

# THE INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF HUMANITIES & SOCIAL STUDIES

## Wisdom: A Rudimentary Philosophical Exploration

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**Abstract:**

*Wisdom is a sought after human quality. It is associated with age, which means it is gained with experience. Experiences are about the world around and self. These two are in a state of tension. Resolution of this tension is through wisdom. The beginning of life in our world was with a single cell: amoeba, which had the characteristic of survival. Wisdom is that evolved characteristic.*

**Keywords:** amoeba, consciousness, Big-Bang

### 1. What is wisdom?

Contemporary Longman Dictionary defines wisdom as 'good sense of judgment, based specially on your experience of life'. "Your", stands for an individual and experiences are experienced by one's consciousness. The word consciousness has been used to avoid confusion between heart, brain or mind which are considered the seat of experiencing, thinking, decision-making and volition. Volition is the power to choose or to decide something without being forced to do it. Further, the experiences are of the world around which consists of things and even people and also one's own body. My consciousness at any moment in life depends upon my experiences so far. My experience of a new object depends upon my consciousness at that time. We are aware of ourselves, of the world around and the experiences. This awareness of our being aware of 'everything' is our consciousness. Wisdom is expressed in words or actions and from the above discussion it is the good sense of judgment based on the conscious 'me' and the world.

### 2. Tension

There is inherent tension between 'me' and the world. Let us go to the beginning of these two.

#### 2.1. The World

Big Bang refers to the great explosion that created the universe. During the explosion, the particles, electrons, protons and photons were continually being created out of pure energy. Some particles like neutrons also came into existence. These form the nuclei of atoms, as we know them today.

Within a few minutes, the universe contained nuclear material of hydrogen, helium, photons and electrons. All of this matter continued rushing apart, cooling and becoming less dense. It took a few hundred thousand years for atoms of hydrogen and helium to be formed. The gases formed clumps due to gravity which became galaxies after condensation.

There is vagueness about the very beginning. From where did the original pure energy come from? What or who decided the time of conversion from energy to matter? Why did the energy convert into electrons, protons and photons and not something else? The answers to these questions are being attempted by the sciences of astrophysics and subatomic particles. However, the theory of Big Bang is supported by actual scientific observations.

The galaxies, as we know have many solar systems of various sizes. Our earth, which for all practical purposes forms our 'world', is a planet revolving around one of the suns in one of the galaxies.

#### 2.2. 'Me'

All matter originated with the Big Bang. Life, as far as it has been understood so far, started from matter. Of-course, there are many unanswered questions. Life started on earth as a single cell, amoeba. It happened in the sea and this cell had a few, very simple characteristics. It 'knew' what is food, and what is poison for it. It moved towards food and against poison. Whatever was poison for it; destroyed it. Whatever was food for it; nourished it. The nourishment helped it to grow in size and then it divided into two. Thus, it multiplied and survived.

From the single-celled to multi-celled, life developed over time. The process culminated into human beings. Throughout this process, all the life forms have kept the common feature; fending against harm and attempting to survive.

### 2.3. Tension

There is a tension between us, the humans and the world around. Our bodies need to be kept within certain temperatures. The world around can be too hot or too cold for them. Our insulation (clothing and shelter) have to be appropriate. In extremely hot or cold climates, the tension between our need and nature becomes obvious. Food is another of our needs. Very rarely is abundant food easily available in nature, without any effort on the human part. Only a few centuries ago, all the waking hours of our ancestors were devoted to this enterprise. Hunting, gathering, agriculture or rearing animals are all the activities of reducing the tension between our nutritional need and nutritional supplies in nature. The wild animal which is the hunter's nutritional need for his survival, also wants to survive. There is a tension between the survival needs of the two.

In nature, the nutritious plants, fruits and roots have their ways of survival. In other words, only the ones that had the survival tactics survived. A fruit represents the plant's attempt to procreate and survive. A gatherer who plucks the fruit is reducing the chances of the tree's survival and enhancing her own.

A farmer plants the seeds of the nutritional plant, waters it and adds manure to soil. He also removes the weed from the soil. Therefore, agriculture is the activity of enhancing the chances of survival of the plants that the humans need and reducing the same for the competing ones.

Animals and plants are a part of 'that', the world. For 'me' to survive, some of 'that' has to be sacrificed. In other words, either I survive or a part (however small) of the world. It is the accumulated human experience aided by language and reasoning, that has helped man survive and occupy almost all the parts of the world. That is the most basic form of wisdom. After the survival has been taken care of, wisdom attempts at higher goals of life.

### 3. Conclusion

Wisdom is the good sense of judgment based on the conscious 'me' and the world. There is a tension, at the very fundamental level, for survival, between 'me' and the world. The quality of resolving the tension is also inherent in all forms of life. It was in the very first single cell: amoeba. Wisdom, at the most basic level, is the same sense of judgment, developed over centuries of evolving species.

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