THE SELF, MOTIVATION & VIRTUE PROJECT

Interdisciplinary Moral Forum

MARQUETTE UNIVERSITY
Milwaukee, WI
March 12-14, 2015

Director's Welcome

Dear Colleagues,

Welcome to the Interdisciplinary Moral Forum (IMF) sponsored by the "Self, Motivation & and Virtue Project," which is made possible by the generous support of the Templeton Religion Trust.   As you know, we received 170 letters of intent from 27 countries. We are pleased and honored at this level of interest in the project, and are delighted to have you with us for this forum.

A glance at our list of projects shows the range and diversity of interests we'll discuss here. From neuroscience to theater, from war to peace, from Islam to Confucianism to Java, Buddhism, and South India, we are looking forward to a lively and robust discussion of the self, motivation, and virtue. Our core project team will be selecting twenty of these projects for the next round of evaluation, but we will also be forming a "Moral Self Network" (MSN) which we hope will entice all of you to stay connected. Work from this network will be digitally archived at the Raynor Memorial Library and will serve as an ongoing resource for those interested in the important topics that bring us together today.

We hope that you'll enjoy the presentations, have stimulating discussions, and form new intellectual friendships.

Sincerely,

Darcia Narvaez and Nancy E. Snow

SMV Project Co-Directors
www.smvproject.com

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Thursday Schedule

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Proposal Abstracts

All research team members and affiliations are included. Team members attending the Interdisciplinary Moral Forum are marked with a star '*'.

Development of Human Values and Virtues: An Empirical Investigation of a Philosophical Debate

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Philosophical inquiry on morality raises the need to distinguish positive behaviors from their underlying motivations. We formulate a developmental model in which early-developing dispositions towards empathy and prosociality, affected by genetics, temperament, socialization and their interaction, are internalized into the self and turned throughout development into values, thus changing the motivation for positive behaviors, transforming them into virtues. A comprehensive longitudinal study will address these ideas.

The Soldier Returned Home: Trauma, Virtue, and the Narrative Self

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More than 2.2 million Americans have deployed to Afghanistan and Iraq since 2001 and an estimated 330,000 will develop posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD). PTSD often results in profound emotional and behavioral shifts—apparent changes in an individual's *character*. Indeed, many veterans are motivated to seek treatment for PTSD because of self-described loss in moral character (e.g., "I have become a bad father."). In addition, PTSD frequently produces ruptures in the sense of *self*. Veterans with PTSD describe a "Me before combat" and a "Me after combat." This study uses state-of-the-science empirical methods to investigate the impact of trauma, and its treatment, on character traits and narrative self-identity.

We adopt a broadly Aristotelian account of the virtues, understood as stable dispositions for appropriate perception, feeling, and action. Three decades of research shows evidence-based treatments reduce the psychiatric symptoms of PTSD. But can standard treatments also lead to increases in certain virtues, and reductions in certain vices? This is a new question, as the discourse of symptoms and the discourse of virtues are related but not synonymous. Based on clinical experience, we believe PTSD treatment reduces inappropriate fear and anger responding, and accordingly results in measurable increases in the virtues of courage and patience, with attendant decreases in the vices of rashness and irascibility. We posit this occurs through an identifiable psychological mechanism: emotionally processing the fear, chaos, and self-identified meanings associated with the trauma memory—a kind of retraining of the emotions and restructuring of the trauma narrative. Thus, we hypothesize that 1) PTSD treatment will increase virtuous responses and behaviors and 2) emotional processing is the mechanism of change. In this way, the project addresses basic questions about character acquisition and re-formation.

Building on McAdam's narrative conception of the self, and emerging research on the self in psychotherapy, our strategy to measure virtue change combines technological innovation with in-depth assessment of identity and the moral self. Aiming for deep integration, regular philosophical interpretation will assess if the empirical operationalization of virtue has, in fact, meaningfully captured the nuanced constructs virtue ethicists study.

The proposed project investigates the possibility of character change in one of the most important contexts for adult self-development in America, psychotherapy. Moreover, the project addresses high profile questions concerning combat PTSD and veterans, and will likely garner press attention. More enduringly, the project offers the chance to synthesize neo-Aristotelian virtue ethics with clinical psychological science.

