

Key Aspects of Moral Character in the Situationist Challenge

JAN BRÁZDIL

Department of Philosophy

Masaryk University, Faculty of Arts

Arna Nováka 1

602 00 Brno

Czech Republic

382430@mail.muni.cz

ABSTRACT

Situationist Challenge in moral philosophy refers to the contemporary criticism of Aristotle's concept of moral character. It is based on a different area than the previous criticism, and thus presents a new challenge to the classical theory. Whether or not this critique is successful in challenging the empirical and normative adequacy of the Aristotelian concept, it is linked with an extensive discussion. I considered it important to explore what we can learn about the classical theory in the mirror of contemporary moral psychology. In this paper, I will introduce some of the aspects which constitute the Aristotelian concept of moral character, but have not been taken into account in the situationist criticism: the moral reasoning, the cultivation based on experience and the aspiration to self-improvement. These aspects are of course based on the general features of moral character (they are implied by them), and the argumentation which fails to appreciate them, fails in proper understanding of its object of criticism.

— INTRODUCTION

The aim of this paper is to outline three aspects of Aristotelian concept of moral character, which may prove to be quite important in its contemporary criticism led by philosophical situationists. As those aspects are routinely omitted from their description of moral character, it can be seen as an implication of the situationists' misunderstanding about the subject of the critique. Not all of these aspects are highly represented in the discussion between the situationists and the advocates of the Aristotelian concept, but still, the more important they may show themselves to be. The goal is then not to show whether or not the moral character is adequate and which of the parties has stronger arguments (more extensive works have

been written on this subject). My intention is to point out that there are three important aspects of a moral character that have not (or at least not sufficiently) been taken into account in the situationist criticism, which has crippling consequences for some of the situationists' arguments. Consequences that are sometimes too obvious to imply anything else but misunderstanding about Aristotelian concept of moral character. I will start by clarifying important terms and by introducing both sides of the discussion. Then, one by one, I will introduce the three key aspects of moral character. And finally, I will explain, why exact understanding of the concept of moral character could be critical in this discussion.

1. SITUATIONIST CRITIQUE AND ITS CONTEXTS AND IMPORTANCE

The discussion that arises from situationist criticism is usually called the ‘Situationist Challenge’ and it focuses on a question whenever is Aristotelian concept of moral character adequate in the light of findings of contemporary psychology. The critique is based on empirical data (i.e. experiments) from the fields of social and cognitive psychology and it challenges empirical and normative adequacy of Aristotelian concept.¹ Whether or not it has sufficient arguments to introduce a decisive conclusion, it’s aimed well enough to make a meaningful and important discussion.

By ‘moral character’ in this discussion I understand: A disposition (ἕξις) which is relatively reliable (that is temporally stable and consistent across situations) and ensure with sufficient probability relevant reaction (e.g. brave reaction) in all relevant situations (that is virtue-eliciting situations, e.g. danger) and in accordance with one’s values and goals, despite situational factors which make this reaction difficult.²

- 1 Empirical adequacy is challenged simply by empirical data, should they imply that only a negligible number of people possesses a disposition called ‘moral character’. Normative adequacy is challenged by empirical data indirectly on the ground of supposed impossibility of acquirement of moral character for most of us.
- 2 John Doris attaches another condition, namely, the evaluative integration (1998, pp. 507–8; 2002, pp. 21–3), which is based on *NE*. The familiar part of the sixth book (i.e. 1144b30–5a2) is often interpreted in such a way that if one has achieved at least one virtue (e.g. bravery), then he also has achieved all the

With this definition I aim to reasonably satisfy the wider understanding of Aristotelian concept of moral character represented in the discussion. That also means to stress those features which we can diagnose in empirical experiment, rather than focus strictly on prohairesis aspect of moral character.³ Of course, with this definition I don’t mean to shape the Aristotelian concept in any

others. Therefore, virtue in its perfect form cannot be isolated. Yet, this interpretation is hardly accepted by everybody (cf. Kamtekar 2004, pp. 468–9). But more importantly, despite of its explicit introduction by Doris, whether this condition is empirically or normatively adequate is not properly questioned in the discussion. The main reason may be that situationists’ experiments are concerned with examining only one moral feature (i.e. virtue) at a time.

