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## The Natural Law Theory of Human Progress Website

### EXCURSUS #25

One of a series of monographs that expands the discussion of important topics examined in *The Natural State of Medical Practice*.

## CRITICAL THEORY VS. NATURAL LAW THEORY OF HUMAN PROGRESS

**SUMMARY:** Humanity's problem, according to Critical Theory, is a Western civilization structured on the generational denial of opportunity for the many so as to further an elite class. It therefore needs dismantling. But abuse of the unprivileged by an elite class is the history of mankind. It is only in the Judeo-Christian civilization of the West that, since the 16<sup>th</sup> C Reformation, legislated natural rights have allowed all citizens to thrive, as described by the Natural Law Theory of Human Progress. While implementation of natural rights protection has been imperfect, Western civilization is, in contrast to all other civilizations, a work in progress and a work for progress. And it is here that the intent of critical theorists to dismantle Western society fails. As a Marxist philosophy fraudulently disguised as a theory, it offers no substitute. The moral guide providing the path for community and progress in the West has been natural law, as most succinctly stated in the Ten Commandments of Judeo-Christianity. The purpose of natural law is to protect natural rights, and natural law is the guide for the individual, not the group or society. Criticisms and corrective actions should be directed at transgressors as individuals, not a society as a whole. To do the latter violates natural law and will destroy the source of Western beneficence (e.g., increased life expectancy, improved lifestyle) now benefiting billions globally. Beware the camouflaged global net being cast by critical theorist authoritarians.

### INTRODUCTION

Critical Theory has received much attention in recent years because its message is promoting dissatisfaction in a variety of social groupings and proposing political solutions inconsistent with traditional American values. Most responses to Critical Theory have been focused on perceived defects in a variety of issues and their relevance to our Constitution. This essay, however, examines the issue on a more basic level, the Theory's morality and its inconsistency with our Judeo-Christian civilization.

## THE TWO THEORIES

The natural law theory of human progress is a theory that satisfactorily explains the post-Reformation beneficence in lifestyle and longer life expectancy in the West that has spread to improve the lives of billions of people globally, with the implication that its continuation is desirable. Using medical care as an example, it is based on historical medical documents and the documented contemporary social status at various times throughout the existence of several “great” civilizations, leading to a proof of the critical importance of civil protection of natural rights for all in a society to explain human progress.<sup>1</sup> There is, therefore, a degree of objective proof upon which the theory is based, which is what a theory technically requires in the modern scientific world. With that as evidence, the definition of the natural law theory of human progress is:

**Definition of the natural law theory of human progress:** A theory ascribing all political and apolitical advances for the betterment of mankind to autonomous associations in which each member seeks self-betterment and has equal opportunity to speak freely and to openly share ideas about the group’s common interest without fear of retribution. Axiomatically it excludes “betterments” that have been stolen, copied, derived by exploitation, or used for subjugation of others.

Critical Theory, currently popular, is being applied by its theorists to different social categories of Western society, including feminist, queer, postcolonial and decolonial, engaged, fat, pedagogy, and race sub-theories, and unites them in collectively denouncing Western civilization.

Here is an academic definition:

**Definition of Critical Theory:** “Critical theory” refers to a family of theories that aims at a critique and transformation of society by integrating normative perspectives with empirically informed analysis of society’s conflicts, contradictions, and tendencies.

Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy

If that is not sufficiently clear (and it is unclear to me), another approach to understanding is provided by Prof. Latiolais:<sup>2</sup>

“The central goal of critical theory is (1) to analyze the various forces that shape contemporary societies, (2) to diagnose their crises, antagonisms, ruptures, and (3) to identify and mobilize agents of social change. Critical theory is a term that describes a wide array of approaches to understanding and criticizing the myriad relations of domination characterizing contemporary

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<sup>1</sup> Volume, chapter and page number of otherwise unreferenced statements in this monograph refer to the version of the four volumes as published by Liberty Hill Press:

Vol. 1 – *The Natural State of Medical Practice: An Isagorial Theory of Human Progress*

