



The Owl of Athena

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The Natural Law Theory of Human Progress Website

EXCURSUS #26

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

MORE ON NATURAL LAW

Summary: A proof of the importance of natural law as a guide for human progress has been provided by the social history of medical practice as presented in *The Natural State of Medical Practice*. The mechanism for that progress resides in the natural law protection of natural rights. This emancipates human ingenuity. But the primacy of the individual in natural law thinking is sometimes lost in discussions of the laws and constitutions of a society. This excursus traces natural law and its beneficence back to the individual and reestablishes the preeminence of the individual, the individual conscience, and individual responsibility in natural law thinking.

“It is almost an historical accident that man’s achievement of control over his material environment by science should have coincided with his abandonment of the principle of spiritual order so that man’s new powers have been made the servants of economic acquisitiveness and political passion.”

Christopher Dawson in *Religion and Culture* ¹

While Mr. Dawson recognized a common feature of great civilizations to be “religious organs of society” that provide vital cultural unity, “a spiritual integration of culture,” this excursus analyzes his implication that modernity and progress are etiologically associated with today’s loss of cultural unity. I argue instead that, rather than being a coincidence, modern progress has been the *consequence* of a spiritual cultural unity in the West as best represented by its Judeo-Christian natural law ethos, whereas the other “great” civilizations became mired in relativistic autocratic morality in their earliest days and never escaped.

Earlier excursus found on the **contratyranos.com** website have discussed many aspects of natural law, and, as analyses presented in the four volumes of *The Natural State of Medical*

¹ *Religion and Culture*, London, 1949, p. 217. Christopher Dawson, the prominent Catholic historian, argued that “Religion is the dynamic element in culture.”

Practice have evolved over recent years, the overwhelming importance of natural law has been increasingly apparent.² The purpose of this excursus is to cement the importance of that association.

A brief definition of natural law is provided by the Oxford English Dictionary:

“A body of unchanging moral principles regarded as a basis for all human conduct.”

Natural law has a common expression in all persons irrespective of age, era, or social standing, and in *The Natural State of Medical Practice* it is equated, in whole or in part, with the *Ten Commandments* expressed in biblical history.³ Characterization of natural law and its justification herein can be reviewed in prior excursus:

1. Excursus 3: Natural law as an inviolable statement on human liberty
2. Excursus 4: Natural law as the source of human progress and virtue
3. Excursus 6: Equivalence of the *Ten Commandments* and natural law
4. Excursus 8: Civil liberties and natural law
5. Excursus 12: Natural law and apolitical progress
6. Excursus 18: Natural law and political progress

It is often repeated that man is a *social* animal. This was questioned in excursus #24, *Man Is Not a Social Animal*, for the history and prehistory of social congregation by our species do not support that statement. It was proposed instead that man is, when circumstances do not interfere, a *moral* animal.

The social dimension comes into being as a consequence of man’s morality, not the converse. Man is not moral because he wants to congregate in a society, wants to love his neighbors, and therefore has decided to devise moral laws to facilitate living amidst others in a society. This means that he could choose to be moral however and whenever it suits him. It also would mean that every society would have its own unique expressions of morality, and this would produce inevitable enmity within and between societies.

Instead, as argued in *The Natural State of Medical Practice*, man did not seek a society beyond his tribe or clan until he determined it could make his life safer and better. He sought security and self-betterment, not neighborly love. And this seemingly selfish design was feasible

² Volume, chapter and page number of otherwise unreferenced statements in this monograph refer to the version of the four volumes of *The Natural State of Medical Practice* 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*

³ 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*, St. Augustine’s “*naturale iudicium*,” 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. An equivalency in natural law with the *Ten Commandments* is attested by Thomas Aquinas, Martin Luther, and Pope Francis. Despite differing opinions as to its origin, aspects of natural law are also found in all major religions and ethical philosophies.

only because it was in his nature to interact morally when conditions permitted. Freed from the authoritarian morality of the kinship he could appreciate for the first time the pleasure of exploiting his natural rights when he joined in early urbanization. To restate, when he judged the appropriate environment existed, he traded his tribe and its authoritarian kinship conscience for a new (to him) type of society, the early urbanizing city-state. His ability to tolerate his new neighbors, and *vice versa*, was due to his own conscience, which is to say his intrinsic expression of natural law. It was innate rather than being devised, convenient, and imposable, and it allowed him to join others of the same ilk in exploiting their ingenuity by common effort; they autonomously organized and specialized because they could trust each other.

