

Connecting our Stories in Time

Wisdom of Science: Life-changing Knowledge & Insights



27 April 2026

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FOURFOLD WISDOM AS GUIDE TO THE FUTURE

- WISDOM OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES
- WISDOM OF WOMEN
- WISDOM OF CLASSICAL TRADITIONS
- WISDOM OF SCIENCE

(THOMAS BERRY, *The Great Work*, 176-77)



Thomas' 4th Wisdom tradition: Science

Frame: Our universe evolving over time

Topics:

- How we got here
- What science has enabled - its wisdom
- How science has gotten us into trouble
- How scientific & spiritual aspirations can be mutually supportive



Our Journey Here: *Science Themes from March*

- **Many evolutionary factors** over 14B years to generated our current reality (e.g., astronomical, geological, biological & psycho-social/mind)
- The **improbability** that we're even here!
- The world's **beauty** in & around us, plus our creative and destructive abilities - with consequences for world



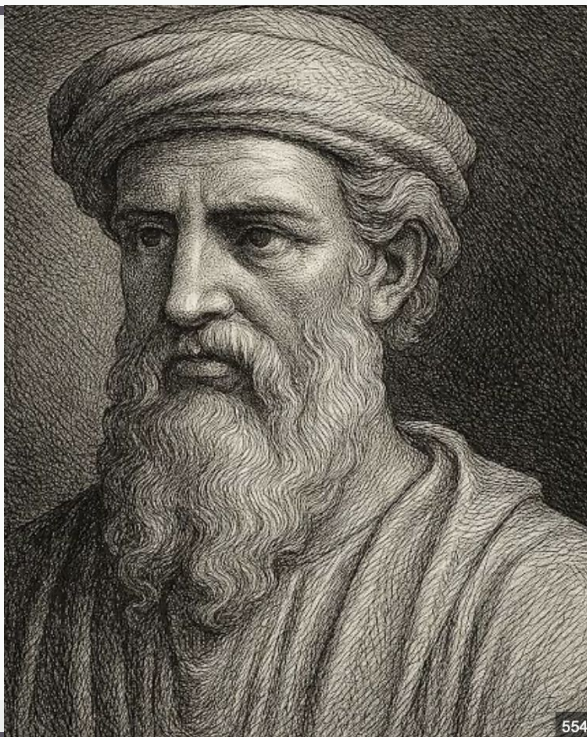
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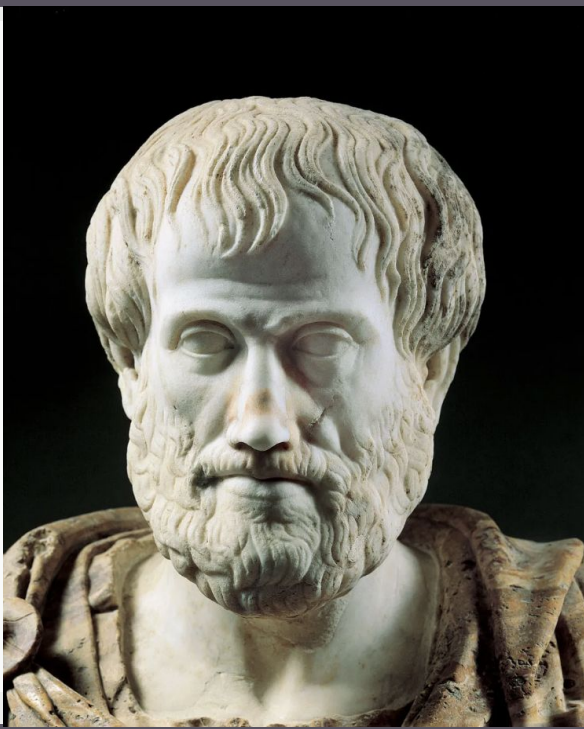
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Greek Classical Age (600 to 300 BC)

