



Texts I | PIU22061

Year	Senior Freshman
ECTS Credits	10
Contact Hours	22 hours
Pre-requisite	None
Semester	1
Module Leader & Lecturer	Dr. Ashely Shaw and Professor Vasilis Politis
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Module Outline:

This module involves reading two texts in philosophy. The module learning aims are to learn to analyse and interpret two important and philosophically challenging texts, to learn to engage critically with these texts and to learn to relate these texts to concerns outside academia.

Component 1: Treatises on Beauty (*Ennead* I. 6) and Evil (*Ennead* I. 8) by Plotinus.

We will be studying two treatises by Plotinus: the treatise on Beauty (*Ennead* I. 6); and the treatise on Evil (*Ennead* I. 8). We will be relating themes and issues in these treatises with themes and issues in Plato and in modern philosophy.

Component 2: *Authority and Estrangement* by Richard Moran.

The knowledge that each of us has of our mind is distinctive. For example, one can come to know that one believes something seemingly without observing one's own behaviour or compiling evidence about oneself, as a detective might. Yet this apparent groundlessness does not diminish our claim to *know* what we believe. In fact, we take each other to be *authoritative* about their own beliefs. There appears to be, then, a puzzling asymmetry in how one knows one's own beliefs in contrast with how one knows the beliefs of other people. Drawing on ideas from Wittgenstein and Sartre, Richard Moran develops an account of the special nature of self-knowledge that emphasises our role as rational deliberating agents. Moran explores ways in which this form of self-knowledge breaks down, such as Moore's paradox and akrasia.

Assessment:

Coursework: one essay for Component 1 and one essay for Component 2: 50%

Examination: one exam comprising two examination questions (one from Component 1 and one from Component 2): 50%.



Recommended Reading List:

Component 1:

Plotinus' treatise on Beauty (*Ennead* I. 6); and the treatise on Evil (*Ennead* I. 8). Please use the translation by Armstrong in the Loeb series. Secondary literature will be advised in class.

Component 2:

The core text of component 2 is Moran, Richard A. 2001. *Authority and Estrangement: An Essay on Self-Knowledge*. Princeton University Press. A week by week reading list for will be provided at the start of the module.

A useful preliminary reading is Moran, R. (2004), Précis of Authority and Estrangement: An Essay on Self-Knowledge. *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, 69: 423-426. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1933-1592.2004.tb00403.x>