Another way of looking at the issue is the following. By imbuing man with a conscience, our Creator has assured our wellbeing by providing a path through which human ingenuity can procure for us a happier mortal existence. Had we a conscience based only on mortal experience we would be as reflexive in our actions as other animals, and humankind would never leave the tribe or overcome the enmity fostered by inevitable autocratic governance.

But once natural law morality is freely exercised in a society we are benefited in two ways, apolitical (material) and political (social). A characteristic of social (political) actions consistent with natural law is that society at large would agree with and obey a common morality and implement necessary positive laws consistent with natural law. But, while this promotes socialization and community, by itself there is no survival benefit even though that survival would be more just and pleasant. Environmental dangers would still exist. In response, we have the material (apolitical) goodness of observing natural law morality that is revealed when products of man's ingenuity as expressed through his associations become available to materially benefit society at large.⁴

But why is natural law at times so difficult to see and so easy to ignore in the face of greed, loyalty, or threats? Why is it so easily ignored when it is an inconvenience? It might be argued that, had man had been bestowed with a more evident, accessible, and readily operational natural law, its beneficence would have been apparent long ago. One response would be to use Milton's explanation in *Paradise Lost* for God's creation of mankind, namely that, as so many Angels were lost in Heaven's battle with Satanic forces, He wanted to replenish their numbers. Although He could have merely commanded new Angels to appear, he preferred that new Angels voluntarily enlist in His service. For this reason He created man and woman in such a way that they would have the free will to join Him or not. To have instilled a more compelling form of natural law would have preempted that free will choice. Or perhaps the survival of a creature with free will would be jeopardized if its element of antagonistic and selfish but ingenious *persona* were to be replaced by an easy predisposition to socialize in large numbers. This could increase the risk for an epidemic-prone society or for one in which a homogenized society would either lose the diversity of ideas that are the springboard for human adaptation and progress or would latch on to a single but dangerous idea that could be existential if carried to completion. This is reminiscent of circumstances surrounding the dispersion of mankind associated with the Tower of Babel.

A less poetical response is that it is none of our business as to why natural law is as it is. We should be satisfied that man has been endowed with two intrinsic mechanisms that provide for his survival and happiness, neither being shared by other animals. One, which permits him to

⁴ A beneficent example in our Western civilization of an apolitical "good" has been the tripling of life expectancy for the common man and woman that has appeared over the past three centuries. For a political "good" it has been the moral abolition of slavery. See excursus #9 and #18, respectively.

thrive in a society, is natural law, and the other, a product of the protection of his natural rights by natural law, is his ability to survive in a dangerous environment, *i.e.*, his ingenuity. Natural law protects us from each other, and ingenuity protects us from everything else. It is essential to understand, therefore, the mechanism through which natural law is made manifest.

Much discussion about natural law and natural rights centers on governance, and differences in interpretation abound. But the focus should instead be on the individual. It is the individual conscience that is natural law's workplace, not government. Consistent with this, and as mentioned elsewhere, the *Ten Commandments* are directed at the individual (commonly cited is *Exodus* 20 in which the Hebrew "you" is second person singular, and this is purposeful, for in the immediately preceding *Exodus* 19:6 the entire society is addressed with "you" in second person plural). Natural law is not a social conscience, nor is it the conscience of a subgroup with supposed intellectual superiority, experience, or social standing. And what is the purpose of natural law? It is the protection of natural rights of the individual: "I will leave you alone if you leave me alone."⁵ Seen in this light, the *Ten Commandments* constitute an inviolable statement on human liberty.

What is the significance of this interpretation? It seems at first to be somewhat self-centered and even selfish. On the other hand, its value in preserving the individual is obvious, for humans were not created as a species in order to fail. They were created to endure and to thrive. And this is what natural law provides. It is not a pathway to Heaven, and it is not an intellectual framework for legal and judicial ruminations. The role of natural law is man's survival and betterment. The importance of the four volumes of *The Natural State of Medical Practice* is that it reveals, through its social history of medical practice, both the reality and inevitability of the bitter life that results from ignoring natural law and the beneficence of human ingenuity when natural law is followed or, to be more specific, allowed to be followed. The relevance of Mr. Dawson's cultural unity can now be addressed.

