

*For our parents,*

**MAXINE, RICHARD, CORRINE, THOMAS**

# Personality, Identity, and Character

**EXPLORATIONS IN MORAL PSYCHOLOGY**

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## The Moral Functioning of the Person as a Whole: On Moral Psychology and Personality Science

DANIEL CERVONE AND RITU TRIPATHI

Noun phrases such as “moral psychology” and the “moral domain” appear to refer to singularities. There apparently is a particular type of psychology that comes into play in a particular domain of life: the moral. And maybe there is. Yet even a quick glance at work in the field reveals multiplicities.

Consider the model presented by Rest (1984; also reviewed in Bergman, 2004). The components of moral functioning that are identified encompass psychological functions that are diverse: interpreting situations, formulating courses of action, contemplating and selecting among alternative values that bear on a given circumstance, executing courses of action. If one considers also the psychological structures and processes (declarative and procedural knowledge, affective systems, cognitive appraisal processes, etc.) that may come into play as individuals execute each of these four functions (interpreting, formulating, selecting, executing), the resulting set of psychological systems is so diverse that it becomes difficult to identify systems that are *not* involved in moral reasoning or action. The set of relevant psychological systems only expands when one considers theoretical views in which evolved, domain-specific mechanisms that may be localizable within specific regions of the brain underpin responses to moral dilemmas and violations of moral codes (Greene, Sommerville, Nystrom, Darley, & Cohen, 2001; Haidt, 2001; Hauser, 2006). When psychologists whose primary expertise is not in moral psychology – such as the present authors – look in on the field, they are tempted to ask: “What’s the difference between moral psychology and psychology in general?”

There is a ready answer to that question, of course. The difference is the domain: moral psychology is distinguished by its focus on that set of encounters that bear on people’s core values and convictions. Yet here, again, one finds diversity. The set of encounters that is moral, like most sets, exhibits fuzziness and family resemblance rather than clear-cut

boundaries. Work by Shweder and colleagues indicates that some cultures view as violations of moral principles actions that, in Western culture, would be deemed mere violations of social convention (Shweder, Mahapatra, & Miller, 1987). Research by Skitka and colleagues indicates that, within a given culture, individuals differ in their reports of whether a given issue (e.g., physician-assisted suicide, gay marriage) is morally mandated – that is, whether the issue elicits deeply held feelings about universal codes of correct conduct (Skitka, Bauman, & Sargis, 2005; Skitka & Lytle, 2008). There exist individual differences, then, in beliefs about the exact domain that constitutes the moral; “the presence or absence of moral conviction about a specific issue,” Skitka et al. (2005, p. 898) suggest, “is likely to be relatively idiosyncratic.”

This leads one to a sequence of observation and conclusion. When one looks at the field of moral psychology, one observes theory and findings that reveal individual differences and some degree of idiosyncrasy in the domain, and observes also that a multiplicity of psychological systems contribute to moral reasoning and action. This observation leads to a conclusion reached already by Blasi (2004b): “Morality, psychologically, is not a self-subsistent entity served by autonomous processes but rather a specific mode of functioning of each person as a whole” (p. 336). The next observation is that, when one looks to the field of psychology as a whole, one finds that there already is a discipline that is devoted to study of the functioning of each person as a whole, and that endeavors to understand how multiple psychological systems contribute to social behavior, interindividual differences, and individual idiosyncrasy. It is the psychology of personality (Caprara & Cervone, 2000) – or, if one views the endeavor as an integrative, interdisciplinary enterprise, it is *personality science* (Cervone & Mischel, 2002). This latter observation leads us to the following conclusion. If one wishes to advance the field of moral psychology, there may be merit in “stepping outside” of that field to survey developments in personality science as a whole. One then can “step back into” the moral domain, per se, armed with whatever useful additional analytical tools one may find in the study of personality.

This, then, is our plan for the current chapter. We recognize that our plan is not entirely unique. Personality theorists have focused intently on questions of moral reasoning, emotion, and action ever since the work of Freud (1923). In the recent era, Blasi (2004b), Lapsley (1996), and others have called for analyses of moral functioning that are located within analyses of whole personality systems. The social-cognitive tradition in personality psychology already has endeavored to respond to such calls, in particular

in theoretical and empirical analyses by Bandura and colleagues (1986, 1991; Bandura, Caprara, Barbaranelli, Pastorelli, & Regalia, 2001), as well as by Mischel (Mischel & Mischel, 1976). The works of these authors and others who have contributed to social-cognitive conceptions of personality structure and dynamics (see Cervone & Shoda, 1999) greatly inform the present contribution.