- Reality an illusion for most people
- Reason must be taught => Socratic method & Academy
- Pythagoras: numbers & harmony = fundamental reality
- Lucretius: reality can be reduced to particles called atoms

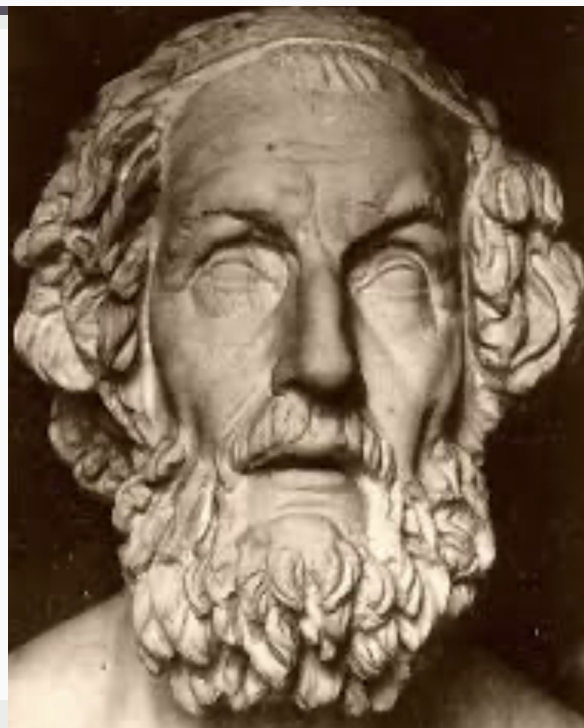


Greek Classical Age (600 to 300 BC)

Philosophers broke from accepted God mythology

Taught science based on

- Human experience
- Deductive reason, intuition & logic
- NOT on an experimental method, data, and community consensus



Conscious Self-Awareness Evolves

- Each new stage coexists with previous
- Evolution of self-views has continued
 - The Garden of Eden =>
 - Heroes – Ulysses =>
 - Evolution of communities =>
 - Individual evolution



Tectonic shifts of the 1500' s & 1600' s

Starting place: Operational Dogma – Part 1

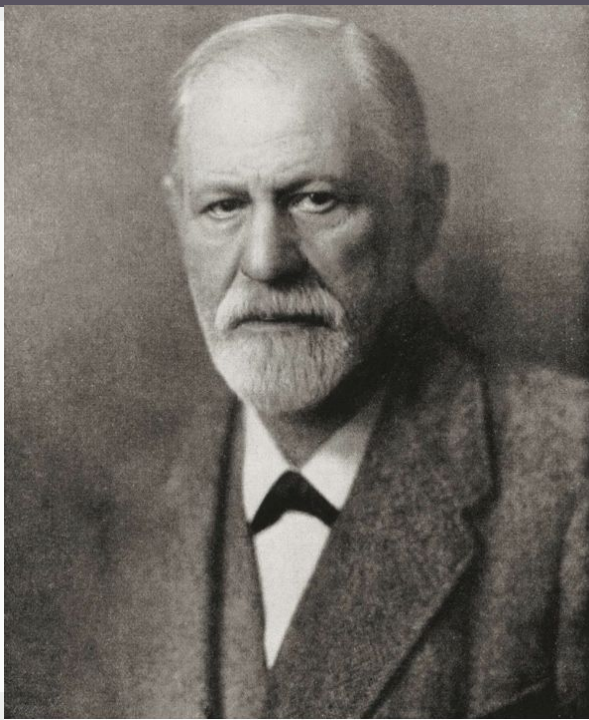
- Celestial bodies' material different from matter of Earth & follow different physical laws in their movement
- Celestial movements must be circular
- Earth was only 5,000 years old
- Species of plants & animals fixed in the beginning



Tectonic shifts of the 1500' s & 1600' s

Starting place: Operational Dogma – Part 2

- **Most reliable source of understanding:** follow the **teachings of ancients** versus observable evidence of the present;
- **Universe** best understood as a **great chain of being** in **hierarchical arrangement**; and
- **Humans** placed **on Earth as temporary setting** for their spiritual development.



