

A plea for the study of the relation between the Aretaic Morality and the Deontic and Responsibility Moralities

Orlando M. Lourenço¹

Abstract

Although the deontic, responsibility/caring, and aretaic moralities have been extensively investigated, the relation among them, namely the relation between the aretaic and the deontic and responsibility moralities, have rarely been studied. To fill in this gap is the main goal of this study. In the first part, we set the context for the study of the relation between the aretaic and the deontic and caring moralities, while arguing that Kohlberg's theory is mainly a deontic moral theory. Second, we elaborate on the reasons why Kohlberg did not introduce an aretaic morality into his theory. Third, we show that Kohlberg's reasons to exclude this type of morality from his moral theory are problematic. Fourth, we argue that much could be gained if moral psychology took the aretaic morality and its relation to the deontic and caring/responsibility moralities into account. Fifth, we present the main findings of an exploratory research on preadolescents' (n = 32) and adolescents' (n = 32) deontic, aretaic and responsibility evaluations of hypothetical actions, and analyze the relations among these evaluations. Finally, we summarize the main ideas of this study; refer to some of its limitations; point to some examples for future research; and claim that our suggestion of an aretaic-deontic-responsibility model may contribute to the understanding of one's moral functioning. However, this suggestion requires further methodological and empirical efforts.

Keywords: aretaic morality; deontic morality; caring morality; moral functioning; Kohlberg

1 Department of Psychology – University of Lisbon, Portugal. Email: oml2105@psicologia.ulisboa.pt. ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-002-3891.6407>

Uma súplica pelo estudo da relação entre a Moralidade Aretaica e as Moralidades Deôntica e de Responsabilidade

Resumo

Embora as moralidades deôntica, aretaica e de responsabilidade tenham sido muito investigadas, a relação entre elas, nomeadamente a relação entre a moralidade aretaica e as moralidades deôntica e de responsabilidade, têm sido raramente estudadas. Estudar esta última relação é o principal objetivo deste estudo. Na 1ª parte, estabelecemos o contexto para o estudo desta relação, enquanto argumentamos que a teoria de Kohlberg é, acima de tudo, uma teoria sobre a moralidade deôntica. Na 2ª parte, elaboramos sobre as razões que levaram Kohlberg a não introduzir uma moralidade aretaica na sua teoria sobre a moralidade. Na 3ª parte, mostramos que tais razões são problemáticas. Na 4ª parte, argumentamos que há muito a ganhar se a psicologia da moralidade tiver em conta a moralidade aretaica e as suas relações com a moralidade deôntica e a moralidade da responsabilidade ou do cuidar. Na 5ª parte, apresentamos os resultados principais de uma pesquisa exploratória sobre as avaliações deônticas, aretaicas e de responsabilidade feitas por um grupo de pré-adolescentes ($n = 32$) e adolescentes ($n = 32$) relativas a ações hipotéticas, e analisamos as relações entre tais avaliações. Finalmente, resumizamos as principais ideias deste estudo; referimo-nos a algumas das suas limitações; sugerimos exemplos de investigações futuras; e argumentamos que as relações entre estes três tipos de moralidade podem constituir um modelo, o modelo aretaico, deôntico e de responsabilidade, que nos ajude a compreender a transição da cognição moral para a ação moral. No entanto, esta sugestão requiere mais investigação metodológica e empírica.

Palavras-chave: moralidade aretaica; moralidade deôntica; moralidade da responsabilidade; funcionamento moral; Kohlberg

INTRODUCTION

When we commit a moral action, we generally judge it to be: (a) morally right in terms of *deontic judgments* or judgments “of what is [morally] right” (Kohlberg, 1984, p. 517; see also Frankena, 1973; Nucci, Narvaez, & Krettenauer, 2014; Turiel, 1983); (b) obligatory for the self in terms of *responsibility judgments* or judgements “to act on what one has judged to be right” (Kohlberg, 1984, p. 517), that is, judgments expressing “a commitment to act on one’s deontic judgments” (Kohlberg & Candee, 1984, p. 52; see also Bergman, 2002, 2004; Blasi, 1993, 1999, 2004; Gilligan,

1982); and (c) virtuous and praiseworthy in terms of *aretaic judgments*, that is, “judgments about the moral worthiness of an action or person” (Kohlberg, 1984., p. 514), and hence in terms of virtue or *arête* involved in the action or person at hand. *Arête* is a Greek word that dates back to Aristotle’s (1941) virtues ethic, and means the moral worth or excellence of a given action or one’s character (see, for example, Boyd, 1977; Frankena, 1973; Lourenço, 2000; MacIntyre, 2007; Nussbaum, 1999; Smith, 2012; Solum, 2004; Watson, 1996). These three types of judgments and reasoning, whose operationalization can be made, for example, according to the procedure described in the empirical research reported below, and the relations among them may contribute to the understanding of one’s moral functioning, namely the transition from moral cognition to moral action.

Before justifying this possible contribution, it is worth mentioning that responsibility judgments and reasoning can be equated to caring reasoning and judgments. This happens, for example, in Gilligan’s (1982) moral theory [see also Skoe’s (1998) work on care reasoning]. Gilligan, for example, has appealed to an ethic of *care and responsibility* (not to an ethic of deontic justice), according to which we should not turn away from someone in need (Gilligan & Wiggins, 1987), not to receive social approval (i.e., a social approval orientation), but because of a genuine moral concern or moral responsibility to help needy others (i.e., a caring/responsibility orientation). Needless to say, a social approval orientation represents a lower moral orientation than a caring moral orientation, for, in last analysis, the former is more oriented to the self than the others (see Kohlberg, 1984).

Why the relation among the deontic, responsibility, and aretaic judgments and moralities may contribute to the understanding of one’s moral functioning, namely the understanding of the complex problem of the passage from moral cognition to moral action (Blasi, 1980)? Theoretically and also with basis on everyday life, it seems reasonable to assume that one’s deontic judgments (“I should steal to save a human life”) lead more easily to the subsequent action (to effectively steal to save a human life) if those judgments are followed by (1) a responsibility or caring judgment (“I am really committed and have a moral responsibility to steal to save a human life”); and (2) an aretaic judgment (“To steal to save a human life is a praiseworthy, laudable, meritorious, and virtuous act”). In other words, it makes sense to claim that one’s deontic judgments are more likely to be converted into moral action if they are followed by a commitment to act in accord with what one thinks it should be done, responsibility judgments (Blasi, 2004; Kohlberg & Candee, 1984; Lapsley & Narvaez, 2004; McNamee, 1978; Narvaez & Lapsley, 2009), and if one finds it virtuous and praiseworthy to follow the course of action judged to be right and obligatory for the self shortly before, aretaic judgments (see Boyd, 1977; Frankena, 1973; MacIntyre, 2007; Nussbaum, 1999).