- 3 As reasonably required by Doris 2002, p. 26. Still, Doris in large part of the discussion considers overt behavior as an aspect of moral character and a part of its definition (e.g. Doris 2005), which I consider to be impossible to implement into a consistent concept of *Aristotelian* moral character. Thus, I use “reaction” in broad sense, including inner states. Also, the expression “sufficient probability” should put aside the objection that moral character is a rare disposition (cf. *NE* 1109a29). It may be true for a fully virtuous character, but moral character considered in this discussion should be a more common (in various degrees). What overall probability (same as reliability) is sufficient is intentionally vague, simply because there is no explicit agreement on some statistical degree. What is important is that whenever the degree is reasonable high for us to conclude that we can use the psychological findings to improve the cultivation of our moral character rather than to abandon it and focus on a different method to ensure a correct behavior in difficult situations (e.g. Doris 2002, pp. 146–9; Harman 2003, p. 91; Merritt et al 2010, pp. 389–91).

way, Aristotle's definition of moral character should be still applicable, just less convenient in the discussion.

Situationists argue that moral character is too unreliable (concerning its consistency across situations) and too weak (i.e. the probability of relevant reaction in relevant situations is too low) to devote our resources to its development.⁴ Supposedly because people are usually unable to overcome various factors such as social pressure, momentary mental settings or even just something as routine as bad weather. According to situationists, moral character does not guide our behavior to such an extent as situations do. Temporal stability of moral character is not a subject of criticism, since we commonly call some people courageous or merciful because we are witnessing countless situations in which these people behave bravely or mercifully. Situationists do not want to question our everyday experience. However, according to John Doris these situations we are witnessing are, in the strict sense, the same (or relatively similar). In another case of danger, the courageous person would fail as everybody else. Doris calls this fragmented character "local".⁵ The Aristotelian concept, however, presupposes fully reliable "global" moral character.⁶

Among advocates of Aristotelian moral character are two leading tendencies. First, accepting situationists' warning about unexpectedly strong influence of some situations as an opportunity to improve our understanding and cultivation of the concept of moral character (since overcoming difficult situations and do the right thing is what moral character is about).⁷ Second (prevailing in later discussions), accusing situationists of "Mischaracterization", that is accusing them of introducing a simplified or inaccurate concept of Aristotelian moral character (usually reducing the role of inner states).⁸

Arguments within both camps are at least compatible if not similar. However, making a too strict distinction between the two rival groups in the Situationist Challenge may be misleading and should not lead us to the belief that we can identify two consistent parties without any internal conflicts. There are quite a few approaches on how to reconcile the concept of moral character with psychological findings and many of them are actively advocated by various authors. While leaving aside the discussion between situationist criticism and non-Aristotelian ethical theory, i.e. different philosophical traditions

4 E.g. Doris 1998, pp. 512–3; Doris 2002, pp. 110–2; Doris & Stich 2006.

5 Doris 2002, pp. 25–6; 62–6.

6 Despite several concrete examples, the general tone of Aristotle's expression he used to describe individual moral virtues is evident (*NE*, book III.–V.). Accordingly, man of practical wisdom is described as "to be able to deliberate well about what

is good and expedient for himself, not in some particular respect, e.g. about what sorts of thing conduce to health or to strength, but about what sorts of thing conduce to the good life in general." (*NE* 1140a24–8.)

7 *NE* 1109a24–b26; Annas 2005, pp. 641–2; Kamtekar 2004, p. 461; Swanton 2005, p. 33.

8 E.g. Annas 2005, p. 637.

like Humean, early Confucianism or Stoicism, there are still contemporary theories responding to situationists' objections (e.g. CAPS, i.e. cognitive-affective personality system) as well as authors like Hagop Sarkissian, Robert M. Adams, John Sabini and Maury Silver who bring interesting arguments to the discussion but do not particularly pick either side.

2. THREE ASPECTS OF MORAL CHARACTER

THE MORAL REASONING

The first aspect of the moral character which makes moral character arguably resistant to situationist critique and which was omitted from the situationists' description of moral character is its substantial dependence on practical wisdom (*φρόνησις*), the aspect of moral reasoning. Moral character is then understood as a *disposition to act for reasons*.⁹ That is the reason for action which follows our reaction in a virtue-eliciting situation. In Aristotle's terms we can understand this reason simply as "reason" (*λόγος*) or "right reason" (*ὁρθὸς λόγος*) in the case of correct reasoning.¹⁰ The right reason, of course, is sometimes difficult to achieve. Aristotle warns us, that there are two ways how we can fail in moral deliberation: we can be wrong about the universal or the particular. Being wrong about the universal means being wrong about what is ultimately *good* or *right* and what good

man should do. Being wrong about the particular means being wrong about the fact, that *this* is the situation which demands a certain reaction.¹¹ But there is also another way to fail in practical wisdom, that is while searching for the best means towards a specific goal.¹² In these three ways we can succeed or fail and each of them produces a *reason* for action. Thus, we act as we act, because we have certain understanding of what is right and wrong (and what is preferable), because we have certain understanding of given situation and because we consider certain means as most fitting to fulfill what is preferable.

