# The Inter-Processual Self

# The Inter-Processual Self:

*Towards a Personalist Virtue Ethics Proposal for Human Agency*

By

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*We dedicate this book to our colleagues,*
*our teachers, our friends and family,*
*as well as to all students and fellow readers*
*who have an interest in how to live well*
*and in harmony with other human beings.*

worms are the words but joy's the voice […]
deeds cannot dream what dreams can do
—time is a tree(this life one leaf)
but love is the sky and i am for you
just so long and long enough
e e cummings, 'Freedom is a Breakfast Food'

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# FOREWORD

Academic life is composed of a large variety of scientific disciplines, each of which is cultivated by a scientific community. These communities behave, to some extent, like tribal societies with their own practices, standards, rites, and a more or less shared history about their forbearers and foundations. This is to be expected since science is the fruit of human endeavor and thrives in the desire to know, as well as in human beings' shared acquisition and essentially social nature. But this fact sometimes causes problems that affect the very goal of science, namely knowledge and understanding.

When it first emerged, science was a unique undertaking that Greek thinkers called philosophy. This was a very beautiful designation indeed, and highlights the fact that the search for truth and knowledge is worthwhile but difficult. It also shows that this undertaking affects human life as a kind of pathos that tends to configure personality. Even in its first instances, philosophy began to divide into different fields. Ethics and the study of human beings began to acquire their own characteristic traits that distinguish them from cosmology. Almost at the same time, the birth of mathematics represented a challenge to the unity of knowledge. It is true that mathematics is clearer than other branches of knowledge, but its connection to reality remains in question.

However, the division of knowledge reached a larger scale in modern and contemporary times. First, thanks to thinkers like Galileo and Newton, physics became a clear and distinct field of study with a methodology that reveals regularities in nature, making it a mechanism of prediction and control. This extraordinary success encouraged thinkers from other fields to try to achieve the same kind of success. In this process, they demarcated a field of study, then a methodology. New scientific communities emerged.

Establishing a shared methodology presented some risks, however. The idea that the application of a method and the accumulation of knowledge according to it inspires unlimited progress, and the fact that sometimes that progress does actually occur, frequently provoked the belief that the history of science is not at all important. In this view, we only need to know about our colleagues' most recent developments and discoveries, and then can carry on with our own inquiry.

This sometimes works well, at least to some extent, in very limited and specialized fields. But, in more complex and difficult fields, obviating history implies forgetting about the choices and presuppositions that make up a discipline and consequently the limitations entailed in the way we cultivate it at any given moment.

This difficulty has become more serious because of another process in the history of science. Philosophy has survived the fragmentation of knowledge, but has been left in a difficult state. As new scientific disciplines that claimed to be entirely serious, objective, and rigorous reclaimed different fields of reality, philosophy began to fall back on the unconquered territories that contain the most difficult and ultimate questions.

The impossibility of dealing with those questions in a "scientific" way has two different and opposing outcomes. Some philosophers declared that, since those questions cannot be answered with the scientific method, they are not at all attainable and, therefore, are a matter of mere preferences or irrational belief. They frequently hold that only the scientific method and the communities that cultivate it are capable of obtaining true knowledge. In this view, the role of science consists in the justification of this idea, the rejection of other research methods, and the clarification of the language of science. Other philosophers accept this demarcation, that is, that other, established scientific "tribes" already occupied some fields of reality, but they try to clearly demarcate philosophy's territory and develop special methods for distinguishing this activity from other intellectual practices.

Much of this work has been fruitful and it is not my intention to condemn modern science overall or recent developments in philosophy. But the situation that this process has created is, in my opinion, far from ideal. The isolation of philosophy can only end in making dialogue among disciplines more difficult and in obstructing a unified and organic vision of reality.

Science is, in fact, very different from the idealized scene of a set of sciences that occupies a well-delimited field of reality, the sum of whose knowledge supposedly expands our vision of the world. In fact, different disciplines frequently study the same realities and deal with not-so-different methods, but the fact is that scientists are often unable to converse or understand others' views on similar topics. This problematic situation often engenders reproaches and a kind of jealousy surfaces between experts; communication therein can become almost impossible.

Nevertheless, human beings cannot do without a vision of the world, so it is normal that our vision of the world is full of oversimplifications

from specialists that ignore the history and complexity of problems. As happens more and more frequently, the humility that a rigorous search for knowledge usually produces in good scientists can lead to skepticism and leave the work of dissemination to popular writers and journalists.