This means that deontic, responsibility/caring, and aretaic judgments may be thought as cognitive motivations that increase one's willingness to behave morally. Although the links between motivation and judgment may be complicated (Hardy, 2006), both Kohlberg (1984) and Piaget (1983), just to cite two well-known moral researchers, argued for the motivational power of moral cognition.

It is worth mentioning that the motivational power of one's moral cognition, be it deontic, caring, or aretaic, on one's moral behavior tends to be overlooked by many moral researchers, namely by those who fault Kohlberg's theory for paying little, if any, attention to the role of motivation in one's moral behavior and development (e.g., Colby & Damon, 1992, 1995). Moral development means an increasing ability to differentiate, coordinate, and rank different perspectives or viewpoints when situations of moral conflict and choice are the case, such as happens, for example, in hypothetical (Kohlberg, 1984; Rest, 1984, 1986) or real-life moral dilemmas (Gilligan 1982). We may say that the majority, if not all, theories of morality that intend to be an alternative to Kohlberg's approach to morality rely, among others things, on the idea that his approach (a) lacks a motivational focus (Colby & Damon, 1995; and (b) is too much based on an ethic of justice at the cost of an ethic of care and responsibility (Gilligan, 1982) and a virtues ethic *a la* Aristotle and his emphasis on the principle of *eudaimonia* or one's fulfillment or self-actualization (Campbell & Christopher, 1996).

A significant contribution to the understanding of one's moral functioning has been claimed by several authors and researchers. For example, according to Gilligan (1982) and Skoe (1998), although Kohlberg had overlooked an ethic of care and responsibility, this type of ethic, with its emphasis on the ideas of caring, benevolence, and concern, plays a central role in one's moral functioning. However, according to Kohlberg (1984), his ethic of justice also includes an ethic of care and concern, namely with our relatives and friends (see Zizek, Garz, & Nowak, 2015). In addition to this, Kohlberg rightly noticed that caring and benevolence cannot solve conflicts of welfare when competing claims in situations of moral conflict and choice are the case. Aretaic judgments and morality and their relation with caring or responsibility judgments and morality have no room in Gilligan's and Skoe's thinking on caring reasoning.

A significant contribution to the understanding of one's moral functioning was also proposed by Haidt (2001, 2007) through his social intuitionist model. According to this model, we first form our moral judgments and decisions with basis on intuitions and emotions and then give reasons for them, our reasons serving as *ex-post facto* rationalizations to convince ourselves/others that our moral judgments and decisions are a reason-based process. The role of emotions in any behavior is indisputable (Damasio, 1999). It should be mentioned, however, that we

cannot exclude reason from our moral judgements and decisions. More precisely, we cannot judge an action to be moral or immoral without taking into account the moral reasons or intentions underlying our decisions (Kohlberg, 1984). In other words, to dismiss the role of reason in one's moral decisions and behavior amounts to depriving them of their very nature. As far as we know, Haidt's social intuitionist makes no reference to aretaic judgments and their possible relation with deontic and responsibility judgments.

A significant contribution to the understanding of one's moral functioning was also advanced by Rest (1984, 1986) with his four components model: moral sensitivity or one's propensity to see a given situation (e.g., a drowning boy) as neutral or moral (component 1); moral judgment or one's ability to emit a moral judgment in the situation at hand (e.g., I should/should not help the drowning boy, component 2); moral motivation or one's inclination to help the drowning boy (component 3); and moral decision or one's determination to perform a moral act (e.g., to risk his/her life to help the focal boy, component 4). However, everyone who understands Kohlberg's theory knows that component 2 of Rest's model is also present in Kohlberg's (1984) theory of deontic judgments, duties and rights. More to the point, a careful analysis of Kohlberg's theory also reveals that his theory appeals to moral motivation, component 3 of Rest's model. Suffice it to say that (a) his deontic judgements have a motivational power (Kohlberg, 1984); (b) although ignored by several critics of Kohlberg's theory (e.g., Colby & Damon, 1992, 1995), he argued that one's moral behavior is also related to a generalized motivation to self-esteem, self-confidence, self-realization, and self-regulation (see Kohlberg, 1987, p. 312). As will be argued below, Kohlberg's theory of deontic justice is at complete variance with an aretaic morality and reasoning.

As moral psychology is a broad research domain, there are other alternatives to Kohlberg's theory. For the sake of simplicity and space limitations, we point only to two additional examples: Turiel's (1983) social domain approach and his idea that one's moral behavior has more to do with coordination of domains (e.g., moral, conventional, prudential, and personal) than only with the moral domain, and Blasi's (2004) self-identity theory, according to which we behave morally to preserve our self and identity. However, both Turiel's social domain approach and Blasi's self-identity theory make no reference to aretaic reasoning, judgments and morality.

Three caveats are in order at this point. First, the deontic-responsibility-aretaic model suggested in this study should be seen as complementary rather than an alternative to Kohlberg's theory or other moral approaches. Parenthetically, it should be noted that if progress in any science was as a function of the number of theories it contains, then psychology, be it cognitive, social, or moral, could be

considered to be the queen of sciences, which is not the case. In other words, the present study simply aims to emphasize the aretaic morality and its possible relation to the deontic and responsibility moralities, and suggest that these relations may contribute to the understanding of one's moral functioning, namely the transition from moral cognition to moral action. Second, the present study is exploratory in its very nature. We know of no study similar to the present one. Third, the present study deals with aretaic, deontic, and caring or responsibility cognition, not with moral behavior.

Despite its strengths, Kohlberg's theory does not go without problems, some of which are mentioned here. For example, as suggested by an anonymous reviewer of an earlier version of this study, research about moral conflicts involving concerns about others' welfare (Jaffe & Hyde, 2000; Juujärvi, 2005) has shown that both genders invoked care-based judgments rather than Kohlbergian justice-based judgments.