The Peaceful Self: An Interdisciplinary Window on Motivation of Virtue

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A peaceful self is characterized by virtuous dispositions for benevolence and justice and self-efficacious skills in nonviolent conflict transformation and peacemaking. In this project we will use an *interdisciplinary approach* to study the *interplay of biologically rooted intrinsic motivation and the narrative development of identities* in the development of peaceful selves. We will study the development of peaceful selves during early childhood and adolescence, both periods of significant social developmental change. We will complement naturalistic observations of preschool peer interaction and conflict management with point-of-event physiological measures and self-narratives indicative of multi-level motivation. Conscious of the importance of cultural narratives we will compare and contrast the early development of peaceful selves in Japan and the USA. We will also investigate peaceful self-efficacy through integrated analyses of Japanese and American adolescents' self-narratives of their conflict management and other-oriented experiences and measures of concomitant mood and physiological states. In addition, we will study the exemplary peaceful selves of two Nobel Peace Prize laureates from different cultural origins to understand how the narrative development of their identities fuels their motivation to act for others and what their virtuous actions meant to themselves and to others. To structure a deep integration between our psychobiological, social philosophical, and political science approaches in this project, we will develop an integrative philosophical and methodological framework, *humanistic naturalism*. This framework uses a naturalistic reinterpretation of Paul Ricoeur's narrative analysis of virtues, motives and the self to clarify the development of a peaceful self through formative moral experiences. In the sections below we discuss our respective contributions and how their envisioned integration will address the central questions underlying our research.

Mindfulness, Creativity, Embodiment and the Cultivation of Self: An East Asian Perspective

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Drawing from East Asian Buddhist practices, our research project explores the role of embodiment and mindfulness practices in the cultivation of self while engaging in a creative activity in a collaborative project between a psychologist, a filmmaker, and a musician. The aim of this project is to examine ways to help people cultivate an awareness of the changing nature of self and its impact on virtues, such as compassion and generosity. The structure of the project is threefold: (a) to interview ten Shakuhachi teachers in Japan to explore their phenomenological understanding of the relationship between the cultivation of self and music; (b) to enable students to engage in cultivation of self by learning mindfulness practices such as breath meditation, body awareness, learning to play the Shakuhachi, and completing film and photovoice projects, while documenting student learning in a longitudinal qualitative study; and (c) to produce a documentary triangulating the interview data of the Shakuhachi teachers and students, various modes of student learning, and clips of the student films and projects to be used as a pedagogical tool.

Theatrical Intervention as a Pathway to Moral Virtue Development

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Moral virtue development is grounded in social relationships that foster the socioemotional intelligence underlying moral virtue. Recent research shows a decrease in socioemotional intelligence with implications for moral virtue development. This project is a feasibility study of a theatrical intervention with parent-child dyads to increase socioemotional intelligence and proto-virtuous character by improving parent-child mutual responsiveness. Our theatrical approach combines direct development of mutual responsiveness and practice of moral virtue scripts, providing a powerful and seamless integration of philosophy, theatre art and social science (longitudinal experimental design, measurement, educational intervention, statistical analyses).

Giving from the Heart: The Role of the Heart and the Brain in Virtuous Motivation and Integrity

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Using a single measurement technique to understand complex behaviors is unlikely to generate a mechanistic model that can predict future behavior or that can be used to develop effective interventions or educational practices that develop and improve virtuous character. We will use multiple methodologies to examine the relationship between explicit, implicit, and embodied measures of virtue. These include explicit self-report of values, implicit measures of associations of value-based associations, embodied responses (brain electrophysiology and autonomic nervous system activity), and explicit charitable-giving behavior. In addition to developing a virtue-theoretic self-report scale, we will investigate the moderating role of a novel construct of integrity, operationalized as the correlation between explicit self-report and implicit measures of virtue.

Virtues as Properly Motivated, Self-integrated Traits

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Contemporary empirical research on virtues has been promising, but limited in depth and value by investigators' reliance on global self-report questionnaires obtained at a single time-point. These questionnaires require respondents to summarize their trait features in very broad statements or focus narrowly on specific behaviors. Properly understood, virtues are partly constituted by appropriate motivations in response to the real-world environment and integrated with the actor's self—features that are not accessible using the predominant research methods.

Our central aim is to deepen virtue research with intensive longitudinal measurement of virtuous activity, which includes behavior, motivation, self-congruence, and situational factors. We will assess participants' real-world activity four times per day over a 14-day period with respect to two pervasive virtues: fairness and kindness. We will then conduct narrative interviews with a subset of participants about virtue in their lives. We will assess motivation in three ways (goals of the activity, motivation type, and felt motivation at the moment) and the integration of the behavior with the self in three ways (self-congruence with virtue-related behavior, consistency of virtue-related behavior over time, and narrative interviews). These innovative methods will enable us to use cutting-edge psychological methods to investigate sophisticated philosophic questions about whether and how people's capacity for virtuous activity depends on their achieving self-integration - both across time and across personal contexts.