I am not rejecting the good work that those professionals and novices can do, but the fact is that scientists have abdicated their task, which has grave consequences for the whole of society.

For this reason, efforts like those that motivate this book must be welcome and should also be encouraged in other fields of research. In this case, the authors offer a diagnosis that inspires new approaches to the study of human action and psychological development, and they propose an alternative approach that aims to more accurately and more richly describe reality. Various features of this undertaking are worth mentioning.

This text is the fruit of dialogue between researchers of different disciplines and various scientific and cultural backgrounds. Their concern for a common topic has made their task and the enrichment of perspectives possible, and has produced a common understanding. This is clear proof that the effort to overcome disciplinary limitations can be fruitful.

As for the proposal, the authors of this work manage to offer not only a theoretical reflection on human beings, but also a model that can be tested and can orient future research and its application to different fields. In accordance with their backgrounds and interests, the authors explain the consequences of their proposal especially for the fields of education and management, but they also make clear its relevance for other fields, like psychological therapy.

I am impressed by their effort to understand the theoretical roots and presuppositions of the model that they want to surmount and, especially, of their proposed model. In this way, they show that science is a historical endeavor that, although it often tends to hide its intellectual roots, cannot be properly understood and pursued without understanding its intellectual origins and the decisions that have contributed to its cultivation and delimitation.

One especially noteworthy feature of the model that the authors propose corresponds to the fact that it aspires to be intercultural. In fact, modern science tends to overly depend on the Western tradition, although, as mentioned, it is frequently totally ignorant of that fact; yet, a globalized world obliges us to keep in mind other traditions and how they can enrich our perspective. If well done, this intercultural effort is very promising.

As the authors present the scholars on whose work their proposal is built, the reader cannot help but admire the variety of personalities

involved. Philosophers and psychologists that belong to different traditions are put together and the authors take advantage of different aspects of their works. This implies dialogue and mutual enrichment between philosophy and psychology, which should be more frequent.

From the beginning, I have witnessed the work that underlies this book. I have seen how it came about and how it has been developed in an intense and sometimes difficult common project. After reading the book, one is tempted to say that the proposal of the "inter-processual self" has already been tested in the very process of writing this text. And this is an extraordinary achievement. Indeed, openness to others, attention to the person, respect for human nature, and hard work are present in the writing of this book, which fittingly correspond to the different roots –or radicals– that are responsible for human life and behavior, and that the authors correctly order and promote.

I thank the authors, Kleio, José Víctor, and Germán, for the invitation to offer a prologue to their book, an invitation that I know was extended out of friendship and mutually shared interests. I have every expectation that the process of mutual enrichment that produced this book will continue, leading to developments that allow for its application and testing. It will surely produce fruitful debate about topics that all humans share and whose accurate study is decisive to our lives.

José Ignacio Murillo
Pamplona, December 26th, 2017

# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

*One word frees us of all the weight and pain of life: that word is love.*

Sophocles

Each of us—Kleio, José Víctor, and Germán—met at a time of personal and intellectual seeking, inquiry, transition, and growth in our lives, and know that without each other our potential for growth would not have materialized. We, therefore, warmly acknowledge what each one of us has given and accepted in this process of co-creating, as well as the future research potential this proposal contains that will inevitably strengthen the present relationship and the future collaboration(s) involving the three of us and other colleagues. We also acknowledge how each other receives acts within this relationship congruently with an inter-processual self (IPS) way of knowing. Such giving–receiving relational mutuality has enabled continued personal growth in the process of "learning who we are and be(coming more fully) such," as Pindar, the early Greek naturalist thinker, brilliantly noted, echoing how we discuss the heart of our proposal in the fifth chapter of this book.

Moreover, we warmly appreciate how the personal trust and relation among us remains a safe space: one that allows us to debate, inquire, and act in such a way as to incubate ongoing attention to this work, which has finally been brought to life and to fruition. We hope readers like this work and its proposal and are intrigued to study it, practice it, and create other work based on it. Proposing a new singular voice in the hope that it will be part of other good existing research in the cross-disciplinary domain of virtue ethics and action research is neither an easy nor a quick and safe choice. But its purpose is worthwhile, and mutual support has been the oxygen in the effort of fostering dialogue that aims to restore a humane and ecologically sensitive economy and society. The kind of action we theoretically describe to this common good adheres to free and open system and ethics in relations of mutual growth. Essentially this personalist virtue ethics proposal (IPS) restores humanheartedness, sincerity and benevolence at the core of human action and collaboration.