It is widely accepted (Modgil & Modgil, 1986; Puka, 1995) that Kohlberg's (1971, 1981, 1984) theory excels in the analysis of a deontic morality, a morality having to do with the concepts of right/wrong, just/unjust, and the like. Kohlberg's theory, however, deals insufficiently, among other things (see Narvaez, 2008; Puka, 1991), with the area of moral caring or responsibility, a moral area related to one's obligations to the others and the self (see Blasi, 1993, 2004; Gilligan, 1982; Skoe, 1998); and does not take into account the aretaic morality, an area of morality concerning the science of virtue and "the concept of praise/blame when we make normative judgments about persons, either of a person as a whole or of some part of a person's character" (Boyd, 1977, p. 69; see also Frankena, 1973; Smith, 2012; Watson, 1996). In other words, Kohlberg's (1984) theory is, above all, a philosophical and psychological theory of deontic reasoning. As he put it: "Our philosophical theory of deontic justice reasoning is not, however, a theory guiding aretaic judgments, that is, judgments about the moral worthiness of an action or person" (Kohlberg, 1984, p. 514). In fact, his theory: (a) conceives of morality in terms of a Kantian, deontic justice (Campbell & Cristopher, 1996). Suffice it to say that on several occasions he claimed that "... justice is the basic moral principle" (Kohlberg, 1971, p. 220; see also Puka, 1995; Rest, Narvaez, Bebeau, & Thoma, 1999); (b) asks participants deontic questions and justifications (e.g., "Should we steal to save a human life? Why/Why not?", see Colby & Kohlberg, 1987a, b); (c) codes individuals' moral reasoning, for example, in terms of normative, utilitarian, perfectionist, and fairness elements (Colby & Kohlberg, 1987a, p. 42); and (d) ends up by attributing a deontic stage or a score of deontic reasoning to the individual (see Colby & Kohlberg, 1987a, b). In contrast to these deontic aspects, Kohlberg's reference to aretaic judgments and morality is rare. He even sustained that his theory of deontic justice has nothing to do with the moral worth of an action or person. In addition to this, he seems

to treat the aretaic morality and judgements as if they were an epiphenomenon included in the area of responsibility judgments and morality. In Kohlberg's words, "...the judgment of responsibility includes an element which Frankena calls aretaic, 'a judgment of the morally good, bad, responsible, or blameworthy.'" (1984, p. 518).

In what follows we (a) reflect on Kohlberg's reasons to exclude an aretaic dimension from his moral theory; (b) show that these reasons do not go without problems; (c) argue that there is much to be gained if moral psychology takes the aretaic morality and its possible relation to the deontic and responsibility moralities into account; and (d) present, succinctly, the main findings of an exploratory, empirical study we carried out on the relations among preadolescents' and adolescents' deontic, aretaic, and responsibility evaluations of some hypothetical actions related to one of Kohlberg's dilemmas described below.

KOHLBERG'S REFUSAL OF AN ARETAIC DIMENSION

Why did Kohlberg not introduce an aretaic dimension into his moral theory, even though this dimension may contribute to the understanding of one's moral functioning, namely the transition from moral cognition to moral action? It is worth mentioning that the passage from moral cognition to moral action is a recurrent problem in moral psychology in general (Bergman, 2002; Blasi, 1980, 1983; Narvaez, 2008), and Kohlberg's theory in particular (Kohlberg & Candee, 1984).

We think that such a refusal is mainly due to two types of reasons. The first type has to do with moral and philosophical reasons intrinsic to Kohlberg's (1981, 1984) theory, namely his opposition to an ethical relativism or a "bag of virtues"-oriented morality, and his defense of an ethic universalism, according to which all individuals should be treated with respect. The second type has to do with Kohlberg's interest in "hard" structural stages, such as Piaget's cognitive stages, as opposed to "soft" or functional stages, such as Loevinger's (1976) stages of ego development (see Kohlberg & Ryncarz, 1990).

Regarding the first type of reasons, it should be noted that the late Kohlberg defended that respect for people, a mixture of justice and benevolence (Kohlberg, Boyd, & Levine, 1990), is a fundamental moral principle, and represents a return of his Stage 6, a Stage he had abandoned in his book, *The measurement of moral judgment: Standard issue scoring manual* (Colby & Kohlberg, 1987b). As a result, he refused to evaluate the moral worthiness of any individual. In Kohlberg's (1984) views, to argue for an aretaic hierarchy would amount to thinking that some persons are more worthy morally than others. However, as he put it, "[p]ersons who make

Stage 5 or Stage 6 [deontic] judgments are not in our theory [of deontic justice] more worthy or morally better persons than those who make Stage 3 or Stage 4 [deontic] judgments” (Kohlberg, 1984, p. 514).

Concerning the second type of reasons, Kohlberg sustained that when he thought of “...three domains of moral reasoning” [i.e., the deontic domain of the right and obligatory, the aretaic domain of the worthy and approvable in human action and character, and the domain of ideals of the good life], his “deontic justice domain” was the only one “... that is amenable to definition in terms of ‘hard’ sequential hierarchical stages such as are defined by Piaget” (Kohlberg, 1984, p. 4). Parenthetically, it should be said that the Piagetian cognitive stages and the Kohlbergian moral stages are not so “hard” and structural as Kohlberg (1984) realized (see Carpendale, 2000; Carpendale & Krebs, 1992, 1995; Chapman, 1988; Lourenço, 2016). For example, research about real-life morality has shown that the most important predictor of the morality usage is the type of moral conflict (e.g., a caring-oriented dilemma vs. a justice-oriented dilemma) rather than, for example, moral stage *a la* Kohlberg (Carpendale & Krebs, 1995) or gender (Jaffe & Hyde, 2000).

In summary, two types of reasons underlie Kohlberg’s refusal of an aretaic morality. First, his theory of deontic justice avoids making judgments about the moral worthiness of an individual or his/her moral/immoral acts and argues for an ethical universalism. Second, interested in hard structural stages, Kohlberg believed that the deontic domain was the only one that was amenable to hard structural and sequential stages

A PROBLEMATIC REFUSAL

The two types of reasons why Kohlberg refused to introduce an aretaic dimension into his theory are understandable at first glance. However, these reasons become problematic and even unjustified when we see them critically.

Understandable as it may be, Kohlberg’s refusal to make judgments about the moral worthiness of an action or person in order to maintain equal respect for all people does not imply to exclude an aretaic dimension from a moral theory. It seems that Kohlberg confounded worthy persons with worthy actions. However, one thing is to attribute a certain moral worthiness to a given action (e.g., to steal to save a human life is a highly virtuous, praiseworthy, laudable, and meritorious act). It is another, quite different thing to judge the author of that action as more or less morally worthy than people behaving differently, for example, not to steal to save the human life at hand. In a nutshell, for a theory to argue for moral respect

for all people, the theory has not to eschew attributions of moral worthiness to a moral or immoral action committed by a certain individual. In addition to this, Kohlberg's claim that "a higher stage is philosophically [and in deontic terms] a better stage" (1984, p. 4) than its predecessor seems somehow inconsistent with Kohlberg's other claim that "[p]ersons who make Stage 5 or Stage 6 judgments are not in our theory more worthy persons or morally better persons than those who make Stage 3 or Stage 4 judgments" (1984, p. 514). If the second claim were the case, then, according to Kohlberg, an action informed, for example, by deontic reasons consistent with his Stage 5 (e.g., Heinz stole the drug to save his wife because he thinks that "... the right to life supersedes or transcends the right to property"; Colby & Kohlberg, 1987b, p. 11) could not be qualified as more worthy morally than an action informed by deontic reasons consistent with his Stage 3 deontic reasons (e.g., Heinz stole the drug "... because he tried to be decent"; Colby & Kohlberg, 1987b, p. 7). However, it seems evident that, when an individual does not steal because s/he thinks that the right to property has precedence over his/her personal, egocentric desires, s/he commits a more worthy, virtuous, praiseworthy, and laudable action than when s/he does not steal because s/he is afraid of being put in jail. If this is the case, then an individual who always commits worthy, praiseworthy, laudable, and virtuous actions is more worthy morally than an individual who always commits unworthy, blameworthy, and non-virtuous actions.

