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## ***Recta ratio*, affectivity, and the good. Integration and ethics of reason in Francisco Suárez**

***Recta ratio*, afectividad y el bien. Integración y ética de la razón en Francisco Suárez**

### **Resumen**

Propongo examinar desde la tradición jesuita y en particular desde el pensamiento de Francisco Suárez, el tratamiento de la razón, y su intrínseca conexión con otras dimensiones básicas de la subjetividad humana como la afectividad o los diversos afectos o modos de amor que modulan y condicionan el ejercicio de la razón, especialmente, en la determinación de su realización moral. Consideramos pertinente este examen pues, a nuestro juicio, opera en esta tradición tanto un cuidado de la facultad intelectual en la persona, como una cierta sospecha de que las “potencias superiores”, como la razón y la voluntad, debido a que no actúan meramente como “señores” o directores de la acción humana, sino que su recto uso tiene que haber pasado por la purificación de las pasiones del alma, y en particular de sus afectos, en orden a un correcto ejercicio de la razón, o *recta ratio*. Así, el examen crítico de las *afecciones desordenadas* en orden a su correcta orientación se presenta como una vía propedéutica para ejercer la *recta ratio*. Pero la razón no sólo debe estar bien ordenada sino permitir al sujeto la prosecución del bien. La eticidad de la razón es por ello, una dimensión constitutiva de la razón. Esta eticidad, desde la tradición jesuita y Francisco Suárez, tiene no sólo un componente

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personal, sino social. En este sentido, la prosecución del bien se abre no sólo al bien de la persona, sino estrictamente al *bien común* como horizonte de la eticidad de la razón.

**Palabras-clave:** *recta ratio*; *affectus*; bien común; Francisco Suárez SJ; tradición jesuita.

### Abstract

I propose to examine the approach to reason in the Jesuit tradition, in particular in the thinking of Francisco Suárez, as well as its intrinsic connection with other basic dimensions of human subjectivity, such as affectivity or the different affections or modes of love that modulate and condition the exercise of reason, especially in the determination of its moral realization. I consider this review to be relevant, since this involves both a care for the intellectual faculty of the person and a certain suspicion that “higher faculties,” such as reason and will, because they do not act merely as “masters” or directors of human action but rather that their right use must have undergone a purification of the passions of the soul, in particular of its affections, for the right exercise of reason, or *recta ratio*. Hence, a critical examination of *disordered affections* ordered in their correct orientation is presented as a propaedeutic way to exercise *recta ratio*. However, reason must not only be well in order but must also enable the person to pursue the good. The ethics of reason is therefore a constitutive dimension of reason. This ethics, in the Jesuit tradition and in Francisco Suárez, has not only a personal but also social component. Accordingly, the pursuit of the good applies not only to the good of the person but also strictly to the *common good* as the horizon of the ethics of reason.

**Keywords:** *recta ratio*; *affectus*; common good; Francisco Suárez SJ; Jesuit tradition.

## 1. Introduction

This contribution seeks to study the interrelation between reason, affectivity, and the good in dialog with the thinking of Francisco Suárez, in the context of the Jesuit tradition<sup>1</sup>, according to which, in my opinion, both the scope of his proposal as well as the inspiration and foundation of his contribution can be better interpreted. For this purpose, I will refer not only to the philosophical and theological work of Francisco Suárez but also to what I consider important for understanding his thinking and contribution, which is the constitutive core of the Jesuit tradition, namely, the proposal for spirituality put forth by St. Ignatius of Loyola<sup>2</sup> and how this offers us a significant hermeneutical key for understanding

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<sup>1</sup> J. A. Senent-De Frutos, «Francisco Suárez and the Complexities of Modernity», *Journal of Jesuit Studies* 6 (2019) 559-576.

