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STUDIES IN THE SPIRITUALITY OF JESUITS



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**Downward Mobility:
Social Implications of
St. Ignatius's Two Standards**

Dean Brackley, S.J.

THE SEMINAR ON JESUIT SPIRITUALITY

A group of Jesuits appointed from their provinces in the United States.

The Seminar studies topics pertaining to the spiritual doctrine and practice of Jesuits, especially American Jesuits, and communicates the results to the members of the provinces. This is done in the spirit of Vatican II's recommendation to religious institutes to recapture the original inspiration of their founders and to adapt it to the circumstances of modern times. The Seminar welcomes reactions or comments in regard to the material which it publishes.

The Seminar focuses its direct attention on the life and work of the Jesuits of the United States. The issues treated may be common also to Jesuits of other regions, to other priests, religious, laity, men and/or women. Hence the *Studies*, while meant especially for American Jesuits, are not exclusively for them. Others who may find them helpful are cordially welcome to read them.

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Philip C. Fischer, S.J., is secretary of the Seminar and an editor at the Institute of Jesuit Sources.

Roger D. Haight, S.J., teaches systematic theology at Regis College, the Jesuit school of theology in Toronto.

Frank J. Houdek, S.J., teaches historical theology and spirituality at the Jesuit School of Theology at Berkeley.

Arthur F. McGovern, S.J., teaches philosophy and is director of the Honors Program at the University of Detroit.

John J. Mueller, S.J., teaches systematic theology at St. Louis University.

John W. Padberg, S.J., is chairman of the Seminar, editor of *Studies*, and director and editor at the Institute of Jesuit Sources.

Michael J. O'Sullivan, S.J., teaches psychology at Loyola-Marymount University.

Paul A. Soukup, S.J., teaches communications at Santa Clara University and is director of studies for juniorate scholastics in the California Province.

John M. Staudenmaier, S.J., teaches the history of technology at the University of Detroit.

Dean Brackley, S.J.

DOWNWARD MOBILITY:
SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS
OF ST. IGNATIUS'S TWO STANDARDS

Studies
in the Spirituality of Jesuits
20/1
January 1988

For Your Information . . .

The following brief conversation, presented here as close to verbatim as I could remember it within a few hours of its occurrence, took place at a recent gathering of Jesuits: Jesuit A addressed the first remark or question to me. I had no time to reply before Jesuits B and C spoke up. A specific issue of *Studies* was involved but I have omitted its title because similar conversations have occurred with reference to other articles in *Studies*.

JESUIT A: "How could you publish that issue of *Studies*? Sure, the subject is important, but it is going to disturb a lot of people and present a lot of pastoral problems."

JESUIT B: "Well, maybe that's true, but it's not what I thought about the article. My problem is that, important as the subject may be, the article simply doesn't take a whole lot of theological data into account."

JESUIT C (*just coming upon the scene, not knowing what the subject of conversation had been up to that point, but turning to me*): "That was a great article in *Studies* on I liked it a lot. It says exactly what I have been trying to express for myself on how I see those relationships and how I've experienced them in my own life."

JESUIT B: "How can you say that? There are real theological and historical problems with the article."

JESUIT A: "Yes, but even more, what is it going to do to our young Jesuits."

JESUIT C: "Well if we three differ so much on an article about a subject that we all think is important, isn't it at least good it does show up in *Studies* and gets us thinking about it and discussing it?"

The conversation was brief because it took place while everyone was on the way to something else. I much appreciated the interest in *Studies* and, obviously, was glad that people read it. All of

us in the *Seminar* out of which *Studies* comes recognize our responsibility to our fellow Jesuits to produce something which they will find interesting and helpful, not just in the reading but in the thought and discussion which, we hope, follow.

There are other ways, too, to learn what readers think of *Studies*. I shall report in the next issue on the survey of our readership done last summer. But surveys are not the only means of responding to *Studies*. The last issue (November 1987) noted that "Letters to the Editor" would begin to appear in this present issue of *Studies*. You will find the first two such letters in a separate section right after the conclusion of "Downward Mobility."

Lastly, that phrase, "downward mobility," expresses so directly and strikingly the originality of what Dean Brackley wishes to convey in his article that we decided to use it as part of the title of his article even though it had some time ago also been used as part of the title of one article among several in a series by Henri Nouwen.

Our acknowledgements to Fr. Nouwen and our congratulations to Fr. Brackley both for his persistence in working for several years on this article and for his imagination in thinking, long before he finished the article, of a title which aptly expresses its central ideas.

John W. Padberg, S.J.

Editor

Studies in the Spirituality of Jesuits

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DOWNWARD MOBILITY

Social Implications of St. Ignatius's Two Standards

Dean Brackley, S.J.*

INTRODUCTION

Night had fallen on San Salvador. The poor capital city took on new life as workers and beggars darted among flickering lights and noisy traffic. Suddenly a mother and two small children stood before me on the sidewalk. Dressed in the simple clothing of the countryside, they surely were the latest of thousands displaced by the war and its bombing. The mother needed to find a bed so they could sleep for the night. Could I help? she asked with the directness of the poor.