However, like in the most of associated experiments, situationists in large part of the discussion assess only overt behavior and mostly ignore inner states (including all reason for displayed behavior). And so, they conclude that experiment participants have responded poorly simply based on their displayed behavior.¹³ This approach to moral character raised an objection (i.e. Mischaracterization response): if we want to assess moral character of other people, we need to analyze their reasons for acting to assess their *reaction* to the situation.¹⁴ True, if our reasoning is right, but our behavior is not, then there is

11 NE 1143b21, 1142a22.

12 NE 1144a6–9.

13 Some of the situations reflect this problem by consider overt behavior to be sufficient evidence (e.g. Doris 2002, pp. 16–7, 86–9; cf. Doris 2010, pp. 140–4), others don't see this as inconvenient at all (e.g. Badhwar 2009, p. 261).

14 Sreenivasan 2002, p. 58; Annas 2003, p. 24; Kamtekar 2004, pp. 470–1.

9 Annas 2005, pp. 637–8.

10 E.g. NE 1144b20–5.

a problem. It would simply mean that we are incontinent (ἀκρατής) and our moral character fails to ensure relevant reaction to the situation. Still, it's safe to say that the behavior of the participants wasn't simply and one-sidedly wrong, because situations introduced in the experiments were arguably ambiguous, and the participants could have good reasons for their behavior, whether the reasons were about preferable goals, particulars, or means. When situationists do not appreciate an interpretative variability of the situations and assess moral character of other people simply based on their own understanding of what is relevant and important in given situation (and, indeed, in human life), or even how to ultimately deal with difficult social situations, then their interpretations will be flawed. Even if participants failed in "moral test", if we ignore their reasons, then there is no telling to what extent they failed (choosing inappropriate means due to lack of experience is not the same as disregarding what is the right thing to do due to situational factors).

For example, in Milgram's experiment there was a participant who was causing electric shocks to a person in a second room step by step with an increasing intensity, until that person stopped reacting, presumably being dead.¹⁵ The experimenter, a professor of Yale University, only sat and repeated to the participant that he *needs to* continue the experiment.¹⁶ Situationists argue

that obedience to authority (i.e. situational factor) makes participants to act with an incredible cruelty regardless of their moral character.¹⁷ But beside the screams there was no other sign of anything wrong. The experimenter, surprisingly, did not react to screaming at all, he didn't ever *try* to convince the participants not to worry. By using sentences prescribed for his role he might even sounded quite bored or apathetic (see note 16). *And* the participants knew very well that this experiment had taken place several times before. Surely the Yale university did not commit a mass murder unnoticed.¹⁸ So maybe, there were good reasons to believe there was no real harm at all. Or at least it was a very difficult situation to read, perhaps too difficult for most people, arguably causing severe confusion.¹⁹

Doris for a significant part of the discussions argued, that overt behavior is a justified condition for the attribution of moral character, because it is

requires that you continue.", "It is absolutely essential that you continue.", You have no other choice, you *must* go on.". If a participant asked or protested, he briefly reacted and finished his answer with "... so please go on" (Milgram 1963, p. 374).

17 E.g. Doris & Stich 2006.

18 Sabini & Silver 2005, pp. 550–3.

19 While Doris refused to interpret this situation as difficult (Doris 2002, pp. 39–42, 49–50; 2005, pp. 657–8), Milgram himself described participant's behavior as nervous and extremely tense, they were observed to "sweat, tremble, stutter, bite their lips, groan, and dig their fingernails into their flesh" and even to laugh bizarrely; only to (in few cases) apologize rather politely and indicating that they wish to leave (Milgram 1963, pp. 375–6).