*For somehow this is tyranny's disease, to trust no friends.*

Aeschylus

Additionally, we acknowledge and reflect on how our project and proposal may come to challenge hubris. We therefore also recognize the challenge that this personalist virtue ethics proposal we offer may pose to other systems of thought promoting mindsets that engage in sacrificing the flourishing of some to an abstract notion of a service to a greater good or a belief in post-humanism as a newly created "normal". This same challenge is posed to other systems of thought; systems which seek some normative justification for despotism's and totalitarianism's projects to master human freedom and openness; or, systems which promote a version of freedom based upon an excessively individualistic thinking regarding how the common good is reachable in life. We are opposed to such proposals that idolize or seriously crush the singularity and fear difference (in cognitive or actual terms) as threats instead of valuing them as possibilities and a manifestation of our wealth of spirit and nature. We trust the IPS proposal provides normative and some descriptive guidance on how to face what is fearful, sad and dehumanizing, however tricky it is for human action to live up to this proposal in our daily life and personal–social relations.

We wish to heartily thank all who believed in us and in this project and celebrate its fruition with us. We also acknowledge our friends and colleagues more broadly who support(ed) us in giving life to this work and/or trusted us in sharing a way of imagining how this new proposal can contribute to the broader dialogue and discourse bridging moral psychology and virtue ethics and applied in educational, organizational and governance theories.

> *Great deeds give choice of many tales. Choose a slight tale, enrich it large, and then let wise men listen.*
>
> Pindar

Our contribution of this new personalist virtue ethics proposal on the self, action, and human development (the so-called *inter-processual self* or IPS) has drawn its core argument, structure, and insights from the history of knowledge (see Appendix). This allows our own theoretical original contribution to the social sciences and human development theories to claim one specific cross-disciplinary rooting. We do therefore feel this is a "small and specific" research proposal even if it appears large due to its effort to create connections across disciplines and time via its theoretical rootedness in the history of knowledge we offer in our book's Appendix. This sense of making a specific contribution enables us to authentically and genuinely feel an integral part of the ethical dialoguing that is a characteristic of academia; and to remain connected and part of the struggles of each and all academic colleagues for a space and voice in their

effort searching for (more) truthful answers to imminent and important challenges, while maintaining their academic integrity and self-respect.

As noted by Professor Murillo in the Foreword, a unity of knowledge that Greek thinkers called philosophy evolved as a division of disciplines that suffered hugely from further fragmentations and subdivisions during the twentieth century; this unity of knowledge was in fact a unity in knowledge and in action with a humanistic ethic with a purposeful orientation to "the good." Our book simply acknowledges the huge loss of understanding and (practical) wisdom that brings many disciplines and life more broadly further away from a sense of what is the essence of being and acting as a human person with an orientation to the good. We therefore acknowledge how other colleagues around various existing formal disciplinary boundaries (and guided by things we were educated and socialized to take for granted in modern thought and fear to inquire, or costs to our professional and personal lives could ensue) have been dedicating their lives in passionate work to resolve problems of self, and action with maturity, and an ethos of responsibility, respect for other(s) as opposed to a striving for mastery and domination and an ecological ethos and sensitivity. We therefore also respect and acknowledge colleagues in various fields of study (normative and applied ethics, human development, social science, and philosophy more broadly) who deal with the same problems, even those we classify as theories with which we disagree, and ideas we think of as hugely influential, but which we do not classify in this volume for reasons explained. Many of you are or have been our friends, teachers, colleagues, and people we know as mentors and/or reviewers and who practice social and government and broader policy and action. Sincerely, therefore, we wish to acknowledge our being part of this broader community in our profession, and our bonds to all of you.

And this brings us to this: we wholeheartedly thank Professor José Ignacio Murillo, who kindly dedicated thought and time for his thorough peer review of the volume. We thank him for his kind scholarly contribution to our effort, via his foreword. Beside the thoughtful and wise words he wrote to prepare readers how to read and understand this work and its roots of inquiry and action, we appreciate this contribution for the uniqueness of its creator: Professor Murillo combines a rare pluri-disciplinary expertise spanning from classical to modern and contemporary philosophy and history of philosophy, cognitive science, as well as behavioral and moral psychology fields of study, while he maintains a virtue ethics academic focus. We find this background important for it balances and expresses with craftsmanship, eloquence,

simplicity, and character ethos the academic "distance–closeness duality" that is required for a foreword to a colleague's work.

