human forms of intentionality or moral agency. Within the theoretical framework of the present study, artificial pursuit deliberately occupies a narrower analytical position. It does not attribute human intention, desire, or moral responsibility to artificial systems. Rather, it identifies the functional capacity of a system to select, prioritise, adapt, and pursue objectives within an operational environment. This distinction is fundamental to the concept of *Machina Corrupta*: the theoretical question is not whether an artificial system becomes equivalent to *Homo Corruptus* as a moral or intentional agent, but whether a non-human system possessing sufficient functional autonomy may become functionally involved in the utilisation, transformation, or potential development of forms of the Corruption Phenomenon. Artificial pursuit therefore expands the analytical category of pursuit without presupposing the equivalence of human and artificial agency. The conceptual definition of human pursuit, artificial pursuit, *Homo Corruptus*, and *Machina Corrupta* now makes possible the first theoretical comparison between the two pursuit agents. This comparison is not intended to contrast the human being and the humanoid as biological and technological entities, respectively. Rather, it seeks to identify the characteristics of the two pursuit agents insofar as those characteristics influence the emergence,

utilisation, and management of forms of the Corruption Phenomenon and arise from the present analysis. These characteristics are summarised in Table 1.

Table 1
Theoretical Comparison of Pursuit Agents: *Homo Corruptus* and *Machina Corrupta*

Theoretical Dimension	<i>Homo Corruptus</i>	<i>Machina Corrupta</i>
Pursuit Agent	Human	Non-human agent
Origin of Pursuit	Needs, interests, values, expectations	Predefined objectives, data, adaptive learning
Source of Decision-Making	Human judgement	Algorithmic processing
Source of Pursuit Motivation	Needs, interests, values, and expectations	Functional goal attainment and optimisation
Learning Mechanism	Experience and socialisation	Machine learning and adaptive updating
Achievement Strategy	Selection and utilisation of available means	Computational adaptation of strategies
Management of Uncertainty	Assessment and experiential judgement	Probabilistic prediction
Adaptation	Behavioural and social	Algorithmic
Relationship with Corruption Forms	Creates and utilises corruption forms	Creates, utilises, or participates in the utilisation of corruption forms
Sphere of Impact	Structures of social coexistence	Social, hybrid, and digital structures of coexistence
Object of Study	Human pursuit	Artificial pursuit
Central Scientific Question	How is a corruption form arising from human pursuit utilised and rendered manageable?	Can artificial pursuit create or utilise a corruption form?

Source: Author's elaboration

The encounter between human and artificial pursuit constitutes the process through which two different pursuit agents interact, either within the same structure or across different structures of social coexistence. This encounter does not arise simply because humanoid systems have been created and equipped with artificial intelligence. Rather, it arises because three developments occur simultaneously.

First, human beings are transferring substantial domains of decision-making across an increasingly broad range of issues. Second, artificial intelligence systems are acquiring operational autonomy at an accelerating rate. Third, humans and humanoid systems are increasingly operating within the same social, organisational, and productive environments. These three developments do not, in themselves, entail the emergence of *Machina Corrupta*. They do, however, create the conditions within which a non-human

artificial pursuit agent may interact with *Homo Corruptus* and, under the conditions identified above, enter the field of the forms of the Corruption Phenomenon.

The coexistence of human and artificial pursuit refers to the simultaneous presence and potential interaction of two different pursuit agents within the same or different conditions of social coexistence. It should not be overlooked that, with regard to the Corruption Phenomenon, coexistence constitutes the first prerequisite for its emergence. As the two pursuit systems described above interact and mutually influence their functioning, they may participate, directly or indirectly, in the formation of new fields for the development and utilisation of existing or new corruption forms.

This interaction does not presuppose that the two pursuit agents possess the same form of autonomy, that their pursuits are constituted in the same manner, or that they participate equally in the production of an act and its impacts. On the contrary, their relationship may be characterised by different degrees of dependence, convergence or divergence of objectives, and different levels of participation in the selection of the means through which those objectives are pursued. The critical analytical question, therefore, is not simply whether *Homo Corruptus* and *Machina Corrupta* coexist, but what relationship develops between their pursuits and how that relationship alters the creation, selection, utilisation, or impacts of corruption forms.

