

What, exactly, does the wisdom of which philosophy is the love include?

Well, it certainly includes a critically reflective understanding of authentic existence and therefore a metaphysical understanding of self, others, and the whole that is theoretically true and an ethical understanding of how one is to act and what one is to do that is practically true.

But is this all that wisdom includes?

So I have usually supposed. And yet a difficulty with this supposition is that it is not at all clear then why philosophy as "the love of wisdom" should be anything other or more than critical validation of all the various answers to the existential question expressed or implied by life-praxis and culture. Why it should also be, in its other main aspect, purely formal analysis of meaning and of all the various kinds of meaning is left unexplained.

But what if the wisdom that is philosophy's object, or objective, includes a critically reflective understanding of *all* that we necessarily presuppose—not only in existing as human beings simply as such, but also in thinking, saying, and doing any of the many different kinds of things that we ordinarily think, say, and do in understanding ourselves and leading our lives in all the various settings in which we actually live? Clearly, on *that* supposition, there would be no need to explain why the wisdom philosophy loves also includes the analysis both of meaning and of all the various kinds of meaning.

31 October 1998