The "unity" of the great civilizations can be dismissed. Theirs was an enforced unity with a core of privileged and rigid unifiers controlling the lives of the unprivileged majority.⁶ No matter what is read about Confucius, Ashoka the Great, Cyrus the Great, and Tutankhamun, all the great civilizations were but sequential autocracies: from 1600 BC to 1912 AD, China had more than seventy major kinship dynasties; from 3500 BC to 525 BC Egypt had twenty-six rigid pharaonic dynasties; Mesopotamia, from the Akadian unification of 2350 BC and for four thousand years, had a series of various authoritarian conquerors, including the Persian Empire (559-330 BC and on into the next millennium); India, following the disappearance of the Indus River Valley civilization (2000 BC), was plagued by regional monarchies until unified under the Mauryan Empire in 322 BC, the Gupta Empire, then the Chola Empire and finally by the Mughal Empire until 1857 AD. Any claim for "unity" merely reflected a purposeful deflection of forces for change. As described in *The Natural State of Medical Practice*, theirs was a false unity secured with Scotch tape; it supported a seemingly unified tradition that was conveniently impressed upon the unprivileged to justify an autocratic morality. A proof of this conclusion is the absence of credible scientific medical practices or medical progress in those civilizations over thousands of years, despite (1) a specialty (*i.e.*, medicine) that is simple, easy, cheap, painless, convenient, and required no technical assistance (the medical history and physical

⁵ See Dr. R. E. Barnett, *A Law Professor's Guide to Natural Law and Natural Rights*, in *Harvard Journal of Law & Public Policy*, 1997, summer issue.

⁶ The seeming unity is much like the disquietude of fear imposed by a savage tyrant who thinks he instills peace when all under his purview bow to him (St. Augustine, *The City of God*, Bk.19, Ch. 12.)

examination), and (2) objective and circumstantial evidence that nascent medical progress had transiently existed in the early years of several of their primary city-states (as laid out in volume one of *The Natural State of Medical Practice*).

In contrast, after emerging from the autocratic fiefdoms and lay practitioners of the Dark Ages in the West, effective medical practices spontaneously emerged not from its universities and religious communities but from individuals among the common citizenry. Their medical discoveries and inventions, appearing in the late 18th C, were followed by an increase in life expectancy in the West in the 19th C and globalized in the 20th C. All this followed on the recognition and then protection of natural rights that followed the Reformation. Individuals now felt they had a personal pathway to God, and it was realized that leaders and the led had equal standing before God. Legislated protection of natural rights appeared, and self-betterment by the individual was increasingly preferred to the betterment of one's betters. Unity existed, but, rather than a monolithic enforced unity, there was a voluntary unity of means: adherence to natural law. By following natural law, individuals could join with strangers in expressing their natural rights, however limited they might have been. This permitted motivation and ingenuity to flourish. There was the evolution of a multitude of associations of individuals working together for common purposes in many specialties. And in working for those things that society sought, society as a whole benefited. The more than doubling of life expectancy that subsequently emerged from the West was an expression of "modernity" that few would criticize, and the global dispersion of its related knowledge in medical journals represented not a disintegration of unity but a dispersion of its usefulness in other regions. Other aspects of modernity paralleled that of medicine, and there are few other than some philosophers who would prefer to return to the lifestyle of the 17th C or earlier. And if they could, they wouldn't enjoy it for long.

Thus, the novelty of this interpretation of natural law in *The Natural State of Medical Practice* is the preeminence of the individual conscience, not a collective conscience and its seeming unity. The Catholic Church had fully embraced the concept of natural law but freedom of expression by the individual parishioner had no priority. What are the consequences of this individualistic perspective and how does it affect other aspects of society?