<sup>2</sup> In the beginning of the *Spiritual Exercises*, Ignatius of Loyola expresses that their scope and purpose is none other than to *get rid of disordered affections*, and thus, the exercises are as follows: «(...) every method of examination of conscience, meditation, contemplation, vocal or mental prayer, and other spiritual activities (...); so is the name of spiritual exercises given to any means of preparing and disposing our soul to rid itself of all its disordered affections and then, after their removal, of seeking and finding God's will in the ordering of our life for the salvation of our soul» I. de Loyola, *Ejercicios espirituales*, Sal Terrae, Santander 2010, nº 1.

the work of Jesuit thinkers. First, the Jesuit tradition is based on a certain suspected fallibility of human reason when it does not recognize and evaluate how the person's affections shape both the understanding and the resolutions of their responses within the context of the world in which they take place. Second, this critique makes it possible to recognize the imbrication and interdependence of the exercise of human reason with respect to other moments or dimensions of subjectivity that operate in an integrated way, shaping human responses. Third, it is important to recognize the understanding and scope of the human good that must be fostered through the exercise of a *recta ratio*, which, given the social condition of the human being, involves not only the individual who acts but also the society in which they live, that is to say, the common good; thus, the honest good to be pursued encompasses the common good, and moreover, given the possible global interaction that has been recognized since the sixteenth century by those Jesuit authors, and by Suárez in particular, would encompass the common good of humanity, not solely the common good of each individual society.

I consider that the Jesuit contribution to this question, and that of Suárez in particular, is also pertinent for illustrating the sense in which it can be understood that there is a deficit in today's cognitive culture that dissociates knowledge and ethics, insofar as it detaches knowledge from affections, will, and values. Symptomatic of this deficit are the frequent calls to reintegrate science with conscience, to unite science and ethics, or to place knowledge at the service of life. In this context, the repeated lack of "political will" to respond according to what knowledge of the world would demand is meaningful. However, this demand for the exercise of "political will" by institutions that can translate what is known and accepted into policies and visible facts nevertheless does not cease to be a naïve and indolent attempt in the end, as they are correlates that are proposed as add-ons (science and conscience, ...), external to knowledge itself. As such, the major assumption that knowledge would be, in and of itself, separated from ethics, from awareness, from life, and from will, continues to be seen as valid, and thus, the experiential horizon of understanding of the fragmentation of knowledge in the hegemonic cognitive culture continues to be accepted. For this reason, the most radical aspect of this cognitive indigence can be expressed as an inability to rightly articulate the relationality of the human being's activity with the world in which they intervene and in which that activity takes place. If relationality is articulated based on the hegemonic civilization and its "cognitive culture" with a self-referential and sacrificial character of nature and of others, we can say that it *sets in motion a disaffected and nonaffective knowledge of the world*, as if it were

a *detached knowledge*, where the love of oneself disrupts the proper execution in the environment of one's relationships, particularly towards others, thus impeding the care of nature.

Accordingly, the interpretative hypothesis I would like to develop to try to shed light on our problem is that the success or failure of knowledge is based on its capacity to articulate the expression and direction of love as the radical motive of human activity. Love can be expressed between two polarities, namely, *amor sui*, or self-centered love for oneself, and *amor Dei*, or love of God, in a theological perspective, which can be understood philosophically as a love open to otherness and a love that is universal. What is relevant, as I will demonstrate, is that although the two directions may contradict one another, according to Suárez, they can be integrated in an orderly way.

## 2. Ignatian tradition: suspicion and care of subjectivity or inwardness

First, let us look at the starting point of the critical approach to cognitive culture in this Jesuit tradition. Adolfo Chércoles notes that St. Ignatius posits a structural suspicion of our self, as there is no prior guarantee of access both to oneself and to reality, and therefore, «I have to *be suspicious* about the possible impairment of my faculties»<sup>3</sup>. The role of affections or affectivity also plays a crucial role in this suspicion. Ignatius of Loyola's observations on human subjectivity, on its psychism and inwardness in the totality of human dynamism, lead him to a critical understanding of "higher faculties" of humans such as intellect and will. In addition, what he observes is that these faculties do not simply act as "masters" of human action but that their judgments, representations, and decisions are not only conditioned by the quality of the "lower levels," such as sensibility and affectivity, but also may be the reason why they do not succeed in their representations and resolutions. In other words, one cannot indulge in the idealization of human faculties as if they were pure vectors of rationality and freedom. In contrast, the faculties participate in their acts in other moments or dimensions that are equally decisive both for access to reality and for their development within it. In this sense, for Ignatius of Loyola, a proper interplay between them implies their correct integration, as they will never cease to be operative in human dynamism.