We thank Christa Byker, Felicity Teague, as well as Sophie Edmonson, Hannah Fletcher, Adam Rummins -and the design, typesetting and print services teams- in *Cambridge Scholars Publishing* for the help in copyediting, for making our ideas stylistically clearer and for helping us to finish off this book so nicely. Your collaboration in making our work enjoyable to read is much appreciated with sincere thanks.

As a final comment, we believe our contribution to a better understanding of the self is part of a larger effort in recent years following many unexpected economic, social, moral, and humanistic crises in the so-called "developed" world.

> *It is terrible to speak well and be wrong.*
>
> Sophocles

Crises often offer opportunities to examine ourselves, and to inquire after what is lacking, or what is not really working, investigating how to sincerely reexamine the status quo especially in how established ways of thinking, knowing, and acting can be re-imagined. This requires personal, relational, and systemic action regarding how to approach choices and the process of acting personally and in collaboration with others in various communities of practice. irrespective of who and if our action is being monitored or "managed-regulated" from outside systems. Our book offers a proposal of moral psychology approached through theory of knowledge and its history. Our proposal on knowing and acting approaches action and valuing as something that demands personal and relational inquiry and a sincere concern for honest responses that are integral to identity and our moral feelings and not just a detached rational judgment capacity. This is a delicate process, therefore, that binds how to be a good person, how to love, and how to act well facing one's and others' responses. The proposal we offer in this book does not adopt the assumption that being human confers absolute freedom and authority to each of us to autonomously construct each one's subjective good. Nor is it tied to a notion of the ethical that undermines the importance of personal and shared responsibility (irrespectively of the extent to which our action is being monitored or "managed–regulated" from outside systems or superior authority) and the notion that goodness and living well is possible independently of the choices each one of us is making approaching our relations and action in our identities, relations, and communities.

> *Seek not, my psyche (soul), the life of the immortals; but enjoy to the full the resources that are within thy reach.*
>
>                                                                    Pindar

Within this context, we hope this book and its proposal contribute to a broader dialogue and actual good progress and solutions. We are motivated to contribute "our voice" and join other voices that genuinely care about restoring a sustainable, humanistic, and ecological ethos. We believe such broader voices are shared among academic communities, educators, and non-academic communities (policy makers, sustainability and personal development and ethics consultancy and bodies, governments and non-profit or non-governmental international transnational or local organizations, local administration, civil society, etc.), who, as citizens in communities, jointly inquire after how to make a better life ethos and practice possible across various spheres.

With full hearts and minds,

**Kleio, José Víctor, and Germán**
*from the United Kingdom, Spain, and Mexico*

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# PART I

# THE PROPOSAL OF THE INTER-PROCESSUAL SELF

# CHAPTER ONE

# AN INTRODUCTION TO THE THEORY
# OF THE SELF AND ITS DEVELOPMENT

Western culture is highly grounded in Greek philosophy, and especially in Aristotelian thought. For Aristotle, there is a close relationship between action and knowledge. Human action deals with the realization of a wide range of activities, aimed at the configuration of life itself according to a certain ideal representation of the good life. This is what Aristotle calls *praxis* (Vigo 2007, 110), and only people who possess a certain rational representation of what a good life means are capable of *praxis*. Human excellence or virtue resides in rightly fulfilling this function in accordance with reason (Sison and Fontrodona 2015, 242). Naturally it should also be noted when it comes to excellence or virtue that "there is no such thing as an objectively virtuous action in itself considered, independently of the person who performs it" (Sison 2015, 252). That is, Aristotelian ethics is premised on a proper human function that expresses reason.

Aristotle classifies the different kinds of human knowledge in accordance with the types of related activity, that is, pursuant to its end. He then identifies three kinds of human activity: contemplation (*theoria*), action (*praxis*), and production (*poiesis*). The different kinds of knowledge correspond with the diverse uses of reason. Theoretical reason (*sophia*) speculates on something and its aim is the contemplation of truth; practical reason (*phronesis*) deals with human action and it has a moral dimension—that is, it enables man to reflect on his actions so that they are organized towards their own perfection; and technical reason (*techne*) is aimed at an external end or result (Met. II 2 and VII 1). Technical reason, unlike the other types of reason, unfolds in the realm of means only. However, along with theoretical reason, it knows universal and necessary causes, so it can be easily taught. Practical reason, which relates to both ends and means, deals with contingent actions.