## ON PERSONALITY SCIENCE

### Dual Meaning of "Personality Structure"

One notable development in the study of personality in recent years is pre-theoretical – that is, it concerns conceptual presuppositions that are logically prior to the formulation of theory and research on personality. The development is clarification regarding alternative referents for the word "personality" and the key phrase "personality structure" (Cervone, 2005).

When investigators in an area outside of personality psychology, *per se* – such as moral psychology – look to the personality psychology literature for insight, they face an obstacle. They must circumvent confusion that may arise from the fact that the term "personality structure" is used to refer to two entities that are quite distinct. In personality theories from Freud to the present day (reviewed in Cervone & Pervin, 2008), theorists have provided scientific models of mental systems that underlie individual consistency, coherence, and uniqueness. A personality "structure," in these theories, is a mental entity that is possessed enduringly by the individual. Theorists generally posit that all individuals possess the given mental entity, but its form, content, or functioning may vary significantly from one person to the next. Freud's superego, for example, is one such entity in psychoanalytic theory. Self-schemas are cognitive structures of personality in social-cognitive theories (Cervone, 2004).

In a second, quite different, usage, a "personality structure" is a model of interindividual differences in the population. The structure is a conceptual system for organizing differences *between* people. Investigators commonly employ factor analysis to identify primary dimensions of variation in ratings of observable personality tendencies; the resulting set of statistical dimensions is the personality structure. Recent findings in multiple languages suggest that six factors are necessary and reasonably sufficient to summarize these interindividual differences (reviewed in Ashton & Lee, 2007); investigators who previously posited five-factor models (Goldberg, 1981) now suggest that six factors (neuroticism, extraversion,

conscientiousness, agreeableness, openness to experience, and honesty/humility) are needed to summarize interindividual differences sufficiently (Ashton et al., 2004). As investigators such as Ashton and Lee (2005) and Saucier, Hampson, and Goldberg (2002) make clear, investigators who construct these factor-analytical models commonly do *not* assume that the between-person factors correspond to mental entities in the head of the individual – an assumption that, were it made, would have no grounding in the statistical methods employed (Borsboom, Mellenberg, & van Heerden, 2003; Borsboom, Kievit, Cervone, & Hood, in press). In other words, there generally is no assumption that the between-person factors are structures in the sense in which the superego is a structure in psychodynamic theory.<sup>1</sup>

Personality psychology, then, has professionalized in such a way that it encompasses two classes of scientific activity that may be complementary, yet are distinct: the charting of interindividual differences in typical behavioral dispositions, and the exploration of intrapsychic cognitive and affective systems that underlie the coherence of psychological experience and social behavior (Cervone, 1991, 2005). When students of moral behavior turn to the personality psychology literature, then, they find two classes of theoretical variables: dispositional variables that function to describe between-person differences in typical behavioral tendencies, and intrapsychic variables that serve to model features of mental life, or "personality architecture" (Cervone, 2004).<sup>2</sup> The distinction is quite consequential; it bears on issues of direct relevance to questions of moral psychology and personality, as we see in the section ahead.

<sup>1</sup> In the mid-1990s, some writers did present theoretical work in which between-person factors were reified, that is, were posited to exist as within-person mental structures (McCrae & Costa, 1996). Our sense is that the absence of an evidentiary base for this position (see Borsboom et al., 2003; Cervone, 2005) has resulted in there being relatively few other investigators in the current field who would now hold it. The practical utility of identifying statistical factors that summarize major dimensions of interindividual difference in global traits is widely acknowledged; the reification of the constructs that correspond to these statistical dimensions is not.

<sup>2</sup> Some refer to these alternative classes of personality variables as different "levels" of personality. We find the spatial metaphor of "levels" here to be obfuscating rather than clarifying. Consider, by way of analogy, different constructs that can be used to describe cars. Cars vary in reliability and in the number of cylinders in their engines. Would one say that degree of reliability and number of cylinders both refer to different "levels" of cars? The term would seem to obscure the ontological differences between the constructs; the car does not "have cylinders" in the same sense that it "has reliability." The differences, in other words, are not different levels of analysis within a given ontology, as the term "levels" implies.

