

KNOWLEDGE AND NASCENT WISDOM

By Adeyemi Lawson

Editor's Note:

Extracted into this booklet is the first portion of an extensive lecture delivered by Adeyemi Lawson, C.O.N who was invited as THE GUEST LECTURER in 1989 to the annual event at the UNIVERSITY OF ILORIN, ILORIN NIGERIA.

The lecture covered a wide field of knowledge and was presented with such depth of information that we felt it best for our readers to present the content in installments, as shown in the table of contents below

I. INTRODUCTION:

It is in humility that I accepted the invitation to address you on this occasion. I thank you for this great honour. I have noted the highly impressive array of professors who have given the florin lectures over many years. I do not belong to that distinguished breed of gentlemen! However, it is now some twenty-eight years since I commenced applying my mind and my being, in all seriousness, to the Finer and Higher Truths of Life and Existence. I did not disdain intellectual appreciations, either. Truth is powerful. True Knowledge however makes one humble. There is no room for conceit. Yet there is the courage of giving expression, even to that which will only be accepted tomorrow!

Our Subject today is: "KNOWLEDGE AND NASCENT WISDOM".

In ancient Greece, the temple of Apollo at Delphi bore the inscription: "Know Thyself". Man was urged and guided to endeavour to understand himself, to observe and consciously experience himself as a phenomenon in nature.

Bertrand Russell stated in his epilogue to his work, "Wisdom of the West":

"One of the perennial problems that has occupied the attention of philosophers is the attempt at giving an account of what the world is like in Its general features But man as a social animal has not only interest in finding out about the world. One of his tasks is to act within it."

Philosophers have approached these problems over the years in what they call "the tradition of argument and reason". It is, however, sad to note that in very

many instances, the philosopher starts an argument and ends up, as if in resignation, admitting that the answer is elusive and that it might yet be found some day!

It was also Russell, referring to the principles that make for civilised living being of ethical character, who said:

“.....these are difficult questions and take time to settle. Perhaps in due course, a solution may be found.”

The Philosopher George Berkeley, made this interesting observation:

“Philosophy, being nothing else but the study of wisdom and truth, it may with reason be expected that those who have spent most time and pains in it should enjoy a greater calm and serenity of mind, a greater clearness and evidence of knowledge, and be less disturbed with doubts and difficulties than other men.

Yet so it is, we see the illiterate bulk of mankind that walk the highroad of plain common sense, and are governed by the dictates of nature, for the most part easy and undisturbed. To them nothing that is familiar appears unaccountable or difficult: to comprehend. They complain not of any want of evidence in their senses, and are out of all danger of becoming Sceptics.

But no sooner do we depart from Sense and instinct to follow thy fight of a superior Principle - to reason, meditate, and reflect on the nature of things, but a thousand scruples spring up in our minds concerning those things which before, we seemed fully to comprehend. Prejudices and errors of sense do from all parts discover themselves to our view. And endeavouring to correct these by reason, we are insensibly drawn into uncouth paradoxes, difficulties, and inconsistencies, which multiply and grow upon us as we advance in speculation, till at length, having wandered through many intricate mazes, we find ourselves just where we were, or, which is worse, sit down in a forlorn Scepticism.”

In his text on philosophical inheritance which opened the discourse in his book, *Philosophy in the Twentieth Century*, Professor Ayer observed that:

“Philosophy is exposed to the charge which is frequently brought against it, especially by natural scientists, that it fails to exhibit any progress.”

He sought to distinguish the progress of physics at various stages of its development from what he would describe as progress in philosophy,

Philosophers have discussed and argued over the centuries a variety of concepts of mind and body, debated confused thoughts on soul, discussed instincts and

intuition.

Lexicographers have in fact equated “instinct” to “intuition” by describing “instinct” as “intuitive feeling”! Different views and opinions of knowledge, different concepts of the world and man’s position in it have been given.

I do submit: One does not really know a thing until one has experienced it. It is, of course, possible through learning, through assimilation of information, for one to come to know of a thing. But knowing of it is distinguishable from knowing it. My conception of true knowledge is of that which one has come to know through experiencing. I do not share the derision of empiricism, which is to be found amongst some philosophers.