The Aristotelian emphasis on excellence in personal moral character (virtue) as the precondition for achieving the "right" reason, although never lost, was gradually degraded thanks to a shift to individualism that can be traced to the fourteenth century (see Appendix). This was a very

unfortunate turn in the evolution of thought, with profound consequences for human action's pursuits. It gave way to later critiques of a reductionist understanding of reason and reason's limits (e.g., Hendry 2016) in contemporary applied philosophy and philosophical efforts to reorient modern thought closer to Aristotle's profound moral philosophy and authority (MacIntyre 1982).

Aristotle's emphasis on practical–moral reason (*phronesis*; prudence) as the only form of rational excellence that is solely linked with a moral dimension of human action is well known and explained. For Aristotle, practical reason emanates from virtue and as a result always predicts action that is linked with morally good ends both internally for the actor and for ensuring a good life for all—*eudaimonia* (Scalzo 2017; Sison 2015). Precisely due to these, and as a result of classical philosophy's basis on character (personal virtue), ethical[1] action is causally linked both to the continuous ethical growth of the actor's moral character, and to ethical outcomes ensuring that the common good of each and all involved is served well (Meyer 2017).

Normative philosophy in various branches deals with ethics and what is ethical. "Ethical" and "ethics" broadly refer to "the branch of knowledge that deals with the moral principles that are the right to govern the person's behavior or the conducting of an activity" (Oxford Dictionary of English, 2nd edition, 595). There are three main branches in Western philosophy (Melé 2012; Ferrero and Sison 2012, 2014). The first branch refers to virtue ethics, which originates in Aristotelian philosophy and claims that living in virtue and adopting virtues that are inner personal dispositions such as benevolence, generosity, justice, or charity, enables both personal flourishing and wider social prosperity. The second branch in the study of ethics is based on Kantian philosophy and focuses on Kant's notion of duty to always act as rational beings and in accordance with a universal categorical imperative whereby other human beings are respected as ends and not means. The third branch of ethics is utilitarianism, which argues that ethics is guided by a rule whereby the greatest good for the greatest number of people must be determined and followed in all cases.

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[1] The term "*ethical*" in its classical sense (prior to the modern thinking in philosophy) refers to how persons come to know what is the right thing to do to act congruently with virtue and moral character. There is a closer link here with the work of Aristotle as he emphasizes the inner locus of virtue and the unity of the various virtues rooted in the continuity and the depth of moral character (NE 1144b.35–1145a.1).

The term "*ethical*" captures a personal quality of approaching and acting based on what is the right thing to do to act for the good, which captures Aristotle's (NE 1144b.35–1145a.1) and broader virtue ethics' emphasis on the importance of each singular moral actor's moral character maturity (Akrivou and Orón 2016; Koehn 1995; Sison 2015).

Nevertheless, "modern" academic disciplines are based on the idealization of theoretical, hypothetical, and abstract reason as the highest form of reason, which must guide human action and how we go about pursuing ends and outcomes. Thus, the key philosophy underlying the disciplines and especially the applied disciplines in modern academia pursues a morally neutral ideal linked with how to reach intellectually correct answers (hence, inspired by theoretical reason), rather than how to improve practical human action (of any form) that leads to morally good processes and outcomes (hence, linked with practical wisdom, or Aristotelian *phronesis*). Of course, "modern" disciplines do try to create foundations for their theories that not only appear independent, but that are also linked with a hypothesis of moral neutrality—that is, theories grounded in abstract principles that are separate and independently autonomous from the character and the moral excellence (virtue) of the acting persons.

Within this context, modern psychology found its footing. The origins of modern psychology were intentionally and closely linked with modern philosophy, grounding assumptions around the emergence of new theory and research methods, and this linkage inspired most of what modern psychology has produced (McAdams 1990a). In its early days, the discipline clearly aimed to "create" a grounding of psychology as a theoretical discipline and relying on positive methods and based on universal and scientific laws and principles. Of course, later, even modern psychology developed various branches that are inspired by a more subjectivist and interpretativist ontology and epistemology, but decisive boundaries were not drawn among these traditions and various lines of works. As a result, modern psychology is hugely fragmented. For example, there are many lines of work to date that claim to be based on Aristotelian and classical philosophy foundations (positive psychology is an example), but neo-Aristotelian scholars ardently question this association (for detailed references see Meyer 2017). Psychology's modern emphasis has specifically focused on creating theory spanning various separate domains, ranging from human cognition, emotion, identity, development and the self, among others.

