

SEVEN

7.1 Everything Is Ruled by Laws

¹Evolution is a process which for the individual means that he gains increasing power over his destiny. This power over destiny is called freedom. Freedom is gained through knowledge. Knowledge, freedom, and evolution are three conditions of a positive meaning of life.

²All three have a condition in their turn. Namely that existence is ruled by laws. If the cosmos were not order determined by law, then life could not have developed. If things did not happen according to law but randomly, then no knowledge would be possible, nothing could be foreseen, and freedom would be non-existent.

³What above all distinguishes hylozoics from other views is the knowledge of the laws of life. The knowledge of laws is the essential knowledge. Knowledge of something is, in the deepest sense, knowledge of the laws that apply for this thing.

⁴The foremost object of science is to discover and describe laws of nature. The more research advances, the more laws they find. They are beginning to see that there is nothing outside what is determined by law, there is nothing that is not ruled by law.

⁵When scientists will have nothing to do with any reality beyond the physical, with “paranormal” phenomena and the “spiritual world”, then it is so because they have not discovered the laws ruling these things. If they concede the existence of these realities at all, they emphasize the apparently unpredictable and lawless nature of their manifestations in order to reject them as insignificant. They regard them as curiosities in the borderland of knowledge, the last remaining riddles of a universe that is in all essentials explored. This example alone demonstrates that knowledge must be explanation of laws.

⁶Hylozoics affords an entirely different perspective on the superphysical than science does. And this it does thanks to its being able to put physical and superphysical reality into a common context, ruled by laws that our reason can grasp and accept. However, hylozoics is not content with the mere statement that there is a superphysical reality as much bound by laws as the physical. It also asserts that this is the essential reality.

⁷It is in the worlds beyond the physical that man’s ever higher kinds of evolvable consciousness have their basis. It is from these superphysical material worlds that the energies originate that drive the evolution of physical life-forms forward. And it is in the continuation of superphysical reality beyond the mere human emotional and mental worlds that man finally reaches knowledge of the meaning of existence.

⁸Man’s self-transformation into something higher than man is a process bound by law and a phase of another process that is immensely larger though equally bound by law – the development of consciousness in all life. The laws that regulate this evolution, the laws of life, are in hylozoics the most important study object of all.

⁹There are laws in everything and everything is expressive of law is the principal hylozoic axiom.

7.2 What Is Law?

¹The most valuable characteristics of a law are immutability and impersonality. If the laws suddenly changed, then the cosmos would degenerate into chaos. Nor can a law be a product of an individual intelligence. Such a thing is always temporary and limited to the ever restricted understanding of its author. The impersonality of the law is the ultimate guarantee against individual arbitrariness, also such of divine kind. Not even the highest cosmic godhead can reach that hypothetical omniscience which could clarify all the potentiality inherent in

matter. Just a fraction of the possibilities of manifestation there are in primordial matter have found expression in a perfected cosmos. From this it follows that all the innumerable cosmoses resemble each other in their basic principles but are totally different in their individual concretions of the universal Law.

²The law is expressive of the immutable and impersonal manner in which matter works. Perhaps nature appears cold and hard to us. It is nevertheless true, just, and incorruptible. And these are the conditions of knowledge and freedom, afford man the immense possibilities that he has.

³Laws indicate that forces are at work, how they work and the conditions under which they work.

⁴No laws can be offset. Ignorant people sometimes speak about “neutralizing the laws of nature”. According to this vague thinking it is thought, for instance, that the aeroplane neutralizes the law of gravitation. What actually happens is that the engine of the aeroplane by its stronger force counteracts and overcomes the force of gravitation. Gravitation as a law, however, continues to work, and with the same force as before, which appears in the very fact that force in the same quantity and direction always must counteract gravitation for the effect intended.

⁵The basic law, from which all laws can be derived and on which the immutability of all laws depends, is the law of matter, the law of nature proper. That law expresses itself in the fact that everything strives towards balance, stability, restoration, harmony.