Vol. 2 – *The Natural State of Medical Practice: Hippocratic Evidence*

Vol. 3 – *The Natural State of Medical Practice: Escape from Egalitarianism*

Vol. 4 – *The Natural State of Medical Practice: Implications*

<sup>2</sup> Christopher Latiolais, in his course description for the Kalamazoo College Academic Catalog, 2024.

society. Although there are many disagreements among critical theorists, most agree about the central questions: How do human beings create the social world? How are they created by it, yet in ways that disempower social agents or disfigure their desires? What is the relationship between structure and agency, and what does this tell us about relations of power and domination? Human freedom and social justice are generally the ethical ideals animating these investigations, such that critical theory is necessarily both descriptive and normative; it presumes a close connection between theory and practice. At the most basic level, critical theorists ask: What is wrong with our world, and how can we make it better?"

The last sentence is the camouflage tent for Critical Theory, a theory that gives no credit to scientific objectivity. It even impugns argument and objectivity as fabrications useful for those holding power. With no objective evidence for support, Critical Theory can therefore be no more than a "hypothesis:"

"a tentative explanation or concession made for the sake of argument.  
Merriam-Webster Dictionary

But it actually is a philosophy, in which a hypothesis is:

"a proposition made as a basis for reasoning, without any assumption of its truth."  
Oxford English Dictionary

Critical Theory, therefore, in its attempts to undo the present structure of society, is a Marxian philosophy masquerading as a "theory." It is a philosophy that conceives an approximation of ideal human nature can be reached only in an ideal society; its hypothesis postulates that approximating this ideal first requires elimination of the existing social structure. It assumes that the autonomous individual, if freed from the chains of powers embedded in society, will somehow be allowed to more closely approach his or her ideal, their justification being, as stated above, a proposition "without any assumption of its truth." It is Marxian in its attack in individualism while claiming the opposite.

But even that is being too lenient on Critical Theory, for philosophy has a distinguished human history even when, as is usually the case, it is considered by many to be irrelevant. Its inventors have been prominent learned individuals, and their reasoning, if not the final product, is admired and studied over the centuries. Critical Theory is to be denied this privilege for it identifies no justification for its existence other than elimination of the present status, and it provides no positive assistance in helping tailor a civilization's future.

It is, nevertheless, important to its advocates that Critical Theory be assigned a place of importance in the intellectual world, and this is aided by claiming an association with famous thinkers of the past. Its early derivation from Marxist philosophy is well documented. But this embarrassing association is conveniently minimized by using the approach of the twin of critical theory, the related "literary theory" (or "literary criticism"). For example, Plato is cited as an early expression of a critical theory.<sup>3</sup> Socrates, via Plato, discusses poetry and separates its components that have social implications from poetry as an art form. He concludes that the effects on society of a poet, especially on children, can be so great that he desires to restrict the role of the poet in his ideal city. He doesn't want its citizenry to risk being inappropriately

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<sup>3</sup> Hazard Adams, *Critical Theory Since Plato* (Fort Worth TX, Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1992).

influenced by socially unsettling rhetoric. In other words, even though poetry can be an adjuvant for philosophy, he imposes his critical theory reasoning on his ideal city by targeting contemporary Greek poetry and poets. He wants his ideal city to be as he thinks it should be. But, in contrast to modern Critical Theory that is hard at work attempting to rid our Western civilization of its purported fraudulent power base, Plato's ideal city itself has remained only a fantasy, and to many an amusing one. Not surprising is the irony that both the critic and the object of criticism are criticizable on the basis of a claim of undue social significance, a well-recognized criticism of Critical Theory.