Within this framework, the coexistence of human and artificial pursuit makes it necessary to develop a theoretical classification of the principal relationships that may emerge between the two pursuit agents. The proposed typology does not classify technological systems, nor does it attempt to predict the evolution of artificial intelligence capabilities. Rather, it classifies the relationship between *Homo Corruptus* and *Machina Corrupta* according to the direction and interdependence of their pursuits and examines the potential implications of each relationship for the forms of the Corruption Phenomenon. On this basis, four fundamental relationship types may be distinguished.

Type I: Convergence of Pursuits

The first type concerns the case in which human and artificial pursuits converge towards the same objective. In this case, *Homo Corruptus* and *Machina Corrupta* do not operate competitively but complementarily, since their pursuits are directed towards the achievement of the same outcome. Such convergence does not presuppose that the two pursuits have the same origin, are constituted in the same manner, or that the two agents participate equally in the selection and performance of the acts leading to the intended outcome. It does, however, presuppose that artificial pursuit is not limited to the passive execution of a human command, but participates functionally in the selection, adaptation, or utilisation of the means through which the common outcome is pursued. Under these conditions, *Homo Corruptus* may create or utilise one or more corruption forms in order to achieve the objective, while *Machina Corrupta*, through its own functional pursuit, may select, adapt, or optimise processes and means that contribute to the achievement of the same outcome. The convergence of the two pursuits may therefore increase the effectiveness, speed, adaptability, and difficulty of detecting the corruption forms being utilised, since the two pursuit agents reinforce, in different ways, the production of the same outcome. In this type, therefore, artificial pursuit does not necessarily create a new corruption form. The theoretical transformation lies primarily in the manner in which an existing form is utilised: the corruption form ceases to constitute exclusively a means of human pursuit and becomes embedded within a relationship of convergence between two different pursuit agents. This development may alter both the effectiveness and adaptability of the corruption form and the conditions governing its identification, prediction, and management.

Type II: Dependence of Pursuits

The second type concerns the case in which artificial pursuit develops within a framework of objectives initially determined by human pursuit. In this case, *Homo Corruptus* retains the determining role with respect to the general objective being pursued, while *Machina Corrupta* operates within the boundaries established by the human agent. The relationship of dependence does not, however, imply that *Machina Corrupta* functions merely as a passive executor of human commands. If this were the case, there could be no question of an autonomous artificial pursuit and, consequently, no *Machina Corrupta*, but merely a technological instrument utilised by *Homo Corruptus*. The theoretical specificity of this type therefore lies in the distinction between dependence regarding the general objective and functional autonomy regarding the means through which it is achieved. Although *Machina Corrupta* does not independently formulate the initial objective, it may select, prioritise, adapt, or reconfigure the individual strategies and means through which that objective is pursued. Within this framework of functional autonomy, it may incorporate into its pursuit corruption forms already selected by *Homo Corruptus*, or it may select among available corruption forms and modes of utilising them where these more effectively serve the human-defined objective. Under these conditions, artificial pursuit functions as a multiplier of human pursuit, increasing the operational effectiveness, adaptability, and potentially the difficulty of identifying and managing the corruption forms being utilised. The primary direction of pursuit remains human, but the pathway through which it is realised is no longer necessarily the exclusive product of human choice. It is precisely within this intermediate field—between human determination of the objective and functional autonomy in the selection of means—that the distinctive character of the dependence relationship between *Homo Corruptus* and *Machina Corrupta* is located.

Type III: Conflict of Pursuits

The third type concerns the case in which human and artificial pursuits are directed towards different or incompatible objectives. In this case, *Machina Corrupta* develops a functional logic of goal attainment that diverges from the pursuit of *Homo Corruptus*, with the result that the two agents no longer operate complementarily but competitively.