Revolutions of Science: Sigmund Freud:

“Humanity has in the course of time had to endure from the hand of science two great outrages upon its naïve self-love.

The first was when it realized that our Earth was not the center of the universe, but only a speck in a world system of a magnitude hardly conceivable....

The second was when biological research robbed man of his particular privilege of having been specially created and relegated him to a descent from the animal world.”

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Galileo



Thomas' 4th Wisdom tradition: Science

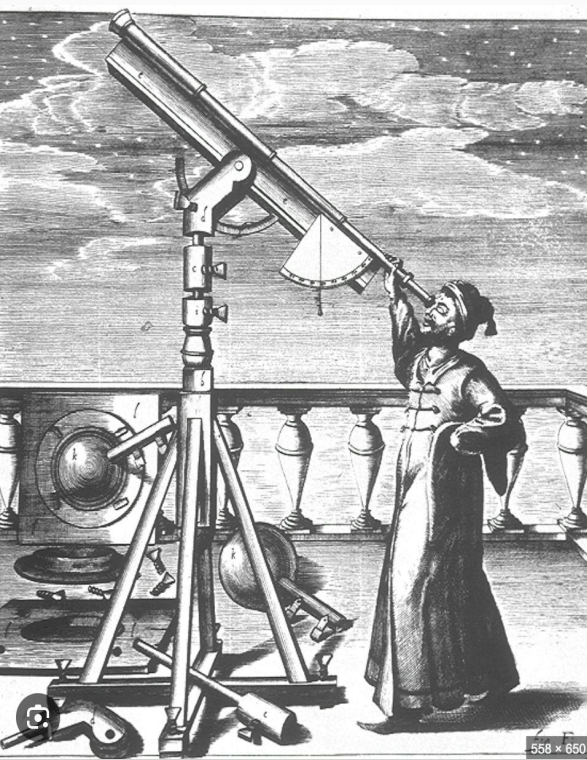
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Revolution: Faith & Reason Unhitched *(again)*

Copernicus, Kepler, Galileo+

- Recognized limitations of deductive reasoning (of human mind)
- Questioned the universe as stable or fixed
- Saw earth as very small part of larger system, not centerpiece
- Conducted 1st controlled, data-driven experiments (about orbits)

Result : Threatened established Catholic theology and power

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Revolution: Faith & Reason Unhitched

- **Bacon**: learned how nature functions, used knowledge to control it
 - Laid basis for new **tools to observe, measure & collect data**
 - Data-driven research/experiments to test hypotheses
- **Descartes**:
 - Saw **natural world as a single system** with math as key.
 - **Objectified nature** & humans to be "lords & masters of it."
 - **Separated mind and body**
- Promoted dualistic views of faith & science

Result: upset the church & faithful

- **Desacralized nature**
- **Set individual above church and state**

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Context of Tectonic shifts (1500' s – 1700' s)

1. Protestant Reformation - Luther's posted theses
2. New technologies
 - a. Navigation instruments
 - b. Plotting geographies
 - c. Warfare
 - d. Energy sources
 - e. Production & commercial distribution
3. New urban centers: e.g., London, Paris, Amsterdam
4. Increasing population
5. Expanding university life, classical learning
6. Architectural renewal - e.g., Panthéon in Paris
7. Artistic expression