### Personality Consistency and Hartshorne and May (1929)

Historically, a prominent intersection of personality psychology and moral psychology was the work of Hartshorne and May (1929). As has often been reviewed (Mischel, 1968), when these investigators directly observed the behavior of school children and measured, in a variety of situations, the degree to which the children displayed conduct indicative of high moral character, the primary finding was *inconsistency* in conduct across situations. Correlations between in-classroom and out-of-classroom measures of moral character averaged  $< .20$  (Mischel, 1968). As Nucci (2004) recently noted, these findings figured significantly in discourse in moral psychology, with the results leading investigators "to view personality as something one does in particular settings, rather than as something one has independent of context," and leading Kohlberg, in particular, to emphasize that "the application of virtues always occurs in context" (p. 114).

We applaud this attention to context in moral psychology. It dovetails with trends in personality science in general (Shoda, Cervone, & Downey, 2007) – trends evident both in cognitively and in biologically grounded analyses of personality and individual differences (see Kagan, 2007). Yet acknowledging the critical role of context is not equivalent to concluding that personality is "something one does" rather than "something one has independent of context." The subtle yet important lack of equivalence hinges on the question we raised above: To what is "personality" referring? Given the findings of Hartshorne and May, what exactly is it that one does or doesn't "have" independent of context?

If personality refers to between-person differences in average levels of behavior – as it does in factor-analytic models of interindividual differences – then the Hartshorne and May findings are quite consequential. Their work, and many similar findings (Mischel & Peake, 1982), indicates that the nature of the differences between people is something that itself differs across context. In some situations, Child X appears to have higher moral character than Child Y, whereas in other situations the opposite is true, yielding the low cross-situational consistency correlations Hartshorne and May report. Personality variables, one would conclude, are weak.

The conclusion changes, however, if personality variables refers to intrapsychic personality architecture. Depending on one's conceptual model of personality architecture, one might never have expected that personality structures would manifest themselves in high levels of cross-situational consistency in a paradigm such as that of Hartshorne and May. Work by one of us illustrates the point; we turn to that work now.

*The KAPA model of personality architecture.* The conceptual scheme guiding this work is a Knowledge-and-Appraisal Personality Architecture (KAPA; Cervone, 2004). The KAPA model is designed to characterize psychological systems that underlie cross-situational coherence and consistency in experience and action. It posits that personality consistency derives, to a significant degree, from a combination of two factors: (1) enduring knowledge about the self, or self-schemas; and (2) subjective beliefs about social situations, especially beliefs about the relevance of personal attributes to behavioral success in one versus another context. A key feature of the model is its anticipating that the content of the self-schemas and situational beliefs may vary idiosyncratically. Even people who share schematic beliefs about their personal attributes – for example, two people who both possess the belief that they are "shy" (see Cervone, 1997) – may differ entirely in their beliefs about the situations in which these attributes come into play. Our research thus employs idiographically tailored methods (Cervone, Shadel, & Jencius, 2001) to assess elements of personal knowledge. We use these measures to predict people's appraisals of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997) – that is, their self-appraisals of whether they can cope with specific behavioral challenges in specified, everyday situations.

Findings reveal that idiographically tailored assessments of self-schemas and situational beliefs are highly predictive of cross-situational consistency in self-efficacy appraisals (Cervone, 1997, 2004a; Cervone, Orom, Artistic, Shadel, & Kassel, 2007; Cervone et al., 2008; also see Caldwell, Cervone, & Rubin, in press; Wise, 2007). Importantly, the patterns of personality consistency that are commonly observed are quite idiosyncratic. Individuals display consistency across sets of situations that are *not* the same from one person to another, and that often violate the structure of nomothetic trait categories (Orom & Cervone, in press).

What is the implication for Hartshorne and May (1929)? As others have noted (Bem & Allen, 1974), these investigators did not find that personality was relatively inconsequential. They found that personality *as construed by them, the experimenters*, was relatively inconsequential. The experimenters chose a personality construct (honesty), designated a set of situations and actions as manifestations of that construct, and found that children did not exhibit personality consistency when the litmus test for consistency was consistency across *these experimenter-designated situations*. The findings generated by the KAPA model raise questions that can be phrased simply: Who cares about these experimenter-designated situations? Why would anyone think that the personality of each and every individual would manifest itself consistently across the same set of situations? Attention to idiosyncrasy can

reveal a powerful influence of personality characteristics that is obscured by generalized, nomothetic studies.