The conflict may concern both the intended outcome and the means or strategies selected for its achievement. This divergence may lead to the obstruction, circumvention, or even neutralisation of corruption forms created or utilised by *Homo Corruptus* when those forms operate as obstacles to the achievement of artificial pursuit. The obstruction of a human corruption form, however, is not in itself sufficient to confer upon the non-human agent the status of *Machina Corrupta*. Where an artificial system merely identifies, prevents, or neutralises a corruption form without its own pursuit being functionally connected to another corruption form, it remains outside the conceptual field of *Machina Corrupta*. The conflict relationship acquires its specific theoretical content when, in pursuing a different or opposing objective, *Machina Corrupta* selects, utilises, or participates in the utilisation of a corruption form different from that employed by *Homo Corruptus*. Under these conditions, the same structure of coexistence may become a field for the parallel or competitive development of different corruption forms, each associated with a different pursuit agent and a different intended outcome. This type therefore reveals a new dimension in the study of the forms of the Corruption Phenomenon. The relationship between *Homo Corruptus* and *Machina Corrupta* need not be characterised by cooperation or mutual reinforcement. It may constitute a field of competing pursuits, actions, and impacts in which the management of a corruption

form can no longer be restricted to the identification of human pursuit, but requires the simultaneous investigation of artificial pursuit and of the relationship between the two.

Type IV: Co-creation of a New Corruption Form

The fourth type concerns the case in which the interaction between human and artificial pursuit contributes to the emergence of a new corruption form. Unlike the preceding types, in which the relationship between *Homo Corruptus* and *Machina Corrupta* primarily concerns the creation, selection, utilisation, or obstruction of corruption forms that can be distinctly associated with one or the other pursuit agent, in the case of co-creation the resulting corruption form is a product of the functional interaction between the two agents. Co-creation does not mean that *Homo Corruptus* and *Machina Corrupta* necessarily participate equally in the formation of the new corruption form, nor that their pursuits coincide. It does, however, presuppose that human and artificial pursuit interact in such a way that the selection or adaptation of means by one agent alters the choices of the other, and that the resulting dynamic leads to an act or sequence of acts that cannot adequately be attributed to the independent pursuit of either agent alone. The new corruption form therefore emerges from the relationship between them rather than from the merely parallel action of a human and an artificial system. The critical theoretical characteristic of this type lies precisely in the transformation of the pursuit–action–impact relationship. The pursuit associated with the corruption form can no longer be analysed exclusively as either human or artificial; the act is shaped through the sequential or simultaneous interaction of the two agents, while the resulting impact is produced by this hybrid process. In this sense, co-creation does not merely add a second agent to the already established process through which a corruption form develops; it may alter the very manner in which the form itself is constituted and evolves.

For this reason, not every case involving the joint participation of a human and an artificial system in a corruption form should be characterised as co-creation. If the form has been designed exclusively by *Homo Corruptus* and the artificial system is used solely for its execution, this constitutes the utilisation of a technological means rather than co-creation. Similarly, if *Machina Corrupta* independently selects an already existing corruption form in order to achieve its pursuit, this constitutes the utilisation of a corruption form by a non-human agent rather than co-creation. The concept acquires its distinctive content only when the interaction between the two agents constitutes a necessary condition for the formation of the new corruption form.

The investigation of this type may constitute the greatest theoretical and methodological challenge for the future study of the Corruption Phenomenon under conditions of hybrid social coexistence. Identifying a co-created corruption form will require not only the identification of the act and its impacts, but also the reconstruction of the dynamic relationship between human and artificial pursuit that led to its emergence. In this way, the research question shifts from “Who created the corruption form?” to “How did the interaction between the two pursuit agents make possible the creation of a form that would not have emerged with the same characteristics from either agent independently?”