Furthermore, literature is fixed in time and is found in libraries worldwide. It will not be changed even if it is judged to contain errors or misdirection. Literary theory can, therefore, be studied, is insightful, and can inspire a potentially constructive response. This is not the case with Critical Theory. Like literary theory, it is happy to find fault with society, which criticism occurs throughout the day to everyone in a democracy and is the source of ideas for argument and possible improvement. But, unlike literary theory in our libraries, Critical Theory is convinced that the present evidence-based and capitalistic culture it claims undermines the fabric of Western society is inherently fraudulent, cannot be improved, is to be destroyed, and is to be replaced by something, or perhaps nothing. It does not agree with the assumption that argument and objective evidence are of value in human progress and the correction of a society's errors. Our attempts to do so are merely a means to further increase the grip of the elite. In this regard it is consistent with the Marxian use of class struggle to replace (revolutionize) rather than correct perceived errors. It incites class enmity against the existing social structures. No matter how its academic subtleties rhetorically camouflage the threat of its verbiage and downplay of any Marxist affiliation, there is no question about its ultimate intent, for if correction of a societal error by democratic means (as has been repeatedly and often successfully done in Western nations) is to be ignored, a coercive alternative will be devised.

## THE DANGER

It may seem unfair spending time criticizing a mere "theory" and one whose advocates are scattered diffusely in various academic and political niches. There is no one leader, party organizer, or central office that can justifiably receive that criticism and respond on the membership's behalf. And its active machinery is further dispersed by the many different targets of the theory, each one with its unique list of items perceived to need correction. This is consistent with the innumerable nuances in definition of Critical Theory. The target is indeed well camouflaged.

Although almost every human endeavor will have its individual critics, Critical Theory paints segments of society with a broad brush. It is, in its nebulous phrases, redefinitions, and academic jargon, an example of an imperfect Rubik's cube. It ignores the complexities of society and does not single out individuals as contributing to social problems. Instead, it deals with groups, thereby pitting one group or class against another. The perceived guilty and the presumed innocents in the various groups are not distinguishable in Critical Theory.

Critical Theory objectively assessed is a serious game of words. What it does is put teeth in the everyday observations of everyone everywhere that something must (not "needs to") be removed and replaced. By selecting issues likely to find a degree of popular support, a rebellion can be instigated by claiming a common source for discontent and focusing on a specific class of

people. What were individual complaints are now the basis for class discord, and the political significance is well known. That a struggle between classes, over time, will lead to violence was stated by Marx: “revolution is the indispensable mid-wife of social change.” Critical Theory is far milder in its threats, but if Western civilization is fractured by internal discord the risk of serious consequences increases, especially from its totalitarian adversaries.

Critical Theory, trendy, sufficiently nebulous and structurally attractive, resembles to a degree the “theory of humours” that, despite no evidence for its very existence, has befriended the medically naïve for several thousand years. Critical theory is a critique of things as they are so that we can evolve the way we should, but, as with children, no clear sense of what that way is. It is a disruptive and destructive theory with a purpose but not a goal. It is, furthermore, a critique of what its advocates personally decide to disrupt or destroy, things that involve the lives of other people, whether those individuals are content with their lives or not. Thus, it is a detached and soulless theory posed by people who think their intellectual superiority and insight place them outside the world they propose to disrupt. It is ahistorical because it declares contemporary society to be the source of their problem, and yet two people make a society and societies and their intrinsic socialization have existed for fifty thousand years. Thus, theirs is a fictive world. They analyze and diagnose but provide no prognosis or therapy despite the promise of change. Theirs is a barren theory. And it is shamefully wasteful, for it blissfully disposes of those events that have, in the past five hundred years, brought much goodness and promise to the global population. Having no defined goal, it initiates a war that can last forever; perennial mobilization without actualization. Critical Theory also works against human nature, for the generational passage of ancestral myths and legends as a guide or ideal for societies is as ancient as language itself. Even religious thought, which will never be deleted from the human psyche except under coercion, is an indirect target of Critical Theory for its theorists view religions as did Marx, “opium of the masses” that will vanish when the suffering of our present civilization is relieved.

To those who wander seriously in the philosophical cloud of Critical Theory I am sorry to have to tell you this, but you, your acolytes, and all those caught up in the subsets of Critical Theory are wasting your time, and, more importantly, you are wasting everyone else’s time. Lastly, for those who use Critical Theory as a smokescreen for other business, we know what that business is.