7.3 What Is a Law of Life?

¹In respect of the meaning of life – consciousness development – laws can be divided into laws of nature and laws of life. The laws of nature are the fundamental ones. They make the cosmos an ordered whole. This order is a condition of the very coming into existence of consciousness in the cosmos. Without self-conscious monads, the cosmos cannot possibly have a meaning. However, only the laws of life make it possible for these monads to realize this meaning. The laws of life are the expressions of natural laws through the cosmic total consciousness. The laws of life give the cosmos a purpose.

²Law belongs to the motion aspect. The laws of nature are the expressions of the law through matter as energies; the laws of life are its expressions through the consciousness aspect as will.

³The laws of life are the legislation and tribunal of life itself. Before we human beings have reached that insight, we shall speculatively devise various systems of justice according to the stages we reach in our evolution. The higher we reach, the better our human law will agree with the laws of life.

⁴The laws of life accord with the best qualities of our being. According as we discover ourselves and realize our inherent possibilities, we discover that laws are conditions of this realization. We can begin to live in harmony with the laws by liberating ourselves from our ignorance of life. That also affords us the greatest possible freedom.

⁵Seven laws of life are basic. They are the laws of freedom, unity, development, self-realization, destiny, reaping, and activation. Besides these seven laws there are many such laws of life as are valid at the various stages and levels. Those are laws that man, eventually and as he develops, learns to discover himself.

⁶At lower stages, the laws of life seem unrealistic. Eventually they appear not just possible but also desirable to follow. Having reached a sufficiently high stage, we realize that they are necessary to all evolution. Anyone who wants to reach higher must learn to apply them. Anyone who does not obey them thereby refrains from reaching higher. The choice is free.

7.4 *The Seven Basic Laws of Life*

¹*The law of freedom* says that every being is its own freedom and its own law and that freedom is gained through law. Freedom is the right to individual character and to activity within the limits set by the equal right of all.

²*The law of unity* says that all beings make up a unity and that every being must realize its unity with all life in order to be able to expand its consciousness beyond its own self.

³*The law of development* says that all life – from the lowest to the highest – develops, that forces act in certain ways towards certain goals, which ultimately lead up to the cosmic final goal. Every primordial atom is a potential god and will some time, through the process of manifestation, become an actual god, that is: reach the highest degree of cosmic consciousness and power.

⁴*The law of self*, or of self-realization, says that every being by itself – by its own knowledge and its own work – must acquire all the qualities and abilities that will ultimately lead up to cosmic omniscience and omnipotence.

⁵*The law of destiny* says that the self in every new life-form is influenced by forces and is put into situations that afford to the self the experiences necessary on that very level in evolution.

⁶*The law of reaping* says that everything we have sown we shall some time reap. Everything we have done in deed, word, feeling, and thought – or failed to do – reacts upon us with the same effect.

⁷*The law of activation* says that the individual's consciousness develops through activity and only through his own activity. Everything must be his own experience and his own working-up of this experience in order to be turned into understanding and ability.

THE LAW OF FREEDOM

7.5 *Freedom Is Law*

¹Life is meant for freedom. If the meaning of life is the development of individual consciousness, how would this be possible if not all unique individuals were allowed to choose their own ways in which to develop? In the most profound sense, freedom is individuality: right to, but also capacity for, individual character and individual activity within the limits set by the equal right of all to the same. Life is freedom.

²All beings must obey laws if they are to live and develop at all. At all stages the individual's measure of freedom is a direct result of his ability to live according to the laws. Man is the lowest kind of evolving being that can reach an understanding of laws of nature and laws of life, live intentionally according to the laws. The better he follows them, the higher he reaches. Life is law.

³Thus life is freedom and law at the same time. This is an enormously important realization that we can reach through esoterics alone. Freedom and law of life are, esoterically, two aspects of the same thing: without freedom no life according to law, and without law no freedom.

⁴People ignorant of esoterics have thought that they find a paradox in freedom: the greater freedom for some certain individual or group, the less freedom for all the others. There are plenty of examples in our world; the dictator with unlimited power (or freedom) over a subdued, fearful nation is an instance.

⁵Common sense tells us that if we view freedom as a paradox, then it is more likely that our concept of freedom is false than freedom itself would be illusory. As long as freedom is

regarded as a right to arbitrariness and violation of the right of others, so long it must remain a paradox. When freedom is understood as the equal right of all, as law in other words, then the paradox dissolves.