(1) **Assigning individual responsibility:** Since natural law as expressed in the individual conscience is a universal attribute of mankind, its morality is a social constant irrespective of the nature of a society. Simplistic but true, were leadership of all nations to respect natural law there would be no more wars. Thus, the focus on natural law in governance of society is important, but primarily so as it involves the individual consciences of leadership. The horrors of totalitarian governance are to be traced to the leader and his implementers. Should a society with a constitution consistent with natural law choose to ignore it, the problems that result will have been caused by those individual leaders and implementers who abused natural law, not the society in its entirety. For example, if a subpopulation is targeted with restrictions based on race or religion that can be considered an infringement of natural rights, it is those who implement restrictions that are disobeying natural law, not the society at large, and it is the implementers who should be replaced or punished, not the society at large. The importance of this perspective is reflected in the moral abolition of slavery in Great Britain, for it would have occurred sooner had there not been the covetousness of a class system that impeded dissemination of the realities

of slavery to its unprivileged citizenry.⁷ It was only when literacy and suffrage finally extended throughout the unprivileged population that government finally abolished slavery by responding to their moral outrage.

(2) **Exploiting man's ingenuity:** Ingenuity is distributed throughout all mankind. It is barely an exaggeration to claim that every individual is ingenious in one way or another given the right moment and right place.⁸ Newtons, Einsteins and Mozarts abound. While we are the fortunate recipients of the marvels of achievement of Isaac Newton, Albert Einstein, and Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, they were not unique; they were lucky in their circumstances. And, as stated elsewhere, had a leader of Ming China (1368-1644) observed the natural rights of all its citizenry, the East may well have unleashed modernity and world prominence rather than the West. Instead, ninety percent of its one hundred millions were constrained to an agricultural existence to support its militancy, its Newtons, Einsteins and Mozarts limited to plowing fields and building walls. The remaining population was necessary to control that ninety percent. The individual was viewed as part of a collective conscience. And this is the social planning that exists in China to this day, and a similar mentality underlies modern collectivist policies.

(3) **Preserving individuality and tradition:** Individual human differences are protected by natural law, in contrast to the authoritarian's unnatural quest for a homogenous society. As a consequence of freedom, natural rights of individuals inevitably collide, and those boundaries between individual rights will themselves vary among societies, depending on geography, demography, and tradition. But each society can determine what those boundaries are, within limits of a legal system consistent with natural law. As a result, societies can differ in many ways, but those differences will reflect internal opinion. They will be acceptable to other societies and, being internal, will not be a major source of friction between societies because of the natural law perspective that all societies would share, and yet each society will retain its unique differences. Matters consistent with natural law but foster differing value judgements can arguably be defended. And as neither side is at fault, society now has the option to be the judge and jury on what is acceptable behavior and can apply solutions and positive laws that seem most appropriate for that time and place. Every major society has its heroes, saints, geniuses, and movements. Relativistic solutions within the constraints of natural law will permit regional and

⁷ As described in Excursus #18, abolition of the slave trade in the West was possible because of efforts of nonconformist Christians, primarily 18th C Evangelist and Quaker sects in Great Britain and the United States. Quakers and other dissenting groups arose in 17th C England during the mid-century Civil War. But most important were active associations such as Clapham Sect, Quakers, the African Association, the Committee for the Abolition of the Slave Trade, and groups from religious denominations including Methodists, Baptists, Swedenborgians, and Anglicans. Notably, women and women's groups were, for the first time, activists, although they were ineligible to vote. Low 17th C literacy rates in the emerging British common citizenry and their limited familiarity with slavery (true in much of Europe) has contributed to the claim that legal abolition in English law was slow in coming, but it should be remembered that few English were eligible to vote because of land requirements. And there were other factors: Manchester's population of 250,000 in 1831 had no Member of Parliament for whom to vote. A generous estimate is that about one in twenty males could vote at that time. While not diminishing the importance of prominent abolitionists, it was the overwhelming condemnation of slavery by the common citizenry that forced, over powerful vested political and commercial interests, the legislated abolition of slavery.

⁸ But it is Lebrecht who considered it "untapped aptitude of ordinary people to rise to an opportunity in a way that others cannot." It "was a "consequence of culture and experience rather than DNA." See *Genius & Anxiety: How Jews Changed the World, 1847-1947*, by Norman Lebrecht.

traditional practices and differences to exist and flourish. Even the frequently criticized concept of nationalism has its place in this conversation once pride of tradition has replaced privilege.