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<sup>3</sup> A. Chércoles, «Conocimiento interno del desorden... y del amor», in *Maestros de la sospecha, críticos de la fe*, Cristianisme i Justícia, Barcelona 2007, p. 96.

It is not a question of advancing on an intellectual plane disconnected from other factors but of ordering them rather than eliminating them<sup>4</sup>. The purpose is thus «to conquer oneself,» i.e., «to make sensuality obey reason and all inferior parts be more subject to the superior»<sup>5</sup>. However, an uncritical understanding of the interplay among these factors that is unilaterally polarized in the superior would be lost. In contrast, the lower maintains and dynamically underlies the higher, even if it does not determine it absolutely, and runs the risk of operating decisively without being noticed, thus distorting, or subverting, the exercise of reason and human will without these faculties having the ultimate ability to autonomously and rightly configure human behavior. In this critical context towards the higher faculties, Ignatius of Loyola proposes a process of self-knowledge and suspicion of oneself in order for individuals to be «master of themselves»<sup>6</sup>, i.e., it is a question of truly assessing and enabling the use of their freedom. Thus, in the Ignatian proposal, it is not simply a matter of disciplining sensory and affective movements but rather of integrating and organizing the entire person to ensure that «I may be able in all to love and serve His Divine Majesty»<sup>7</sup>. Ignatius of Loyola's apparently paradoxical proposal is that the maximum of humanity or its fullness cannot be achieved by self-centeredness through *amor sui* but rather in a decentering towards *amor Dei* as the originating dynamism that enables all life and all lives, the source of the common good, at whose service all life and freedom is humanized and fulfilled.

Along this path of decentering and of a new relationship with reality and its integrated and nondialectical foundation, as Adolfo Chércoles has indicated, Ignatius of Loyola dismantles the “security” in ourselves, not only to know ourselves better and be consistent but also to access the truth of things and to selflessly step outside of ourselves. He immerses us in a *generalized suspicion*. We can rightly define St. Ignatius as a true master of suspicion. Our values can thus impede true life, the very experience of God as a mere projection; all our affections, which will be disordered to the extent that they turn us into predatory beings; and last, a «suspicion of everything that isolates us from a *we* that we are called to make

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<sup>4</sup> L. M. García Domínguez, «Afecto», *Diccionario de espiritualidad ignaciana*, Mensajero-Sal Terrae, Bilbao-Santander 2007, pp. 101-102.

<sup>5</sup> I. de Loyola, *Ejercicios espirituales*, *op. cit.*, nº 87.

<sup>6</sup> A. López Galindo, «Apetito», *Diccionario de espiritualidad ignaciana*, *op. cit.*, p. 182.

<sup>7</sup> I. de Loyola, *Ejercicios espirituales*, *op. cit.*, nº 233.

possible»<sup>8</sup>, and that situates the scope of the authentic human good in line with the common good.

In this context, we can understand the distinction that Suárez makes, transcending a naturalistic understanding of human reason, to make room for an understanding of the complexity and ambiguity of rationality:

Nature does not itself err because of the purpose, because it is directed by its author. Humans, however, can err because they are directed by their reason, which can be deceived<sup>9</sup>.

Humans are neither merely nature nor merely rational nature. Rational teleology is not assured of its fulfillment beforehand. Suárez therefore introduces suspicion about the exercise of reason and about the scope of its own rational perfectibility. To facilitate this perfectibility, Suárez broadens the exercise of reason to an expanded use, one that is not solipsistic but open to social mediation. Thus, commenting on the “presupposition” in St. Ignatius’s *Exercises*<sup>10</sup>, Suárez proposes that those who accompany another in the practice of spiritual exercises should try all the appropriate means with which they can remedy their understanding and safeguard it in case of error<sup>11</sup>. It is a particular case of support, but it serves to illustrate the convenience of social mediation.

As for the cause of the error, Suárez states that affection can mislead or misdirect the rectitude or honesty of human action. He therefore indicates that a person will not act righteously if he or she is attached to honors or riches for their own sake as the agent’s purpose. At the very least, that attitude would be a venial sin by virtue of its object, i.e., that moral fault in which the purpose of the work does not lie in God but in another good, which in and of itself constitutes an error on the path to the subject’s happiness, for the person loves that object in a higher way than it deserves, from which their authentic happiness is born. In contrast, indifference towards those goods, insofar as this is what allows them to be used in the service of the preservation of virtue, and not as a purpose for the agent, is necessary for the rectitude of will<sup>12</sup>. *Recta ratio*, Suárez emphasizes, recognizes

<sup>8</sup> A. Chércoles, «Conocimiento interno del desorden... y del amor», *op. cit.*, p. 104.