More importantly, according to Kohlberg (see Kohlberg & Candee, 1984), compared to a lower deontic stage, a higher deontic stage is more likely to lead to responsibility judgments and, hence, to moral action. If this is true, then Kohlberg's other claim that a "... more adequate mode of [deontic] reasoning is neither necessary [n]or sufficient to define the person who makes [this more adequate mode of deontic reasoning] as morally worthy or virtuous" (1984, pp. 514-515) seems to be an odd claim. If this were the case, then we would be entitled to say that those who tend to behave morally with basis on their advanced deontic moral reasoning are not more worthy or virtuous morally than those who tend to behave immorally with basis on their elementary and egocentric interests and needs. However, to adhere to this position would amount to espousing a relativistic stance, which is at complete variance with Kohlberg's assumption of rational universalism and value relevance: "The assumption of value relevance implies that moral concepts are not to be understood as value neutral but are to be treated as normative, positive, or value relevant"; the assumption of universalism implies that moral concepts are not to be treated "... in a totally value-relative way" (Kohlberg, 1984, p. 215).

As for Kohlberg's conviction that, among other domains, the aretaic domain is not, in contrast with the deontic justice domain, "... amenable to definition in terms of 'hard' sequential hierarchical stages such as are defined by Piaget" (1984, p. 4),

it should be said that such a conviction is not to be treated as a metaethical, but an empirical claim. As such, only empirical studies can show us whether or not the individual's aretaic judgments and evaluations change over time in terms of hard sequential hierarchical stages such as defined by Piaget. As is known, Kohlberg (1984) conceptualized three successive and hierarchical levels of deontic reasoning (preconventional, conventional, and postconventional), and Gilligan (1982) advanced three successive and hierarchical levels of caring reasoning (preconventional, conventional, and post-conventional). In this vein, albeit subject to empirical corroboration, it makes sense to think of three successive and hierarchical levels of aretaic reasoning: a preconventional aretaic level according to which virtuous actions are those that bring about our well-being, needs and desires; a conventional aretaic level according to which virtuous actions are those that lead to others' well-being, needs and desires; and a postconventional aretaic level according to which virtuous actions are those that, at the same time, take into account and coordinate in terms of fairness our and others' legitimate interests, such as, for example, to attain a state of self-actualization in Maslow's (1943) terms. As the aretaic domain is a moral domain conceptually distinct from both the deontic and the caring moral domains (see Boyd, 1977; Lourenço, 2000), the presumption of these levels of aretaic reasoning different from both deontic and reasoning levels seems to be justified.

Here, it should be said it is ironic that Kohlberg's structural levels and stages of deontic reasoning have been informed, not by Piaget's views on moral development, but by Piaget's initial views on cognitive development (see Wright, 1982). First, when discussing, in his seminal book, *The moral judgment of the child*, how the child comes to understand and follow the rules of marbles' game (i.e., *le jeu des billes*), Piaget made it clear that heteronomous morality and autonomous morality are not two global stages of moral development because these two types of morality represent "... two moral attitudes [that] may coexist at the same age in the same child." (1932, p. 101). Second, with the passage of time, Piaget's (1983) early idea of hard structural cognitive stages was mitigated and, in the process, his cognitive stages came to accommodate to the idea of asynchrony, heterogeneity, and content in development (Carpendale, 2000; Chapman, 1988; Keller, Eckensberger, & von Rosen, 1989; Lourenço & Machado, 1996).

In summary, there are good motives to say that Kohlberg's reasons to exclude an aretaic dimension from his moral theory are problematic. First, to proclaim that any individual should be treated with respect does not imply that we cannot classify his/her moral or immoral actions and choices as virtuous and praiseworthy or as non-virtuous, and blameworthy. Second, only with basis on empirical work can we say that the aretaic domain is not amenable to definition in terms of hard sequential levels.

WHAT COULD BE GAINED IF THE ARETAIC MORALITY AND ITS RELATION TO THE DEONTIC AND RESPONSIBILITY MORALITIES WERE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT?

First, because aretaic morality has to do with the concept of praise/blame and the moral worthiness of either a person or his/her actions (see Boyd, 1977, p. 69), this type of morality is conceptually distinct from both deontic morality, whose main injunction is that we should not treat others unfairly (see Kohlberg, 1984), and caring or responsibility morality, whose main injunction is that we should "... not to turn away from someone in need" (Gilligan & Wiggins, 1987, p. 281). Thus, the aretaic morality seems to constitute a domain that can originate theoretical debate and empirical research different from that generated by both the deontic and responsibility moralities.

Second, in addition to constituting a conceptually independent area of theoretical debate and empirical research, aretaic judgments may also help us understand the highly debated problem of the transition from moral cognition to moral action (see Blasi, 1980, 1983, 2004; Colby & Damon, 1992, 1995; Kohlberg & Candee, 1984; Rest, 1984; Rest et al., 1999). Several theorists and researchers (e.g., Blasi, 2004; Colby & Damon, 1995; Rest, 1984) have faulted Kohlberg's theory for not introducing into his theory a motivational factor which would be of help to explain the transition from moral cognition to moral action. Note, however, that, as alluded to earlier, Kohlberg sustained that "[t]he basic motivation for morality is rooted in a generalized motivation for acceptance, competence, self-esteem, or self-realization." (1987, p. 312). More to the point, according to Kohlberg (1984), this transition is mediated by two intervening judgments: deontic judgments, which have a deontic decision function, and responsibility judgments, which have a follow-through function. More precisely (see Kohlberg & Candee, 1984), as individuals move from stage to stage, they are more likely to make judgments of responsibility consistent with their deontic judgments, and thus they are more likely to act in accord with what they think to be right.