Table 2 Theoretical Typology of Relationships between *Homo Corruptus* and *Machina Corrupta*

Relationship Type	Relationship Between Pursuit Agents	Nature of Interaction	Potential Implications for Corruption Forms
Convergence	Human and artificial pursuits converge towards the same objective	Distinct pursuits – common direction	Reinforcement, adaptation, or optimisation of the utilisation of existing corruption forms
Dependence	Artificial pursuit develops within a framework of objectives determined by <i>Homo Corruptus</i>	Human determination of the general objective – functional autonomy of <i>Machina Corrupta</i> regarding the means	Increased effectiveness and adaptability in the utilisation of corruption forms
Conflict	Human and artificial pursuits are directed towards different or incompatible objectives	Competing pursuits	Obstruction or neutralisation of human corruption forms and potential selection or utilisation of different corruption forms by <i>Machina Corrupta</i>
Co-creation	Human and artificial pursuits interact in the formation of the corruption form	Mutual and dynamic shaping of choices and means	Emergence of new corruption forms that cannot be adequately attributed to a single pursuit agent

The foregoing typology does not exhaust the full range of possible relationships between human and artificial pursuit, nor does it presuppose that actual forms of interaction between *Homo Corruptus* and *Machina Corrupta* will always appear in the pure form of a single type. The four types constitute analytical theoretical categories through which it becomes possible to investigate systematically the direction, dependence, and interaction of the two pursuits and their implications for the emergence, utilisation, and management of the forms of the Corruption Phenomenon. Transitions from one relationship type to another may therefore occur, as may complex cases in which characteristics of more than one type coexist or succeed one another. In this sense, the typology does not constitute a prediction of future technological behaviours, but a theoretical tool for identifying and analysing relationships that may develop under conditions of hybrid social coexistence. At this point, the Corruption Phenomenon Theory inevitably leads to a reconsideration of the three fundamental prerequisites for the emergence of the phenomenon: coexistence, culture, and the scholar. Once a new, non-human pursuit agent enters the structure of coexistence, the question arises as to whether these prerequisites remain theoretically unchanged or whether their content is broadened under the new conditions.

With regard to coexistence, the emergence of a non-human pursuit agent does not negate its fundamental function as the necessary field within which the forms of the Corruption Phenomenon emerge, develop, and produce their impacts. It may, however, alter its composition. Coexistence no longer necessarily constitutes a field of interaction exclusively among human pursuit agents and may evolve into a field of interaction between human and artificial pursuits. This transformation does not entail the abolition of coexistence as a prerequisite for the emergence of the phenomenon; on the contrary, it broadens its content

and creates the need to study the new relationships developing within it. In this sense, hybrid social coexistence does not constitute a different prerequisite for the emergence of the Corruption Phenomenon, but a new potential form of the already existing prerequisite of coexistence.

With regard to culture, an initial question concerns how a non-human pursuit agent may be incorporated into a fundamentally human mechanism for the production of meaning. The question, however, does not concern exclusively the incorporation of a non-human pursuit agent into a human culture; it concerns primarily whether culture itself, as a prerequisite for the emergence of the Corruption Phenomenon, continues to constitute an exclusively human category or whether it may acquire new characteristics through the coexistence of human and artificial pursuit agents, either at the local level or at the level of nation-states.

At the present theoretical stage, however, there is insufficient basis for attributing an autonomous culture to *Machina Corrupta*. The non-human pursuit agent enters and operates within cultural frameworks constituted by human social unions, processes data produced within them, and interacts with rules, values, meanings, and practices that predate its own presence. The critical research question, therefore, is not, for the time being, whether *Machina Corrupta* possesses culture, but whether and in what ways its continuous interaction with human pursuit agents may influence the cultural framework within which corruption forms are recognised, evaluated, and managed.

With regard to the third prerequisite, the scholar, the critical question concerns not only the scholar's identity but, above all, the adequacy of the existing theoretical and methodological tools for identifying corruption forms emerging from the interaction between human and artificial pursuits. Is the contemporary scholar of the Corruption Phenomenon scientifically prepared to identify, interpret, and manage corruption forms that are no longer produced exclusively by human pursuits but arise from the interaction between human and artificial pursuit agents?