The problem with philosophers, in my observation, notwithstanding the brilliance of logical analysis which they exhibit, whether in critical or speculative philosophy, is due to a failure to acknowledge that man is himself a creature in Creation and indeed but a fruit of Creation. Many evince the sad limitation of virtually equating the Universe to Creation. Tones of resignation, claims of truth being elusive! These cannot then be surprising.

Philosophers from the East have come up with different quality of Results. They seek, within the limitations of varying degrees of inner maturity, to probe into and receive from the Finer realms of Creation beyond the Physical and Natural. They recognise that our Universe is part of a Great Creation. The Major Part of it is beyond our Conception of Space and Time.

Apart from the contributions of philosophers, we also have the field already covered by physicists to help us to a level of awareness of the major steps that man is taking towards appreciating finer and higher Knowledge.

I will invite you to contemplate the phenomenon which man has observed in his study of sub-atomic physics, which properly appreciated, must lead man to contemplate his finer connections in Creation and, indeed, of many elements with the unseen forces of nature.

The development of Knowledge on Earth has today progressed, through the Guidance of Mediated Knowledge and furthering experiencing, to the levels from which True Energy and Power stream into our Universe, to the Finer and Higher Realms of Creation.

Let me quote Oscar Ernst Bernhardt who wrote the great Work, “In the Light of Truth”, under the Pen-Name of Abd-ru-shin:

“Man has altogether lost the concept of genuine knowledge! He no longer knows

knowledge is! All learning through studying has nothing to do with knowledge! An eager student can become a scholar, yet be a long way from being called a knowing one. Therefore the expression “knowledge” in the sense in which it is used today is wrong. The man of today can speak of erudition but not of knowledge! What he acquires in universities is merely erudition, as the climax and crowning point of learning! It is something acquired, and not his own! Only what is one's own is knowledge! Knowledge can come only from experience, not from learning!

Thus we have scholars and knowing ones. The scholars can and must learn from the knowing ones!”

In the presentation of this paper, I shall therefore observe the approach of Western Philosophy and also that of Eastern Wisdom. I will leave it to my hearers and readers to advise themselves on my distinction.

I shall then speak of the relative abilities of the parts of our Brain called the Cerebrum and the Cerebellum. This will be followed by the observations on The Relevance of Modern Physics.

Finally, I shall speak on some related subjects "In Nascent Wisdom". Wisdom now being brought into existence on Earth.

I. THE PHILOSOPHER’S APPROACH:

(i) Western Philosophy:

The contribution of philosophers to the development and enlargement of knowledge following the tradition of argument, analysis and speculation, necessarily compelled an increasingly sole reliance on the intellect. The higher the level of intellectual sophistication he can claim, the more renowned he is. A touch of vanity was not always wanting, George Berkeley, himself a member of the fraternity, said:

“Philosophers have not only failed to lay, but have actually made thicker, the ‘learned dust’, of the Middle Ages.”

It was Rene Descartes who came up with the famous sentence: “Cogito ergo sum” - “I think, therefore I exist.” This was in the 17th Century, and this contributed in no small degree to the limitations with which many a philosopher of that age contemplated the conception of a “mind” and the relative identity of this to matter.

There developed the philosophical thought that led to the extreme formulation of the dualism: Spirit and Matter. This view of nature was based on a fundamental division of nature into two separate and independent realms: that of mind (*res cogitans*) and that of matter (*res extensa*). This Cartesian division led scientists to consider matter as dead and completely separate from themselves. They saw the material world as great multitude of different objects assembled into a huge machine of the universe. Even Isaac Newton constructed his mechanics on the basis of such a mechanistic world. Today, we know how wide off the mark they veered.

Philosophers are known to be preoccupied with the way things are to be described. This is often presented as an enquiry into their essential nature. What is it that they are trying to find out? One is tempted to ask! But then already knowing the use of certain expressions, they are seeking to give an analysis of their meaning. How far would this bring us to the recognition of true knowledge? With such analysis, one does not always come much closer to a clear understanding or perception of the object or the ideas. Do they really contribute much to the advancement, development or enlargement of knowledge? But then, they are always limited to the perception of the physical senses of man.

