



Wisdom: A History

Trevor Curnow

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What, precisely, is wisdom? And who is wise? Wisdom has fascinated the human race for thousands of years; ancient authors sought to capture it in collections of proverbs and fables, while modern thinkers seek to uncover its essence. It has been thought about in many different ways and searched for in many different places. Philosophers have claimed to be lovers of it and scholars have always tried to define it, yet wisdom is as elusive today as it has ever been.

All societies have had to deal with the problems posed by the fundamental features of human existence, from love to questions of our own mortality. In facing these we have sought to find wise solutions for answering them. Globally, cultures have believed in the divine nature of wisdom, and have attributed it to deities such as Sarasvati, Apollo and Odin. In *Wisdom: A History*, Trevor Curnow provides an introduction to wisdom in its many forms throughout human history. Curnow draws on examples from diverse times and cultures including ancient Egypt, medieval Europe and modern Africa. Special attention is paid to the proverb – regarded as a vehicle for wisdom throughout history – and the author collects 100 edifying examples at the book's conclusion, which can instruct and inform readers searching for wisdom in their own lives. Giving a new insight into what wisdom actually is and where to find it, this book will interest all those interested in the history of humanity's quest for knowledge.

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