



Philosophia

The Love of Wisdom

Bath Royal Literary and Scientific Institution

Andreas Wasmuht





Bath Royal Literary and Scientific Institution

The promotion and advancement of science, literature and art.

Cambridge Dictionary

the ability to use your knowledge and experience to make good decisions and judgments

Collins Dictionary

Wisdom is the store of knowledge that a society or culture has collected over a long period of time.

Oxford Dictionary

Capacity of judging rightly in matters relating to life and conduct; soundness of judgement in the choice of means and ends; sometimes, less strictly, sound sense, esp. in practical affairs

Wikipedia

Wisdom, sapience, or sagacity is the ability to think and act using knowledge, experience, understanding, common sense and insight.

Knowledge is not synonymous with Wisdom

Knowledge - Epistēmē



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- Epistēmē – ‘Knowledge, Understanding, Acquaintance’
 - Scientific Enquiry establishing paradigms
 - Truth, Belief and Justification
 - Knowledge of description and acquaintance
 - Infallibilism and Indefeasibility
 - A Priori and A Posteriori Knowledge

Pramanas – Means of knowledge (Proofs)

- Pratyakṣa (perception)
- Anumāṇa (inference)
- Upamāṇa (comparison and analogy)
- Arthāpatti (postulation, derivation from circumstances),
- Anupalabdi (non-perception, negative/cognitive proof)
- Śabda (word, testimony of past or present reliable experts).

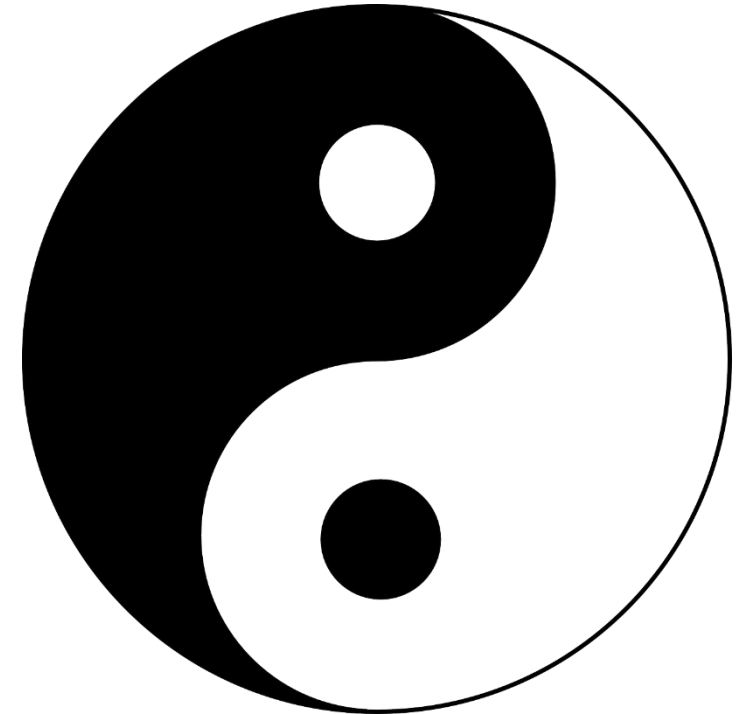


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Chinese Epistemology

- Includes moral contents and social practice
- Emphasis on education and learning
- Perfecting, Attuning, Polishing
- Relations within nature
- The cosmic and mental relations represent the basic precondition of human perception and comprehension.



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Philosophy – The Love of Wisdom - But what does that mean

What is Love?

- **Eros** Romantic Love
- **Storge** Familial Love
- **Pragma** Enduring Love
- **Philia** Friendship Love
- **Agape** Self-less Love

Philia – ‘Community love or friendship’

- Connectedness
- Reciprocal and Mutual
- For itself and in itself – an end in itself
- The Good – a state of being & becoming

Knowledge and Wisdom

- **Sophia** – ‘Skill, intelligence, Wisdom’
 - Praxis & Experience
 - Knowledge & Understanding
 - Insight & Judgement
 - Value & Virtue



Some ancient western conception of wisdom



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- **Socrates – The Oracle of Delphi – ‘Know thyself’**
- The wisest man in Athens, because he knew only that he knew nothing (or I don’t think I know what I don’t know), often transcribed as ‘There is only one thing I know and that is that I know nothing’.
- The perfection of the soul through virtue is the highest good, the wisest (Crito)
- The unexamined life is not worth living
- **Aristotle – Eudaimonia** – a flourishing life, exemplified by arête – virtue or excellence, goodness as the only good in itself
- The Golden Mean
- Distinction between Phronesis (Practical Wisdom) and Sophia (Pure Wisdom)