In defence, Prof. Ayer states:

“In fact the historian of philosophy can trace the influence of one philosopher upon another and can look not to the contributions which have been made to the subject by a series of eminent persons, but rather to the evolution to a set of perennial problems.”

“Progress consists not in the disappearance of any old problems, nor in the increasing dominance of one or other of the conflicting sects, but in a change in the fashion in which the problems are posed, and in an increasing measure of agreement concerning the character of their solution. As in a guessing game, the players have not yet found the answers, but they have narrowed the area in which they can reside.”

Progress in philosophy is said to consist of this!

I have made this brief reference to the method and approach of the philosopher to help focus on the limitations of exclusive reliance on the intellect. We live in a world where intellectual attainments have reached such height of acceptability and commendation that some may be surprised to find that I am today drawing a sharp and vital distinction between the capabilities of the seat of intellectual reasoning of the human brain and the provision in the brain for receptivity of

finer connections that make for the use of other organs of perception other than the physical senses of sight, touch, smell, taste and hearing.

(ii) Eastern Wisdom

The approach of Western philosopher being only rational, making for sole dependence on the intellect, appears to be in ignorance or rejection of the organs of human perception. Perhaps there is indeed fear of acknowledging the existence of that which one knows so little about. Eastern sages, in contrast, have been nurtured in the pride of varying degrees of familiarity with the finer senses. Even they, however, do not claim to know much about the “How” of the workings of these finer senses. They, however, continue to learn and benefit from increasing exposure and repeated efforts at pressing these fine organs of perceptions into activity. They followed the path of receptivity of wisdom from finer realms. They learned that they had to silence the intellect in the course of these efforts. They sought the transcendental reality. Their discoveries were viewed with suspicion in the West. Western progress in science over the centuries, however, came closer and closer to the establishment and confirmation of Eastern Postulates. Western theories, on the other hand, fall away from time to time as new discoveries brought new knowledge.

The Eastern sage spoke of absolute knowledge obtained through meditation. He knew not precisely from where. Dr. Fritjof Capra, a physicist, courageously produced an exploration of parallels between modern physics and Eastern mysticism in his book titled: “The Tao of Physics”. The publication has been a success and a best-seller. Taoism is the Chinese trend of thought contrasting with Confucianism with its strong inclination to intuitive wisdom rather than rational knowledge. Hinduism, Zen, Buddhism, Taoism, Chinese thought, or any other Far Eastern approach, base their views of the World on “Mystical Experience”. “Mystical” only because the West calls it so for lack of understanding. Naturally, they all stress different aspects of their several experiences. The most important characteristic, however, is the unity and mutual interrelation of all things and events.

I have found it convenient to quote Dr. Capra on Eastern Philosophy. He writes:

“The monistic and organic view of the Milesians was very close to that of the ancient Indian and Chinese philosophy and the parallels to Eastern thought are even stronger in the philosophy of Heraclitus of Ephesus. Heraclitus believed in a world of perpetual change, of eternal ‘Becoming’ . For him all static being was based on deception...”

Heraclitus thought that all changes in the world arise from the dynamic and cyclic interplay of opposites, and he saw any pair of opposites as a unity. This unity, which contains and transcends all opposing forces, he called the Logos.”

In the light of recent discoveries in sub-atomic physics, the long-drawn opposition of pluralism to monism must weaken and ultimately disappear. In Chinese philosophy, the flowing and ever changing reality is seen as a cosmic process in which all things are involved.

One can discuss a great number of postulates in Eastern wisdom. It will however suffice for my purposes, to treat just three.

(i) The words of a TAOIST text is said to run as follows:

“The stillness in stillness is not the real stillness. Only when there is stillness in movement can the spiritual rhythm appear which creates heaven and earth.”

I I have always found this statement not only intriguing but a good mind-teaser. Speaking of the stillness in movement, one can contemplate the possibility of an absolute optimum of velocity with a beginning continually running into an end and the end continually running back into 'the beginning. At such inconceivable absolute optimum velocity, indeed perfect stillness, should be the result!

It has been given in higher knowledge that our conception of time and space is really peculiar to this part of the World of Matter. The less the density in Creation, the finer the realm, the finer the environment and the much faster, conceived in earthly terms, would be the sensing of time.