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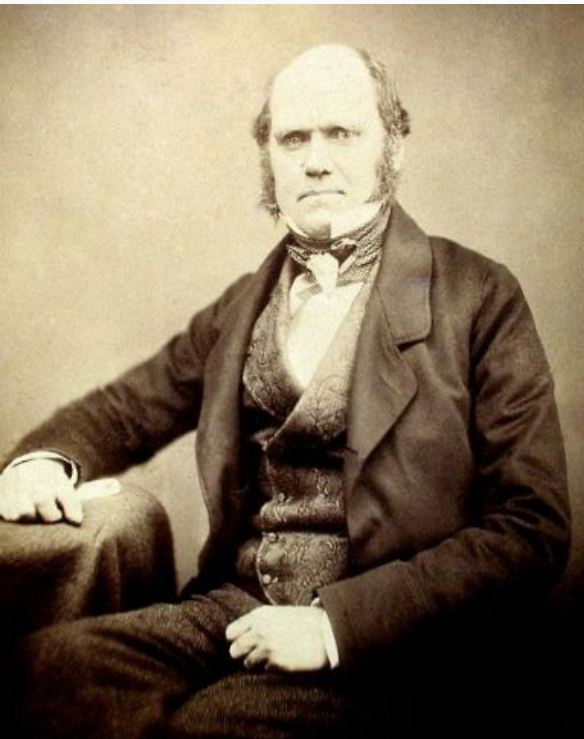
Implications of Cartesian Dualism: 1

Definition of

- God
- 'Nature'
- Humans' relation to nature
- Mind & body as separate: *cogito ergo sum*

Way people perceive and act in the world

1. Scientific inquiry, knowledge acquisition & use: objectivity regarding universe, earth, life on earth
2. Civil society
 - a. Governance (monarchy, democracy)
 - b. Political discourse, public order
 - c. Language



Implications of Cartesian Dualism: 2

Faith & spirit:

- Lessened influence of church and its dogma and doctrines
- Questioned redemption in a "heaven" separate from Earth
- Disconnected spirit/faith and science
 - World of **spirit/soul** "considered an **unreal emotional or aesthetic experience of the human psyche.**" (TB)
 - "*Crisis of belief*"

Scientists

- Used their universities & teaching for next generations
- Took over intellectual & moral guidance of society

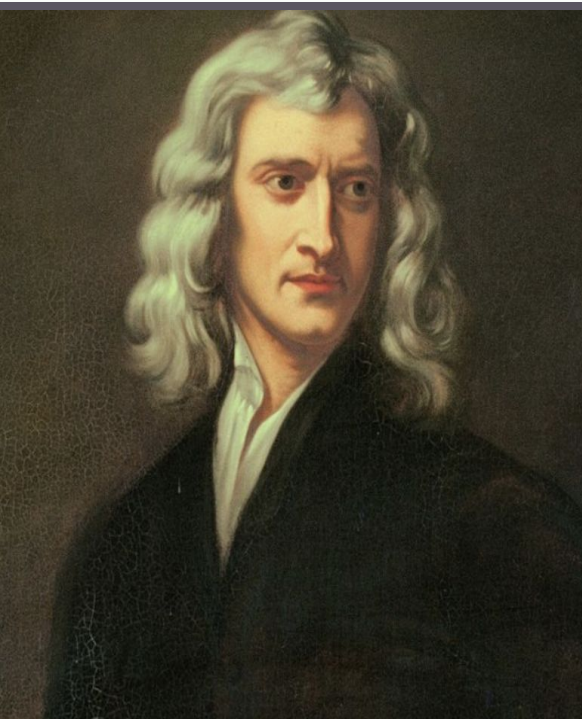


18thC – early 20thC: Enlightenment Science

Awakening to more than human natural world +

Stepping back, observing, describing and measuring

1. Structure, functioning & ordering principles of universe
2. Identifying geographies, plant & animal forms, variety of humans
3. Discovering laws of motion, nature of light, **diversity of chemical elements**



18thC – early 20thC: Enlightenment Science

1. **Newton (1643 - 1727)**

- a. Saw himself as both theologian & scientist
- b. Developed tools & knowledge of math & physics
- c. Laws of gravitation re: Earth+ => dominant until Einstein & Planck

2. **Von Humboldt (1769 - 1859)**

- a. Explored biological differences by global location
- b. Used the fossil record & geological conditions

3. **Darwin (1809 - 1882)**

- a. Biological development of different species
- b. Evolution of forms of life over time=> theory of “survival of fittest”

4. **Freud (1856 - 1939)**

Developed method for treating mental disorders by investigating interaction of conscious & unconscious elements in the mind.