A more modern account of wisdom



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- **Immanuel Kant – The Categorical Imperative**
 - Nature formulation - Act only according to that maxim whereby you can, at the same time, will that it should become a universal law.
 - Humanity formulation - Always treat humanity as an end in itself, rather than merely a means to some other end.
 - Autonomy formulation –the will of every rational being as a universally legislating will, whilst at the same time recognising the autonomy of others.
- **A good will**, the only thing in itself (noumenon)
- **Sapere Aude** – ‘Dare to Know, Dare to be Wise, Dare to think for yourself’ (What is enlightenment?)

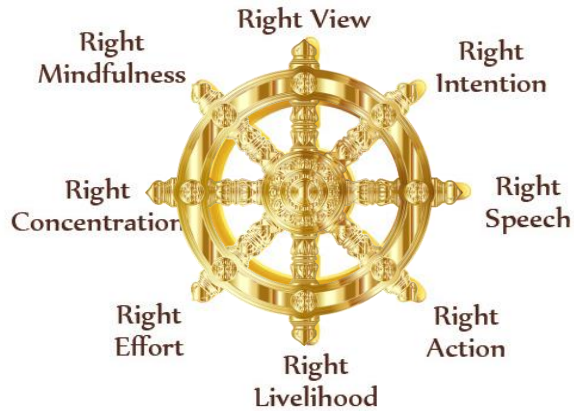
Some eastern conception of wisdom



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- Bhagavad Gita –
 - The Yoga of action (Karma),
 - The Yoga of knowledge (Jnana),
 - The Yoga of devotion (Bhakti)

- The Eightfold Path –



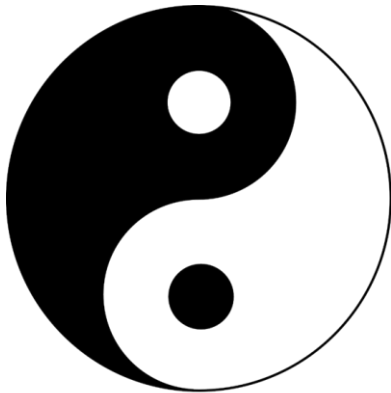
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- Right View, (Wisdom – Prajna),
- Right Resolve
- Right Speech,
- Right Action, (Moral virtue – Sila),
- Right Livelihood,
- Right Effort,
- Right Mindfulness, (Meditation – Samadhi)
- Right Concentration

Some eastern conception of wisdom



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- **The Analects** ('selected sayings')
 - Ren – Benevolence, Kindness, Sincerity
 - Li – Propriety, Rites, Etiquette
 - Yi – Righteousness, Justice
 - Zhi – Knowledge, Polished, cultivation, education
 - Xin – Integrity
- Sizi – Zhong (loyalty), Xiao (piety), Jie (contingency), Yi (Justice)

- **The Tao Te Ching** ('The way and its power/virtue')
 - Simplicity and Spontaneity (Zi-ran) - natural
 - Wu Wei (acting without acting)
 - The one - Chi - gives rise to the two (Yin and Yang)
 - Everything originates from and returns to the eternal
 - The nature of being and becoming

Mohism

- Mozi 470-391 BCE
 - **Jian** – inclusive and impartial love for everyone and the world
 - Behaviour, rather than tradition and social conventions matter
 - Conflict arises due to differences in culture, rather than nature
 - Society is an organism that needs to be organised through Jian
 - A Meritocracy represents the best form of government
 - Simplicity, Integrity and impartial Love represent wisdom