<sup>9</sup> «Natura non errat per se a fine, quia dirigitur a suo autore. Homo, vero, errare potest, quia dirigitur a sua ratione, quae decipi potest». F. Suárez, *De beatitudine*, Biblioteca del Seminario de Valladolid, Valladolid c. 1579, f. 17r.

<sup>10</sup> I. de Loyola, *Ejercicios espirituales*, *op. cit.*, n° 22.

<sup>11</sup> F. Suárez, *De religione*, XVI bis, ed. C. Berton, Vives, París 1859, T. X, L. IX, c. 5, n. 10.

<sup>12</sup> F. Suárez, *De religione*, *op. cit.*, T. X, L. IX, c. 5, n° 11

those goods not as convenient to nature but as indifferent and to be sought as instruments to conserve virtue or nature.

Suspicion, i.e., an evaluation of affections in terms of their functionality and their care, involves not only the ordering of their weight and function for the rectitude of will but also the pursuit of material and bodily sustainability. It therefore seeks integral care, including the bodily dimension of the subject, the integrity of life. Thus, in the case of the goods of life and health, they are honestly desired without attention to any other purpose, «insofar as they are in themselves convenient to nature and necessary to a certain integrity of it»<sup>13</sup>.

### 3. Rectitude or honesty of reason in Suárez

We now ask ourselves wherein lies the rectitude or honesty that characterizes reason and, with it, its influence on will, the act, or the good sought or possessed.

The source of rectitude is love for the universal good or rather for the source of all good, as opposed to a restricted and limited love, merely *amor sui*, which would be the cause of a lack of rectitude because of the negation of the respectivity that occurs in its praxis. Nevertheless, there is an ultimate connection and foundation between the two ways of desiring the good, which can be stated as follows

the goodness of God is the reason for desiring everything through the universality of causality and reduction insofar as everything that is desired is reduced to God as its purpose<sup>14</sup>.

Suárez analyzes the integrity of the honesty operating between *amor Dei* and *amor sui*. This particular dialectic is translated and materialized in the love of friendship, charity or benevolence as well as in the love of concupiscence or love for oneself<sup>15</sup>. There is in the human experience a «double love»<sup>16</sup>, or a two-way

<sup>13</sup> F. Suárez, *De religione*, op. cit., T. X, L. IX, c. 5., n. 12

<sup>14</sup> F. Suárez, *De beatitudine*, op. cit., f. 150v.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, f. 92v.

<sup>16</sup> On the specific character or mode of the two types of love, he tells us that «the love of God is twofold, one is that of pure benevolence and charity with which someone loves God for himself and wants for themselves all good things, as God himself is good and perfect in himself, and it is absolutely certain that this love remains in the heavenly realm, as is clear from what has been said. Another [love] is that of concupiscence, with which someone loves God for themselves in order to achieve a happy state with their attainment and possession. This love differs from the first in the reason for loving and the term of love, (...), I now suppose it more probable that it remains [in the blessed], although in an ordered and subordinate way to the love [of friendship]».

love. Suárez, however, demonstrates the complexity and systematicity of human happiness, demonstrating the integration of its moments. We are in the presence of an initially unspecific and ambiguous pursuit of the good for the realization of the human agent, but upon considering the state of beatitude, we can step outside this ambiguity and lack of specificity of the human good. Thus, for example, in the blessed there is both a joy and a double pleasure; in the first sense, by virtue of which it follows:

of the good possessed, as a twofold love of God is understood, in the same way pleasure is twofold. The first follows from the love of charity and is joy for the good of God in oneself, and this is the principal joy of the blessed, for they love the good of God and see God and possess him, and in this, they especially rejoice. The second follows from the love of concupiscence, and this joy must be situated in the blessed as the love from which follows, for the blessed love God for themselves, see that they possess him, and therefore delight in him<sup>17</sup>.