⁶Also our concept of law has its origin in ignorance and, therefore, is erroneous. From the hylozoic point of view, the most serious feature of the misconception is that law is made subordinate to god, that law is considered as tantamount to the inscrutable will and power of an infinite being. According to hylozoics, there is no such being. All “gods” are finite beings, omniscient and omnipotent only in a relative sense. And all “gods” obey the law. They are gods by virtue of their power to understand and apply the law in a sovereign manner within their limited (albeit to us enormous) sphere of life.

⁷In hylozoics, law is above god. And this is the condition of freedom and evolution. No god can or even wants to prohibit anything, punish or judge anybody. Religions containing such doctrines reflect in this mere man-made fictions. Instead, hylozoics asserts the inviolability of the individual as a logical consequence of his potential divinity. For all monads will some time reach the highest divine stage. Only the time for this is different for all. And those who are now at the highest stage know that they would never have been able to reach it without their divine right to freedom.

7.6 Freedom Must Be Conquered

¹The goal of the existence of the cosmos is the omniscience and omnipotence of all monads. This harmony is an existence of the greatest possible freedom and, at the same time, the greatest possible lawfulness for all.

²From the beginning, the monad is totally unconscious and totally unfree. Its path to final cosmic divinity is named development. This implies self-realization. The monad will itself conquer all the necessary qualities and abilities by having experiences and learning from them. Just so the monad gains knowledge, insight, and understanding. Just so the monad forms its ever unique individual character.

³Development is the path from ignorance to omniscience, from bondage and impotence to omnipotence, from isolation to unity with all life, from suffering to happiness, joy, and bliss.

⁴Man works at increasing his freedom by obeying the laws of life. To do this, he need not be aware of them. When he has discovered them, however, he can with greater energy and purposiveness work for his own and other beings’ liberation, evolution to something higher. In order to discover the laws of life, man must first learn to apply them.

⁵Man is at every stage, on every level in evolution, relatively free, relatively not free. He is free to the extent that he has acquired knowledge, understanding, ability. The limit of his knowledge, understanding, and ability indicates the limit of his freedom. The condition of reaching the greatest possible freedom at every stage and level is that man has acquired such extensive knowledge and such activated ability to apply knowledge as is possible at his stage and level.

⁶Man develops under the balancing of freedom and law. This is what is called responsibility. When we prove our sense of responsibility for others, standing up for their freedom and right, then the consequence according to the law of responsibility or reaping is that our own freedom will increase. And, conversely, when we infringe the right of another, we lose the same measure of freedom ourselves. It can happen in this life or later. The law can wait. But a sowing will some time be reaped. The better we know the laws of life, the better we can live our lives. We then avoid infringing the right of others and so have greater freedom, being spared such limitations of freedom as are conditioned by reaping.

⁷“Free will” is a problem that has been wrongly formulated. The essence of the problem concerns our freedom to choose between various actions. And that freedom in its turn depends

on our power to freely choose motives. For we do not choose between actions, but these are determined by that motive within us which is the strongest. Therefore the question is: Can we reach such a degree of freedom that we can intentionally strengthen any motive whatever and make it the strongest? This problem thus concerns the freedom of consciousness. Free is the man who can always decide himself what thoughts he will think and what feelings he will cherish. Unfree is the man who cannot control his mental and emotional life, in whom undesired, disturbing, and destructive thoughts and emotions come and go as they like.

⁸This freedom of consciousness is determined by all the laws of life, especially the laws of development, self, reaping, and activation. Consciousness that is not free, impotence, division, and inability are due to insufficiently developed consciousness and/or bad reaping. Consciousness becomes free, concentrated, and self-controlled through methodical activation. Nobody else but the man himself can do this and in his own individual way.

7.7 Social Freedom

¹The basic factors in physics are force and matter. The dynamic factors in society are power and people. Power arises from the will and action of people but can subsequently live on more or less independently: the power of tradition, the power of ideas, the power of conventions are examples of that.