#### The KAPA Model of Personality Architecture: Two Implications for Moral Psychology

The KAPA model of personality architecture (Cervone, 2004) addresses two additional points of potential interest to the student of moral behavior. We spell them out briefly here; more extended discussions of related issues can be found elsewhere (Cervone, 2000, 2005, in press; Cervone, Caldwell, & Orom, in press; Cervone, Shadel, Smith, & Fiori, 2006).

*Consistency between cognition and action.* An enduring puzzle in the study of moral action is that people's actions often seem not to align with their cognitions (see Blasi, 1980, 1983). An individual's morally relevant beliefs and capacity for moral reasoning may endure over time, yet their morally relevant actions may vary across time and context. What conceptual tools from personality science might address this puzzle? One is a distinction in the KAPA model. Drawing on work by Lazarus (1991), the KAPA model distinguishes two qualitatively distinct aspects of cognition: knowledge and appraisal. Knowledge consists of enduring mental representations of persons or the physical or social world. Appraisals, in contrast, are not enduring, "static" elements of knowledge; they are dynamic processes of meaning construction that occur within a given encounter. People continually appraise the relevance of circumstances to their well-being, their capacity to cope with challenges in the environment, and the social and moral appropriateness of alternative courses of action.

This distinction addresses the question of consistency between action and cognition by dividing it in two: (1) Is action consistent with dynamic cognitive appraisal processes? (2) Is action consistent with enduring elements of knowledge? The KAPA model (as well as appraisal models of emotion, such as that of Lazarus (1991) do expect relatively consistent cognition-action relations when the cognitions at issue are cognitive appraisals; appraisals are viewed as a proximal determinant of emotional experience and self-regulated action. But the KAPA model explicitly does not expect uniformly consistent cognition-action relations when the cognitions at issue are elements of knowledge. As indicated by various models of knowledge and information processing in the field of social cognition (Higgins, 1990; Markus & Wurf, 1987), people possess a vast store of knowledge about the social world and the self, and only a small subset of that knowledge can possibly come into play at any given moment. Many elements of knowledge

that might potentially bear on appraisals of a situation simply will be inactive; priming manipulations that are designed to activate one versus another element of knowledge support this general conception of the activation of beliefs (Cervone et al., 2008).

In the moral domain and elsewhere, then, the individual will possess numerous beliefs, goals, and standards for evaluating actions that are unconnected to action in a given encounter for a simple reason. In that encounter, they are mentally latent – like books on a shelf of a personal library that contain information that *might* inform a person's course of action if they had time to take the book off the shelf and remind themselves of its content.

*Interpreting the ambiguous.* The second point concerns a phenomenon that has been of central interest to researchers in personality and social psychology, yet that garners lesser attention in studies of moral reasoning and action. It is the interpretation of circumstances that are informationally complex and inherently ambiguous. In innumerable everyday circumstances – a consumer judging whether a salesperson is truly friendly or manipulative; a student judging whether a professor is being helpful or condescending; a citizen considering whether a government's plans (for military action, for economic development, etc.) are beneficial or morally objectionable – people's actions and their meanings may be ambiguous, and the number of factors that potentially bear on these meanings may be large. Consider, as a more elaborated example, a hypothetical small town in which a group of officials are considering plans for expanded business and housing. Some may focus entirely on the economic benefits of development. Others may focus on potential harm to wildlife and the natural environment and view those harms in moral terms. By virtue of their attention to different aspects of a complex issue, some individuals are "in the moral domain," and others are not.

The phenomena that require explanation, then, include not merely reasoning, motivation, and emotion that occur in circumstances that unambiguously are relevant to moral concerns. The phenomena also include processes of meaning construction that occur in circumstances that are complex or ambiguous – processes through which some individuals attend to moral concerns that others do not even notice. These processes are unaddressed by experimental paradigms that feature informationally simple scenarios depicting a single issue (physical harm, incest, etc.) that lies unambiguously in the moral domain.