The love of friendship does not deny, repudiate or exclude the love of concupiscence. Both are part of the unitary, albeit complex, experience of happiness. In this sense, the pure *amor Dei* or love of charity is not totalitarian, insofar as it does not prevent or does not demand the annihilation of the good proper to those who love. Now, how do the modes of this duality relate to one another?

there is only one beloved good and only one subject to be loved (...), with this love of God more than of myself, and I want myself to be united with Him as the ultimate purpose, and thus, I address myself to God and not God to me. (...) The reason is that because God is a universal good, He is not ours because He is ordered to us but rather we to Him, just as the whole is the good of the part. For the part is ordered to the whole, rather than the contrary. (...) Every good, insofar as it is rightly loved, must be desired in the same way as the good of the one who is desired<sup>18</sup>.

Suárez analyzes a threefold reason for good or desirability in human action, insofar as it is a direction or conversion to the object. Accordingly, the object as good is sought insofar as it is «honest, pleasant, and useful». Now, it is necessary to note the difference between the honest good and others that are desirable as a purpose, such as the pleasant, as only the reason of the honest good can give the human act the status of moral goodness, not the reason of the natural or pleasant good. Hence, even if the same reality is in accordance with nature and is pleasant

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Francisco Suárez, *De beatitudine*, *op. cit.*, ff. 91r-92v.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>18</sup> F. Suárez, *De beatitudine*, *op. cit.*, f. 67r.



and honest, if it is desired for the sake of the pleasure of the act, for the reason of that object as such, it would not have moral goodness or rectitude. This is because the good or object that is not desired on the basis of an honest good is not regulated by right reason. Thus, if the will is not moved by the motive of honesty, the act would not be morally good on the strength of any other motive but rather indifferent or materially evil. Human acts therefore take their qualification for moral goodness from the honest purpose<sup>19</sup>. The explanation is that no one could love any object with equal proximity due to several formally diverse reasons of good in terms of their reason for desirability, as they would always consider one of them as the proximate motive of love. Thus,

if someone loves a pleasurable and honest object, if it is an act of virtue, they do not gravitate towards it in the same way under both reasons but rather consider honesty primarily and, as a secondary motive, pleasure as a desired material object, insofar as it is under honesty and is regulated by reason<sup>20</sup>.

The rectitude or morality of the action corresponds, first, to a love decentered from oneself or centered on one's own universal goodness, as is proper to the love of friendship, charity or benevolence. This love has a deeper and more comprehensive scope. In this sense, it has the potential to enable an understanding and enjoyment of the most universal good, of the greatest goodness and perfection of the good.

But then the question arises as to whether there can be any rectitude at all in the love of concupiscence that is presented, *prima facie*, as more imperfect in comparison with the scope and potentiality of the first. The second mode of love would be more attached to a tendency of nature itself, which configures, also in oneself, a certain normativity inscribed in the natural tendency towards self-preservation and enjoyment and pleasure in one's own life. Now, if the "organ" that regulates and measures rectitude is reason rather than merely nature, would the love of concupiscence also achieve rectitude? The answer Suárez offers is positive. In addition, it must be said that were this not the case, Suárez would be engaging in a totalitarian vision of rational rectitude, if love for oneself, towards oneself, and the enjoyment of one's own good as one's own were excluded. Nevertheless, Suárez does not indulge in an idealization of universal love that by

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<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, f. 32v.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*

virtue of its own excellence would disparage the “portion” of good of everyone and in everyone. We can therefore say that if the love of friendship is the source of the common good, this common good does not exclude the private good, as *the whole is the good of the part*<sup>21</sup> and therefore includes it and organizes it for a more complex perfection of one’s own good, insofar as it enables the more universal good, without deferring it or derogating considering the higher good, as:

It cannot be said that the love and pleasure of concupiscence have no place in the blessed, for they are imperfect acts. They are not imperfect acts exclusively; that is to say, although they are not as perfect as others, they nevertheless do not include in their imperfection a reason that is opposed to that state, nor are they incompatible with other more perfect acts. Furthermore, [they are] also interested in and in conformity with the right tendency of nature, and thus, there is no reason why the blessed cannot possess them as we grant for the same reasons to them the natural love and the pleasure that accompanies it<sup>22</sup>.