Personal Projects and the Development of Virtue: How Characteristic Adaptations Enact and Encourage Virtue

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How does the development of virtue play out in the context of personal projects—key elements of identity in which progress is crucial for well-being—such as those related to relationships, vocation, and self-improvement? In a sample of 200 undergraduates, this longitudinal study will investigate how characteristic adaptations (goals, interpretations, and strategies adapted to an individual's particular life circumstances) develop over time and whether their enaction in the context of personal projects both expresses and leads to the development of virtue. We will use an innovative method called *personal projects analysis* to assess characteristic adaptations and associated virtues, and we will test whether a future-authoring intervention, designed to help people envision their ideal future and hone their goals and strategies, facilitates the development of virtue. We hypothesize that characteristic adaptations expressed in personal projects predict the development of virtue and that this process can be facilitated by future-authoring. If a brief intervention has a measurable effect on the development of virtue, it may provide a powerful tool for improving human life.

Self-Transcendence, Virtue and Happiness: A Psychological Investigation of Buddhist Perspectives on the Self and Well-Being

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The proposed project aims to study self-identification as a major impediment to virtue and happiness, and self-transcendence as a reliable path to higher personal well-being. Approaching age-old philosophical questions using current psychological theorizing and an empirical methodology, we will put to test Buddhist ideas on the relationship between self, virtue, and happiness (*eudaimonia*). In particular, we will study a family of virtues and character strengths that approximate self-transcendence in the Buddhist sense, such as humility, perspective, and a sense of interconnectedness with humanity. We plan a three-stage project with distinct contributions at every stage: In the first stage, we will develop implicit, non-self report measures to capture the aforementioned virtues (methodological contribution). The second stage will employ the measures developed in the first stage to investigate the relationship between self-transcendence and well-being (theoretical contribution). Finally, in the third stage, insights from the previous stages will be utilized to create scientifically validated exercises that can help people cultivate virtue and happiness.

"Jihad," what's happening with this virtue?

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"Jihad" for Muslim is a virtue, it's learned from generation to generation. But nowadays we can see that this virtue has had different interpretations in society, from peaceful to terrorism. This research will be conducted in Indonesia, the place that is known as one of the biggest Islamic communities in the world. The primary research questions are (i) how jihad as a virtue have been shared as an idea in society, and (ii) how motivation to implement this virtue can be very different one to another (iii) what are psychosocial factors that give contribution in implementing of these virtue. The study will be conducted in three of study with different methods. The first study aims to explain the variety of the virtue of Jihad that can be derived from Islamic literature. The second study is qualitative-comparative, using a social representation approach, this study will explain the personal and social pattern in understanding of different representations of virtue Jihad and the implementation. The result from the second study will be tested in laboratory with experimental design which aims to test the different reactions of the brain regarding the motivation difference of jihad between person's moral obligatory or emotional inclination on some variation differences group of jihad interpretation. Using Electrical Capacitance Volume Tomography (ECVT) we will record how brain will react in specific situation. This research will integrate three disciplines: humanities (theology), social science (psychology and sociology), and natural science (physiology and neuroscience) all studying the same virtue, Jihad. The research expected outcomes are to explain the variety of the virtue of Jihad that can be derived from Islamic literature, and to describe the representation of virtue of Jihad and its implementation on individual level and different type of group in Islamic community in Indonesia.

Self as a Minority: Perceptions and Presentations of Well-Being, Efficacy, Creativity and Empathy

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"Man is least himself when he talks in his own person. Give him a mask and he will tell you the truth."
-Oscar Wilde

The self in the world is conceptualized differently by various philosophical traditions. In the Isha Upanishad (Aurobindo, 1921), the self is considered an immutable part of the universal consciousness, interconnected with all things animate and inanimate. According to Western philosophers who argue for the social construction of self, human persons are self-narrators and self-creators (DeGrazia, 2005) and our personhood is called into full expression by others who treat us as one of them (Baier, 1985) even though this cannot be assumed to manifest in all human interactions (Mills, 1996).

Lindemann (2014) further delineates that personhood is a social practice that involves at least four components: a) a procession of mental states, b) expression of these states by the human body, c) recognition of what is expressed and d) response on the basis of that recognition. Using this framework, our team of researchers representing the arts, social sciences, natural sciences and philosophy will explore the impact of self-expression through multiple methodological approaches. The primary purpose of the study is to better understand how young adults in the U.S. who self-identify as minorities (broadly defined to include race, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, ability/disability, nationality and country of origin) experience being efficacious, creative and empathic within the majority culture that might categorize them as "other." We propose to examine how visual self-representation and the associated autobiographical narratives can generate and sustain creative self-efficacy, mutuality and empathy.

