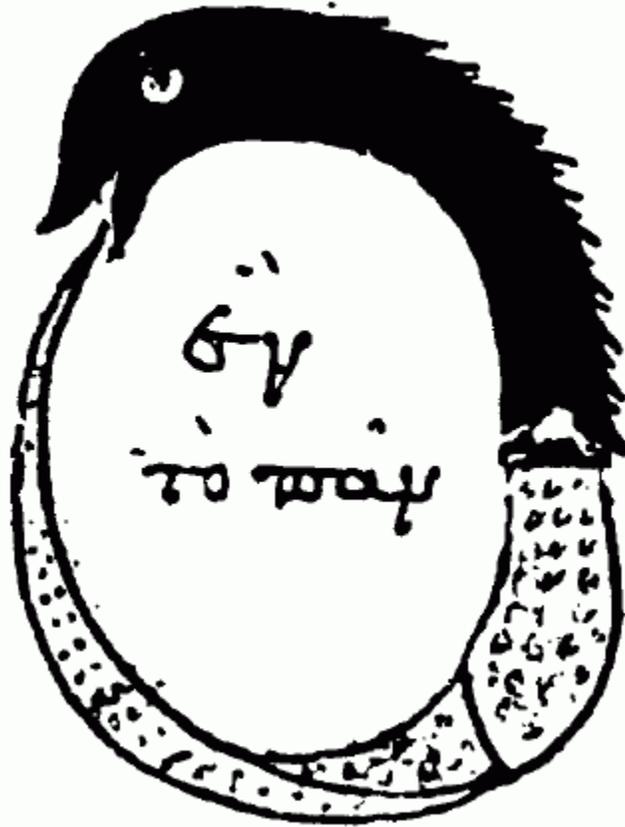


# The Wisdom of the Flourishing Earth



When we perceive the world without the filter of thought, we realize that it is thought that has made the world that humans have come to believe is reality plain and simple. But it is not reality plain and simple, it is the world that thought has created. When we have learned to perceive the world without the filter of thought, we perceive the world as it is - or at least as well as embodied consciousness can perceive the world. To see things the way they are, free of the delusions of the mind, is wisdom.

The notion of wisdom, like all concepts, has evolved throughout the history of written accounts. The key insight, as the concept developed in the Axial Age<sup>1</sup>, appears to be recognition of the possibility of gaining knowledge beyond the ken of the many, “hoi polloi”, in regard to reality. Attainable through special gift

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<sup>1</sup> A period that lasted from about 800-200BCE. “Big questions that were specifically psychological in nature emerged: ‘Who am I?’ and ‘Why are people different?’ Perhaps as a consequence of this questioning, a new generation of wisdom teachings emerged across the four geographic areas affected. In India, new Hindu doctrine included a greater degree of reflection and analysis. Buddhism and Jainism both emerged, similarly self-reflective and analytical. China saw Confucianism, Taoism, and the “Hundred Schools.” Iran saw Zoroastrianism. In the Middle East, Judaism coalesced, and changed from its non-reflective earliest writings, to a more human-focused perspective epitomized by the later books of the Hebrew Bible and by Rabbinic Judaism. Greek philosophy explored the human mind and argued for self-knowledge.” John D. Mayer, May 25, 2009, The Significance of the Axial Age (the Great Transformation), <<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/the-personality-analyst/200905/the-significance-the-axial-age-the-great-transformation>>.

of the gods, initiation, or personal self-cultivation, this insight turned the potential, unaware human into one who has attained knowledge of ultimate reality.

In the West, in the fourth century BCE, Aristotle clearly distinguished practical wisdom (*phronesis*, *prudentia*) from wisdom proper (*sophia*, *sapientia*). The former indicates skilled behavior in the social, material world. The latter is the insight that the social-material world is a partial and crude version of complete reality. Humans have both a material nature, which is subject to the limitations that result from identifying with this lower nature, or from being unable to escape its control; and an essential nature that is prior to the material nature, as an inner potential. This central, divine core, with which all humans are endowed, must be discovered by each of us, as classically explained in Plato's parable of The Cave, in which people are limited to viewing a world of illusion, until one escapes the cave to discover reality. Or recalled, as in The Hymn of the Pearl, which relates the story of a prince sent to Egypt to retrieve a pearl guarded by a dragon. Once arrived in Egypt the youth is captivated by its delights and forgets his mission. Finally, he receives a letter from the king reminding him of his true nature and the treasure he was sent to retrieve.

It is knowing oneself in this sense that is complete wisdom – *prajñā*, *sophia*, *sapientia*. This requires no doctrinal commitments. It is enough to realize that reality may be different from what we, and the great mass of people, believe it is.

This is the wisdom of The Wisdom Page. We will explore this feature of wisdom here, and strive together to escape the illusion created by being consciousness in a material body – that is, assuming that we are basically material beings, because the body's needs are so powerful and the body itself appears to be so undeniably our fundamental reality.

Central to this effort is a simple method by which people can themselves approach (at least) this wisdom, called self-control of the mind – or, the zone game. In this activity, we learn to pay attention to what the mind is doing throughout the day. We become aware of our default mental mode, that is, what the mind is doing when we are not engaged in any activity. We learn to end compulsive thinking (which includes, in addition to internal speech, daydreamy fantasy and emotional scenarios). This is replaced by pure perception: awareness without being turned into words or emotions. This direct perception is called the zone.

By becoming adept in the zone game – living as an athlete who is performing at his peak, in the zone – we perceive ourselves and the world without interpreting reality through a filter of words, concepts, miseducation, and the distortions of the imperfect exterior senses.

A person can play the zone game simply for the joy of accomplishing something valuable and challenging: ending compulsive thinking and attaining a mind that is free. For if we cannot control the mind, we are controlled by the mind: by its assumptions and thoughts, desires and fears. Here's how to play in twenty-four words: Take one thought-free breath. Not necessarily perfectly thought-free, just good enough. Then continue. As you create more space in the mind, observe what appears.

Learning self-control of the mind, and finding out what appears in a quiet, attentive mind, is natural human development, no different from learning to walk on two legs, to use symbolic language, or to make tools. It has taken longer to accomplish *this* developmental task because it is more difficult and not as obvious to the physical senses as the others.

By taking this “longest stride of soul that humans ever took” we step beyond the Axial Age. This experience of a new level of consciousness, and attaining a radically different, holistic identity is the greatest possible adventure for humans. We hope you will take the voyage with the Flourishing Earth.

RHT  
12/16/2020