Third, although the consistency between moral cognition and moral action tends to increase with development (Kohlberg & Candee, 1984; McNamee, 1978), such consistency is not perfect even among postconventional subjects. This means that the transition from moral cognition to moral behavior entails more than deontic and responsibility judgments. Given that aretaic judgments are focused on what is approvable, virtuous, and worthwhile in moral actions, it makes sense to think of them as an additional cognitive motivation for moral action. To think of aretaic judgments as a possible cognitive motivation for moral action does not mean that they are more related to moral behavior than their deontic or responsibility/caring counterparts. So, it seems natural to think that the more one sees as worthy

and virtuous (aretaic evaluation) an action judged to be right in deontic terms (deontic evaluation) and obligatory for the self in terms of moral responsibility (responsibility evaluation), the more one is likely to perform such an action, and thus the greater the consistency between one's moral cognition and one's moral action will be. Only further research can determine whether that which makes sense theoretically is indeed the case in empirical terms.

As far as we know, there is no empirical study relating one's aretaic judgments to his/her moral behavior. The present study does not address either such a possible relation because the study deals with moral cognition (deontic, aretaic, responsibility), not moral behavior.

In what follows we elaborate a bit more on what could be gained if moral psychology took into account the aretaic domain as well as its possible relation to the deontic and responsibility/caring domains. As referred to above, the aretaic domain is conceptually grounded on theoretical work that distinguishes aretaic judgments about the moral worth or virtue of particular actions from deontic judgments of rightness and obligation. As Boyd pointed out, "when we use right/wrong we are not making claims about what is intrinsically worthwhile, but rather about how we should act toward each other" (1977, p. 68). But if the aretaic domain is a conceptual domain distinct, for example, from Kohlberg's (1984) deontic domain and Gilligan's (1982) caring domain, then both empirical and theoretical psychological research on the aretaic domain and its possible relation to the deontic and responsibility domains is conceptually grounded.

Because morality deals with the way things ought to be, not the way things are, theories of moral development implicitly accept that some moral judgments or actions based on such judgments are, in deontic terms, closer than other judgments or actions to what may be called the moral point of view (see Kohlberg, 1984), or a given moral *telos* or end state. However, to accept this deontic hierarchy amounts to assuming that the more a certain judgment or action is close to that moral *telos*, the more this judgment or action deserves to be seen as worthwhile and approvable in terms of virtue or *arête*. In short, to appeal to an aretaic dimension of morality is to include in the moral domain a dimension that, as it were, seems to belong to this domain almost naturally or intrinsically.

The study of an aretaic morality may turn out to be heuristic, among other things, for a better understanding of one's deontic and responsibility judgments, and also of the possible relations among these three types of moral judgment (deontic, aretaic, responsibility). For example, according to some authors (e.g., Boyd, 1977), but not others (e.g., Kohlberg, 1984), what makes more sense is to see aretaic judgments as dependent upon deontic judgments. In Boyd's words, "for the concept of praise/blame to be applicable we have to have already made a judgment about the right"

(1977, p. 68). True as this statement may be, it also makes sense to think that our judgments about what is right/wrong, deontic judgments, are partly determined by the aretaic value we attribute to what is seen as right/wrong in a particular choice or situation, aretaic judgments. In other words, the more one judges an action to be praiseworthy in aretaic terms, the more it will tend to be judged as right in deontic terms. In contrast with Boyd, Kohlberg (1984) thought that what makes more sense is not a relation between the deontic domain and the aretaic domain, but between the responsibility domain and the aretaic domain. Actually, according to Kohlberg (1984), deontic judgments have not any aretaic implications (p. 514), whereas a responsibility judgment includes an aretaic element (p. 518). Accordingly, it makes good sense to think that a moral action we are committed to performing, a responsibility judgment, is something that we tend to see as worthwhile for the self, an aretaic judgment. However, it also makes good sense to think that the more we believe that an action is worthwhile and meritorious, the more we are inclined to perform it in terms of commitment and responsibility.

SOME EMPIRICAL FINDINGS ON THE RELATION BETWEEN THE ARETAIC MORALITY AND THE DEONTIC AND RESPONSIBILITY MORALITIES

Thus far, we only know of an empirical study that examined the relation between aretaic judgments and deontic judgments in a sample of undergraduate students (Lourenço, 2000). In what follows we present briefly the main findings of a study we carried out on the relation among the aretaic, deontic, and responsibility judgments and evaluations in a sample of preadolescents and adolescents.

Participants, tasks, procedure, and scoring

Participants were 32 11- to 13-year-olds (16 boys and 16 girls; $M_{age} = 12.20$ years; $SD = 0.64$), and 32 15- to 17-year-olds (16 boys and 16 girls; $M_{age} = 16.10$ years; $SD = 0.25$). They came predominately from middle-class families living in the area of Lisbon, Portugal. All participants were white. Parents of all children involved in this research gave written permission for their children to participate in the study by using an appropriate consent form. Both participants and parents were assured that this research would follow the ethical procedures approved by the Psychological Association from their country and the American Psychological Association (2010).

Each participant was confronted with four hypothetical actions informed by reasons that were consistent with Stage 3 deontic reasons and referred to Kohlberg's Joe hypothetical dilemma. This dilemma, of which each participant received a written version, describes the case of a 14-year-old boy (Joe) and his father. The father promised that his son could go to camp if he saved up the money for it himself, what Joe did. Just before camp is going to start, the father changed his mind. Some of his friends decided to go on a special fishing trip and Joe's father was short of the money it would cost. So he told Joe to give him the money he had saved. Joe didn't want to give up going to camp, so he thinks of refusing to give his father the money (Colby & Kohlberg, 1987a, p. 3).

The four hypothetical actions were described in a booklet given to each participant and presented by the experimenter (a graduate psychology student) in the following manner. First hypothetical action: Let's suppose that Joe gave his father the money "... out of love and to preserve their relationship" (see Colby & Kohlberg, 1987b, p. 239). This is an authority oriented-action in terms of moral issue (authority vs. contract), and a caring-oriented action in terms of moral orientation (caring vs. social approval). Second hypothetical action: Joe gave his father the money "... so that others do not form a bad impression, image, or opinion of him" (Colby & Kohlberg, 1987b, p. 190). This is an authority and social approval oriented-action. Third hypothetical action: Joe refused to give the father the money because the father "should have a concern for how Joe feels and not demand the money" (Colby & Kohlberg, 1987b, p. 189). This is a contract and caring-oriented action. Fourth hypothetical action: Joe refused to give the father the money "to show others his good character, or so that he will leave a good impression" (Colby & Kohlberg, 1987b, p. 189). This is a contract and social approval-oriented action.