Work by Zelli and colleagues illustrates how social-cognitive theory and research methods can address the question of whether people spontaneously

detect morally relevant concerns in ambiguous circumstances (Zelli, Cervone, & Huesmann, 1996; Zelli, Huesmann, & Cervone, 1995). They explored spontaneous inferences of hostility and aggressive intent (inferences related to the moral domain, in that bodily harm is morally relevant). In a cued-recall paradigm, participants first read textual material that was ambiguous with respect to whether a person's actions (e.g., a policeman pushing someone out of the way) were intentionally hostile and aggressive. Participants subsequently tried to recall the material after exposure to verbal recall cues, some of which featured hostile content. Individuals who reported experiencing high levels of aggression in their everyday life were more likely to recall the sentence content when they were presented with hostile recall cues (Zelli et al., 1995, 1996). This suggests that, as a result of their experiences with aggression, these individuals developed highly accessible knowledge pertaining to aggression that, in turn, led them spontaneously to categorize ambiguous actions as aggressive. Research by Narvaez, Lapsley, Hagele, & Lasky (2006) speaks even more directly to spontaneous social-cognitive processing in the moral domain. They used a primacy-of-output method (participants list traits describing individuals they know, and the semantic content of traits enumerated at the outset of the lists is assessed) to identify individual differences in the possession of highly accessible knowledge in the moral domain. Subsequently, participants read sentences that were ambiguous with respect to whether depicted actions were morally virtuous. People with chronically accessible moral constructs recalled more sentence material when prompted with recall cues that referred to morally relevant personal dispositions. These and other findings supported a social-cognitive view of morality positing that "moral personality can be understood in terms of the chronic accessibility of moral schemas for construing social events" (Narvaez et al., 2006, p. 980).

Social-cognitive research exploring individual differences in people's construals of ambiguous information indirectly raises questions about theories in which moral functioning is explained by reference to universal, evolved psychological systems that are activated by eliciting cues and that automatically produce moral emotions and intuitions (Haidt, 2001; Hauser, 2006). Even if one were to presume that such models accurately characterize the nature of evolved systems, there is a limit to what they explain. If one wants to understand moral thought, emotion, and action that occur in complex, ambiguous social settings, one must identify psychological systems that determine whether people categorize ambiguous actions as morally relevant. These systems cannot be domain-specific moral mechanisms since, if an individual does not attend to moral violations or

categorize actions as morally relevant, they are not, subjectively, in the moral domain in the first place (also see Cervone, 2000). Questions about the categorization of ambiguous actions are circumvented within laboratory paradigms that present to research participants vivid, unambiguous violations of moral codes. But such questions must be confronted if one wants to understand the experience of persons who are acting in naturally occurring environments that are complex or ambiguous.

#### MORAL IDENTITY, SELF-CONSISTENCY, AND SOCIAL-COGNITIVE PERSONALITY ARCHITECTURE

Having now reviewed developments in personality science, it is time for us to "step back into" the moral domain. We consider how conceptual and empirical tools found in social-cognitive analyses of personality architecture might speak to questions of ongoing discussion in moral psychology. We focus, in particular, on the moral identity theory of Blasi (1983, 1984; see also 2004a, 2004b). We do so because of its exceptional impact and continued promise, and also because it is a framework about which questions are raised in the literature (Nucci, 2004).

#### Self and Identity in Moral Functioning

Blasi (1983), following his provocative review (Blasi, 1980) indicating that relations between moral cognition and moral action are only moderate, proposed the Self Model of Moral Functioning. His analyses of self and moral identity (Blasi, 1983, 1984; see also 2004a, 2004b; Blasi & Glodis, 1995) are deservedly recognized as a major step forward in filling the conceptual gap between moral understanding and moral action (Bergman, 2004; Hardy & Carlo, 2005).

Blasi's (1984) theory focuses on the role, in moral functioning, of self, self-identity, and self-consistency. Of critical importance is the conception of self in his view. To Blasi, the self is not a collection of self-representations; it is not a simple mental enumeration of one's personal attributes. Instead, self "is an organization of self-related information in which the various elements are brought together according to certain principles of psychological consistency" (Blasi, 1984, p. 131). The organizing principle refers to the process of determining the order and hierarchy among the ideals or concerns included in the self, along "metaphorical" (p. 131) dimensions such as "centrality" and "importance." Those core values that are most central and are considered indispensable to the self constitute the "essential or the core

self" (p. 131), and "identity is considered equivalent to the essential self" (p. 130). When identity comprises moral concerns or ideals, or when such concerns are seen as central and essential to one's self, one is said to have a moral identity. In this model, identity figures centrally in motivated action: It does so through a principle of self-consistency: "the motivational basis for moral action lies in the internal demand for psychological self-consistency" (p. 129). The person with a strong moral identity feels a sense of responsibility, or a compulsion, to act. Action reflects not on a rationalistic calculation of costs and benefits, but on "an extension of the essential self into the domain of the possible," an extension that must occur if the person is "to remain true to himself or herself" (p. 132). Failure to act triggers anxiety and guilt (Blasi, 1984; Blasi & Glodis, 1995). Blasi (2004a, 2004b), in essence, it emphasizes the subjective, agentic, and experiential aspects of the self – that is, of the whole, integrated person.

