

The Task of a New Star Wisdom in Modern Time
Unrevised Lecture by Willi Sucher - 7 May 1953, Hawkwood

Is there a necessity for a star wisdom in this age? Of what significance can this be to the people of today?

The stars are the spiritual foundation of all that we behold through our senses, of all that exists in the universe. This very Earth is the physical foundation of all that exists in the kingdoms of nature.

How do we stand within this universe of the stars? Humans alone have the faculty to think and the ability to relate our experiences to a center within; that is, our ego. This is a unique position within this great earthly domain. We alone can step back and look out into the universe. We are a means of recognition within this universe, and we can stand outside in spiritual consciousness of that realm of events. We are the organ through which the universe can recognize itself and can say “I AM” to itself.

There are two poles of cosmic existence. One is the foundation of all natural creation, as recognized by modern science and astronomy, and the human being is the opposite pole through which the that realm is realized and the universe can say “I AM”. This is the great miracle of the universe.

Think of how much the Earth depends on the activity of the Sun and also of the Moon. All that is in the kingdoms of nature comes from the Earth and its substances. However, the building stones of matter come from the great universe of creation around us.

We are the great organ of Self-realization, of Self-perception of the creation of the universe within the realms of the visible beings of the kingdoms of nature. However, we are not just a passive mirror, reflecting the surrounding universe, but we are an active center through the agency of the “I AM” living within us. Through this faculty of evolving cognition, we are a creative architect, using the creative universe as material: the light, warmth, and substances streaming in upon us from the surrounding universe. Rather, we might say that we are as yet an architect apprentice, for we have not yet reached our full potential. This urge to realize within ourselves the laws of the great universe has been implanted into us since the beginning of time. That is our history.

The history of human endeavor through the ages is to come to grips with the great problem: “I myself, and the universe around me.” The ever changing forms of this problem have evolved through the ages from the childhood of history to our approaching maturity.

The child’s first authority was the teacher, the Divine universe of the stars, manifesting in movement and gesture for our guidance. Later, independence developed and even rebellion against this Divine authority, denying even the authority of the Divine Word. This is the present age, which also rejects the Divine world.

We can rejoice in such a rebellious attitude, even in education, as it is the first sign of a child’s approaching maturity and independence. Someday the Child of this universe will come into its own, with a mature cognition of the messages of cosmic authority, though not in a sense of predetermination or fate but with full cooperation. The realization of the great cosmos in our ego is now a necessity, if we are to become a full human being. Therefore, star wisdom can only grow with our increased recognition of it.

I will give you a brief summary of how human beings through the ages put our social order into relation with the starry world and into the world conceptions of historical evolution. For more than 2000 years, one major controversy had been the question: Are we standing still in cosmic space, or are the Sun and planets moving around the Earth? Some 2000 years ago it was believed that the Earth stood still and that the Sun and the planets moved around the Earth. This was expressed by Ptolemy, who was an astronomer in the 2nd century AD, as the Egyptian Age lingered into the Græco-Roman Age.

In the early 16th century of the middle ages, Copernicus made a great change, largely through thought rather than observation, by insisting that the Sun stood still in cosmic space while the planets with the Earth moved around the Sun.

These world conceptions are stages or steps in which we have tried to come to grips with the cosmos in relation to ourselves. We built our earthly home according to these principles. One of the purest manifestations

of this conception was in the Celtic civilization and social constitution, which maintained that ancient cosmic-world conception.

King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table contain it all. The Sun of the cosmos corresponded to the Prince, or the ruler, on the Earth. King Arthur instituted the Round Table, which has a relation to the Holy Grail, as predecessor. There was also the ancient Celtic image of the Magic Cauldron, from which all wisdom flowed.

At this Table, there was one place where a continuous watch was kept on the world, whereby a knight was always sent out to help any who were in distress. King Arthur is often known as the Ploughman, which has great significance. As a boy, Arthur dreamed that he ascended to the sky on a spiral staircase. There he saw his father, the great Dragon (Pendragon), and all the spiritual beings behind that constellation of stars. Pendragon pointed out the Great Bear constellation—also known as the Plough—which has seven stars. Herein Arthur entered the Hall where the seven Kings sat, and he entered as the eighth King, whereon they all cried, “Comrade in God, the time has come when the great shall become small.” This is a cosmic picture in the myths of the human descent to Earth from the spiritual world, from the macrocosm to the microcosm.