The proposed study will include four methodological approaches: artistic expression (portraiture of the self in the world), physiological indicators of well-being (salivary analysis of amylase, cortisol and oxytocin), psychological indicators (self-efficacy, creativity and empathy), and, examination of philosophical frameworks embedded in the descriptions of self.

We expect that the project will offer participants novel opportunities to create and reflect on their autobiographical representations and deepen research on the outcomes of creative self-expression. The outputs will include scholarly publications, a monograph, as well as community wide interactive exhibitions of the artwork created through the project. We propose to use the exhibition format to both disseminate some of the artistic findings and further examine the changes in the viewing public's awareness of and empathy for the minority experience.

Understanding the Virtue-Relevant Self through Courage

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To what extent do differences in who we are predict differences in courage? We propose to develop a measure of the virtue-relevant self, which is composed of self-conception, social roles, virtue-relevant values, and personality traits. We will then conduct three studies using this measure to determine the extent to which these various components of the virtue-relevant self predict the types of acts people consider courageous as well as the willingness of people to engage in courageous acts themselves. We believe that individual differences in each of these components – that is, the content of the virtue-relevant self – will correlate with differences in first, how people rate actions that they themselves have undertaken in the past; second, how people rate actions that other people have taken; and third, the willingness of people to take certain kinds of courageous action. If found, these relations will have broader implications for the self and virtues by indicating that traits of the self beyond character traits affect both the conception of virtuous behavior and virtuous behavior itself.

Investigating Implicit Aspects of Virtue: Understanding Humility Among Moral Exemplars

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Our research project will investigate the virtue of humility among real world humanitarian exemplars, such as holocaust rescuers and hospice workers. We will use computer technology to analyze interviews with these types of populations to understand the different factors involved in the virtue of humility. Following the work of Aristotle, we believe this virtue is formed as a kind of habit that becomes a natural extension of one's character. We aim to operationalize and empirically evaluate aspects of the virtue of humility through the computational analysis of implicit semantic processing embedded in the narratives of real world humanitarians. Latent semantic analysis, multi-dimensional scaling, and hierarchical cluster analysis will be used to map self-understanding schemas in these populations and its role in humility while serving others.

Development of the moral self: A comparison of Protestant rural dwellers in the Netherlands and Hindu rural dwellers in South India

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Our study investigates virtues within a community by comparing elderly people in an orthodox protestant rural setting in the Netherlands with those in a traditional hindu rural setting in South India. Elderly people are important conveyors of virtues, especially in rural settings where living in extended families is still a very common tradition. Hence elderly people play an important role in the moral growth of people in their environment. In this study, we combine a philosophical study on virtues with a qualitative empirical study. We focus on lived experiences that denote moral dilemmas and conflicting virtues. We unravel personal reflections upon actions, with a special focus on (1) moral legitimations of behavior and (2) feelings of regret and guilt, implying senses of moral failure. Thus we bring virtues to the surface that underpin behavior in the past or present of our informants.

Humility in Loving Encounter: Ontological and Cognitive-Motivational Models of the Moral Self in Stable Communities of Care, Forgiveness, and Reconciliation

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The moral self as determined by moral identity and centrality schemas is known to be critical for exemplars of stable care and reconciliation in difficult circumstances (Monroe, 2008). We propose a philosophical-psychological-neuroscientific project that will 1) develop an ontological model of the self as entailed by humility in stable, loving encounter; and 2) draw on the ontological model in both a) developing a cognitive-motivational model of moral identity that accounts for humility in loving encounter and b) designing empirical approaches to shape and constrain the model. Both aims necessitate our focus on a family of concepts regarding the "moral self," including moral identity and moral centrality (on the importance to selfhood of moral schemas see (Reimer et al., 2012); on schemas, see (Narvaez, 2005; Narvaez & Lapsley, 2009)). Working

directly with exemplar communities, we will use Parallel Constraint Satisfaction theory (PCST) to develop a computationally robust, empirically tested and parameterized model of moral identity for humility in loving encounter. Empirical approaches combine narrative analysis, Q-sort, behavior, and neuroimaging with stable communities of humility in care and reconciliation.

