TEXTES SÉANCE 10:

1) *Universalizability.* - According to this new approach the universality of genuine moral rules provides us with a test as to whether or not a given proposed rule is genuinely binding: we look to see whether the rule truly could be universalized, whether it is *universalizable*. The claim, then, is that if we consider a rule that is not, in fact, a valid moral rule, we can discover this fact by seeing that it is not universalizable; the lack of moral validity is demonstrated by the very fact that it cannot be properly universalized. [...] So the *first* thing that we do is to try to imagine that everyone does indeed act upon the rule in question, just as they are required to do.


2) What exactly is it that is supposed to go *wrong* when we try to imagine everyone acting on rules that are not, in fact, valid? The most straightforward suggestion concerning what might go wrong is this: it might simply be *impossible* for everyone to act on the rule in question. The particular universalizability test that would correspond to this proposal is this: if it is literally impossible for everyone to act on a given rule, then that rule is not, in fact, morally valid.


3) This proposal does seem intuitively plausible. But why, exactly, should we believe it? That is, why *must* it be the case that if a rule is genuinely universally valid, then it must be possible for everyone to act on that rule? The most natural defense of this claim, I suppose, is this. There is a plausible and widely held view that “ought implies can”. According to this view, a given agent can be morally required to perform a given act only if the agent can perform the act. [...] Therefore, if it isn’t really possible for everyone to act upon the rule, it can’t truly be the case that everyone ought to act upon: the rule cannot be a universally binding one.


1/ Traduction:

- Etablir un lexique anglais-français comprenant les termes les plus difficiles, puis traduire soigneusement les trois textes en français.

2/ Question :

- En quoi le test d’universalisation présenté ici diffère-t-il de la question populaire « Et si tout le monde en faisait autant ? »

- Expliquez l’adage « doit implique peut » (*ought implies can*), autrement dit (en droit civil français) « à l’impossible nul n’est tenu ». Quel usage en est-il fait dans le texte 3 ?