(4) **Superseding common law:** Natural law limits the individual in society by forbidding interference with the natural rights of others. This is vague in details but specific in its purpose. In contrast, common law over the ages, while sharing much the same purpose, is applied to a myriad of specific legal issues but has lacked foundational consistency during its evolution. For example, a civil right is not a common law right. Nevertheless, English common law and natural law share essential features: by replacing conventionalism, they are both the products of reason and conscience, and they are founded on protection natural rights. But the vast number and variety of circumstances in modern society that require legal oversight for social order must be subsumed within a canon of legislation that is understandable, accessible, and acceptable throughout society, not a vast series of case law navigable only by legal specialists. This is provided by devising constitutional protections restricting positive law except for necessary and agreed upon exceptions. And so, despite a commonality based on reason, in America a relatively stable but broad interpretation can be achieved. As so wonderfully demonstrated in the Constitution of the United States and its Bill of Rights, we have specific protection of our enumerated rights, those most susceptible to government infringement.⁹ But we also have a general protection for all other rights (the unenumerated rights of Amendment 9), making them likewise beyond the reach of federal governance.

(5) **Independence from mode of governance:**

Theoretically, a sovereign dictatorship can be consistent with natural law if its purpose is to protect natural rights. Natural rights are rights of the individual, not a group. Democracy holds no special place within the compass of natural law, for it can be as tyrannical as any other form of governance. In a dictatorial society, positive laws consistent with natural law can be protected and a source of law and order susceptible to local relevancies. Indeed, in *Lex, Rex*, a 1644 book by a Protestant minister in Scotland, Samuel Rutherford, clearly stated in Question 40 that “The prince is but a private man in a contract” and that a king is not a king until he takes an oath and is “accepted by the people.”¹⁰ Rutherford was implying that there was no inherent difficulty in having a monarchy if natural law were obeyed, for a king was under the same covenant as the people and in a sense inferior because he was under obligation to them. Thus, the successes of the post-Reformation modernity were only indirectly related to democracy. They were instead the consequence of recognition of natural rights. This contrasts with the inordinate praise traditionally given to the ancient Greek freedoms and their democracies, for the real purpose of

⁹ One justification for imposing positive laws is reference to common law, a traditional legal foundation based on reason accumulated over centuries. It is, in a manner of speaking, a statistical approach to the appropriateness of natural law. That is to say, over centuries a particular argument is decided more in one way than another and therefore is more likely to be just because it has passed muster by being approved by the consciences of more people. That decision has therefore been judged more “natural” and reasonable and thereby more likely to be correct. This remains, however, a relativistic decision. While the argument is made that reason is the only way we can approach an objective definition natural law, this opens the door to subjective interpretation. If, however, the positive law of concern is truly consistent with natural law, there is no concern. Common law is, therefore, a source of opinion, one that can vary from society to society, and it may often be correct in situations where the issue is not one that involves natural law or a natural right. It is, however, inadequate as a natural law substitute.

¹⁰ Raath, A, *The Transformation of Reformed Natural Law Doctrine in Samuel Rutherford's Lex, Rex*, in *Koers*, 80 (4), 2015.

their democracy was to foster the allegiance of more people for defense of the city-state. It was not meant to promote individual expression *per se*. Instead, where the Spartans used indoctrination to assure its domination, the Athenians preferred motivation.¹¹ Fortunately, the ingenuity released by even limited expression of natural rights can produce wonderful results, medical progress as expressed by Hippocratic physicians being one example.

(6) **Sources of confusion; spirituality:** The beneficence of protected natural rights, as stated earlier, emerges from the unprivileged population of a society, for the time of privileged classes is spent evolving ways to maintain their privilege. This, of course, is one beauty of the Constitution of the United States, for it forbids a privileged class. We are all unprivileged! Nevertheless, the occasional but spectacular art masterpieces of the Renaissance, commissioned by tyrants, permitted a few of their favorite unprivileged subjects to express to a limited degree their natural rights. From this there is an unfortunate tendency to praise some tyrants and autocratic governments for the resulting beneficence. This confusion develops because the benefits from protected natural rights are so great that, as stated above, even their limited expression can be wonderful. The problem is, however, that the occasional bursts of excellence associated with autocratic regimes, whether stolen, copied, or gifted from select unprivileged individuals, can appear to justify regime perpetuation.