15 Milgram 1963, pp. 371–4.

16 Experimenter spoke with firm voice using phrases: "Please go on.", "The experiment

supposedly supported by Aristotle's own claim and the concept of moral character without it would be unfalsifiable.²⁰ However, in the first case Doris refers to *NE* 1098b30–1099a5 which is ambiguous to say the least. Critical part about activity (ταύτης γάρ ἐστιν ἢ κατ' αὐτὴν ἐνέργεια) probably refer to virtue rather than to happiness. Few years sooner Doris refused generally accepted interpretation of another part of *NE*, which supports statement that activity is not the most reliable indicator of moral character.²¹ The second objection is probably too rash. The concept of moral character cannot call into question any empirical observation, the problem of falsification is only present if experiments are not sophisticated enough to avoid similar objections. Such experiments would have to be financially more expensive and more complex, as Doris himself suggests.²² But that makes it worse for situationism rather than Aristotle's moral character.

Later for the sake of the argument Doris acknowledged the relevance of inner states, particularly practical wisdom, as a part of moral character. But at the same time he refused that something like practical wisdom could have a sufficient influence on our behavior, because our reasons for action are, as Doris and other situationists argue, prone to be shaped by situational factors.²³ To support this statement, they presented the impact of various cognitive biases on our

reasoning.²⁴ At this point the discussion turns to be more psychological than philosophical and questions about self-control, emotional regulation or reappraisal of situations (i.e. cognitive change) are gaining more importance. While Aristotle has something to say about these problems,²⁵ the answer to this objection was very aptly formulated by Gopal Sreenivasan: “[it] proves too much and also proves too little”. It proves that our ability to reason in moral situations is seriously crippled, which could have serious impact on any ethical theory, or it proves that moral reasoning can be in some situations challenging (so we need to put more effort to a proper moral education).²⁶ Either way, without more specific and convincing argumentation it seems this line of critic misses its point, i.e. whether or not is the Aristotelian concept of moral character flawed (in comparison with alternative concepts).

— THE CULTIVATION BASED ON EXPERIENCE

Another aspect of moral character may seem quite simple and obvious, but it is important nonetheless. Moral character is (or should be) cultivated through experience during our life.²⁷ Still, there is one of the most quoted and particularly large experiment introduced by situationist critique, an experiment

20 Doris 2002, p. 17; Doris 2005, p. 664; 2002, p. 26.

21 I.e. *NE* 1111b 6–7; Doris 1998, p. 523, n. 25.

22 Doris 2002, pp. 38, 71.

23 Doris 2010.

24 Merritt et al 2010, pp. 360–3; Doris & Stich 2006, Doris 2010, pp. 142–4.

25 E.g. *NE* 1108b19–26, 1109a35–b24, or the parts related to continence and incontinence.

26 Sreenivasan 2014, pp. 309–10; Kamtekar 2004, p. 491; cf. Doris 2002, pp. 107–8.

27 *NE* 1142a12–21, 1095a1–4.

with more than eight thousand participants, which examined *honesty* as a moral trait of character.²⁸ The experiment is unique in more than one way with respect to the discussion, but the most important thing is that these participants were children aged from eight to sixteen years. This fact of course presents a problem, because in the case of *Aristotelian* concept of moral character even a “good” and well-behaved child has somewhat incomplete virtue (ἀρετὴ φυσικὴ), because it lacks experience as well as understanding of moral concepts like honesty or justice.²⁹ Not only a child has no practical wisdom it neither has any moral virtue. At first, due to lack of time. This is especially true for practical wisdom as one of the intellectual virtues that is formed by learning and experiencing things. But even moral virtue, while cultivated as a habit, undoubtedly requires time for a habituation. At second, as Aristotle clearly repeated several times, there is no moral virtue without practical wisdom.³⁰ Thus, a child is simply unable to act virtuously or even to choose (προαίρεσις).³¹ As Julia Annas appropriately noted, children obtain just fragmented moral views, the

unification of which is enabled only by wider understanding later in life.³²

Surprisingly there is only a single mention of this obstacle in discussion relevant to the Situationist Challenge.³³ Some other authors mention the age of the participants but see no serious trouble in it.³⁴ Yet, the main conclusion of this experiment is *just* that the moral behavior of participants is fragmentary. Therefore, this experiment might as well represent a support (rather than a criticism) of the Aristotelian concept.

