

“philosophy,” a union of philos (love) and sophia (wisdom), or love of wisdom

It may be asked why I insist on using the word "philosophy" as a self-sufficient name without prefixing it by some descriptive term or person's name when it has held different meanings in different centuries, or been associated with different points of view ranging from the most materialistic to the most spiritualist. The question is well asked, although the answer may not be quite satisfactory. I do so because I want to restore this word to its ancient dignity. I want it used for the highest kind of insight into the Truth of things, which means into the Truth of the unique Reality. I want the philosopher to be equated with the sage, the person who not only knows this Truth, has this insight, and experiences this Reality in meditation, but also, although in a modified form, in action amid the world's turmoil. 20.1.127

There is a kind of understanding combined with feeling which is not a common one here in the West, indeed uncommon enough to seem more discoverable and less puzzling in the Asiatic regions. It is puzzling for four reasons. One is that it cannot be attributed to the intellect alone, nor to the emotional nature alone. Another is that it provides an experience so difficult to describe that it is preferable not to discuss it at all. A third is that although the most reverent it is not allied to religion. A fourth point is that it is outside any precise labelling as for instance a metaphysics or cult which could really belong to it. Yet it is neither anything new or old. It is nameless. But because there is only one way to deal with it honestly--the way of utter silence, speechless when in contact with other humans, perfectly still when in the secrecy of a closed room--we may renew the Pythagorean appellation of "philosophy" for it is truly the love of wisdom-knowledge. 20.1.129

The term *philosophy* we reserve for the *philosophy of truth*, which is the harmonious and balanced union of all these elements in their perfected state. We shall not here use this term for the academic wordplay, the sterile jugglery of technical terms, the toying with unreal and distant issues which so often passes for philosophy. This integrality is more in accord with the ancient and essential meaning of the word, derived as it is from the Greek *sophia* (wisdom or ultimate knowledge) and *philos* (love). 20.1.131