In the following chapters of this book, we position and associate our personalist virtue ethics proposal and its moral psychology in reference to

key philosophical and psychological authors. Indeed, as we analyze in Chapter Five, the proposal of the inter-processual self (IPS) has broad philosophical and psychological bases, which we further develop throughout the book. However, regarding how the corresponding moral psychology of our proposal (IPS) compares and contrasts with the broader discipline of psychology, we have mainly focused on the so-called cognitive revolution and respective works in the evolution of psychology (Flavell 1992). Our review, therefore, is centered on cognitive and personality models of growth and related works regarding conceptions of human growth, with an emphasis on integrative processes in the self and the role of identity, differentiation, and integration in human agency and interpersonal relations.

We have consciously chosen to rely on certain authors, philosophers, and key representative psychologists, because we think that, for the current debate on the person and their development, these works offer better conceptual and descriptive keys. These "keys" allow us to maintain a dialogue with other lines of research that walk along different paths closer or farther from our personalist virtue ethics proposal. We offer in our novel book a personalist virtue ethics proposal (IPS) and our distinct contribution centers also on our approaching the topic of ethical beings, growth, and action via a theory of knowledge. Beyond our distinct contribution, we hope that this work serves to facilitate further open and new cross-disciplinary dialogue and collaboration bridging moral psychology, philosophy, theory of knowledge, and social and behavioral science more broadly. Regarding our proposal, we have chosen to relate it to different and distinct authors to overcome mere cultural conditions that may block one tradition from connecting to another line of thinking springing from another cultural system of understanding the same phenomena. Hence, our reference authors (who are Aristotle, Leonardo Polo, Alfred N. Whitehead, Wang Yangming, Carl Rogers, Erik Erikson, and Viktor Frankl) have indeed very different cultural, geographical, and temporal backgrounds and origins. And this accounts for how they utilize different language and conceptual connections that, as we show, often capture phenomena in a profoundly congruent way.

We can relate to these authors as we, both personally and as a research team, are linked with various cultural, linguistic and socio-emotive backgrounds, which perhaps allows us to see connections across these different cultural origins in our key authors of reference.

The debate we hold throughout the book to some extent also reflects the debate that psychology has in its evolution. There was a moment in the history of psychology in which the concern for the discipline has been to

prove and to further become a strictly scientific discipline, which led to a focus on the study of behavior, and the blooming of behaviorist psychology and operant behaviorism (Catanya and Harnad 1988; Skinner 1987; Skinner 1990a, 1990b; Watson 1913, 1926). This turn is part of a broader move in psychology from Darwin to behaviorist thinking (Boakes 1984). And this evolution (behaviorism) has also been due to the ease of measurement via tools and experimental works (Skinner 1947). In experimental psychology, regarding the behavior of a subject and its personality concepts are conceptualized and operationalized as measurable. So this simple fact would allow psychology to stand on its feet towards its becoming "an adult" scientific discipline. This line found a separate field of growth in educational research (Skinner et al. 2008). Skinner is a reference author for this trend (Skinner et al. 1972; Skinner 1996), which led to research on the subject and his behavior. We simply indicate the fact that a huge bias exists when the study of the person has been reduced to the behavior, which influenced modern behaviorism in psychology being taken for granted as "the" only psychological science relevant to the study of the human being who is the acting agent. Our proposal critiques this approach.

Behaviorist psychology and the branch in psychology known as Gestalt behaviorist school of thought, opened a new door to psychology towards its "cognitive" turn (Murray 1995). That brings this discipline closer to the research lines we more closely observe in this book as key models of reference for AS. It has been the desire to recover the psychological world of individuals that led to a reaction to the purely behaviorist strand looking to life and people in terms of mere "reflex-action" terms (Watson 1926) and towards cognitive psychology revolution (Murray 1995). In this cognitivist strand's booming (Flavell 1992), one representative thinker is Vygotsky, whose sociocultural approach (Gauvain 2008) had a big influence in educational and growth psychology with the notion of the proximal zone of development and the development of constructivist curricula (Jaramillo 1996). And, of course, the emphasis of Piaget's theory of constructivist cognitive development (emphasizing the formal abstract operational thinking marking "proper" adulthood) is a huge influence from the same field. This line of cognitive psychology enriched the ego psychology models because besides the behavior the inner richness of the human psyche starts to be considered in some form. Towards this, an influence has been the move of the daughter of Sigmund Freud to the USA, where much of this psychology development occurred. However, central to this psychology was the "me." Now, these same authors have already pointed out that the ego and its development outside

of the game of social relations cannot be understood. Even authors such as Piaget, who is often accused of self-isolation, are, in fact, highly social. For example, it is enough to read Piaget's (Piaget and Cook 1952, 2013) understanding of the development of the autonomy (Piaget et al. 2013; Kamii 1991) of the child directly to see that it is a tremendously social proposal with its emphatic playful understanding of community and of neighborhood (Piaget 2013a, 2013b).