## THE TARGET: WESTERN CIVILIZATION

To proceed with our topic, its purpose is to justify the preceding paragraphs by showing that, left alone, society will change spontaneously and for the better as long as it acknowledges natural law and is not prevented from obeying it. We have proof.

We are not like llamas or ants. We do not naturally congregate except for special occasions. Prehistory and history reveal that, apart from family, and assuming a safe and fertile environment, we prefer to be independent, self-reliant, and keep a safe distance from those who might transgress our natural rights. Once tribal societies left the nomadic life and became sedentary, their relative independence and freedom from the authoritarianism of the kinship made possible access to a domicile and local environment that supported a less hazardous lifestyle. This sounds idyllic.



There was, however, a hitch: without large localized societies, human progress will be forever impossible. Examples of scattered domiciliary-based cultures that never progressed include the ancient Cucuteni-Trypillia culture (5500-2500 BC) of eastern Europe, the almost ageless Jomon culture (10,000-300 BC) of Japan, and, more recently, Great Britain and Europe in general prior to Iron Age *oppida* (200 BC). Dispersion in family units or kinships or clans will never begin to approach an ideal state. Prehistory provides unequivocal proof of this statement, and the Australian aborigines, without a town or a medical practitioner to show for 50,000 years of nomadic wandering, bring the documentation of this claim up to modern times. Much larger concentrated societies are necessary to enable humans to progress beyond primitivity because convenient interpersonal communication and the ability to form associations are critical.

And so, when a greater degree of security, convenience, and comfort became available, the proximity of others was acceptable. But there were social conditions to be met that, as much as possible, allowed its new citizens to proceed with self-betterment as they chose. That society was made palatable by agreed upon standards of social interactions. This occurred during the “settlement hierarchy” phase of early urbanization of the early city-state prior to its autocratization. The consciences of (relatively) free individuals were able to guide communal decisions. This was different from the bond of family. It was, instead, based on common interest, a sphere of interest, one that necessitates a degree of conformity and promotes a degree allegiance. This is predictable and normal. With security assured, it was a bond based on mutual respect between individuals.

Thus, it was the formation of commercial associations during early urbanization of certain ancient primary city-states of persons seeking self-betterment that benefited from a transient environment of relative freedom. That setting permitted the *initiation* of human progress as manifested in revered ancient medical writings whose wisdom emerged in the earliest civilizations of Mesopotamia, Egypt, India, and China. Self-reliance was retained, but, rather than depending on gathering berries and killing game, some judged it preferable to do things for others in return for their berries and game. As a consequence, some became expert hunter-gatherers and others became expert at select services such as medical care that would benefit themselves and society itself. The stage for progress was set.

Unfortunately, when a society is sufficiently large, factions form and become fractious, powerful and extend their dominance generationally. As authoritarian governance takes over and embraces privileges, authoritarian directives restrict the opportunity for the unprivileged of the population to seek self-betterment. This restriction is permanent. Thus, ancient civilizations were the source of uncountable tragedies for humanity. We read from those early years much about some pieces of art, some writings of note, some monuments to heroes and victories of a valiant few that didn't produce much change. But we read little about the vast unprivileged population and the miserable world in which they lived and promptly died. What we had prior to the Reformation was a world in which there was no liberty for the unprivileged except for fringe populations overlooked by tyrants and their minions. It was a time when the unprivileged populations would have welcomed Critical Theory or any theory of change with open arms, and I would have been among them. Life was difficult to terrible, with life expectancy little more than thirty years. Wealth, power and morality were inextricably bundled for the elite and autocratic. Attempts at correction failed painfully. Dissatisfaction with mystical and temporal leadership of mankind's various societies has always existed, but the only change was the exchange of one authoritarian for another. And so it would have continued, but for the Reformation in the West.

