

**XXXIII INTERNATIONAL PHILOSOPHY OLYMPIAD, BARI,
ITALY, MAY 15-18, 2025: TOPICS FOR THE ESSAYS**

ENGLISH

1. It may be confidently asserted that no man chooses evil, because it is evil; he only mistakes it for happiness, the good he seeks. And the desire of rectifying these mistakes, is the noble ambition of an enlightened understanding, the impulse of feelings that Philosophy invigorates.

Mary Wollstonecraft, *A Vindication of the Rights of Men, in a letter to the Right Honourable Edmund Burke, Occasioned by His Reflections on the Revolution in France*, Printed for J. Johnson, 1790, page 136.

2. Since authority always demands obedience; it is commonly mistaken for some form of power or violence. Yet authority precludes the use of external means of coercion; where force is used, authority has failed. Authority, on the other hand, is incompatible with persuasion, which presupposes equality and works through a process of argumentation. Where arguments are used, authority is left in abeyance. Against the egalitarian order of persuasion stands the authoritarian order, which is always hierarchical. If authority is to be defined at all, then, it must be in contradistinction to both coercion by force and persuasion through arguments.

Hannah Arendt, What is authority? *Between Past and Future*. Penguin Books ([1954] 2006, pages 92–93.

3. Thus to speak a language is to commit ourselves to the double indeterminacy due to our reliance both on its formalism and on our own continued reconsideration of this formalism in its bearing on experience. For just as, owing to the ultimately tacit character of all our knowledge, we remain ever unable to say all that we know, so also, in view of the tacit character of meaning, we can never quite know what is implied in what we say.

Michael Polanyi, *Personal Knowledge. Towards a Post-Critical Philosophy*, The University of Chicago Press ([1958] 2015), page 95.

4. The image gives, by itself, almost no intelligibility. The image must be explained; and the explanation given about it on television is insufficient. If in the future there were television that explained better (much better), then the discourse on a positive integration between homo sapiens and homo videns could be resumed. But for the moment, it is true that there is no integration, but subtraction and that, therefore, the act of seeing is atrophying the ability to understand.

Giovanni Sartori, *Homo videns. La sociedad teledirigida* [Homo videns. The remote-controlled society]. Taurus, ([1997] 2008), page 53, (Original Translation).