However, we think that psychology is taking a third turn, where the emphasis would be on the social and the community is not only a modulating aspect of human development but also the nature of what is the person and its development. In that line, we include ourselves, but there are many other efforts that have been considered tangentially in this book, and others that have not been considered at all. The reason for exclusion is entirely due to focusing on the interdisciplinary dialogue and debate (philosophy and psychology) of the person and their development in general.

For example, of great interest to all of us is a line of work recognized under the terms joint attention and share intentionality, our reference author here is Tomasello, anthropologist, and psychologist (Tomasello 2007, 2014). This line, together with the works of attachment, social referencing, and the we-mode in anthropology (Gallotti and Frith 2013), is showing, as we do ourselves, that the dimension of (inter)personal relationship is not a mere modulating aspect of personal processing in the self. The social and relational in the person is profoundly about our nature as social beings, and, in agreement with our proposal, the person and his/her development can be correctly understood from within personal relationality. Hence, precisely expressing this commonality we have with these anthropological psychologists, in our proposal in the inter-processual self, the term "**inter**" is expressing this very profound assumption. The difference is that, while these proposals of Tomasello (2007, 2014) and others of social referencing (Klinnert et al. 1986; Mireault et al. 2014; Pelaez, Virues-Ortega, and Gewirtz 2012; Feinman and Lewis 1983) or attachment theory (Bowlby 1982) focus on the study of the small child and adopt a more psychological approach, our personalist virtue ethics proposal focuses on the person in general (and personal relational growth) and with a philosophical and psychological approach.

We suggest that many other lines of work are open in the same direction as ours, and future research will give a fuller account of this, giving strength to our work in turn. Just to show some examples, we quote from psychoanalysis, such as Winnicott (1965) and Kohut (1966, 1968), or from the personalist philosophy to humanistic psychology of Mounier

(2009) or Buber (1970), or from the same psychology to Murray (1964), who came to propose that psychology should evolve to "personology."

We thus discover a common line on which we find ourselves, one that has as a common denominator the characteristic of approaching the knowledge of the person from his natural inter-personal base and never abandoning this base. That is to say, the personal encounter—or relation as natural root of the person—is not just a moment of the self (in its growth), but it is its constant reference that never abandons human beings. And it is from where a(ny) human person accesses the world and itself, as we discuss later in the book with reference to the conceptual foundations of the IPS proposal.

This line should not be confused with others that, in our opinion, end up dissolving or diminishing the "I" in the social as if in the end social pressures become the subject who acts in an oblivion of its identity as if it is the impersonal "society." This seems an exaggeration that we do not share. We find problems with these proposals as they abandon the personalist normative assumption we suggest in IPS. Precisely in order to avoid such misunderstanding instead of repeatedly talking about the social, we refer, instead, to inter-personal relationship(s): we aim this way to preserve and safeguard the character of personal being and personal encounter and to create a form of conceptualizing our proposal that closes the door to the possibility of its supporting views that blur the person in a game of social tensions, laden with sociological concerns and assumptions that cancel the key concerns we represent—as on occasion Bourdie performs (1990; Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992) from sociology.

At this point it is also useful to refer to basic terms we relate to surrounding the person, the self, and agency in philosophy and psychology. To contextualize these here in the context of psychology so that readers can follow the subsequent chapter analysis, it should be noted that different branches of "modern" psychological research frequently use the terms "person," "subject," "actor," "agent," "me," "the self," and "I." These terms are used to refer to the human being who is, who acts, and his or her associated "growth". Often, achieving personal growth in psychology has focused on the question of how to achieve *integrity in the self*, while the pursuit of being *a self-integrated person* has been linked with cognitive developmental dynamics associated with the actor's self-system (McAdams 1990a). Congruently, central questions in the "modern" branches of self-integration psychology also touch upon important ontological and epistemological, as well as moral and teleological, issues (McAdams 1990a, 1990b) such as those that have been tackled by normative philosophy in both the classical and the modern traditions.