## THE REFORMATION

Beginning in early 16<sup>th</sup> C Europe, led by a moral rebellion against contentious Church policies, there came to be an appreciation of natural rights for all persons and a realization that natural law protected those rights, that they could be legislated, and that leadership was under the same moral obligation as the unprivileged of society (see ref. 1, especially vol. 3). This great Reformation, dated for convenience to Martin Luther and his ninety-five theses in 1517, would ultimately lead to a freeing of common men and women from their enforced support of feudalism, allowing them for the first time in human history to seek self-betterment rather than assisting in the betterment of their superiors. Increasingly prominent in local political discourse, the importance of natural rights and natural law was realized and gradually legislated. A degree of personal freedom permitted the associating in groups large and small, and ingenuity, curiosity, and motivation of the previously unprivileged was thereby released. Capitalism as a true free market appeared and competed with mercantile capitalism. Prosperity and specializations led to invention and discovery. Equally important, this new aspect of society could market and advertise its findings, thus spreading its beneficence to a larger population to the point that it became clear to all that there was such a thing as civilizational progress and that we should want it to continue. The result has been the magnificent flourish of human ingenuity in Western civilization, a flourish that soon spread globally. For the first time in human history the life expectancy of the entirety of a society increased, climbing from 30-35 years to about 80 years in the last two centuries. In a similar time frame and in the same locale, for the first time in human history slavery was morally and officially abolished in the Western civilization. Despite its ups and downs, despite ever-present sociopaths and the greedy, envious, and vengeful that are always with us, and despite it being a work in progress, the beneficence of Western ingenuity has spread to billions of people.

To summarize, it was the 16<sup>th</sup> C Reformation in Europe that, by subsequent legislation of natural rights, provided the foundation for a structured society capable of a *maturation* and expansion of human progress. Without structured societies we might all be revering the “dreamtime” of the Australian aborigines.

Thus, America and other Western nations have been the source for two centuries of global beneficence of a magnificent and unprecedented degree in human history and a victorious restraining force against tyranny that has saved the world and its diversity, so far, from global authoritarianism. This has been the result not of a privileged population but an unprivileged population, a status guaranteed to Americans by its Constitution that forbids a privileged population. And the underlying strength on which this accomplishment has been based is the realization of natural rights as guaranteed by our Bill of Rights. That protection in turn is based on natural law as most concisely stated in the *Ten Commandments*, the 3500-year-old heritage of our Judeo-Christian civilization.<sup>4</sup> Furthermore, as natural law and the *Ten Commandments* are equivalent, that same beneficence and strength can be considered a universal heritage of humanity, not just good fortune for a unique global region. Over time, therefore, as authoritarian governments are removed by their citizenry, this will be recognized and accepted globally.

This is the “menace” that Critical Theory plans to replace.

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<sup>4</sup> See Excursus 23, *The Natural Law Theory of Human Progress*, section 6C, for the intimate connection between natural law and natural rights.

## CRITICAL THEORY, NATURAL LAW AND THE INDIVIDUAL

Aside from its destructiveness, unfairness, and lack of a definable goal, the primary condemnation of Critical Theory is its abrogation of natural law.<sup>5</sup> Natural law is identical in all persons and for all times. In essence it says that one should not do to another person what one would not want done to one's self, the inverse of the Golden Rule (sometimes referred to as the Silver Rule). Crucially, natural law is directed at the individual, not the group. This is explicitly stated in the *Ten Commandments* where the ancient Hebrew text is addressed in second person singular. Natural law is in the individual's conscience. It is not a characteristic of a group. Thus, the basic error of Critical Theory is that it targets groups rather than individuals. It destroys the good in order to destroy the purported bad.

But critical theory advocates cannot wait. In addition, they cannot tolerate American predominance, even though the basis for that predominance is the consequence of individual liberty and civil rights that should be applauded and improved, not vilified and destroyed. In doing so they advocate the destruction of the source of present-day global beneficence. In effect, they propose the destruction of the Judeo-Christian heritage as expressed in the *Ten Commandments* and as supported by objective evidence of the goodness of natural law (better lifestyle, longer life expectancy) as a basis for community, the very reason mankind was able to overcome its aversion to crowding. Their ultimate goal is unclear, but that is of secondary importance, for destruction must come first. Their concept of global government, the bargaining for who will control its weaponry and dismantle nationhood is still in the planning stage. If not precluded by the free nations and citizens of the world, the dismantling of Western heritage will not be silently acceded.