²Power is force. And if power is not to be a blind, destructive force of nature, it must be controlled and directed. This is the task of consciousness. The higher the level of consciousness in an individual or collective, the greater the power he or it may use according to the laws of life. Higher consciousness entails a greater knowledge of the laws of life, a greater ability to apply them faultlessly.

³Power is in itself neither evil nor good. Power is in itself nothing “bad”. Power is necessary to keep people together, to counteract chaos, to drive people to action, to carry through necessary changes. Whether power is to be a force for evil or good depends on the wielder’s level of consciousness, degree of egoism (will to power) or altruism (will to unity), his ability of prevision, and the actual result – a good resolution may as we know have a bad result.

⁴In its ideal form, the wielding of power both aims at, and leads to, greater freedom for all, deeper unity between all, better self-realization for all, more efficient activation of all – in short – higher developed consciousness in all.

⁵In its ideal form, power is always balanced by equally much responsibility exacted. Power without responsibility is despotism. Responsibility without power is oppression. The fact that the law of reaping always exacts responsibility for abuse of power does not hinder us human beings from doing it as well.

⁶The more responsibility a man is willing and able to bear, the greater the power the Law entitles him to wield. The greatest possible responsibility presupposes the greatest possible knowledge and ability but entitles to the greatest possible power or freedom. For power and freedom are the same thing as seen from different view-points and with boundaries drawn differently between the individual and the collective. Everybody has, according to the law of freedom, a right to live his own life in his own way, as long as he does not violate the right of others to the same.

⁷But freedom over the lives of others (that is: power) should be given only to those who have reached such a degree of insight and ability that they can bear the responsibility accompanying this freedom, should be given only to those who have learnt to obey the laws of life.

⁸The problem of the ideal society is a problem of freedom. The greatest possible freedom to the greatest number of people, respect for everybody’s right, must be guiding principles.

Those who want to introduce the ideal society by using violence against the law-abiding, restriction of freedom and right, are on the wrong path. They believe they can promote the abstract or ideal good by violating the concrete and real good. That demonstrates the power of “ideas” (actually: fictions) over thought.

⁹The ideal society is not brought about by means of a certain social system. Societies can never be constructed beforehand. They take shape while growing according to the collective character of people. Generally it can be said that the determining factors in society do not concern organization or system. They never have as much to do with form as with content, that is: function, dynamics, and consciousness. And it is people that make up the content of the organization or system. Of course social forms are dangerous that concentrate power in a few persons’ hands. And certainly that social form is the best which distributes power the most evenly between different interests and classes, contains powerful barriers to abuse of power, and has efficient, incorruptible authorities of scrutiny. But the solution lies nevertheless in people themselves. When a sufficiently influential minority of citizens (it will take a very long time before they will be in the majority) have understood the law of freedom so that they act on this understanding, they will force their rulers to such concessions that freedom will be achieved and their society will be the very best with respect to the developmental stages of the population. With highly developed citizens, any social system will be ideal. With comparatively lowly developed citizens – as is the case now – the most ideal social system will be an unrealistic armchair product. For it is people that succeed or fail in living up to the ideals; and it is people that in so doing make up the content of the system.

THE LAW OF UNITY

7.8 The Importance of Unity

¹The planet-encompassing intelligences who watch over mankind say that of all laws of life the law of unity is the most important and the most self-evident. Unity or love is the one essential thing. But man thinks that everything else is more important. The law of unity is the law that is incomparably the most important for man’s development, harmony, and happiness. The law of unity is the law of love, service, and brotherhood.

²The decisive importance of unity appears in all seven laws of life. For they are universal and aim at unity. They concern the collective more than the individual. In the law of freedom lies everything that helps others to liberation, in the law of unity everything that helps others to feel sympathy and loyalty, in the law of development everything that helps others to develop, in the law of self everything that helps others to realize themselves, in the law of activation everything that helps others to think and act on their own. If something does not benefit all, then it is a mistake as to the laws of life. Evil and good largely coincide with what separates and unites people. The greatest contribution a man can make is to rally and unite, the greatest harm is to split and disunite. Of course there is false unity based on group egoism and directed against others. Nevertheless the principle holds good as such.