These questions, among others, include the following: "Who is the human being in ontological terms?" "Who is the self and how is the self constituted?" "How should we understand agency and the relation between agency and the subject who acts?" "How should we understand the purpose of psychology for agency and the ends that human action creates or pursues?" "What provides unity and purpose in human life?" "What is the nature of personal integrative development and what is the reference for maturation and growth?" "What are the developmental dynamics in the self that allow a person to grow and flourish, and how do we define what effective growth ensures?"

Within modern psychology, the branch of theory concerned with human moral action in a way that is linked with a mature inner locus in the acting person (which is the modern equivalent of Aristotle's concern for human virtue and its inner locus as prerequisite for an ethical teleology connected with human action) were greatly influenced by a few, albeit extremely important, scholars and theorists. Specifically, theoretical foundations in modern psychology surrounding problems of the mature self and ethical human action have received attention from Piaget (1962) and Vygotsky (1980, 1986) in cognitive development, Kohlberg (1969, 1981, 1984; Kohlberg and Ryncarz, 1990)—and recently Haidt (2001)—in moral development and cognitive theories (also Harvey, Hunt, and Schroeder, 1961), humanistic development psychology inspired by Rogers (Gendlin 1962, 1969, 1978/1997, 1991), and human learning theories (Kolb 2015) that are inspired by radical empiricism in Dewey (1929).

In mainstream modern psychology, Richard Ryan equally and profoundly influenced a positivist scientific human development theory (Deci and Ryan 2002, 2013; Ryan 1995; Ryan and Deci 2000, 2004, 2006; Ryan and Lynch 1989; Moller, Deci, and Ryan 2006).

Additionally, post-Piagetian theorists have developed noteworthy works and theories that are influenced by the postmodern turn in modern psychology that started in the 1990s. Related works include those by Kegan (1982, 1994) and Lahey-Laskow (1986), who were inspired by postmodern thinking on the socially constructed self (Gergen 1985, 1991, 1999). Finally, Loevinger (1966, 1976) and her successor Cook-Greuter (1999, 2000), who worked on the post-Piagetian ego-development branch of modern psychology, were greatly influenced by psychoanalytical traditions on the self (Loevinger's work is especially and closely linked with Freud, Strachey, and Freud 2001; Freud 1992) and Buddhist thinking (Cook-Greuter's work).

Across all of these theories, and despite theoretical differences in foundations and assumptions, there are very salient commonalities

regarding what it is to be an ethical person and the links between an ethical (morally mature) self-system and the kinds of agency and action that ensue. They also contain concern about how to maintain and enhance the resilience and the flourishing of the acting agent in pursuit of a desired end.

Despite the hyper-fragmentation of modern psychology on the self, and human growth and development, across all modern (or postmodern) lines of work mentioned above, some common questions also emerge, including how some notion of "mature" or "higher-level" human agency for the good occurs. This problem is being approached through a conception that it has to emerge later in life as a result of intentional rational will by subject-agents, and in most cases human mature agency is seen as tied to aspirational conceptions of growth in order to achieve self-direction or self-authorship first, which would then allow human agency to focus on moral concerns and exclusively allow for a connection with broader universal and human values in higher states of growth. Integrative processes in the self in modern psychological theories (e.g., Ryan 1995) have a lot of commonalities with stage development models regarding the inner tendencies of human organisms to strive to actualize themselves by covering increasingly diverse needs, gradually aiming at establishing higher unity in the self.

These models assume the self-system of the acting person lacks a naturally existing integrated locus that motivates the organism's aiming to achieve superior states of integrative processing, which are theoretically linked with an aspirational ideal of retrieving (a lost/inexistent) inner locus of integrity (and virtue) in the person's organism and self-system. In addition, modern theories on the self and human growth generally understand the self as **lacking unity**, and human development, through a variety of tasks, aims to integrate different domains, identities, antithetical traits or tendencies, or conflicting functions and processes in the self. Hence the problem of an integrated self has always started from a premise and axiom that the self lacks integration and unity, and a higher-level capacity for integrative development is primarily a cognitive challenge to be solved.

Overall, as noted, all the above approaches emanate from the very premises of modern thought and are not in deep theoretical congruence with Aristotelian assumptions that guide a consistent moral psychology (an applied moral psychology that fully corresponds to a classical conception of the self, action, and human and social growth). Based on these critiques and limitations relevant to the current strengths and weaknesses of modern psychology of self, we trust our proposed theory of