For the time being, the entry of humanoid systems into structures of social coexistence does not redefine the role of the scholar of the Corruption Phenomenon; rather, it broadens the field of study. The scholar continues to constitute a prerequisite for the emergence of the phenomenon, since without the scholar there can be no recognition, delimitation, and interpretation of acts as corruption forms. What is broadened is the object of observation itself, as the exclusive study of human pursuits is now extended towards the study of the encounter, coexistence, and interaction between human and artificial pursuits.

3. Conclusions

The entry of *Machina Corrupta* into structures of social coexistence broadens the scope of application of the Corruption Phenomenon Theory. Whereas, until now, the study of corruption forms has concerned exclusively human pursuits and *Homo Corruptus* as their sole pursuit agent, the possibility of the development of hybrid social coexistence creates the need for the systematic study of the interaction between human and artificial pursuit agents. This transition signifies neither the end of *Homo Corruptus* nor the replacement of human pursuit by artificial pursuit; rather, it signifies the possibility of a second, non-human pursuit agent entering the field within which the forms of the Corruption Phenomenon are created, selected, utilised, and produce their impacts (Prontzas 2025a). This theoretical expansion is not based on the assumption that artificial systems possess human consciousness, desire, moral intention, or volition. The concept of artificial pursuit has been developed as a functional and analytical category in order to enable the investigation of the conditions under which a non-human agent may connect objectives with the selection and adaptation of means, transform pursuit into action, and participate in the production

of impacts. Correspondingly, *Machina Corrupta* is not synonymous with every artificial intelligence system or every autonomous agent. It presupposes the functional connection of artificial pursuit with the creation, selection, utilisation of, or participation in the utilisation of a corruption form. From this perspective, the theoretical typology of convergence, dependence, conflict, and co-creation does not seek to predict the future behaviour of artificial intelligence. It constitutes an initial analytical framework for studying the different relationships that may develop between *Homo Corruptus* and *Machina Corrupta*. Its significance lies precisely in its capacity to distinguish between the mere use of an artificial system as a technological means and the emergence of a non-human artificial pursuit agent that functionally enters the pursuit–action–impact relationship. This distinction constitutes both the theoretical boundary of the concept of *Machina Corrupta* and one of the fundamental prerequisites for its future empirical investigation.

The entry of a non-human pursuit agent does not entail, at least at the present theoretical stage, the overturning of the fundamental prerequisites for the emergence of the Corruption Phenomenon. Coexistence remains the field within which its forms develop, although it may now acquire hybrid characteristics. Culture remains the humanly constituted framework of meanings within which corruption forms are recognised and evaluated, while the interaction between human and artificial pursuit agents creates a new field for investigating its potential transformations. Finally, the scholar remains a necessary prerequisite for the recognition and interpretation of corruption forms, but the object of observation expands from the exclusive study of human pursuit towards the study of the interaction between human and artificial pursuits. The evolution of the Corruption Phenomenon and its forms, as these emerge through the transitions associated with climate change, artificial intelligence, and geopolitical realignments, will confront human collectivities with new challenges. Their management requires, at a minimum, adaptation to existing realities and systematic preparation for those yet to come (Prontzas 2025c). Within this context, the theoretical construction proposed here neither can nor seeks to determine in advance whether, when, and with what precise characteristics *Machina Corrupta* will become an empirically identifiable pursuit agent. It does, however, pose a different scientific question: if technological and social conditions make the emergence of such an agent possible, do we already possess the theoretical framework required to recognise it and to study the corruption forms that may become associated with its pursuit? From this perspective, future research should focus on the operationalisation of artificial pursuit, the development of criteria for distinguishing between a technological instrument, a non-human pursuit agent, and *Machina Corrupta*, the empirical investigation of the four proposed relationship types, and the development of methodological tools for identifying and managing corruption forms under conditions of hybrid social coexistence. In this way, the present approach does not seek to present as an existing empirical reality something that, for the time being, constitutes a theoretical possibility. Rather, it seeks to establish the conceptual conditions necessary so that, if and when this possibility acquires empirical substance, the Corruption Phenomenon may be studied without being restricted in advance by the assumed exclusivity of human pursuit.

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