#### Self, Identity, and Self-Based Motives in Social-Cognitive Theory

How, then, does the moral identity model of Blasi relate to the social-cognitive models of Bandura, Mischel, and other social-cognitive investigators (Cervone & Shoda, 1999), including one of the present authors (Cervone, 2004)? We consider this question by addressing first the notion of self-consistency, and then the concepts of identity and self.

*Self-consistency.* In social-cognitive theory, motivation is explained by reference to a diverse set of socially grounded incentives for action, as well as a self of internal, cognitive motivators that also have foundations in social interaction (Bandura, 1986). A feature that distinguishes social-cognitive theories of personality from phenomenological personality theories such as that of Carl Rogers (1959), or from perspectives such as that of Blasi, is that social-cognitivists do not posit a self-consistency motive. Theorists such as Bandura recognize, of course, that people commonly are motivated to maintain a consistent sense of self and to regulate action according to consistent standards of self-evaluation. However, they do not feel that these processes are universal, and thus do not posit self-consistency as a universal motive.

There are at least two grounds for questioning whether self-consistency is a universal motive. One is the human capacity and tendency to reinvent oneself: to change plans, change pursuits, change one's social self.<sup>3</sup> Though

<sup>3</sup> The tendency may be particularly prevalent in the United States, where "reinventing oneself," a reviewer of the autobiography of Bob Dylan writes, "may be America's most important indigenous art form" (DeRogatis, 2004). Even Erikson (1963), who highlighted

people often appear to act as if they have an inner compass, they sometimes act as if they have decided to throw their compass in the trash and set out in directions unknown. Such potentialities for reinvention in personality functioning (Caprara & Cervone, 2000) lead many investigators to avoid the positing of consistency motives.

The second concern with self-consistency motives is that they may not be universal. Cultural psychologists instruct that the self, as construed by Western psychologists, may not be the lens through which all persons view their social world and their own personhood (Kitayama & Markus, 1999). Motives in some cultures may be distinctly more other-focused than they are in the West (Tripathi & Cervone, in press). The social-cognitivist, then, hesitates to posit a motive for self-consistency.

We note that Blasi, too, is keenly aware of the possibilities of cultural variation. The "type of self experience based on an attitude of care for the self, desire for integrity, and assiduous work on oneself, is not universal, but seems to depend on historical and economic conditions, culturally accepted ideas, and on individual development" (Blasi, 2004a, p. 7). Research in cultural psychology suggests that such awareness is critical in the psychology of self and intentional action (see Heine, Lehman, Markus, & Kitayama, 1999, for a review). In Japanese culture, Heine and colleagues (1999; see also Kitayama, Markus, Matsumoto, & Norasakkunkit, 1997) could not find consistent evidence of psychological strategies for maintenance of self-esteem (a construct that differs from Blasi's concept of self-identity, yet that still relates to the notion of people's "work on oneself"). Heine and Lehman (1999) report that in Japanese culture *self-criticism* is a more adaptive way of functioning, and is less strongly related to depression, than in American culture; self-criticism in Japan is a dominant mode of experiencing the self because it helps in self-improvement vis-à-vis the demands and expectations of others (Kitayama & Markus, 1999). In the moral domain, Miller and colleagues document qualitative variations in what constitutes personal choice or moral duty among Indians and Americans. Indians, compared to Americans, show a greater tendency to view meeting the needs of close others as a matter of moral duty rather than of personal choice (Miller, Bersoff, & Harwood, 1990; Miller & Bersoff, 1992); for example, Indians, more so than Americans, perceive helping behavior in moral terms when interpersonal reciprocity considerations are involved (Miller & Bersoff, 1994).

the continuity in the sense of self, noted that the American history of "contrasts and abrupt changes" fosters the recognition of "dynamic polarities" in development and the tendency "to leave [one's] choices open" (p. 286).