5. **Curie (1867-1934)**

First woman awarded Nobel Prize, first in two categories (physics, chem)

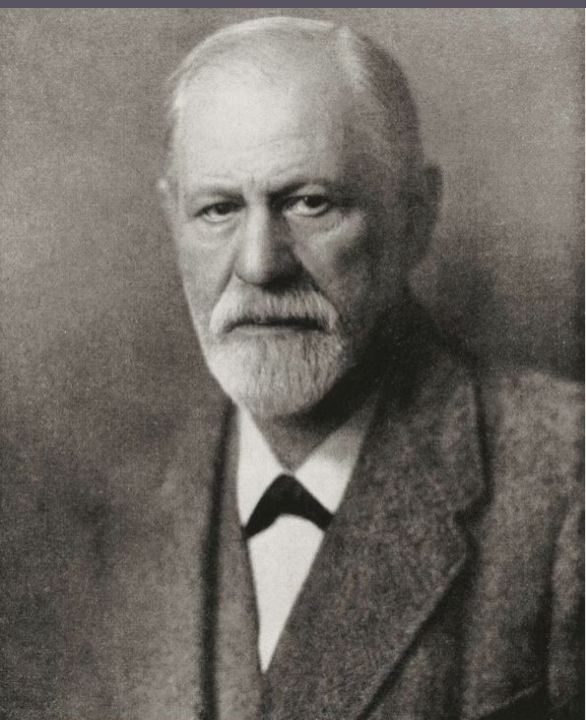


18thC – early 20thC: Enlightenment

Science

Implications

- Questioning authority of monarchs & church
- Universities defined separate disciplines for study & practice
- Limitations of Newtonian framework => questions & advances
 - a. **Quantum revolution**
 - b. **Psychoanalysis: exploring inner mysteries**
 - c. **Ecology: mapping species' interaction in systems**
 - d. **Realization**
 - i. universe not stable, but
 - ii. evolving in an identifiable sequence of irreversible transformations in which humans participate



18thC – early 20thC: Enlightenment

Science

Psychoanalysis - exploring humans' inner mysteries

Freud:

man's craving for grandiosity is now suffering the third and most bitter blow from present-day psychological research which is endeavoring to prove to the ego of each one of us that he is not even master in his own house, but that he must remain content with the veriest scraps of information about what is going on unconsciously in his own mind.



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Challenges

Working with Past Wisdom Traditions & Stories

- Moving from a deeply encoded worldview to one that's emerging and only partially visible
- Participating in birthing the new story of the ecozoic era in this time "between stories"
- Reflecting a "continuing process of emergence"

Multiple – sometime conflicting – stories live together.

How do you sense things are in flux?



A Peek Ahead:

Cosmogenesis Now Central to our Self-understanding

An **irreversible** sequence of transformations got us humans to today's Earth and our universe.

Results:

- **Greater complexity in structure and functioning**
- **Greater variety & intensity in modes of conscious expression (e.g., creativity)**



01-Garden Gateway

Thoughts for another evening

- Summarize **dominant worldview** in early 20C and in 2026
- Outline quantum revolution + other breakthroughs
 - **Max Planck, Albert Einstein, Werner Heisenberg**
 - **Carlo Rovelli's insights**
 - **Medical, genetics & psychiatric milestones**
 - **Cybernetics & digital revolution**
 - **Teilhard de Chardin, Berry, et al. supporting cosmogenesis**
- Explore
 - **shifts in views of consciousness, self in universe**
 - **emerging science (e.g., AI, +?...)**
- Integrate the 4 wisdom traditions to
 - **Broaden & deepen New Story of cosmogenesis**
 - **Guide our lives in this critical moment toward Ecozoic Era**

Our Shared Home