#### 4. Rectitude and pleasure in the ways of loving

Given the above, it is pertinent to consider the rectitude of one’s own natural tendency, which is not disparaged nor substituted by a mechanism of sublimation that annuls it in its own necessity and exigency. This tendency, then, is validated and accepted by rational judgment. This demonstrates, in its concreteness and radicality, that reason is not, so to speak, for Suárez, “denaturalized” or disembodied or opposed to the primary sensibility in which human acts unfold. It is, therefore, an integrated or bodily reason that embraces and takes place in the body without being merely subsumed in its own instinctive nature. Nevertheless, it does not fail to discern the quality of this natural tendency and to validate its own rectitude.

Precisely because of this, rectitude does not involve only a formal dimension of correctness in accordance with reason but also integrates a sensory dimension linked to pleasure in and through the possession of the good. Thus, pleasure is not dissociated from moral or honest action but is rather “accompanied” by it, albeit in an orderly way. It is the virtue of charity that gives rise to this love and pleasure, for «pleasure presupposes love»<sup>23</sup>. Hence, this pleasure is present not only in the love of concupiscence but also in the love of friendship. As such, first, the blessed attain pleasure through the goods of God, which is motivated by charity

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<sup>21</sup> *Vd. sup.* note 18.

<sup>22</sup> F. Suárez, *De beatitudine*, *op. cit.*, f. 141r.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, f. 94v.

through the love of pure divine friendship. Second, pleasure also follows from the presence of God, whom the blessed love to the utmost degree, which can also be motivated by charity, and therefore, «to love the presence of the friend through the perfect bond is an act of pure friendship encouraged by it, thus also the joy born of it»<sup>24</sup>. Third, this love of charity also generates the joy of the blessed for their own happiness as a private good. The blessed «can love themselves for the sake of charity» and, for the same reason, enjoy their own goods. In turn, the blessed can similarly enjoy the happiness of the other blessed through charity<sup>25</sup>.

Fourth, it also seems certain that the blessed can delight in their own happiness with a hope distinct from all that has been said, for pleasure is given to love, from which it is born, but the blessed can love their own happiness and comfort with the love of concupiscence, which is distinct from the love of charity; therefore, the pleasure of which it is a consequence will also occur in the blessed and would be distinct from any pleasure of charity<sup>26</sup>.

### 5. Rectitude, will, and virtues: personal and public happiness

What is the potentiality of rectitude on the path towards human fulfillment and happiness? Suárez notes that charity rectifies or makes the will right, and therefore, happiness «is not [only] a consequence of rectitude but also involves the rectitude of will itself»<sup>27</sup>. But equally, to attain future happiness, it is necessary to have had a right will in this life, for «men acquire in this life the true and inner rectitude by which they have a right will before God»<sup>28</sup>. The reason is that humans are inclined towards happiness through their own will, and by means of the right will and by the works that proceed from it, they are on the path to happiness. «This rectitude consists of the order due to the ultimate end (...) [for the] will is right when it is in conformity with right reason and with the divine will»<sup>29</sup>. The natural happiness of this life thus presupposes and is achieved by rectitude, which consists of the exercise of the virtues and in living based on right reason. Although in a primary sense natural happiness consists of

<sup>24</sup> F. Suárez, *De beatitudine*, *op. cit.*, f. 140v.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, f. 146v.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, f. 144v.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, f. 145r.

the contemplation of God, that happiness cannot remain without the practice of the virtues. However, Suárez indicates, what moves and sustains this practice is the love of God, which

brings with it the observance of the natural commandments and, consequently, the practice of the virtues. As well, because for that contemplation, it is necessary to have the passions under control and the spirit calm, things that cannot happen without the practice of the virtues (...). Similarly, because after contemplation and the love of God, what most perfects humans as such is the practice of the virtues and living according to right reason<sup>30</sup>.