What does this mean in identity terms? Are Indians and Japanese, because of the demands of interpersonal obligations and responsibility, less agentic than their American counterparts and therefore less likely to recognize their essential self? The database of cultural psychology is still relatively sparse. One wise course of action may be to answer such questions after more evidence comes in. We thus turn to the second of the concerns in relating Blasi's work to that of social-cognitive theory, namely, phenomena of self and identity.

*The self and identity in social-cognitive theories.* Although one can't tell a book by its cover, one can tell something from a book's subject index. The most comprehensive volume in the history of the social-cognitive tradition is that of Bandura (1986). In its subject index, the number of page references one finds when searching for "identity" is zero.<sup>4</sup>

It would be superficial, and also incorrect (see Bandura, 1999), to conclude that this means that social-cognitivists are uninterested in identity. Yet one can conclude something. The absence of index entries, we think, reveals something about the way in which social-cognitive approaches treat the concept of identity. By comparison, imagine looking for "invisible hand" in the index of an economics textbook. One might find few entries, yet one could not conclude that the author was uninterested in the possibility that individual decision makers in a free market who are acting to maximize personal gain might, as Adam Smith suggested, end up acting so as to maximize the welfare of the overall community. The dearth of references would suggest the manner in which the book treated the phenomenon under consideration: not by explaining the market through the action of a hand (invisible or not), but in terms of a complex system of interlinked economic processes, with the system exhibiting emergent properties that include those that we describe with the term "invisible hand." Analogously, social-cognitive theory takes a systems perspective on personality and identity (Bandura, 1999; Cervone, 1997, 2004; Mischel & Morf, 2003; Morf, 2006). Personality is viewed "as an emergent property of self-relevant processes" (Morf, 2006, p. 1528), including "identity goals that [give] substance and meaning" (Morf, 2006, p. 1534) to cognitions about the self and to social activities. The phenomena that we call "identity" are thought to be explicable by reference to social-cognitive and affective processing dynamics that inherently function as coherent systems (Cervone & Shoda, 1999).

<sup>4</sup> The "identity theory" referenced in Bandura's (1986) index is an identity theory of mind in which mental states are posited to be identical to brain states, not a theory of identity that addresses questions about the consistent organization of self-relevant information.

This systems view is best construed as a meta-theory rather than as a specific theoretical formulation, as Mischel (2004) explains. At the level of theoretical formulation, a critical psychological structure in identity is posited to be the self-schema. Individuals are thought generally to develop a small number of domains of personal expertise (Cantor & Kihlstrom, 1980) in which their self-relevant knowledge is highly elaborated, or schematic (Markus, 1977). People display consistent patterns of thinking across social domains that may in some respects be diverse, yet that may relate to a given aspect of schematic knowledge (Cervone, 2004). In such a social-cognitive analysis, an individual who possessed an integrated system of self-schemas in a domain, who possessed personal goals that were linked to this self-knowledge, and who held related standards for evaluating the self in its pursuit of these goals would be said to have a strong identity in that domain. If someone, for example, saw herself as highly "athletic" and possessed elaborate self-schemas in the domain of athletics, enduringly possessed goals pertaining to athletic attainment, and maintained rigid standards for evaluating her training and athletic performance, the social-cognitivist would say, "That's it; she identifies with the domain of athletics; she has an athlete identity."

The question, then, is: Is that it? Even in principle, does this conception of interconnected beliefs, goals, and personal standards (Cervone, 2004) constitute identity, or is there something more – some additional, distinct psychological system that underlies the organization of self and the associated phenomenological experiences that we call "identity"? As we understand the writing of Blasi (2004), he would claim not only that there is something more, but that one cannot even get there (to a proper analysis of identity) from here (a social-cognitive model of self-representations): "It is very difficult to imagine, at least for me, how, starting from cognitive self-representations, one could *theoretically* explain the attitudes of care for the core self, and the active, responsible management of the self" (p. 8).

