



Bath Royal Literary and Scientific Institution

The promotion and advancement of science, literature and art.



Philosophia

The Love of Wisdom

Bath Royal Literary and Scientific Institution

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Knowledge - Epistēmē



- 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).

Chinese Epistemology

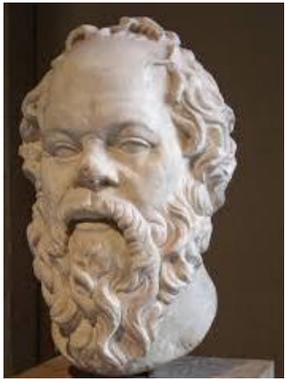
- Includes moral contents and social practice
- Emphasis on education and learning
- Perfecting, Attuning, Polishing
- Relations within nature
- The cosmic and mental relations represent the basic precondition of human perception and comprehension.



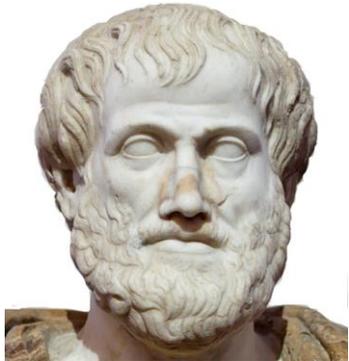
Philosophy – The Love of Wisdom

- **Philia** – ‘Filial, community love or friendship’
 - Connectedness
 - Reciprocal and Mutual
 - For itself and in itself – an end in itself
 - The Good – a state of being & becoming
- **Sophia** – ‘Skill, intelligence, Wisdom’
 - Praxis & Experience
 - Knowledge & Understanding
 - Insight & Judgement
 - Value & Virtue

Some ancient western conception of wisdom



- **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



- **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



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

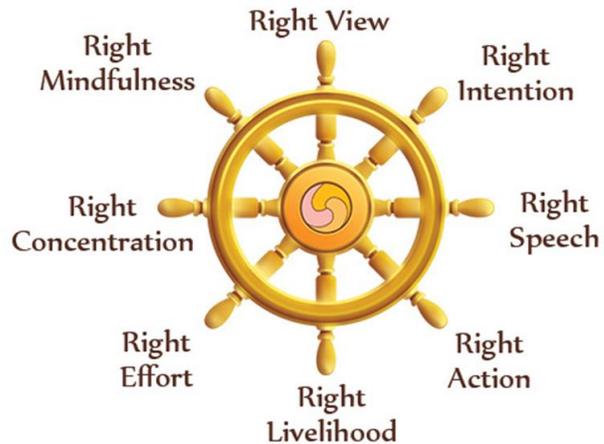
- The Eightfold Path –

- Right View,
- Right Resolve
- Right Speech,
- Right Action,
- Right Livelihood,
- Right Effort,
- Right Mindfulness,
- Right Concentration

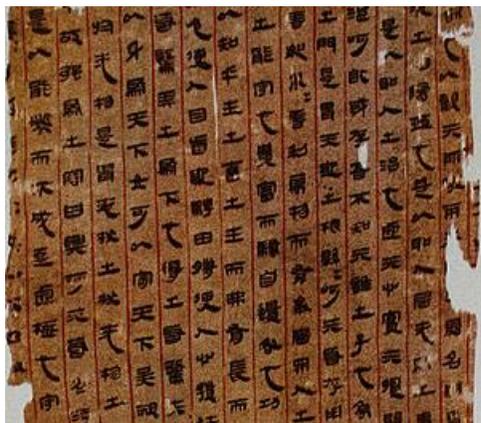
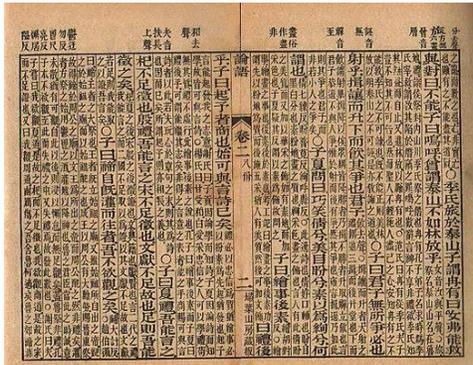
(Wisdom – Prajna),

(Moral virtue – Sila),

(Meditation – Samadhi)



Some eastern conception of wisdom



- **The Analects** ('selected sayings')