However, in the same way, rectitude and the consequent practice of the virtues is necessary «for the splendor and peace of the Republic and, even in a certain way, for the proper maturity of one's own life»<sup>31</sup>. It is therefore pertinent to observe the imbrication of what happens internally in the subject, with their ontological potentiality and the public efficacy of their social influence. The fairness or fit of rectitude for human development also provides the public peace that is born of the justice of rectitude. In contrast, we might say discord, animosity, and war in social relations are caused by a lack of rectitude, i.e., by *disordered affections*. The path to successful human realization is contingent upon, even sometimes made impossible by, the type of *affections* that are operating. These may not only be endangering human orientation—of which it is necessary to be critically aware—but may also be a radical and structural level that must be positively cared for. This organizing of affections, as demanded by the *Constitutions* of the Society of Jesus, is proposed as a transcending or a stepping outside of oneself, one's «sensual love»<sup>32</sup>, one's own will and self-referential impulse, a way out of one's self-centeredness, which will either benefit or help to further one's own self-realization as much as «ohe goes out of his self-love, will and interest»<sup>33</sup>. It involves channeling love as the most radical engine of human dynamism along the path of abnegation and humility as the opposite of the rejection of God and neighbor due to pride and false self-love<sup>34</sup>.

Consequently, the dynamism and orientation of the affections that operate in

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, f. 125r.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>32</sup> I. de Loyola, *Constituciones*, *op. cit.*, nº 516.

<sup>33</sup> I. de Loyola, *Ejercicios espirituales*, *op. cit.*, nº 189.

<sup>34</sup> R. Pallín, «Abnegación», *Diccionario de espiritualidad ignaciana*, Mensajero-Sal Terrae, Bilbao-Santander 2007, p. 66.

the love that moves the subject has a significant ethical-political impact. As we have indicated, if it is aligned with the love of God in the Christian worldview, as a more universalizing love or a love that enables coexistence, it establishes the dynamics of the common good. St. Thomas understands God as the *bonum commune* par excellence, and although it is not a fully developed idea, it is proposed as an interpretative key to the social common good<sup>35</sup>. In the community of the common good, God is present as the common good, as a Good that communicates and brings about communication. The primacy of the common good over the private good<sup>36</sup> is thus proposed as a starting point as opposed to mere competition or the domination of some over others. In the same line of thought, it is possible to understand the commitment of the best Jesuit tradition<sup>37</sup> and its achievements to the centrality of the common good and its operationalization at the service of the maximum number of subjects, as according to the *Constitutions*<sup>38</sup> of the Society of Jesus, the more universal the good, the more divine it is<sup>39</sup>, the *The more universal the good is, the more is it divine* «extend to the aid of greater numbers of

<sup>35</sup> I. Ellacuría, «Historización del bien común y de los derechos humanos en una sociedad dividida», in Juan Antonio Senent (ed.), *La lucha por la Justicia. Selección de textos de Ignacio Ellacuría (1969-1989)*, Edit. Universidad de Deusto, Bilbao 2012, p. 278.

<sup>36</sup> «If God is ultimately the universal cause of desire (*vd. sup.*), *recta ratio* makes it possible to evaluate and guide the desire for good so that society will not be deceived and frustrated in their desire:

St. Thomas supposes, however, that all private goods are ordered to the common good, what the experience of each one teaches, for each particular thing is ordered to the benefit of the entire universe. (...) But they can do this only through their will because it alone has for its object the universal good, and it alone can lead to the common good and to the universal purpose. It is therefore necessary that the desire that is directed towards that purpose lead to any other good in order to that one, and the desire that gravitates towards the common good, which is composed in its own way of private goods, must necessarily [be] rational. The natural, then, is only drawn immediately to the private good by a certain imperfect and material mode, yet it is not drawn to the common good except insofar as it is contained in some way in the private good itself». Suárez, *De beatitudine, op. cit.*, f.18v.

<sup>37</sup> I say “better” in an evaluative sense from our historical vantage point and in contrast with other developments or appropriations of other authors and lines of thought that are fundamentally functional to capitalist modernity. Cf. J. A. Senent-de Frutos, «Hacia una relectura de la matriz cultural ignaciana desde nuestras necesidades civilizatorias actuales», *Concordia. Revista internacional de filosofía* 66 (2014), pp. 25-48. J. A. Senent-de Frutos, in H. Shelkshorn (ed.), *Reformation(en) und Moderne. Philosophische-theologische Enkurgurden*, Vienna University Press, Vienna 2016, pp. 153-171.