Here we wish to say two things: One can be seen to be in defense of the social-cognitive perspective and the other could be seen to be in defense of Blasi (not that he needs our defending). Blasi is correct in pointing out the difficulties encountered when trying to get from self-representations, which commonly are conceived in a manner that is static and decontextualized, to self-management, which involves a contextualized, dynamic, agentic self. Yet getting from "here" to "there" is precisely one of the tasks for which the KAPA model, reviewed earlier, was devised. The KAPA model recognizes that the way to account for experience and action is not through static mental representations, but through dynamic appraisal

processes – processes that numerous emotions theorists (Scherer, Schorr, & Johnstone, 2001; Smith & Lazarus, 1990; Ellsworth & Scherer, 2003) contend are central to emotional experience and motivational dynamics. Schematic self-representations, then, are conceived not as immediate determinants of self-regulated action but as one factor that influences the appraisals the person forms in a given context. This conception reformulates the here-to-there problem as noted above by dividing it in two. Can one (1) start from dynamic cognitive appraisals through which individuals evaluate the self-relevance of encounters, their capacity for coping with encounters, and norms that constrain behavior in those encounters; and (2) get to an active, agentic, motivated-and-emotional self-regulating self? Quite a wealth of research on cognitive appraisal processes, emotions, the motivational implications of emotional states, and the self-regulation of emotions suggests so (in addition to references above, see Ochsner & Gross, 2004). Can one get from enduring mental representations to dynamic appraisal processes? Quite a wealth of research in social cognition (Moskowitz, 2005), including work that manipulates the accessibility of mental representations experimentally to determine their impact on self-appraisals (Cervone et al., 2008), suggests so.

However, the question that remains is whether this formulation addresses the phenomenology of selfhood and identity of interest to Blasi. Here we are inclined to say that it may not do so – certainly that it may not do so in full. Fully addressing the phenomenology of acting in a domain in which one is highly identified may, indeed, require an expansion of traditional social-cognitive formulations. One particularly sophisticated expansion is suggested by Kuhl and colleagues in their functional analyses of personality and self that is known as Personality-Systems Interaction (PSI) Theory (Kuhl & Koole, 2004). PSI theory distinguishes between two self-regulatory functions: self-control, which involves the inhibition of impulsive actions in order to maintain a focus on specific goals, and self-maintenance, which involves directing action toward activities that are intrinsically appealing or congruent with one's overall system of personal aims and values, yielding experiences that may be described as "flow" states (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990) or experiences of self-determination (Deci & Ryan, 1985). Importantly, PSI suggests that these different functions are subserved by qualitatively different types of self-systems. One is a system of self-representations similar to that envisioned in analyses deriving from the study of social cognition (Markus & Wurf, 1987); it subserves the function of self-control. The other, however, is a more holistic system of integrated beliefs, affects, and personal values in

which self-representations are implicit rather than explicit (Kuhl & Koole, 2004); this holistic system underlies the capacity for self-maintenance. Kuhl and colleagues suggest that the holistic system that underlies self-maintenance and "flow" states can be modeled through parallel-processing architectures (Rumelhart & McClelland, 1986) and that, neuroanatomically, it entails right-hemispheric processing to a greater degree than does the system of propositionally represented goals and beliefs about the self. A great advantage of PSI analyses is that they begin to concretize, in the language of the contemporary psychological sciences, holistic processes that sometimes are described merely at a metaphorical level that is a less generative guide to research.

The inclusion in PSI theory of two self-referent mental systems can be seen as consistent with Blasi's contention that a model positing only propositionally represented beliefs is not sufficient to capture the psychology of identity and self-management. Yet, the PSI formulation is not damning of social-cognitive theory. It suggests merely a normal-science conceptual advance in which, based on empirical findings, one would differentiate two psychological systems that previously were conceived as one (cf. Mischel & Shoda, 1995; Metcalfe & Mischel, 1998). In principle, in an approach such as the KAPA model, one would differentiate systems of mental representation in the manner that PSI theory suggests.

We will not take a stand on this issue here at the close of this chapter. We will, however, take a stand on strategies for approaching it, and related issues we have discussed. As we have seen, discourse in moral psychology raises questions of general significance to psychological science: the difficulty of linking thought to action; the scope of explanations that reference evolved mental mechanisms rather than socially developed knowledge; the challenge of modeling mental systems that underlie the spectrum of human experiences. The best way to advance understanding of these topics surely is not through a compartmentalized discourse within moral psychology, *per se*, but through a generalized discourse involving moral psychology, personality science, and psychological science as a whole. The challenge for investigators in the social-cognitive tradition, as we have suggested, is to face squarely the phenomena of self and identity described by theorists such as Erikson (1963) and Blasi (1984). A challenge for students of self, identity, and moral action is to consider fully how the psychological analyses found in personality science and the cognitive sciences (see Bechtel & Abrahamsen, 2007) might inform their understanding of the psychological systems that enable persons to function as moral agents.

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