Eudaimonic Growth: How Virtues and Motives Shape the Narrative Self and Its Development within a Social Ecology

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This transdisciplinary study will examine how the narration of self, motivation, and eudaimonic virtues like wisdom and compassion develop within a social ecology of family master narratives and social institutions that either foster or constrain the development of such virtues. Drawing from a larger, longitudinal study of character development and life stories in adulthood, we will interview individuals and their families about virtue-relevant events in life, such as conflicts of belief (intrapersonally, interpersonally, and institutionally), virtue-focused projects and activities, and self- and family-defining memories. Narratives will be analyzed qualitatively and critically as well as quantitatively and in relation to other measures of eudaimonic and personal development. We expect that specific virtues will serve as motivational themes in personal and family stories and that these narrative themes will predict specific paths of virtuous self-development. We further expect that specific inequalities in family and social-institutional contexts will correspond to specific conflicts in the development of eudaimonic qualities in individuals' lives.

Encircling the Confucian Self

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The interdependent, culturally embedded Chinese self differs from Western and non-Western selves in countless ways as revealed by developmentalists, neuropsychologists, cultural historians and philosophers. We are called into this work first because this multidisciplinary area of research lacks a unified explanation for these facts. To explain the unique features of the Chinese self, philosophers appeal to Confucianism, biological anthropologists to pathogen load, neuroscientists to activation in the PFVC, and psychologists to developmental or parental influences—a confusing array of explanations. In addition, the relationships between features of the Chinese self and moral development and motivation have been underexplored. The mission statement of our immersively interdisciplinary team for this project is: *To provide interdisciplinary answers of the highest quality to a set of well-crafted, circumscribed questions about the self and its moral development in a non-WEIRD population, China, using a complimentary set of innovative methods.* Our research on behalf of achieving this goal has four components: (1) a developmental psychological experiment on moral self and moral motivation amongst Chinese and Western children; (2) a neuroimaging study of the gap between one's actual self and one's ideal self; (3) text-mining a definitive dataset (ours, already compiled and tested) of a thousand years of classical Chinese texts to examine the association of self, psychological states, and virtues; and (4) an authoritative interdisciplinary article combining our team's joint areas of expertise to explain the unique profile of the Chinese self in data from developmental, cross-cultural, and neuropsychological research as a product of the interaction between evolutionary psychology, physical ecology, and Confucian cultural transmission in Chinese history.

The Motivation to Love: Overcoming Spiritual Violence and Sacramental Shame in Christian Churches

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The Motivation to Love is a collaborative, qualitative study of *spiritual violence* in Roman Catholic and evangelical Protestant churches' relationships with lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) people. Spiritual violence uses religious means to violate a person in her relationship with God. *Sacramental shame,* which uses shaming practices to try to draw people "closer" to God, is one particularly pervasive kind of spiritual violence directed at LGBT Christians. Our project investigates how the self is harmed by the spiritual violence of sacramental shame and how people—situated differently in relation to this institutional religious harm—acquire the motivation to cultivate such virtues as compassion, hope, and Christian love that can serve as counterforces to this form of violence. We use qualitative sociological methods to collect data about peoples' experiences of sacramental shame and finding the motivation to love in the face of spiritual violence. By coupling conventional sociological methods of analysis with moral and analytical philosophical frameworks, we will develop an empirically grounded, nuanced account of the character damage this mode of violence can inflict and possibilities for recovery, while simultaneously supporting a moral argument for why this mode of violence is unjust. Among other things, we predict that having a relationship with a lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender person will provide motivation to rethink conventional church characterizations of sexual difference. We also expect that self-conscious identification as LGBT helps individuals who have been shamed by the church to heal and thrive, regardless of their theological views of same-sex sexual practices.

Selfless Agents

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This project will address the fundamental question in the background of the Self, Motivation and Virtue Project: How is the Self to be conceived? We challenge the premise of western philosophy that a diachronically unified self is the locus of moral progress? Instead, we posit the fifth century B.C. Buddhist thesis that a diachronically unified self is a conceptual falsity and it is not necessary for moral progress. This hypothesis will be validated through novel neurophenomenological experimentation using advanced brain mapping techniques. Neurophenomenology seeks to integrate valid first-person subjective information with third-person objective measures to gain a more complete understanding of mind and consciousness. Buddhist phenomenological insights, which enable elicitation of highly refined and informative first-person reports, will underpin the experimental design.

Existential Feelings in Virtue: A Philosophical-Psychological Investigation

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Discourses on the self and virtue have minimized the importance of emotion in favor of cognitive-developmental perspectives. Yet recent theory and research in philosophy (Kristjánsson, 2010; Slaby & Stephan, 2008) and psychology (Haidt, 2008) find that affect plays a *constitutional* role in the self, moral judgments, and virtuous behavior. A class of affective phenomena called *existential feelings* has been identified as vital to self-understanding and motivation (Ratcliffe, 2008; Slaby, Paskaleva, & Stephan, 2014). The present interdisciplinary project investigates the significance of such feelings as a motivational link between the self and virtue.