As can be seen, of the four actions, two actions were oriented to the contract issue (e.g., "Joe did not give the father the money"), and two actions were oriented to the authority issue (e.g., "Joe gave his father the money"). For each set of two contract- or authority-oriented actions, one pointed to a caring orientation (e.g., "Joe gave the father the money out of love and to preserve their relationship"), and the other to a social approval orientation (e.g., "Joe gave the father the money so that others do not form a bad impression, image or opinion of him"). Hypothetical actions were classified in terms of moral issue (contract or authority) and moral orientation (caring or social approval) by two independent coders and experts in Kohlberg's theory. This classification was made according to Kohlberg's scoring system (see Colby & Kohlberg, 1987a, b). Interrater reliability between the two independent coders was 100 percent agreement. Finally, participants were asked to make deontic, aretaic, and responsibility evaluations of each of the four presented actions on a five-point-scale (i.e., "Do you think that such an action was highly correct/

right - 5 points; only correct/right - 4 points; neither correct/right nor incorrect/wrong - 3 points; only incorrect/wrong - 2 points; or highly incorrect/wrong - 1 point?”). A similar procedure was used to assess participants’ aretaic evaluations (e.g., “Do you think that such an action was highly virtuous and praiseworthy - 5 points; ... ; or highly non-virtuous and blameworthy - 1 point?”), and responsibility evaluations (“Do you think that Joe was highly decided/committed to performing such an action - 5 points; ... ; or highly decided/committed to not performing such an action - 1 point?”). Aretaic, deontic, and responsibility scores were summed and then averaged (see Appelbaum & McCall, 1983). Aretaic, deontic, and responsibility mean scores could range from 1 to 5. In order to avoid order effects, the order of presentation of each type of judgement (deontic, aretaic, responsibility), moral issue (authority, contract) and moral orientation (caring, social approval) was counterbalanced across subjects.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings for males and females were combined, since no statistically significant gender differences were found in any of the possible comparisons when appropriate statistical analyses (*t* tests) were performed. Suffice it to say that the greater difference between boys ($M = 3.0$, for deontic-caring evaluations) and girls ($M = 3.25$, for aretaic-social approval evaluations) showed to be to a non-significant difference, $t(62) = 1.289$, $p > .05$.

This finding is inconsistent with Gilligan’s (1982) idea that when they speak in moral terms, women tend to speak in terms of an ethic of care and responsibility, and men in terms of an ethic of deontic justice, duties and rights. Gender differences in the moral literature have been a highly debated and controversial question. This debate is mainly due to Gilligan’s claim that (1) women are predominantly oriented to an ethic of care and responsibility and men are predominantly oriented to an ethic of justice, duties, and rights; and (2) men tend to score higher than women when both are assessed on Kohlberg’s moral interview (Colby & Kohlberg, 1987a, b). Overall, review of literature on gender differences in moral development has disconfirmed both of Gilligan’s claims (Jorgensen, 2006; Puka, 1991; Walker, 1986). Concerning gender differences in terms of care and justice reasoning, research about real-life moral dilemmas (Wark & Krebs, 1996) has shown that type of moral conflict (e.g., caring dilemma vs. justice dilemma, hypothetical moral dilemmas vs. real-life moral dilemmas) rather than gender determines, for example, one’s type of moral reasoning (e.g., caring reasoning vs. justice reasoning; e.g., Jaffe & Hyde,

2000, one's level of moral development (Carpendale & Krebs, 1995), and so forth. Needless to say, it is beyond the scope of this study to make a comprehensive review about the role of gender in one's moral cognition and behavior

Participants' aretaic, deontic and responsibility evaluations

Table 1 presents the aretaic, deontic, and responsibility mean scores and standard deviations as a function of age (11-13- and 15-17- year-olds), moral issue (contract and authority), and moral orientation (caring and social approval). Examination of the data in Table 1 reveals three consistent patterns.

Table 1
Aretaic, deontic, and responsibility mean scores and standard deviations as a function of age, moral issue, and moral orientation

Age	Moral Issue	Caring			Social Approval		
		Aretaic	Deontic	Responsibility	Aretaic	Deontic	Responsibility
11-13 years	Contract	3.53	3.31	3.72	2.88	2.84	3.56
	Authority	4.31	4.19	4.41	3.06	3.03	3.66
	Total	3.92	3.75	4.06	2.97	2.94	3.61
15-17 years	Contract	3.25	3.41	3.59	1.88	1.84	3.41
	Authority	4.34	4.00	3.88	2.53	2.34	3.34
	Total	3.80	3.70	3.73	2.20	2.09	3.37

Note: Each cell could range from 1 to 5.

First, regardless of age, moral issue, and moral orientation, a given mean score never appeared twice, which, as could be expected, shows some variability in this pattern. Actually, it would be almost impossible to get 24 equal mean scores when three independent variables (age, moral issue, and moral orientation) were the case. Even so, participants' aretaic mean scores were not much different from their deontic and responsibility counterparts. When *t* tests for all possible comparisons (16) between aretaic and deontic mean scores, and between aretaic and responsibility mean scores were performed, there was only one comparison that showed to be statistically significant, $t(62) = 2.00, p < .05$. This comparison refers to an aretaic mean score ($M = 4.34$, for authority issue, older group) and a deontic mean score ($M = 2.34$, authority issue, older group). Deontic vs. responsibility comparisons could have been performed. We did not perform them because the main goal of this exploratory study was to examine the neglected relation between aretaic morality and judgments and deontic and responsibility judgments and moralities.

This significant finding notwithstanding, data in Table 1 remind us more of an aretaic-deontic-responsibility parallelism than an aretaic-deontic-responsibility differentiation. Actually, t values for the other 15 comparisons were always non-statistically significant ($p > .05$)

An aretaic-deontic parallelism was also found in previous studies (e.g., Lourenço, 2000). These two parallelisms do not lend support to Kohlberg's (1984) idea that his deontic judgments and morality have nothing to do with aretaic judgments and morality. These parallelisms also indicate that, however much it makes sense in theoretical terms, our suggestion of an aretaic-deontic-responsibility model, this suggestion should be seen cautiously. Note, however, that the present empirical research is exploratory and deals with moral cognition, not with moral action. The fact that the same mean score never appeared twice (see Table 1) suggests that the first mentioned parallelism is, say, a mitigated parallelism and, to an extent, is also consistent with our above mentioned suggestion (see more in the Conclusions section). This last suggestion, however, should be also seen with caution because, as said on the previous page, it would be almost impossible to get 24 equal mean scores when three independent variables (age, moral issue, and moral orientation) were the case.

Second, the younger group's aretaic, deontic, and responsibility evaluations did not differ significantly from those of the older group. In fact, when t tests for all possible comparisons relative to age differences were performed, even the greater difference between the two age groups ($M = 2.88$, for the younger group, aretaic evaluations, contract issue, social approval orientation, vs. $M = 1.88$, for the older group, aretaic evaluations, contract issue, social approval orientation) showed to be a non-significant difference, $t(62) = 1.282$, $p > .05$.