— THE ASPIRATION TO SELF-IMPROVEMENT

The third and final aspect of moral character that I want to present is the aspect of an improvement. Moral character is (or should be) constantly improving. The starting position on this question is similar as with the previous one: moral character is cultivated through experience during our life. When aiming to virtue, we begin with choices which are far from perfect (missing in preferable goals, particulars, or means), in time we improve our understanding of what is good and bad, and with enough experience later in life we come to practical wisdom.³⁵ But the problem in this case is different. Almost all experiments

28 Hartshorne & May 1928. Experimenters examined honest behavior of the same participants in various situations concerning stealing, lying, and cheating. Their conclusions were quoted as relevant for this discussion for example in Doris 2002, pp. 62–4; Sabini & Silver 2005, p. 540–1; Prinz 2009, pp. 119–20; Alfano 2013, pp. 38–9.

29 NE 1144b 1–16.

30 NE 1103a14–6, 1103a26–b2, 1144b24–32, 1139b4–5, 1178a16–9.

31 NE 1100a1–3, 1111b7–9.

32 Annas 2006, pp. 516–9. Latter Annas elaborates on this question (2011, pp. 21–6).

33 Kamtekar 2004, p. 466, n. 30.

34 E.g. Ross & Nisbett 1991, p. 98; Sabini & Silver 2005, p. 540, n. 19. Doris concludes that regardless, this study does “provide limited basis for conclusions regarding consistency in adult behavior” (2002, p. 63).

35 NE 1109a24–b24, 1098a20–2, 1142a12–6.

introduced by situationists put a single participant into a single situation and mark the result. The only exception to this is the experiment examining honesty, the rest of them never put a same participant again into a similar situation.

But the great advantage of moral character and virtue consists not only in dealing with unusual situations, but also in the effective improvements based on repeated experiences. That means being able to deal with them better next time. The improvement is not as apparent and characteristic aspect of Aristotelian moral character as the previous aspects, but I think it is justifiable. It may come as no surprise that the key role in the Situationist Challenge is played by practical wisdom, as a disposition to (among other things) *correctly* recognize moral features of a situation. But at this point I argue that the emotional part of virtue is also important. The effort to improvement is arguably implied by strong feelings for doing the right thing, while those feelings have its origin in value-like traits of moral character. Aristotle on several places notes that virtue and virtuous activity relate to pleasure and pain (ἡδονή, λύπη).³⁶ Also, virtue (as well as vice) is based on our conviction (πιστεύειν) about right and wrong, which we acquire when we get older; in the meantime we are not *convinced*, we just follow what others say.³⁷ Similarly, Aristotle suggests that to become truly virtuous (not only continent or incontinent)

we need to accept what is right *as a part of ourselves* (συμφυῆναι).³⁸ This concept has some similarities, at least in the case of self-improvement, with intrinsic values and motivation: if we are having certain intrinsic or internal value concerning virtue, we are strongly convinced that virtuous life really is good and worth our time without any additional reward; when doing what is virtuous, we are happy and satisfied.³⁹ So, if the values (in the above-mentioned sense) are part of the moral character, then a (virtuously) kind person with a strong aversion to cruelty will more likely and with much greater concern reason about past situations, should he find out that he himself has acted cruelly due to situational influences. And through this reasoning he should improve his moral character.

Aristotle himself might point out this conclusion: the reasoning of an incontinent and more so a virtuous person about poorly resolved situations is likely to be accompanied by remorse (μεταμέλεια) and therefore the incontinent state is only temporary (unlike vice).⁴⁰ If the aspiration to self-improvement really is a significant aspect of the moral character, then it remains an open question, how relevant can be the evidence about adequacy of moral character which is based on singular observation.

And again, this aspiration as an aspect of moral character is mentioned

36 E.g. NE 1104b4–16, 1121a3, 1105a4.

37 NE 1151a11–26, 1142a15–21.

38 NE 1147a22–3.

39 E.g. Reeve 2009, pp. 128–35.

40 NE 1150b29–35, 1121a1–3, 1111a15–20.

only few times in the Situationist Challenge, it is mostly ignored.⁴¹ Doris reflects this objection, but only briefly: the more we insist on moral character as a disposition to improve our reaction *after* a moral conflict, the more we lose the notion of moral character as a disposition capable of responding adequately in every situation.⁴² But vice versa: the more we insist on moral character as a disposition to immediately solve any moral conflict, the more we lose the notion of moral character connected with strive for self-improvement, with regret of failures, and with joy of simply being a good person.