In five studies using cross-disciplinary, innovative methods, we will determine whether positive existential feelings support a sense of emotional connection to others that bolsters virtues of courage, humanity, and transcendence. We will further determine whether existential feelings are negatively impacted by the aging process, and whether this process can be altered to increase virtue in older adults.

When the Virtuous Community and the Virtuous Individual Collide in the Creation of Virtuous Selves

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The primary research question for our project is "How is the virtuous self fostered in environments where frameworks that develop large, competitive (individualistic) egos with small moral selves are pitted against frameworks that generate selves that see themselves *as selves* because of other selves that are *for* other selves?" Rather than contrast Western and non-Western cultures, as is typically the case in the literature, we seek to interrogate new problems arising from the imposed interpolation of Western cultures into African cultures. Our methodology will draw on anthropological fieldwork methods that use participant observation in the form of critical immersion over an extended period of time in order to understand research questions through a community's point of view. An ethnographic study of this nature is able to document social life *in process*, in the intimate daily context through which social values and conditions are generated. We conjecture that there will be inter-generational conflict and negotiation around identity and the self. Younger generations may find themselves caught between two worlds, and contestation may be negotiated through different roles (including those of individual, family member, and community member) and informed by different social spaces (e.g., rural vs. city) and social forces (e.g., NGO programs, which tend to focus on the youth and the development of their *individual* selves as opposed to selves *for composing a community*.) We further conjecture that individuals, especially of younger generations, may experience a doubling up of double consciousness. That is, such individuals may develop an elastic self, which sees the virtuous self through different lens in different contexts, leading to situations where their less expansive self will experience itself as being seen and judged, as virtuous or not, through their larger, individualistic selves and vice versa. Integration of these two different types of selves, within one self, may prove to be problematic for the individual, their mental health, and the health of the communities to which they belong.

Self and Desire as Seeds of Virtue: A Buddhist-inspired Multi-method Investigation

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According to Buddhist philosophies, recognizing the self as impermanent, changing, and interdependent is at the root of virtue. With this realization, desires shift away from inward self-cherishing and toward outward self-transcending (e.g., for others to be happy and free from suffering). This altruistic outlook underlies virtuous action and flourishing. Our primary research question asks: 1) to what extent do people experience self-transcending and self-cherishing desires in everyday life, and 2) to what extent do these different desires predict behaviors and body physiology that underlie virtue and well-being. As highlighted by the SMV project, one challenge involves measuring both intention and action. To overcome this challenge, we propose a multi-methodological study that will integrate first-person experiences of desires (which reflect intention), second-person reports from close others (i.e., romantic partners), and third-person laboratory measures of prosocial behavior and body physiology that underlie virtue and flourishing in the context of social relationships (i.e., with one's romantic partner). We will use an "experience sampling" method delivered via a smartphone app to capture psychological desires in daily life. In the laboratory, we will examine if desires in daily life are related to prosocial behavior and physiological synchrony during face-to-face social interactions with a romantic partner. Theoretically, we anticipate that integration of Buddhist philosophy into Western psychology research will encourage more emphasis on the deep psychological desires (e.g., for wealth, recognition, esteem, social connection) that appear to continually drive behavior (v. emphasis on surface desires, food, alcohol, sex). Empirically, we predict that fre-

quent self-transcending desires in daily life will be related to prosocial behavior and physiological synchrony during interactions with romantic partners. Going forward, this project will provide the foundation for future work examining how the moral self can be shaped through contemplative practice (e.g. compassion and or mindfulness meditation) in everyday life.

The Transformation of the Self: Competing Moral Repertoires in Modern Java

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Character and virtue are changing rapidly in Indonesia, home to the world's largest Muslim population. The long-praised preference for communal harmony over individual advancement is under great stress. The dominant force behind this is thought to be secular consumerism. Our project aims to assess the impact of commercialization and modern Islamic religious education on the Javanese preference for communal harmony. An extensive survey of Javanese parents and their children and close ethnographic studies of individuals will provide insights into the changing nature of Javanese morality, which is the heart of Indonesian culture. Rather than focus on self-reported values, we will focus on the morality stories that people tell. We hypothesize that the new moral repertoires of consumerism and religiosity are not in competition but are rather working in tandem to undermine the preference for communal harmony in Javanese culture.