Different societies and cultures may define boundaries of permissible behavior differently, but natural law remains intact. And the purpose of natural law is to protect our natural rights. We are not to transgress another's natural rights. Especially important is that individuals responsible for governing be bound to the same natural law, thus ensuring government does not infringe on natural rights. And this is what makes America unique. Its Bill of Rights provides for legislative enforcement of natural rights for every citizen, because history has consistently shown that conscience alone is insufficient for policing human misbehavior.

It is understandable why Critical Theory cannot come up with a goal to justify its demands for social dismantling. Natural law provides the path for peaceful society by guiding the individual; the authoritarian imposes a peaceful society by threat of coercion. But a society as a conjunction of friends and allies underlies the reason for a society's very existence. The underlying purpose of a society is to be with, depend on, and befriend others in the alliance and those in friendly alliances. This is not surprising in that the Latin base for "society" is *socius*, meaning "comrade, friend, ally." Should a change be coerced, it temporarily strengthens the leadership and weakens the society. The structure may disintegrate altogether. But if that happens, members of the original society will not just mill around as lost individuals. They will

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<sup>5</sup> Natural law is an expression of a universal human characteristic about which there is little fundamental disagreement. This universal characteristic is present in every individual, regardless of sex, wealth, popularity, status, race, geographical location, or era. It has been variously named: Cicero's *ius gentium*, Justinian's *ius naturale*, Dr. James Q. Wilson's "moral sense," Thomas Aquinas' *lex naturale*, Grotius' *ius naturale*, Margaret Meade's "species-specific capacity to ethicalize," Maritain's "natural law of conscience," Judeo-Christianity's *Decalogue* (*Ten Commandments*), with some including *The Golden Rule* as its equivalent, and Blackstone's "law of nature" as assessable by human reason. Despite differing opinions as to its origin, natural law also finds advocates in all major religions and ethical philosophies.



gravitate to another acceptable society in defense. The desire for an alliance that assists security and well-being, whether economic, physical, or moral, is normal and strong, especially if family is involved. Any theory that demands the unraveling of normality is wrong. To propose an idealistic goal where there will be no social pressures that might not affect personal development and happiness cannot be taken seriously. Normality is to be taken seriously.

There are, of course, innumerable things that are abnormal but highly valued. It is abnormal to jump out of an airplane, but the people that can do it are admired. To be outside the range of normal is, for many things, a blessing for everyone. Thus, the problem is not the abnormal. Five percent of a population in a two-tailed Gaussian (normal) distribution are above or below normal. The problem instead is the unravelling of what is normal. It is not wrong to be abnormal, and we all comprise abnormalities in one respect or another. It is wrong, however, to destroy the concept of “normal.”

Who defines normality? It is the “usual” as defined by Merriam-Webster. But “normal” implies a standard, whereas “usual” implies customary. The latter is therefore a social construct. Normal is more than a social construct. That there are two sexes is not “usual.” It is normal to claim there are two sexes, and an invocation of a standard is provided by the ability of the two sexes to create another human life. Critical theory, which anathematizes “normal,” considers our society’s norms as relative and a device for fraudulent domination. It would have us replace “normal” with “usual.” This incorporates relativity into terminology, for identifying something as “usual” can vary among observers and provides no boundaries, whereas “normal” implies a common element susceptible to some form of quantification or definable boundary.

Natural law is normal. Natural law is the conscience of all mankind, and its components are universally understood even if commonly disregarded. The modern global benevolence of Western ingenuity is a consequence of obeying natural law, even if only to a limited degree. We do not need anyone disrupting the first civilization in human history to implement true progress, especially when the proposed method will itself be a transgression of natural rights of many. Natural rights, protected by natural law, are normal, not usual. Usual rights in prior civilizations were reserved for the power elite. It is not normal to murder, rob or defraud, but that has been the usual method of those seeking power over others. Only in our Western, or Judeo-Christian, civilization has appreciation and implementation of normal morality been associated with governance of society. We do not need these modern-day counterparts of Diogenes the Cynic to confuse those who desire to better understand what is at stake.