7.9 The Will to Unity

¹All the sufferings and present difficult situation of mankind can be brought back to one single thing: men’s will to power. When sufficiently many have understood that the will to unity is the only sensible, the only possible alternative in the long run, and act on that understanding, then everything will change on our planet.

²With the will to unity man learns to disregard what is different and to consider what is similar between people. He learns to rejoice at the differences, to understand that they are justified as expressions of everybody's unique individual character, realize that they enrich the totality as long as all are united in the one essential thing: the common striving forward and upward. Only the man who is ignorant of life can strive for standardization, a similar view and striving.

³The most important thing is to fight hatred, egoism, and falsehood in all their countless manifestations, to teach people to live in peace with each other, to teach them to appreciate each other as they are and to teach them to look upon each other as fellow-wanderers on the path, the same path as all must wander with all the mistakes that all must do in order to learn. Any kind of judging and moralizing is a great mistake and a crime against the law of unity. Of course criminals and other violators of the right of others must be efficiently stopped in their recklessness and be taken care of by the community for social re-education. But we have no right to punish, hate, take vengeance, do evil that good may come thereof. As long as society will not see this, it will vainly fight criminality.

⁴The will to unity above all appears in the personal responsibility we sense for others. The more we grow into unity, the more the sphere of this personal responsibility expands too, embracing not only our closest relatives and friends but also our tasks, our nation, mankind, and every living creature. The knowledge of the laws of life refutes the false talk about the insignificance and impotence of the individual man. Everybody can make a contribution. When making it, it is not for us to decide whether our contribution "is of any use". Anyone who has really understood what responsibility means does whatever he can without regard for the size of his contribution, for he understands that by such inquiry he would only seek to estimate his own greatness or importance. A man's true greatness lies in his understanding of shared responsibility for everything that happens. Lack of responsibility is a proof of ignorance of the meaning and goal of life.

7.10 Service

¹The serving attitude to life arises from the will to unity. Service is an art, the greatest and the most difficult art. Everything is easy in theory. It is his practical life, his realization, how he makes the right decisions, chooses right and acts right, that proves a man's greatness and capacity. The first thing is to be clear about your own motives. Most motives are selfish, depend on your likes and dislikes and your desire for satisfaction, emotional and mental stimulation. Whenever "self" appears everything is distorted. "I will help. I will serve. I want to feel good." But if our thoughts so revolve all around our own self, what is left for the fellow man we were about to help, the task we were supposed to do? This sense of self counteracts service, separates from unity. In unity there is no "self", only "we". It is this impersonal attitude that is so difficult for man to reach.

²How hard it is to serve appears in the fact that you can do more evil than good by service. You shall not serve evil, but that is precisely what you do by injudicious service. That is why true, efficient service presupposes all-round, harmonious development of man. Ennoblement of emotionality is necessary, the cultural stage is a condition. This is not enough, however, despite what many mystics believe. Mentality must also be activated, so that man grows in judgement and common sense. Otherwise there is a risk for the noble mind to be foolish and so serve evil. There are some sayings attributed to the Christ which he never uttered: "Give to whomever begs you" and "Resist not evil". These are instances of wrong service. That would be tantamount to satisfying evil and so increasing its power. According to the laws of life, it is our duty to resist evil, for example if our country is attacked and the freedom of our nation is threatened. Else we give ourselves up to evil.

7.11 Love

¹The word “love” has been abused as few other words. It may mean anything from a fleeting sympathy to total devotion that does not shrink from any sacrifice, from cool benevolence to absolute unity with all life. Many people are too primitive to be able to love. They have no individual experience of that which people at higher stages put into the word “love”.

²We do not love all equally much. We love our friends more than strangers or enemies. Everything is in degrees, a fact that perspective thinking (47:5) understands. Anyone who says that he loves all equally much, has no self-knowledge on this point, unless he actually means: all equally little.

³Love remains just a beautiful word, binding us to nothing, if it is not expressed in action. Religious people can talk about love without committing themselves to anything. Lip-service is not enough. Freed from sentimentality, love rather manifests itself as action; action motivated by impersonal will to unity.

