

## The Books of Life®



### Beyond closed and open society

Man finds himself in a world and has to cope with a world he has not created and he cannot rule, which hogs him with claims and coercion. Over and over again, he tried to escape from the pressure of hard facts and managed to soften the pressure of reality in some respects, for example through technology, medicine and social planning. However, as a matter of fact it is impossible to scotch suffering, need and death, and there is no society which would not impose force and waiver on its members. Again and again, human thinking has been running against this fact and has been deposing the everyday reality with its scourges to an "appearance" and subordinated them to a "true reality". Thus, man interpreted the universe as a great state ruled by a superhuman ruler, which gave rise to the idea of a "just" and "harmonious" world order, which bode man a sense of the universe (a superior regime of sense) and ultimate norms on his behavior. The theocratic society is a closed society. In such a society, all thinking is patterned, and everyone who violates this pattern violates eternal laws and cannot be part of the society.

In contrast to the closed society, there is the open society. Every individual has to take personal decisions and try to break through the social and mental barriers or at least to question them. Modern human being has lost confidence in the old dogmas. In the totality of tradition, he detects the principles of the closed society, compelling the individual under a metaphysical notion and its law.

The open society does not pursue a fixed, overriding aim to which all its parts are subordinated. The Austro-British philosopher Sir Karl Popper, for whom the systems of Plato, Hegel and Marx theoretically substantiated and practically promoted totalitarian systems, designed an "open society"

which is not planned on the drawing table, but shall develop evolutionarily in an ongoing pluralistic process of attempts at improvement and error corrections.

In the open society, the individual creates his fate himself. It is no longer imposed on him.

Some people think that after the two world wars, the western hemisphere has been overcoming the closed society and with it the closed views and mentality, but still today the people are governed by Plato's "theory of elites". They want to be ruled, but by people who know what they are doing, who can decide their life better than they can.

Political ideologies fulfill the old longing for a closed world view, for clarity, order and stability. We are still dominated by Plato's "philosopher kings," who believe that they have detected higher laws and hand over the responsibility of their measures to higher powers. Thus, they have nothing to do with the Socratic philosophers at all and, as Popper proves on many of his pages, would be allowed to use propagandist lies and confront the principle of popular sovereignty. But in point of fact, also free state school system, quota regulation, redistribution, price regulation of basic foodstuffs, state infrastructure, monetary system, central bank and base rate on the one hand and philosophy and science with all their findings on the other hand are elements of totalitarian planning and control.

It is not necessary to be pointed out in the Books of Life that, in reaction to the pressure of reality and the fateful "thrownness" of man in irrevocable circumstances, a new utopia joins company with the authoritarian tradition of Plato, Hegel and Marx: The claim that an open society implies, which is that a society does not need a fixed, overarching goal to which all its parts are related, is the goal to which all its parts are related.

Just as socialism should liberate the people from capitalism, but has enslaved them, the open society throughout the western hemisphere manifests itself as an authoritarian form of rule by imposing egoism, atheism, nihilism and above all capitalism and isolates those from society who think in any different way, not because they have another opinion, but because they would infringe the eternally valid truths of the open society.

Environmental degradation, climate change, illegal wars, repression of free speech and epidemic diseases such as burnout, mania and depression make clear that we as a society actually have no choice: we have gone too far in bearing the control and regulation of liveliness on the basis of a mechanistic, reductionist worldview free of meaning and are in doing so slamming into the wall.

In George Grows' Books of Life, we meet protagonists who do not want to come to a life in terms with a closed or apparently open society and take the bull by the horns. Similar to Odysseus, Theseus, Achilles and other heroes of the ancient mythological world, they leave their home in order to recover the treasures which are only open to the next or future mind and consciousness and bring them home for the benefits of everyone:

Wald Whittman commissions a report on his daredevil journeys, Edward Kay hires nine "heirs of fate" to safeguard his spiritual heritage for humanity, Mrs. Stadnikow invites luminaries from all over the world to a San Francisco meeting in order to discuss and to clarify the phenomenon of metaphysics once and for all or the geologist Dr. Weingartner who gets to the bottom of the "things which are no things" in his very own way.

Ancient Greece was only able to overcome its authoritarian system of rule and set the first state democracy in the history of man because the Greek myth does not include a perfect, absolute creator of the world – in sharp contrast to the Jewish, Christian, Muslim or Hindu myth. This means that the Greek mythos is fundamentally different from the socialist, liberalist, capitalist and the myth of the open society, which as well "slip into an ontological-metaphysical valuation and idealization" (Karl Mannheim), as it would happen to any judgmental and any value-free ideology. Conversely, a perfect, absolute order of the world was in ancient Greece both practically and theoretically completely alien.

Prometheus, the initiator of human civilization, as a demiurge, designed the first human beings out of clay and equipped them with properties. In the course of this creation, however, large errors occurred, which manifested as insufficiencies, from which humankind is suffering since then. In consequence, our task is to discover the errors and participate in evolutionary creation. This task is as immediate and natural as the desire of a child to walk.

The heroes of the ancient myth stood on the threshold of a new, that is, of the rational, technological oriented society. They discovered a supposedly magical object, that means an object highly technological for their time such as a sword, armor, a lance or a thread that functions like a GPS unit, while George Grow's pioneers strike out into the third and for the time being last period of man and humanity.

On their adventures, they discover what is valuable and worth retaining in both the traditional society and in the modern or "open" society and how both of them can be fused into one value and life. Which elements are based on experience and facts and which emerged under the pressure of reality as compensation and repression?

In *The Integral Society*, George Grow activates the parable in which tradition and modernity are represented by a giant and a dwarf. The dwarf on the giant's shoulders looks even farther than his carrier, but could not see far without the giant below him. Together they form a team. By George Grow's protagonists, everyone, who relies on the eyes of just one of them and despises the view of the other, is considered to be an extremist. The suspected Prophet Wald Whittman, the former Diva and TV star Mrs. Stadnikow, the supposed murderer Edward Kay, the very normal Dr. Weingartner who would be too good for this world and other "mavericks" in Grow's Books of Life are no activists for an open society, but visionaries of an integral society, future and mentality. They get past both the old and the new taboos and dogmas of a supposed social progress. Instead of constitutive principles, they develop regulative ideas and cling to them to the very end: as the meaning of life, the walk of man and humankind in three phases, the integral value, the concord of monotheism, pantheism, polytheism and atheism, the Copernican revolution of the mind, the cult of culture and other innovations that put the protagonists to a thrilling test, while they are struggling most entertainingly and intoxicatingly with their fate and daily life.

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