To conclude this section, critical theorists, like the Marxists, target the teaching of children in their pedagogical scheme. Traditional teaching represents to them merely the generational passage of social traditions they judge are defective. They prefer children be free to evolve their own ideas for society and personal development. They are to question everything in Western culture, and culture will then change accordingly. But by ignoring tradition and precedent the obvious result will be, over time, the cessation of progress. Western culture with its admiration of its relevant leaders and related events is founded on the Judeo-Christian ethos and its contribution to human liberty, civil rights, and the benevolence that has ensued. In effect they are criticizing natural law and those who recognized its importance and legislated it. As natural law is our conscience and the *Ten Commandments* are, in effect, the heritage of all humanity, Critical Theory in the final analysis is proposing a reversion to a pagan existence and a global chiefdom.

## CRITICAL THEORY AND *STATUS QUO*

One Critical Theory argument, using Blackstone and Bentham as examples, is that natural law is irregularly defined and, developing over centuries of experience and precedence, represents a *status quo*, merely restatements of unchanging self-serving policies. Not to quibble with philosophical ruminations, the definition of natural law is not to be provided by lawyers, economists or philosophers, although it is proper to acknowledge they should obey it. But this argument is difficult to understand in that modern technology and communication, the scientific advanced medium produced by our democratic societies in the West without which critical theorists themselves would never have come into existence, is continually changing and increasing in content and availability to all people and at the same time decreasing in cost. It represents the fruit of civil liberties flowing from and to all unprivileged populations. Critical Theory, in contrast, has a singular focus and singular purpose that is applied to all social circumstances. It has made the judgment that in all instances the present status is wrong and should be changed because its underlying social structure is rigged to favor those already in power. But change in the West is continuous, and both the beneficence of its products, the mechanism for their production, and the correctability of social flaws is spreading from the West to all other nations.

The apparent ascendancy of the West and Western culture, which is the source of such angst to its antagonists, is due to legislative protection of natural rights. As knowledge of the beneficence of that protection leads to recognition of natural rights in nations around the globe, autocracies will gradually disappear, a peaceful but diverse world can then conceivably exist, and solutions for global problems will emerge from all corners of the world. The day when global populations do not depend solely on the ingenuity of the West will be a happy day for all, because it will mean mankind has finally left authoritarian governance and philosophies in the dust. That *status quo* will be welcome.

People are different in innumerable ways and in varying degrees. If a person feels less comfortable socializing with another person based on physical, social, moral, or philosophical reasons, that is quite normal. Everyone has preferences for socializing. And some are leaders, some are followers. Some are active, others are passive. Some are thinkers, others are doers. Some are busy, others are casual. Some are ambitious, some are content with sufficiency. Some in the media make enormous salaries, and some, like me, wouldn't have their job for all the tea in China. And happiness and contentment can be found in all, the wealthy being no happier than those not wealthy. One thing, and one thing only, is to be considered: natural law. In a land of civil liberty based on natural rights protection each person can find his own niche, making errors and corrections along the way. That is normal. If a person of one ethnic group is transgressed by a person of another ethnic group, the problem is not with the ethnicities. The problem is the transgression, a disobeying of natural law. The problem is with the individual doing the transgression. Natural law (the *Ten Commandments*) is directed at the individual, not the group.

If there are important differences in a society, a person may leave that particular society for another, or popular efforts can be made to alter society by mutually agreed upon methods. Penalizing of an entire social group because of transgressions of some individuals is immoral.