The argument by Christopher Dawson that collective spirituality has been a civilizational unifier is weak. Religion was not a unifier in that to be areligious or to propose an alternative religion could be dangerous. But far more important has been crony autocracy in which authoritarian governance enlists religious/spiritual sentiment to increase its control over society. In Egypt the pharaoh's themselves were declared divine, thereby justifying enrolling a massive priesthood in governance and beyond. By this means even medicine became a branch of government, for all physicians were priests. In India, Hinduism was not by itself a unifier. Indeed, it has been claimed that every man in India is a philosopher. And there are a myriad variations on the Hindu theme throughout India. But the combined ecclesiastical and monarchical authority, as described before the Christian era in the Laws of Manu regarding divinity of the king and the caste system, provided a cohesive frame for authoritarian unity throughout Indian history. Even the famed medical text, *Charaka Samhita*, became a mechanism for implanting religious practices and solidarity in the public mind. In China, the issue was a bit different in that Confucian philosophy and primacy of kinship, rather than religion, became the *modus operandi* for monarchical kinship governance beginning with the Han Dynasty, but as a unifying mechanism, the result was the same. In the Middle East with the combination of autocratic wars and the enlistment of the Islamic religion as an ally and a justification for "unified" Islam's forceful expansion in the Near and Middle East, northern Africa and parts of Europe, each success was seen as justifying greater unity for that cause. And more recently, the cohesive frame of authoritarian unity in the religious West during the Dark Ages and the Medieval period resulted from mutual interests of the Vatican and feudalism. It was in fact the decrease in Vatican support that prompted monarchical leaders to seek to retain their positions of power by obtaining support from the citizenry, an important step toward natural rights.

And so the spirituality of the individual within the great civilizations has not been the basis for their greatness. Civilizational usurpation of spirituality has instead produced the façade of unity. The "great" civilizations were not "great." As discussed in volume 3, chapter 7, of *The Natural State of Medical Practice*, the "great" civilizations of history were merely sequential

¹¹ Volume 3 of *The Natural State of Medical Practice*, pp. 304ff.

autocratic dynasties. As they were unable to progress, and as progress is implied by “high level of ... technological development” in some definitions of “civilization” (Merriam-Webster), it is argued in volume 4, excursus 14 (*Civilization vs. Uncivilization*) that they are not even entitled to be called civilizations. And from their authoritarian trap those civilizations did not escape until entrepreneurs of the West revealed to unprivileged populations around the globe the benefits of natural rights and resulting free enterprise, a revelation that is presently unfolding.

In conclusion, the unifying feature characterized by associations that have produced Western modernity, beneficence, and its globalization is natural law. In a large population the scope of individual interests and needs pertinent to self-betterment will be broad. Thus, the successes will seem disparate and perhaps spawning previously unanticipated change and extraordinary opinions. And some of these may have broad implications throughout society. One consequence is that the volume of information today is so vast that no individual can begin to grasp its range of significance. Subdivision of effort is inevitable. It is no longer possible to be a “Renaissance Man.” This may give the appearance of chaos in a free society as interests and efforts acquire their advocates that become involved in inevitable boundary disputes, a function of the emancipation of the ingenuity of many individuals. It is a dramatic change from the phobia of change characteristic of autocracies of all prior civilizations. But allegiance to natural law will not fragment. It will even strengthen when citizens realize what will happen if their natural rights are removed.

Nevertheless, we must remain alert to reasons for confusion, for autocratic governments present their technical achievements as indigenous rather than the products of theft, plagiarism, copying, or benefaction that they are. And much of the seeming chaos in the West today is purposefully instigated by individuals or associations basically autocratic in nature. Brash and subtle authoritarians, which include crony capitalists and critical theorists, are always active in our midst. But as long as natural law is our guide, all will be well.

As a final word, the importance of the individual in the implementation of natural law is also expressed in the “law of the harvest.” Commonly interpreted as “we reap what we sow,” it is more accurately, “he will reap” what “he” sows (2 *Corinthians*, 9:16; *Galatians*, 6:7). While the object of these two declarations is spiritual, one might consider that, in adhering to natural law, the beneficence of human progress can be considered the harvest of the West.