However, time is said to stand, in reality, completely still. The whole of Creation, together with creatures in Creation move in-time. It does appear to us that time moves only because of the relativity of our movement in time. In this dense part of the World of Matter, so comparatively sluggish, is the illusion of the movement of time that it is difficult to conceive the dimensions of time and space in much finer realms.

The Eastern sage, who then speaks of stillness in movement, has already been exposed to finer experiencing that brings the certainty of the knowledge that man with his rational approach is yet a long distance from appreciating. And yet

these are the things we must grasp with a higher degree of clarity to be able to assess accurately the effects of Motion, which we call events, in our universe.

(ii) Contemplate further the wisdom of the East, recalling a saying credited to Chung Tsai:

“The great void cannot but consist of chi; this chi cannot but condense to form all things and these things cannot but become dispersed so as to form the great void.”

Here again one comes across a seemingly paradoxical statement but a statement pregnant with wisdom. Today, science accepts that the void is an identifiable field of energy in the quantum field theory. But more than that, Chung Tsai appears to have stumbled on to a great truth which Western science is yet to discover, namely, that it is from finer radiations traversing immense distances, approaching particular cooling off points, that condensations do permit the formation of many particles and entities of life at various levels of Creation. The whole of the universe being a condensation of radiations formed in the activities which flow from Finer Realms of Creation.

I shall be dealing more with the phenomenon of radiations In Creation as I go to the Section-“Nascent Wisdom”. To me, however, in the knowledge in which many like me do stand today, this statement of Chung Tsai affords evidence of some commendable degree of receptivity. He even perceived the end flowing back into the beginning!

According to the Big Bang theory, the observed expansion of the universe is seen as a thrust of the initial explosion. It is rationally projected that the moment of the big bang marked the beginning of the universe and the beginning of space and time!

When man however attempts to fathom what happened before that moment, he runs into great and severe difficulties. Sir Bernard Lovell is quoted as having said:

“There we reach the great barrier of thought because we begin to struggle with the concepts of time and space before they existed in terms of our everyday existence.

I feel as though I have suddenly driven into a great thought barrier where the familiar world has disappeared.”

The whole purpose of this paper, and indeed my hope, is that soon enough, scientists will accept that there is a need for man to become familiar with what

obtains beyond that which Sir Bernard Lovell has described as the “great barrier of thought”. The human body has been so endowed and the faculties at his disposal are such that a true bridge can be afforded to his inner self through which he can bring to his day consciousness that which he can intuitively perceive of those Finer Realms of Creation beyond our Universe, beyond the World of Matter, only a limited part of which is familiar to scientists generally.

(iii) Finally, let me draw your attention to yet another saying attributed to Lao Tsu:

“He who pursues learning will increase every day. He who pursues TAO, Will decrease every day.”

Not only must the rational mind or the seat of intellectual reasoning be silenced when the organs of intuitive perception come into play and lead one to levels of awareness that are considered extra-ordinary by earthly standards, but indeed, it is only he who becomes too strongly subjected to the development of the Intellect, and becomes unaware of his finer faculties, that is exposed to vanity and conceit which result in the feeling of some increase in stature. He however who pursues wisdom and becomes increasingly receptive to the knowledge which Nature itself mediates, progresses in maturity, sensing the Greatness, the unimaginable Greatness of Him in Whose Will the whole of Creation came to be. Thus will he also approach the sensing of his own nothingness in Creation.

And yet therein lies true greatness

II. THE INTELLECT AND THE RELATIVE ABILITIES OF THE CEREBRUM AND THE CEREBELLUM

It is known that there are two parts of the human brain - the frontal brain which we call the cerebrum or, in common parlance, the “large brain”; and the part of the brain at the rear, which we call the cerebellum and ironically describe as the “small brain”. We are familiar with the functions of the cerebrum, the seat of the intellect. But with the functions of the cerebellum, we are less acquainted. In his work: “In the Light of Truth”, Abd-ru-shin, in the lecture titled “INTUITIVE PERCEPTION”, writes!