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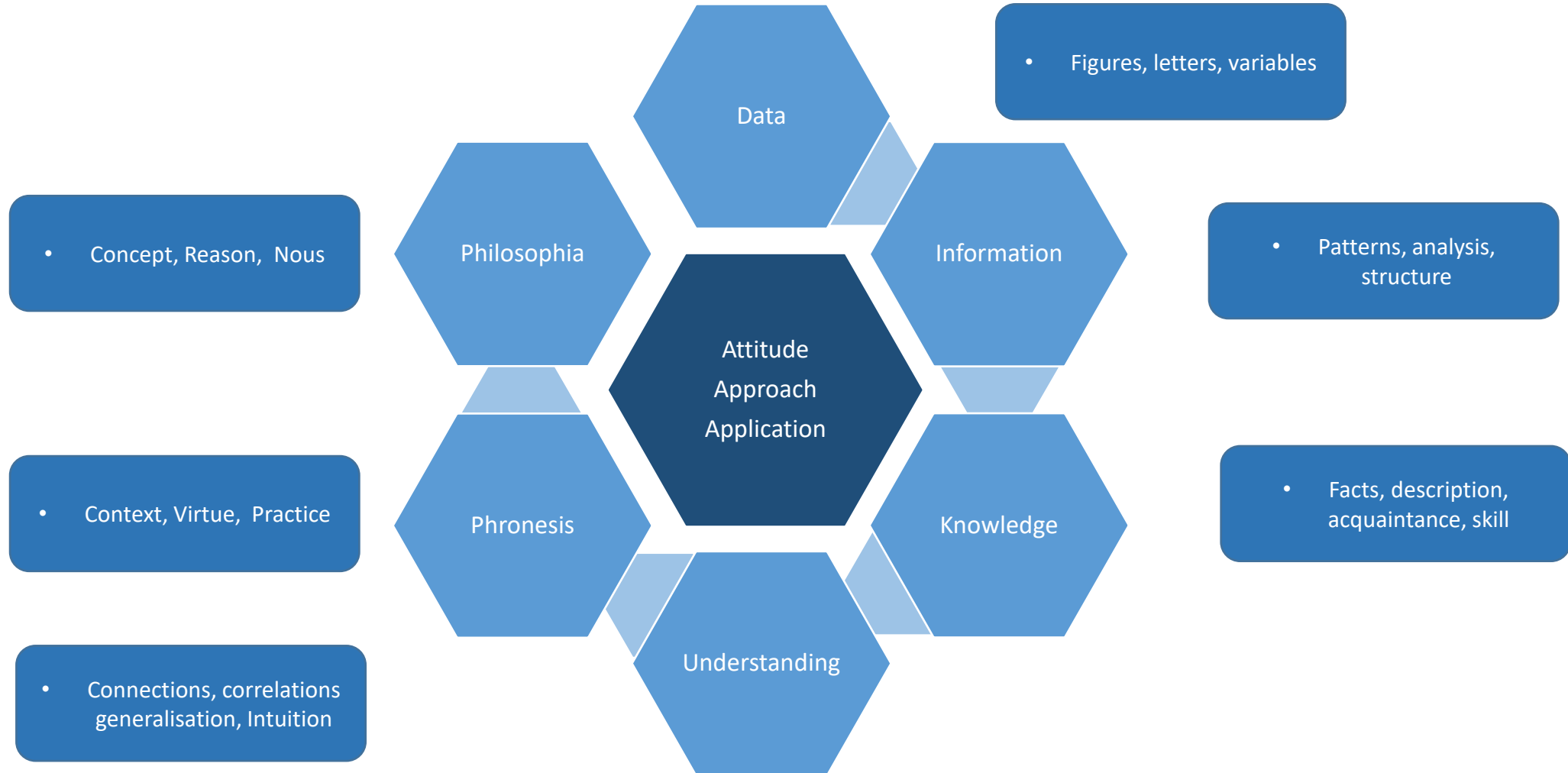
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Phronesis – Practical Wisdom

- ‘Doing the right thing, at the right time, in the right place and for the right reasons’
- A practical wisdom associated with action in particular situations
- Distinct from episteme (knowledge) and arête (excellence)
- Requires judgement and excellence of character & habit (in addition to arête and eunoia)
- Involves Póiesis and Praxis)
- Socrates & Plato Practical virtue – the good
- Facilitates Eudaimonia (a good or flourishing life) through reflection on the good
- Contextual wisdom born out of experience

Sophia – Pure Wisdom

- ‘The ability to form concepts through rational enquiry
- Intellectual virtues of nous (intuitive understanding of reality) and episteme (logical construction of knowledge)
- Emphasises Logos – reason, enquiry
- The exploration through reason of fundamental questions on existence, knowledge, values, mind, and language. (epistemology, axiology and ontology (metaphysics)
- Axioms able to be taught and learnt
- Originates from, explores and presents a worldview
- Universal and theoretical wisdom



‘The right application of concepts in the right contexts with the right virtues to do the right thing, at the right time, in the right place, for the right reasons’



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Thank you