Investigating the Moral Self

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Emerging research suggests a crucial link between the self and morality; that is, we define ourselves less by our personality, memory, or agency than by our moral values. Although this work indicates an association between morality and the self, it reveals little about how this association works, and thus the goal of our project is to provide answers to key questions related to responsibility, motivation, recognition, and the psychological implementation of the moral self. To explore these questions we intend to use a range of innovative psychological methods, including: causal modeling of participants' responses, field research on patients with severe amnesia, and tools from cognitive psychology—such as increased cognitive load—to manipulate attributions of identity, We expect our studies to provide insight both into the mechanisms that lead people to define the self in terms of moral traits and into the relationships between this moral self and other important normative concepts, such as responsibility. In particular we predict that moral identification mediates attributions of responsibility, that the link between the self and identity is dependent on online cognitive processes, and that identification with some set of values increases moral motivation.

Motivating Virtuous Selves: The Impact of Gender and Culture

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The self is defined differently both across and within disciplines and cultures. The traditional Western view of self as an ethical or economic subject is challenged by process philosophers as misplaced and by feminists as incomplete. Multicultural approaches call for a socially-situated self, but even this approach fails Buddhist no/not-self or Daoist selflessness. This philosophical concern parallels psychological studies of identity that have demonstrated different performance

results following reminders of personal identity aspects (priming). However, these psychological studies suggest an approach that may avoid the philosophical definitional difficulties. Components, or characteristics, of identity may be evaluated for their tendency to motivate virtuous action in individuals who hold differing views of self. This focus on the components of personal identity shifts the conversation from an ontological deadlock to the efficacy of specific interventions. It also facilitates cross-cultural approaches to applied ethics in fields such as business, medicine or research, where international and interdisciplinary teams are common.

Our project invites adults of varying ethnicities and genders to participate in an online adventure. After completing a brief survey with priming questions, they choose their character (avatar) and adventure. Participants then make ethical decisions in virtual narratives and maintain weekly journals. The methodology uses online role-playing, interactive technology, journal textual analysis and data collection technology. As the study will be conducted in the heavily-diversified population of the Hawaiian Islands and beyond, the experiment will have the benefit of comparing eastern and western cultures. We expect to find that people make different ethical calls depending on whether they are primed for gender or culture. We will also explore whether one personal identity component is stronger than the other in motivating virtuous decisions. This project will both extend and add a comparative dimension to research on psychological priming, philosophy of self, virtue, and ethical behavior.

The Virtue of Self-Distancing

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According to Adam Smith, developing a moral self requires psychological distance: the ability to adopt a perspective outside of oneself, and then examine and regulate one's feelings and behavior from that point of view. This developmental account of the self gives rise to a particular conception of virtue: a view of the ideal moral agent as one who feels keenly for others, feels little for herself, and in all cases regulates her conduct from a self-distanced point of view. According to Smith, these aspects of virtue are all related. He claims that one who feels keenly for others will be particularly well suited to acquire a high degree of self-command, and he suggests that the process of self-distanced self-evaluation can itself support the development of a virtuous character by both moderating a person's emotional reactivity and enhancing their sensitivity to the rights and interests of others (relative to their own). Our project will rigorously test Smith's claim that adopting a self-distanced perspective enhances one's sensitivity to the rights and interests of others. Laboratory studies will systematically manipulate whether participants self-distance when reasoning about moral dilemmas, and examine the implications of these manipulations for moral reasoning and behavior. Field studies will complement these lab studies by examining the role that self-distancing plays in moral reasoning and behavior in daily life. Consistent with Smith's claims, we predict that subjects who are either cued or taught to self-distance will display higher levels of empathy and more altruistic behavior.

The Neuroscience of Habituated Motivation

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This project brings together neo-Aristotelian theory of motivational habituation and neuro-cognitive models of skill acquisition, in order to explain why it is so difficult to cultivate extended and sophisticated motivational habits that would not be so easily defeated by akrasia or other unduly situational influences.

We will apply Bayesian models of social cognition to the acquisition of moral competences. Bayesian architectures have the virtue of explaining how we unconsciously minimize sophistication in order to reduce bioenergetic costs of learning. But while we prefer heuristic and narrow context-locked skills, sometimes, when environmental conditions justify it, we are able to invest in learning subtle and sophisticated patterns. Elucidating this ambivalent attitude in Bayesian terms will shed light on typical obstacles and unexplored opportunities for the cultivation of sophisticated motivational habits.

The team is composed by philosophers working on the naturalization of virtue and computational neuroscientists specializing in motivation.