If we have in mind that the participants in this study were preadolescents and adolescents, one may think that, according to Kohlberg (1984), they were probably and predominantly conventional individuals, and hence, the evaluations at hand would not be subject to a significant age effect. So, the inexistence of an age effect on participants' moral evaluations involved in this study is consistent with previous literature on one's moral development (e.g., Kohlberg, 1984; Rest, 1984, 1986). This literature shows that pre-adolescents and adolescents did not differ much in their level of moral development, that is, in their ability to differentiate, coordinate and rank order different "voices", interests or viewpoints when competing claims in situations of moral conflict and choice are the case.

Third, when differences between caring and social approval evaluations were statistically analyzed, t tests showed that there was only one significant difference between caring evaluations ($M = 4.34$, for the older group, aretaic morality, authority issue) and social approval evaluations ($M = 2.34$, for the older group, deontic morality, authority issue), $t(62) = 2.000$, $p < .05$. Even so, regardless of age, type of morality, and moral issue, caring-oriented actions were always considered

to be more right, worthy, and likely to be performed than their social approval counterparts. This consistent pattern in all possible comparisons (12) is difficult to explain in terms of mere chance. Will it be that statistically non-significant results may have a significant psychological meaning?

This consistent pattern is relatively consonant with findings of the only study we know that studied the relation between the aretaic morality and the deontic morality and also compared caring evaluations with social approval evaluations (Lourenço, 2000; see also Nunner-Winkler, 1984). We say relatively consonant because, in that study, caring evaluations were always higher than social approval evaluations. However, the difference between both types of evaluations was always statistically significant, what was not the case in the present study. This pattern also shows that a moral theory should incorporate a caring dimension, this being consistent with Gilligan's (1982) emphasis on the role of an ethic of care and responsibility in one's moral functioning (see also Skoe, 1998) and partly consistent with Kohlberg's (1984) idea that his ethic of justice also incorporates an ethic of care, namely an ethic of care having to do with one's family and friends. In this vein, it should be mentioned that the late Kohlberg (Kohlberg et al., 1990) come to defend that respect for people – a mixture of justice and caring – is a fundamental moral principle. This Kohlberg's claim is an additional reason for considering that his theory of deontic justice and morality is not at complete variance with Gilligan's (1982) ethic of care and responsibility.

Relation between the aretaic evaluations and the deontic and responsibility evaluations

In this study, we were particularly interested in the relation between the aretaic morality and the deontic and responsibility moralities. Table 2 presents these two kinds of relation as a function of moral issue (contract and authority) and moral orientation (caring and social approval).

Table 2
Pearson's correlation coefficients between participants' aretaic evaluations and their deontic and responsibility evaluations as a function of moral issue and orientation

Type of Comparison	Aretaic/Deontic	Aretaic/Responsibility
Authority/Caring	.76; $p < .01$.05; ns.
Authority/Social approval	.76; $p < .01$.29; $p < .05$
Contract/Caring	.59; $p < .01$.28; $p < .05$
Contract/Social approval	.73; $p < .001$.18; ns.

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

Examination of Pearson's correlation coefficients presented in Table 2 shows that for the entire sample, participants' aretaic evaluations were more strongly related to their deontic evaluations than to their responsibility evaluations. So, not only were the aretaic/deontic correlations more frequently significant (all of the four possibilities) than their aretaic/responsibility counterparts (only two of the four possibilities), but also when they were statistically significant, the correlation coefficients having to do with the aretaic/responsibility relation were much lower ($r = .290$; $r = .280$) than their aretaic/deontic counterparts ($r = .760$; $r = .590$).

These two findings show that the participants in the present study considered that the aretaic morality was more related to the deontic than the responsibility morality. These findings are consistent, for example, with Boyd's (1977, p. 69) idea that when we make deontic judgments, which are part and parcel of a deontic morality, we tend also to make use of the concepts of praise/blame, virtuous/non-virtuous, laudable/non-laudable, which are key concepts in an aretaic morality. These findings, however, do not go well, for instance, with Kohlberg's idea about the relation among aretaic, deontic and responsibility judgments and moralities. According to Kohlberg's thesis, it would be expected that there would be a stronger relation between the aretaic morality and the responsibility morality than between the aretaic morality and the deontic morality. Suffice it to say that Kohlberg stated that "... the judgment of responsibility [not the deontic judgment] includes an element which Frankena calls aretaic..." (1984, p. 518). These two findings have deep implications for our suggestion that, along with other moral approaches described in the Introduction section, an aretaic/deontic/responsibility model may contribute to the understanding of one's moral functioning. These implications will be discussed in the Conclusions section.

CONCLUSIONS

In this article we have claimed for the study of an aretaic morality and reasoning, namely the study of the relation between this type of morality and reasoning, and the deontic and responsibility moralities and reasoning. In this vein, we suggested that a model that takes into account these three types of morality and reasoning (the aretaic-deontic-responsibility model) may contribute, along with other moral approaches (e.g. Kohlberg's (1984) theory of deontic justice; Gilligan's (1982) theory of an ethic of care and responsibility; Haidt's (2001) social intuitionist model; Rest's (1984) four components model) to the understanding of one's moral functioning, namely the passage from moral cognition to moral action (Blasi, 1980, 1983).

As already said, the idea of an aretaic morality and reasoning has no room, for example, in Gilligan's (1982) theory of an ethic of care and responsibility, Haidt's (2001) social intuitionist model, Rest's (1984) four components model, or Blasi's (2004) theory of moral identity, just to cite four examples. However, in theoretical terms, it makes much sense to think that the more one sees as laudable, worthy and virtuous (aretaic judgment) an action judged to be right in deontic terms (deontic judgment) and obligatory for the self in terms of moral responsibility (responsibility judgment), the more one is likely to perform such an action, and thus the greater the consistency between one's moral cognition and one's moral action will be.

We know of no study that has tried to confirm or disconfirm this hypothesis in empirical and behavioral terms. Although empirical, the research reported in the present study deals with moral cognition (deontic, aretaic, and responsibility/caring), not with moral action.

In addition to presenting this research, the current study also argued and showed that: (1) Kohlberg's theory is mainly a theory of deontic justice; (2) moral and philosophical reasons intrinsic to his theory and his interest in hard structural stages partly explain why Kohlberg excluded the aretaic dimension from his theory of deontic justice; and (3) Kohlberg's reasons for such an exclusion are problematic and even unjustified.

As noted in the previous section, participants' aretaic evaluations were more strongly related to their deontic evaluations than to their responsibility evaluations. What are the implications of this finding for our suggestion (see also Boyd, 1977) that there is a difference among deontic, aretaic, and responsibility reasoning and morality and, hence, that we can think of an aretaic/deontic/responsibility model that, along with other approaches to morality, may contribute to the understanding of one's moral functioning?