## CRITICAL THEORY AND PROGRESS

Human differences are essential to human progress. Progress represents change and the interplay of ideas. This goes against the very grain of authoritarianism, which, while able to transiently thrive on the leavings of progress by others, tolerates neither dissent nor heterogeneity. To those that posit Critical Theory will release individual natures and allow them to reach the Marxian goal of fulfillment of being to the benefit of society is to dream. There is only one way to tolerate differences. That way is to obey natural law at all levels of society, individually and in governance. This way we tolerate and even revel in differences as long as we do not transgress another person's natural rights, including the right to associate, and as long as our natural rights are protected from them. It is a pleasure to visit different ethnic communities, to read about different religions, learn about other cultures. In protecting our natural rights, we retain our ability to be different and to choose those affiliations to which we are most compatible. If we group according to a common difference that is normal. To prevent it is to restrict our natural right to associate as we wish and promotes the authoritarian's desire for social homogeneity. The problem is not the being different. The problem is, instead, intolerance of differences. A hallmark of Critical Theory is the encouragement of intolerance (by dismantling society) while damning tolerance (the source of human progress).

As long as we are able to move from one part of our personal social composite to another based on merit, climb or not climb whatever ladder for advancement that fits our preferences and abilities, and engage in the normal desire to compete, individualism is well-served and the normal tendency to join in associations and alliances is celebrated, their importance stressed by Alexis de Tocqueville:

Nothing, in my opinion, is more deserving of our attention than the intellectual and moral associations of America. The political and industrial associations of that country strike us forcibly; but the others elude our observation, or if we discover them we understand them imperfectly, because we have hardly ever seen anything of the kind. It must, however, be acknowledged that they are as necessary to the American people as the former, and perhaps more so. *In democratic countries the science of association is the mother of science; the progress of all the rest depends upon the progress it has made.*<sup>6</sup> Amongst the laws which rule human societies there is one which seems to be more precise and clearer than all others. If men are to remain civilized, or to become so, the art of associating together must grow and improve in the same ratio in which the equality of conditions is increased.

Alexis de Tocqueville (1805-1859)<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Italicized sentence in its original French: Dans les pays démocratiques, la science de l'association est la science-mère; le progrès de toutes les autres dépend des progrès de celle-là.

<sup>7</sup> *Democracy in America*, vol. II, sect. 2, chap. 5, (translation of final paragraphs by Henry Reeve, italics added). The referenced chapter by Tocqueville comprehends all types of associations. There is a tendency in academia to exclusively concentrate on his use of associations as bases for activism in the public or "civil" sphere. I view this as a narrow interpretation. Implicit in his overall assessment of associations is self-governance. Management of local issues by local people decouples them from central government: the more widespread the associations the less governmental presence and the less risk of tyranny. To this I would also add is his implication, in the italicized line, that associations are *the mother of science* in that they include those associations that encourage, vet and display the ingenuity and inventiveness of the people.

To think that every human being will prefer to reach some mythical personal goal of being by scrapping the role of social environment that has produced the good that billions enjoy today is obviously foolish. But that particular goal of human fulfillment is not the *raison d'être* for many who espouse Critical Theory. Their true goal is an autocratic global government that will erase the differences its theorists have determined are detrimental to humanity. To do this they will replace the moral basis of our Judeo-Christian civilization by attacking the productive consequences of its freedoms, basing its arguments on examples of the inevitability of human weakness rather than their correction, replacing it with the inevitable incompetence that accompanies the autocratic morality of authoritarianism. As with all autocratic morality, it will be relative, convenient, self-serving, and coercive. It will reflect whatever is necessary for survival of its leadership. It is the same scheme that in 1917 would keep in power the dictators of all the "people's republics" of Marxism.

To conclude, the magnificent and global flourishing of almost all human societies resulting, directly and indirectly, from the Reformation in the West is objective proof for the existence and goodness of natural rights as protected by natural law. Furthermore, as the Western expression of natural law finds its origin in ancient Hebraic writings (the *Ten Commandments*) and its venue for human beneficence unlocked by the Reformation, our Judeo-Christian civilization can be credited with its implementation. But, as natural law is an attribute of all mankind, its beneficence will be expressed in any society where natural rights are protected. Logic says, therefore, that to undermine the structure upon which that global flourishing has been erected is dangerous and, if coercive, is evil. Critical theory is one or the other. 'Tis better to correct the ills we have than fly to others that we know lead to ruin.