⁴We need ideals to worship, we need people to admire and to love. By loving one we learn to love more and more. What we love and admire we become one with. You cannot meditate without love, and you cannot develop love without meditation. For that reason meditation need not be intended as such, but only persistent, unremitting concentration.

⁵We must have strong feelings of attractive power. Else we cannot develop, cannot ennoble and raise our emotionality. And using only our mentality we will never attain causal consciousness. We are not to use mentality to stifle or suppress emotionality, as some people think. On the contrary, we should develop our emotionality, for man must utilize all his inner resources if he is to realize the superman. But emotionality should be controlled, re-directed from the lower and illusory to the higher and ideal.

THE LAW OF DEVELOPMENT

7.12 *The Law of Development and Universal Attraction*

¹The fundamental law of nature is the law of cause and effect. The basic law of life is the law of attraction or law of unity. This law manifests itself consistently in all worlds in such a manner that the higher world attracts and influences the lower world. This attractive power has been compared to the effect of the sun on the plant. It entices the plant out of the ground and causes it to reach out for the light and heat of the sun, symbols of the wisdom and love issuing from higher worlds.

²The law of development says that there are forces working in various ways towards the cosmic final goal. The power of attraction is one such force. Man’s response to this power is another similar force. It expresses itself in his striving for self-realization. When he has once decided to work for self-realization and follows the attraction to the higher he senses, his development may accelerate forcefully.

7.13 *The Law of Development and Self-Realization*

¹The law of self-realization is in fact a law concomitant to the law of development. It is true that man must do his due and as though no help were to be found. But if he does so, his purposiveness will be rewarded. The forces of the law of development will then automatically add to his own contribution, strengthening it. Without this addition, his own forces would not suffice.

²But note this: the law of development is the manifestation of a force of unity. Whether energy is added to man depends on his attitude to unity. Anyone who wants to develop for any other motive than to serve life, anyone who wants to develop for himself, will have to do without this help. However, to the same extent that man lives for others his own development is promoted so that he will be able to make an ever more efficient contribution.

7.14 *The Development of Man*

¹The lower a man is in development, the more experiences of a similar kind are necessary for him to learn, to comprehend, and to understand. That is why development at the stage of barbarism takes such an enormous time.

²When man has once acquired that general fund of experience of life which is required for comprehension, he can start specializing. In life upon life he has to study ever new spheres of life, until a dawning general understanding of life makes itself felt.

³This is repeated at each stage of development. The stage of civilization has its particular understanding of life, the cultural and humanist stages have theirs. This is why people at these various stages “do not speak the same language”. They all have the words in common, but the content of experience that man puts into them differs for different stages. What a barbarian means by “freedom” is not the same as what a cultural individual puts into the word.

⁴When man reaches the stages of culture and humanity, he eventually develops his sense of reality and his interest in human things, his understanding of the true values of life, of the meaning and goal of life and the means for attaining the goals.

⁵The monad is always enclosed in the causal envelope during its entire sojourn in the human kingdom. During incarnations this envelope embraces the new envelopes of incarnation. When the self awakens to consciousness in the physical world, it is from the beginning totally ignorant and disoriented. The new brain knows nothing of what the old brain knew. During the years of childhood and adolescence the self must activate consciousness in its new envelopes – from the lowest molecular kind up – by means of its latent abilities and dispositions. Having contact with other people and sharing their experiences, the self learns to perceive and understand and it tries to orient itself in its new world. Whatever the self has no opportunity to contact again remains latent. The capacities the self does not exercise again remain latent.

⁶During his childhood and adolescence man recapitulates the general consciousness development of mankind from the stage of barbarism. It depends on many factors how long a time he must spend until he reattains his true level, the level he reached in former lives: the capacity of his new brain, his environment, education, opportunities of contact with things that may bring his subconscious (latent) knowledge to a new life. There are many people who in a new life never reach their old level. There are others who reach it but in old age. If life takes a normal course, man should have covered the stage of barbarism at 14 years, the civilizational stage at 21, the cultural stage at 28, to start anew where he left off at 35 years – provided he has previously reached the humanist stage, which not many have. The higher the level the self has managed to reach, the faster man passes these stages in each new incarnation, if bad reaping does not hinder.

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