3. UNDERSTANDING OF MORAL CHARACTER

There are, of course, other relevant experiments, as well as objections to situationist criticism.⁴³ But I consider these three points to be the most significant for my conclusion, that there arguably is a misunderstanding about Aristotelian concept of moral character, and also I consider them the most important for further discussion. The first aspect (i.e. the reasoning) relates to an extensive discussion about the capabilities of practical wisdom. The other two aspects (i.e. the cultivation through experience and the aspiration to self-improvement) are mostly ignored, but they are no less important, because they also include a wider understanding of the concept of

moral character. And the understanding of moral character is crucial to the Situationist Challenge. For 'how do we understand it' without doubts implies 'what do we expect from it'. Do we expect immediate or contemplative reaction to a situation, or both? How resistant do we expect moral character usually is? To whom is this disposition available? And what are its main advantages? Answers to these questions should be a starting point for any discussion about moral character. Unfortunately, these answers are missing in the situationists' approach or they are considered intuitive (i.e. presented as unproblematic statements and without further discussion).

If there really is a different understanding of moral character in the Situationist Challenge, there is little we can do but start over with these questions.

41 Annas 2006, pp. 523–4; Magundayao 2013, p. 98.

42 Doris 2005, pp. 658–9.

43 For brief introduction see Kamtekar 2004, pp. 462–6.

ABBREVIATIONS

NE *Nicomachean Ethics*

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Alfano, M. (2013). *Character as moral fiction: excellence in being for the good*. Oxford: Cambridge University Press.
- Annas, J. (2003). "Virtue Ethics and Social Psychology". *A Priori* 2, pp. 20–34.
- Annas, J. (2005). "Comments on John Doris's 'Lack of Character'". *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 71(3), pp. 636–42.
- Annas, J. (2006). "Virtue Ethics". In: D. Copp (ed.), *The Oxford handbook of ethical theory*, New York: Oxford University Press, pp. 515–36.
- Annas, J. (2011). *Intelligent virtue*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Aristotle (1991). *Nicomachean Ethics* (trans. by W. D. Ross). In: J. Barnes (ed.), *The Complete Works of Aristotle*, Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Badhwar, N. (2009). "The Milgram Experiments, Learned Helplessness, and Character Traits". *The Journal of Ethics* 13(2/3), pp. 257–89.
- Doris, J. (1998). "Persons, situations, and virtue ethics". *Nous* 32, pp. 504–530.
- Doris, J. (2002). *Lack of character: personality and moral behavior*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Doris, J. (2005). "Replies: Evidence and Sensibility". *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 71(3), pp. 656–677.

- Doris, J. (2010). "Heated Agreement: Lack of Character As Being for the Good". *Philosophical Studies: An International Journal for Philosophy in the Analytic Tradition* 148(1), pp. 135–46.
- Doris, J. & Stich, S. (2006). "Moral Psychology: Empirical Approaches". *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2014 Edition), 2006. URL: <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2014/entries/moral-psych-emp/>.
- Harman, G. (2003). "No Character or Personality". *Business Ethics Quarterly* 13(1), pp. 87–94.
- Hartshorne, H. and May, M. (1928). *Studies in the Nature of Character, vol. I: Studies in Deceit*. New York: Macmillan.
- Kamtekar, R. (2004). "Situationism and Virtue Ethics on the Content of Our Character". *Ethics* 114(3), pp. 458–91.
- Magundayao, J. (2013). "Dispositions and Skills: An Argument for Virtue Ethics against Situationism". *Kritike: An Online Journal of Philosophy* 7(1), pp. 96–114.
- Merritt, M. et al (2010). „Character“. In: J. Doris and the Moral Psychology Research Group (eds.), *The Moral Psychology Handbook*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 355–401.
- Milgram, S. (1963). "Behavioral Study of obedience: A study of situational and dispositional variables in helping behavior". *The Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology* 67(4), pp. 371–8.
- Prinz, J. (2009). "The normativity challenge: Cultural psychology provides the real threat to virtue ethics". *The Journal of Ethics* 13, pp. 117–144.
- Reeve, J. (2009). *Understanding motivation and emotion*. 5th ed. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.
- Ross, L. and Nisbett, R. (1991). *The person and the situation: perspectives of social psychology*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Sabini, J. & Silver, M. (2005). "Lack of character? Situationism critiqued". *Ethics* 115, pp. 535–62.

- Sreenivasan, G. (2002). "Errors about errors: Virtue theory and trait attribution". *Mind* 111, pp. 47–68.
- Sreenivasan, G. (2014). "The situationist critique of virtue ethics". In: D. Russell (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Virtue Ethics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 290–314.
- Swanton, Ch. (2005). *Virtue ethics: a pluralistic view*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2005.