<sup>38</sup> I. de Loyola, *Constituciones de la Compañía de Jesús*, Santiago Arzubialde *et al.* (eds.), Mensajero-Sal Terrae, Bilbao–Santander 1993.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, nº 622.

our neighbors»<sup>40</sup>. It is not simply a question of an alleged natural common good given by God that is there for unlimited individual appropriation, as the liberal tradition maintains, but rather that what is divine is that the effective good reaches everyone, ultimately humanity in its diversity of peoples; it is therefore necessary to construct and discern the institutional mediations at the service of that good, which each subject and community is called to live and promote.

### **6. *Recta ratio*, mystical life, and the common good**

The way of knowing depends on the affection involved in the cultivation of that knowledge. Not every mode of knowing is humanly useful but rather that in which an “ordered affection” operates. The quality of the organized is recognized by the discernment of the consequences of the type of affection modulated in the knowledge that operates in the subject. In addition, there, affections move between two great polarities: those that unite, or *divine*, responsible, convivial affections or *diabolical* affections, which separate, dissociate, and sustain a self-referential mode of human activity, as if one’s personal good were irresponsible and independent of the progress of the world.

What aids in ordering affections is contemplative activity, which is

the first step of the honest life (...) because the beginning of health comes from holy thinking (...), and holy thinking itself refers to contemplation. And these [contemplative exercises] are intended to excite and promote this thinking and reflection in the person<sup>41</sup>.

Contemplation is thus an extremely simple act that is carried out more by receiving than by seeking, as a way of looking and finding peace in the truth found<sup>42</sup>. It involves purifying and ordination the affections that operate in the human soul, for Suárez recognizes that to perform good works, they must be preceded by the holy thinking and holy desire that is cultivated in mental prayer, which is not merely the solitude of the subject with their own inwardness but rather a relationship from that realm with God. Supernatural salvation is not separated from good works, and salvation in this life, or earthly happiness, reaches its culmination in contemplation, which, in turn, opens up the path to right action or

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<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, n° 623.

<sup>41</sup> F. Suárez, *De religione*, XIV, op. cit, T. X, L. IX, c. 7, n. 14.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*

honest living. But this spiritual practice is not exclusive to those who are purest and most committed to the contemplative life, but rather

it is good for everyone to exercise themselves in love, [and therefore] it will also be useful to accustom oneself little by little to remain in that love with some tranquility and peace of mind as each one is granted by heaven. Moreover, the gentleness of devotion is very profitable in every state and is brought about only by the love or the substantial devotion which everyone should seek<sup>43</sup>.

All this leads us to recognize the public potentiality of the mystical life, in which the affections that lead to an honest, right or just life are ordinate<sup>44</sup>. Thus, the meaning of political society as a *corpus mysticum* can also be understood. The concept of the mystical body is primarily theological and had been used to define the Church. Suárez, however, also uses it to describe the concrete way in which the moral and political unity that exists in different societies is achieved, which, to some extent, could also be used to understand the type of relationship that exists within the human gender in a moral and normative or convivial sense<sup>45</sup>. Here, this concept does not have a figurative or metaphorical use but rather a rigorous and descriptive one. In this sense, it must be reconstructed on the basis of Suarezian mystical theology. Mystical activity is understood as a way to remedy and rightly articulate the true sociability of the subject. The exercise of the mystical acts that correspond to spiritual acts allows the subject to be ordered in order to be incorporated into the sphere of a beneficial relationality or in the line of the good and is a way of overcoming a disordered relationality insofar as this does not enable their adequate realization for themselves nor in the environment of their relationships.

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<sup>43</sup> *De religione*, op. cit, T. IV, L. IV, c.1, n. 2).

<sup>44</sup> In relation to mystical acts, such as the public prayer of the Church, Suárez emphasizes the weight of community prayer over personal or private prayer, as «the community has a special dignity for which reason the common good is considered more divine.» *De religione*, op. cit, T. IV, L. IV, c.1.

<sup>45</sup> Suárez states: «the human gender, into howsoever many different peoples and kingdoms it may be divided, always preserves a certain unity, not only as a species, but also a moral and political unity (as it were) enjoined by the natural precept of mutual love and mercy; a precept which applies to all, even to strangers of every nation. Therefore, although a given sovereign state, commonwealth, or kingdom may constitute a perfect community in itself, consisting of its own members, nevertheless, each one of these states is also, in a certain sense, and viewed in relation to the human gender, a member of that universal society» *De legibus ac Deo legislatore*, op. cit., L. II, c. 19, n. 9.