
It is left to modern moral philosophy - the moral philosophy of all the well-known English ethicists since Sidgwick\(^1\) - to construct systems according to which the man who says "We need such-and-such, and will only get it this way" may be a virtuous character: that is to say, it is left open to debate whether such a procedure as the judicial punishment of the innocent may not in some circumstances be the "right" one to adopt; and though the present Oxford moral philosophers would accord a man permission to "make it his principle" not to do such a thing, they teach a philosophy according to which the particular consequences of such an action could "morally" be taken into account by a man who was debating what to do; and if they were such as to conflict with his "ends," it might be a step in his moral education to frame a moral principle under which he "managed" [...] to bring the action; or it might be a new "decision of principle," making which was an advance in the formation of his moral thinking [...] to decide: in such-and-such circumstances one ought to procure the judicial condemnation of the innocent. And that is my complaint.


**N.B.** : Article disponible en ligne en v.o. Il existe une version française sur le site « klesis » sous le titre « La philosophie morale moderne ».

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\(^1\) Henry Sidgwick (1838-1900), voir notamment ses *Methods of Ethics*, 1874. Moore fait donc partie du lot (cf. texte annexe au cours du 15/03/2012)