Arthur does not represent the supreme ruler in the center. Note that it is a round table, which can send cosmic forces to all quarters of the suffering world, which is a democratic conception; for the Earth is the altar—the Table on which the food is prepared for humanity. Arthur’s Round Table represents the Zodiac of the fixed stars, and we have it represented again in the Last Supper with the twelve disciples.

While Copernicus published his new system, putting the Sun at the center, Machiavelli was writing his *Il Principe* in Rome, which made the ruler the complete autocrat. Socially it was later to be represented by Louis XIV—Le Roi Soleil - L’etat c’est moi (I am the Royal Sun - I am the State). Thus, on Earth the changing cosmic conceptions are reflected in changing historical conceptions.

Humanity was thus taking another step in relation to the solar universe as a new social concept. Machiavelli interpreted the Copernican system in social terms, yet he had never even heard of it! This was the age of adolescent rebellion against the teacher.

Then came Kepler, conceiving the universe as living and harmonious, but from Newton onward, the universe increasingly became conceived of as a machine. After Copernicus, Louis XIV, and to a certain extent Charles I, represented this new consciousness. After Kepler, the mechanically ordered state began to come into existence to match human conceptions of the mechanical universe, which was ruled by civil servants. We are now trying to achieve the final perfection of this by a complete authoritarian regime, such as in Russia. It is the gravest danger yet for the evolution of freedom.

Science has discovered what it calls an expanding universe, containing millions of solar systems like our own. These are supposed to be flying apart at unconceivable velocities, like some magnified atomic explosion. This same atomistic disintegration is being reflected in a like manner in our social organism, as a result. Human beings will no longer be able to understand each other, even though we are working side by side; it is an atomization of humanity.

We stand at that zero hour, which is demanding that humanity develop a new consciousness toward the cosmic world and its laws, so that it may build a healthy home on Earth. This is essential for the West and the future of the human race.

We must desert this mechanized universe; astronomers have reached the borderline, and we are aware that it is no longer purely mechanical, especially through Sir James Jeans, who concludes the thought to be the informer of cosmic space and not matter as priority. There are many indications of this urge to move forward to a living universe again, but the prevalent theory is that of mathematical equations and no matter at all, even. However, Sir Arthur Eddington has kept both his vision and his humor, plus humanity in his astronomical conclusions.

Ours is a threefold universe, and yet it is part of an even greater one. Our solar system is surrounded by many stars, which are the greater universe, and our Earth swims as though in the Mother Womb of the greater cosmos. We have already seen how this is reflected with much exactitude in human embryology. There is an agency holding our solar system together, which is the Sun. It is not by a mechanical gravitational pull, for we have seen the Sun as a vacuum of non-space, drawing toward this vacuum, as by suction, the cosmic substances from the periphery. Essences from the greater universe are thus drawn in to nourish this solar system of ours.

The Earth is the home of the human race, building up a civilization that is striving to live a spiritual life. We have the great Father World and Mother World of cosmic existence. Secondly, we have the Agency of the Sun forces in the cosmos, containing all that exists and nourishes—the very essence of the solar system. Thirdly, there is our Earth sphere, where the spiritual life and culture can be advanced. Rudolf Steiner's book, *The Threefold Commonwealth*, shows the future aim of humanity toward a threefold social system as the only possible solution for the many troubles of our modern age.

Through cognition, by studying the greater universe beyond our own, we can find the building stones of the social-economic life for a healthy society. Through studying the Sun, which nourishes our Earth, we recognize the needs within the realm of individual human rights. By studying the Earth and its properties, we can advance the cultural and spiritual properties of all human beings. Cosmic conceptions can provide the building stones for creation in the social, rights and cultural spheres.

Hence, the necessity for a new star wisdom: recognizing the cosmos as necessity, not just as a hobby, and as the source of inspiration and guidance in all freedom. For the great cosmic Mother has left us free to learn by our own mistakes.