The gestation of virtue: An examination of how experiences in the womb may build the moral self

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This project represents an empirical test of the Co-Investigator's "Life is a Wonder" model of pregnancy (Barragan Sanchez, 2007). The Life is a Wonder model posits that, if an expecting mother construes her coming baby as a gift, they she will attempt to "interact" with the fetus in order to welcome her or him to the social world. This "invitation to be born" comes in the form of massages that the mother carries out whenever she feels that the baby moving in her belly. In anecdotal experiences in her training sessions with expecting mothers, the Co-Investigator has found that reciprocating the baby's movement causes the baby to continue to move, and that the more the baby moves, the more emotionally attuned she or he is during the

first few years of life. Over the long term, these in-utero experiences with reciprocation are thought to build a self that is responsive, empathic, and committed to other humans. As such, this project aims to scientifically test whether it may be possible that the massage that some mothers do on their abdomens in response to their babies' movements may drive the emergence of the moral self.

Self-Control: The Linking of Self, Motivation, and Virtue

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The key issue our team will be exploring is the role played by self-control in the development and expression of virtue. In particular, we are interested in the self-regulating function of people's self-narratives (specifically, the degree to which these narratives weave together virtue-oriented goals and identity attributes). We expect to find that highly virtue-oriented self-narratives help to generate and maintain the motivational structure necessary for virtuous character. In order to test this hypothesis, we will refine and develop measures to investigate the relationship between virtue-relevant mental states/behaviors, general capacities for self-control, and self-narratives. Having developed the requisite psychometric tools, we will then extend our research by exploring the relationship between self-control, self-narrative, and virtue cross-culturally. By comparing Americans and Brazilians, we hope to determine whether general self-control and self-narratives play a consistent and stable role in the development of virtue (or whether there are instead important cultural differences). Finally, we will rely upon recent advances made in computational linguistics to explore how people think and talk about virtue. Our goal at this final stage is two-fold: First, we want to explore the underlying semantic and syntactical structure of people's self-narratives and the relationship between how people think and talk about self-control and how they behave. Second, we want to develop therapeutic writing tools for shaping and changing people's self-narratives in the hopes that these changes will in turn improve self-control and facilitate virtuous behavior (in children, adolescents, and adults). In this respect, our project has a descriptive element as well as a prescriptive element.

Motivating the Self to Virtue in Western and non-Western Countries: Does nation or faith matter more?

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'Self' has long been a contested term within psychology and religion; however, Christianity, Islam, and Buddhism all acknowledge that individuals struggle to embody narratives of a virtuous life—a life motivated to do good, avoid the bad, escape suffering, and help others to do the same. Our international interdisciplinary team plans to interview people from 4 faith conditions (Christian, Muslim, Buddhist, and agnostic), in 3 countries (Canada, Iran, and Korea) about their understanding of virtue and how they might attempt to achieve virtue in their own lives. We will also invite participants to comment on classic stories of wisdom in these 3 religious traditions in all 3 countries, acknowledging that these faiths do not regard selves entirely in isolation but see them as needing support from faithful communities. Finally, participants will complete a wisdom simulation. Although each country contains citizens of different religious faiths, national holidays show that Canada is administratively a Christian nation, Korea is a Buddhist nation and Iran is an Islamic nation. Participants will be invited to give examples of someone they know personally who is living a virtuous life and how they find two kinds of motivation to do so: (1) *proximal* (e.g., resisting temptation), and (2) *lifespan developmental* (e.g., daily mindfulness mediation or prayer, or through some deep religious insight, such as Buddhist Satori or Christian Grace). We will also ask participants for examples of their own virtuous behavior and their motivation

to virtue. In **Study 1**, participants will come from two age groups at opposite ends of adulthood, with potentially very different views of the motivations that inspire a virtuous self: (1) emerging adults (age 18-25) and (2) retired older adults (age 60-80) (N=480). **Study 2** will further explore these issues with religious authorities in each country, with psychotherapists considered agnostic authorities (N=120). All interviews and coding will be in the official language of each country (Farsi in Iran, English in Canada, Korean in Korea), with coding and analysis overseen by a native speaker of that language on the research team. However, critical incidents and key examples of themes will be translated into English for commentary by the whole team. The goal is to explore the cultural determinants and universality of virtue, and whether understandings of virtue are more commonly shared within national cultures or within religious faiths (i.e., whether Canadian Christians, Muslims, Buddhists and non-religious participants have more in common on the basis of being Canadian, or whether Christians in Iran, Canada, and Korea are more alike based on being Christian and striving to live a life of Christian virtue).

Notes

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