

Philosophy as Philo and Sophia: meaning *the union of love and wisdom, or love of wisdom*.

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

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 man 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

The Tibetan “union of Wisdom and Compassion” described by HHDL as “*Om Mani Padme Hum*”

HH Dalai Lama: Om Mani Padme Hum

In Kindness Clarity and Insight, the Dalai Lama presents his analysis of a mantra as encapsulating a whole philosophy. Here is a summary of his idea.

The whole mantra means “through the combined functioning of Compassion and Wisdom, may our ordinary starting mind be transformed into HUM--which is wholeness, completeness, nonduality.”

OM = AUM is the starting point: the original body, speech and mind of the individual which is to be transformed. In Buddhism, the mind which we start with (which is not only the gross mind, but a very subtle mind which continues from life to life) can be transformed endlessly into enlightenment. Simply by the fact of being a human being, we have the potentiality of enlightenment within us.

MANI means jewel and refers to compassion, which like the jewel, has a diamond quality which can pierce through any egoistic attitudes.

PADME means lotus and refers to wisdom, which like the lotus grows up in the most seemingly unlooked for places.

HUM means wholeness, completeness, non-duality: the primordial nature.

Comment: We notice the striking parallel of compassion and wisdom to the term philosophy: the love of wisdom or union of love and wisdom. In this one short mantra is summarized the whole path of philosophy.

Janet points out that a wonderful elaboration of this simple correlation-outline is in Govinda’s book: Foundations of Tibetan Mysticism

Rajaji on Shankara Bhajagovindam

Adhi Shankaracharya wrote a number of vedantic works for imparting knowledge of the self and the universal spirit. He also composed a number of hymns to foster bhakti in the hearts of men. One of these hymns is the famous Baja Govinda.

The ray of devotion (bhakti) is not different from the ray of knowledge or gnana . When intelligence matures and lodges securely in the mind, it becomes wisdom. When wisdom is integrated with life and issues out in action it becomes bhakti. Knowledge when it becomes fully mature is bhakti. If it does not get transformed into bhakti, such knowledge is useless tinsel. To believe that gnana and bhakti, knowledge and devotion, are different from each other is ignorance.

If sri Adi Shankara himself, who drank the ocean of gnana as easily as one sips water from the palm of ones hand, sang in his later years hymns to develop devotion, it is enough to show that gnana and bhakti are one and the same.

Click here audio of middle para: [Rajaji Fun Audio/text \(jnana and bhakti\)](#)

AND: Some Readings on Philo-Sophia from April 2022 Meetup

[“Philo-Sophia” means Love and Wisdom:](#)