First, given that (a) two of the four correlation coefficients having to do with the aretaic/responsibility relation were not statistically significant, and (b) the two correlation coefficients that were statistically significant were quite low, then we may conclude that aretaic reasoning and morality is, to some extent, distinct from responsibility morality and reasoning. These findings are, to an extent, consistent with our idea of introducing an aretaic dimension into the moral domain.

Second, it is true that the four possible correlation coefficients for the aretaic/deontic relation were statistically significant. However, no correlation was perfect (1.0), and one correlation was only a moderate correlation, $r = .590$. These two facts show that aretaic reasoning and morality is not reducible to deontic reasoning and morality and, hence, there is room for the aretaic reasoning and morality within the moral domain, such as suggested by the aretaic/deontic/responsibility model. These facts are also consistent with Boyd's thesis that "the area of moral-

ity concerning the concept of right/wrong [deontic morality] is different from the “concept of praise/blame [aretaic morality] when we make normative [and deontic] judgments ...” (1977, p. 69; see also Lourenço, 2000).

The finding that participants’ aretaic mean scores were relatively similar to their deontic and responsibility counterparts (see Table 1) seem to show that there are some commonalities among the three types of morality focused on this study. Because of this similarity, the idea that aretaic reasoning and morality is non-reducible to either deontic or responsibility reasoning and morality should be seen cautiously.

However, when a consistent pattern is found (e.g., caring-oriented hypothetical actions were always considered to be more right, worthy, and likely to be performed than their social approval counterparts; there was no aretaic, deontic or responsibility mean score that has appeared twice), we wonder whether we cannot say that the pattern is psychologically meaningful even when it is only corroborated by few statistically significant results. As for the finding that there was no aretaic, deontic or responsibility mean score that has appeared twice, it would be almost impossible, as mentioned earlier, to get 24 equal mean scores when three independent variables (age, moral issue, and moral orientation) were at issue.

In other words, in theoretical terms, it makes sense to suggest an aretaic-deontic-responsibility model that may contribute, along with other approaches to morality, to the understanding of one’s moral functioning. Although conducted at a cognitive, not behavioral level, the present research is, to some extent, consistent with this suggestion.

As is often the case, a study generally raises more questions than those it solves. The present study constitutes no exception.

For example, it might be objected that we speak of one’s moral functioning, yet the study remains at a verbal and cognitive level. Needless to say, a comprehensive account of one’s moral functioning has also to be based on one’s moral behavior. This means that further empirical research is needed to see to what extent one’s moral behavior is affected by one’s aretaic, deontic, and responsibility reasoning.

The relation between deontic cognition and moral behavior has been frequently researched (see Blasi, 1980, 1983). The same is true regarding the relation between responsibility/caring cognition and moral behavior (e.g., Gilligan, 1982). We know of no study addressing the relation between aretaic reasoning and moral behavior. To study this possible relation is an additional example for further moral research.

To perform a study addressing, at the same time, the role of one’s aretaic, deontic, and responsibility cognition in one’s moral behavior was never performed. Such a study could constitute, say, a critical study for our suggestion that aretaic, deontic, and responsibility reasoning may contribute to the understanding of one’s moral functioning in general and one’s moral behavior in particular.

We often refer to one's moral functioning. However, our experimental sample only involved preadolescents and adolescents. So, to investigate a main theoretical assumption of the present study – the more one sees as laudable, worthy and virtuous (aretaic judgment) an action judged to be right in deontic terms (deontic judgment) and obligatory for the self in terms of moral responsibility (responsibility judgment), the more one is likely to perform such an action, and thus the greater the consistency between one's moral cognition and one's moral action will be – waits for being studied at the behavioral level among different age groups (i.e., a cross-sectional study) and even through a longitudinal study.

It might also be objected that the idea of equating care reasoning to responsibility reasoning is not accepted by all moral researchers, Blasi (1999) for example. Here, we follow Gilligan's voice and his emphasis on an ethic of care and responsibility, that is, her idea that we should be concerned with others' welfare and have even a moral responsibility to help needy others. As already noted, Gilligan spoke about an ethic of care and responsibility, not about two ethics: an ethic of care and an ethic of responsibility.

It has been argued and shown that individuals think and behave differently in moral hypothetical dilemmas and in real-life dilemmas (e.g., Carpendale & Krebs, 1992, 1995). Thus, we might have got different results if a real-life moral had been employed. So, the use of a hypothetical dilemma in the present study could be judged to be other of its limitations. However, when we conduct research we have to make choices because we cannot study almost everything at the same time.

Last, but not the least, it could also be objected that people think and behave differently in justice dilemmas and caring dilemmas (see Modgil & Modgil, 1986). So, we might think that we could have obtained different results if a caring instead of a justice dilemma were used.

Critic John Horgan once said that "... all empiricism in the world cannot salvage a bad [and unclear] idea" (1999, p. 27). We are fully aware that the majority of present findings speak more in favor of an aretaic/deontic/responsibility parallelism than an aretaic/deontic/responsibility differentiation. Needless to say, it is the idea of differentiation, not parallelism, that lies at the heart of our suggestion to think of an aretaic/deontic/responsibility model as a contribution to the understanding of one's moral functioning.

Despite the fact that the majority of present findings do not lend support to our suggestion, to argue for a distinction among aretaic, deontic, and responsibility judgements, reasoning, and moralities seem to be a good and clear idea. This means that we should not give it up even when its empirical corroboration is far from being well substantiated. We know that positive results and findings are generally considered to be better findings and results than negative ones. However, negative findings can be more challenging than positive ones for the former may stimulate

more research than the latter. In addition to this, when negative findings are the case they can be seen as more reliable than positive findings because researchers prefer to get positive rather than negative findings.

We know of no dictionary that does not distinguish the concepts of right/wrong, just/unjust, which lie at the heart of a deontic morality (see Kohlberg, 1984), from either the concepts of praise/blame, virtuous/non-virtuous (see Boyd, 1977), which are key concepts in an aretaic morality (see Frankena, 1973), or the concepts of caring/not caring, responsibility/non-responsibility, which are central concepts in a caring-oriented morality (see Gilligan, 1982). Note also, for example, that the idea of distinction among domains of social knowledge, between an ethic of justice and an ethic of care, between a deontic morality and an aretaic morality pervades, respectively, Turiel's social domain approach, Gilligan's (1982) work on different moral voices, and Kohlberg's (1984) theory of deontic justice.

It is often the case that good and clear ideas were not corroborated, for example, because of limitations of the focal study. In addition to those mentioned above, our procedure did not ask participants to justify their aretaic, deontic, and responsibility evaluations. This means, among other things, that our attempt to conceive of one's moral functioning as involving an aretaic dimension, a deontic dimension, and a responsibility/caring dimension is an attempt that requires further methodological and empirical efforts.

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