“Every intuitive perception that a person has immediately forms a picture. In the formation of this picture the small brain or cerebellum participates as the bridge across which the soul should control the body. It is that part of the brain through which you receive your dreams. It is in turn connected with the frontal brain or

cerebrum, through the activity of which thoughts are generated that are more closely tied to space and time and which eventually constitute the Intellect.”

“Now pay close attention to the process! You will then be able clearly to distinguish when the intuition speaks to you through the spirit, or when feeling addresses you through the intellect!”

“The activity of the human spirit awakens intuitive perception within the solar plexus, thereby simultaneously making an impression upon the cerebellum. It is the effect of the spirit, that is, a wave of power issuing from the spirit. Man naturally perceives this wave in that spot where the spirit within the soul is connected with the body - in the centre of the so-called solar plexus, which passes on the wave to the cerebellum where it creates an impression.”

“In accordance with the specific nature of the various impressions received, the cerebellum, like a photographic plate, forms a picture of the process as willed by the spirit or as created with the strong power of the spirit through its volition. A picture without words! The frontal brain takes over this picture and seeks to describe it in words, thereby generating thoughts which then find expression in language.”.....

“Man, however, voluntarily abandoned the course prescribed for him through the constitution of his body. He stubbornly interfered in the normal working of “the chain” of his instruments by making the intellect his idol. Thus he concentrated his whole energy upon the training of the intellect in an entirely one-sided manner! As a result the frontal brain, having now become the producer, was forced to exert itself cut of all proportion to what was required of the other co-operating instruments.”

“This naturally incurred a heavy penalty! The uniform and harmonious cooperation of all the individual links was upset and hindered, and with it every right development. The excessive strain to which the frontal brain alone was subjected for thousands of years forced its development far beyond everything else.”.....

.....“The specific quality of the cerebellum is needed in order to receive the vibrations of the spirit. It is impossible to bypass it, for the work of the frontal brain is to prepare their transition to the World of Fine Gross Matter, and therefore it is of a quite different and much coarser nature.”

“But let us now turn to the further consequences of the false mode of living in the past! The cerebellum, which is relatively much too small, makes it difficult for the truly serious seekers of today to distinguish between what is genuine intuitive perception within them and what is merely feeling. I have already said that feeling is produced by the frontal brain; the thoughts it sends out influence the bodily nerves in such a way that, in reaction, they forcibly incite the frontal brain to indulge in so-called imagination!”.....

..... “In the case of intuitive pictures, which arise through the cerebellum acting as a bridge for the spirit, the picture immediately appears first, and only thereafter is it transmuted into thoughts which then influence the feeling of the body!”

Unfortunately, physiologists do not appear to have investigated with sufficient degree of thoroughness the functions and abilities of what is called the small brain, the cerebellum. But here you have it' in the quotation which I have given you.

Knowledge in this respect, mediated to man by someone who has observed that true knowledge, comes only from experiencing. He has spoken in the language and authority of someone who knows, without ambiguity, without citing any other person as authority. Undoubtedly speaking from experience.

How can this come to be? Perhaps it may be a privilege someday to know more of such phenomenon.

With this neglect of the cerebellum by man, it has become weak and suffered like an atrophied muscle. Consequently, for some millennia, man has cut a sad caricature of himself, hopping along on one limb instead of walking gracefully on two. What beautiful level of achievement would he have claimed had he but maintained the natural balance in the use and development of both the cerebrum and the cerebellum!

You will have noted, in the quotation which I read out, the reference to knowledge of Creation. Abd-ru-shin speaks of *“one who knows the process of development in Creation as a whole and then studies himself attentively.”*

The new knowledge now contrasts the abilities of physical sensory faculties with finer sensory abilities. We can now bridge the rational approach of the West and the radical empiricism of the East. The bridge is born of higher knowledge, guiding the man of today to fine experiencing with nature.

It is in my submission vital for the West to become familiar with non-physical sensory appreciation of reality. Giant strides can then be taken on the path of

progress, supported by the ongoing discoveries in the field of Physics.

Even William Jams on psychological research indicated:

“Our normal waking consciousness, rational consciousness as we call it, is but one special type of consciousness, whilst all about it, parted from it by the flimsiest of screens, there lie potential forms of consciousness, entirely different.”