- Ren – Benevolence, Kindness, Sincerity
- Li – Propriety, Rites, Etiquette
- Yi – Righteousness, Justice
- Zhi – Knowledge, Polished, cultivation, education
- Xin – Integrity
- Xiao – Filial piety, order, respect
- Wu Wei – effortless action

- **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

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

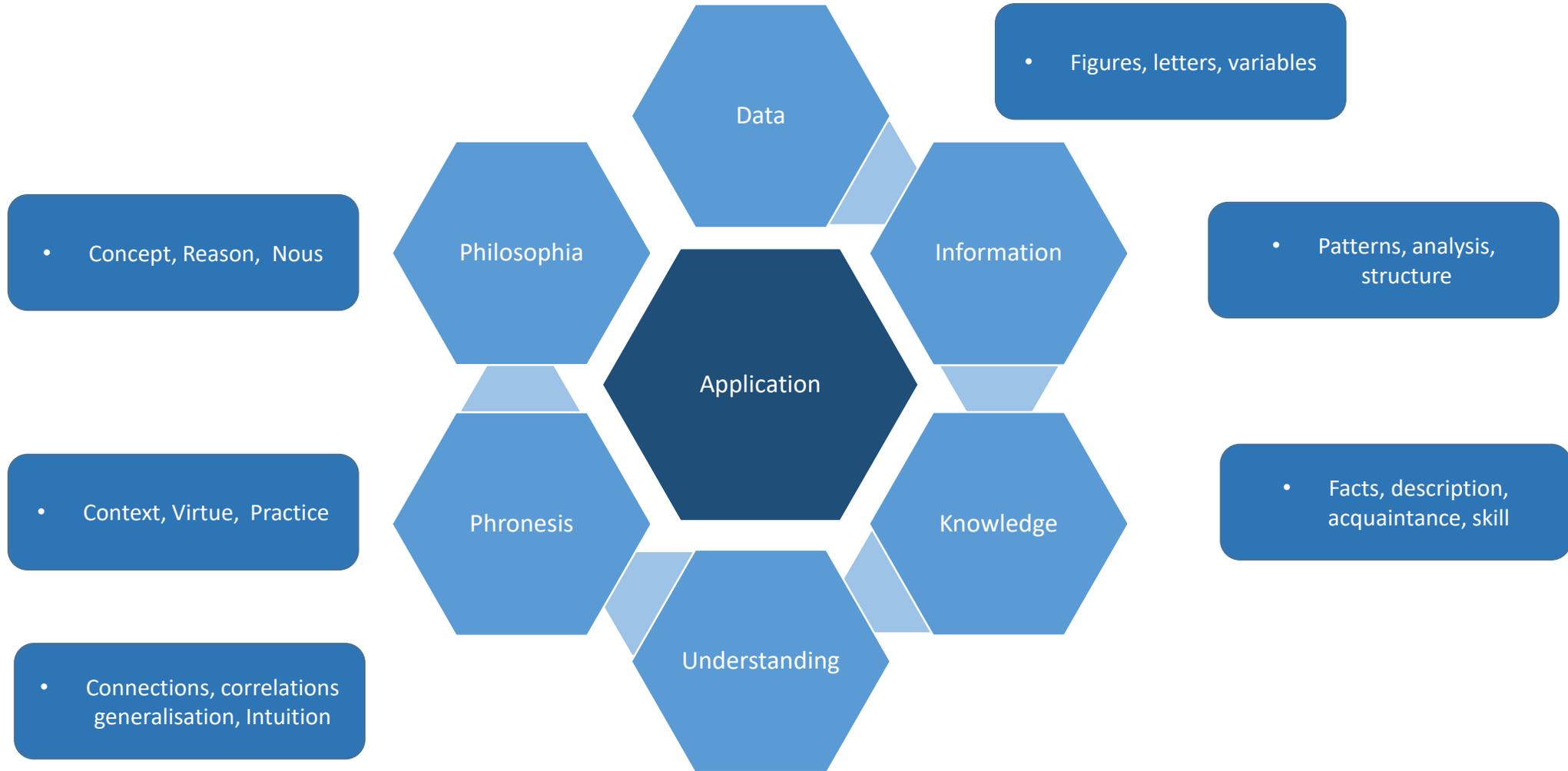
Sophia – Pure Wisdom

- ‘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



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Thank you