

TEXTES SEANCE 9:

1) What ultimately makes actions right and wrong is that they are permitted, forbidden, and required by principles that no one could reasonably reject, given the aim of finding principles that others, similarly motivated, couldn't reasonably reject. For example an act is wrong if and only if any principle that permitted it would be one that could be rejected by people with the motivation just described.

Thomas Scanlon, *What we Owe to Each Other*, 1998.

2) According to contractualism, the source of motivation that is directly triggered by the belief that an action is wrong is the desire to be able to justify one's actions to others on grounds they could not reasonably reject. "Reasonably", that is, given the desire to find principles which others similarly motivated could not reasonably reject. [...] The desire to be able to justify one's actions (and institutions) on grounds one takes to be acceptable is quite strong in most people. People are willing to go to considerable lengths, involving quite heavy sacrifices, in order to avoid admitting the unjustifiability of their actions and institutions.

Thomas Scanlon, «Contractualism and Utilitarianism», 1982.

3) It is sometimes said that morality is a device for our mutual protection. According to contractualism this view is partly true but in an important way incomplete. Our concern to protect our central interests will have an important effect on what we could reasonably agree to. It will thus have an important effect on the content of morality if contractualism is correct. To the degree that this morality is observed, these interests will gain from it. [...] The contrast might be put as follow. On one view, concern with protection is fundamental, and general agreement becomes relevant as a means or a necessary condition for securing this protection. On the other, contractualist view, the desire for protection is an important factor determining the content of morality because it determines what reasonable be agreed to. But the idea of general agreement does not arise as a means of securing protection. It is, in a more fundamental sense, what morality is about. *Ibid.*

1/ Traduction :

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

2/ Question :

- Expliquez la fin du texte 3 : comment le contractualisme parvient-il à ne pas réduire la moralité à un instrument utile à la vie sociale. L'utilitarisme opère-t-il une telle réduction ?