Taken aback, I needed a moment for this to sink in. Sorrow and then shame followed my initial confusion. Next came helplessness and anger. But most stirring about this apparition was the message of the woman's bright eyes (whether she was aware of it I cannot say): she and I were one. We did not belong to different species at all; we were rather a sister and a brother, two human beings enjoying the same dignity, deserving the same respect.

* Author's address: Jesuit Community, 860 Manida St., Bronx, NY 10474.

That meeting and those feelings remind me today of encounters closer to home, with homeless people in the New York subway and even the haunting, hollow faces of late-night TV appeals to help the starving in Africa.

Unfortunately, the vision of our identity with the poor and outcast can be difficult to sustain. After these momentary encounters we often experience the truth draining away, dissolving like a dream we vainly try to recapture in the morning or a sand castle battered by the tide. The vision seems imperiled, not only by resistance within us, but also by powerful cultural forces which bid us distance ourselves from those the world deems unimportant.

Not long ago a friend of mine received the following letter from a leading credit-card company:

Dear ----- :

Recently I invited you to apply for the **** Card. . . . I believe you've earned this invitation. You've worked hard and have been recognized for your efforts. And nothing is more satisfying than achieving your own personal goals.

Now it's time for you to carry the card that symbolizes your achievement--the **** Card.

Only a select group will ever carry the **** Card. So it instantly identifies you as someone special--one who expects an added measure of courtesy and personal attention. And with the **** Card, you enjoy an impressive degree of convenience, financial flexibility and service. . . .

The **** Card says more about you than anything you can buy with it. I think it's time you joined the select group who carry it.

Sincerely,

The letter is comical in its flattery of those special people so unlike the young Salvadoran mother. But it points to cultural currents that, while less blatant, are deep and powerful nonetheless.

Unsettling encounters with the outcast have grown harder to avoid in recent years. We also know they point beyond themselves

to staggering facts about millions undernourished, an appallingly unjust world economic order, desperate efforts by elites to maintain power, and desperate attempts to change things. These realities and the danger of nuclear war press upon the Christian conscience as never before. At times they threaten to overwhelm us.

We are not among the poorest and are rarely satisfied with our response. How can we face these challenges more responsibly? Conscious of our weakness, at times we tire of what seem like constant reminders of injustice. Some resent a rhetoric that suggests they are responsible but leaves them feeling guilty and helpless. Others, weary from years of struggle for justice and peace, feel tempted to short-term results that compromise solid long-term gains. Bankers and nuns, plumbers and priests, secretaries and students--most of us who call ourselves Christians want to respond better to the challenge of injustice today. This paper aims to help that discernment process along in a small way.

St. Ignatius of Loyola's meditation on Two Standards, one of two central meditations of his *Spiritual Exercises*, has helped me greatly in this respect. It describes two subtle forces at work in the world, or what we could call two opposing strategies for living. For this reason I think the Two Standards is a meditation on our situation. For we, too, struggle with two tendencies or strategies. One is the force I glimpsed in the Salvadoran woman's eyes. Eyes like hers can break open our hearts and carry us away. That is the core of a "strategy" I will refer to in this paper as downward mobility.

But, as we have seen, allowing ourselves to be borne away like this brings us against powerful obstacles in our society. Another "strategy" confronts us which constitutes a flight from the outcast. This strategy is so dominant in our culture that we ignore it to our peril.

I think the Two Standards meditation sheds much light on these strategies, revealing upward and downward mobility as key categories for determining our response to injustice today. I will first analyze this meditation and then develop some of its social implica-

tions for our time. While Ignatius presents the Exercises to individuals, these individuals live out their relationship to God in and through their relationships to the world, particularly other human beings. Precisely because the Two Standards is so true to our experience as individuals, it has profound implications for our social life as well.

PART I. THE TWO STANDARDS

Two strategies

Deception. - Ignatius begins his meditation by illustrating how life is a struggle between good and evil, darkness and light. For in the end only two footpaths spread out before us. Ignatius has us consider how Christ "wants all beneath His standard, and Lucifer . . . wants all under his";¹ and he goes on to describe two military camps.

It costs us to view life as a struggle because the dominant liberalism of Western societies would suggest we can be for Christ without being against anything, for life without being against death. By contrast, in the New Testament, Jesus and the prince of

1 *The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius*, trans. Louis J. Puhl, S.J. (Westminster, Md.: Newman Press, 1957), *SpEx* 137. I will be citing this translation, at times with minor changes, referring to the traditional numbered paragraphs, e.g. *SpEx* 137, in text and footnotes.

Ignatius actually gives very little attention to the devil in the *Spiritual Exercises*. The devil's role is virtually confined to the Two Standards (*SpEx* 136-147) and the Rules for the Discernment of Spirits (*SpEx* 313-336). He uses "demon" just once in passing. See Stanislas Lyonnet, S.J., "La méditation des Deux Etendards et son fondement scripturaire," *Christus* 12 (1956): 435-456, p. 443. "Ignatius' extremely rare reference to preternatural activity . . . reflect[s] his concern for the human rather than the diabolical . . . [and] most of all . . . his consuming interest in, and love of . . . our Lord . . ." (David M. Stanley, *The Call of Discipleship: The Spiritual Exercises with the Gospel of St. Mark, The Way Supplement*, nos. 43-44 [Jan. 1982], p. 110). It is worth noting in passing that neither in the New Testament nor in the *Exercises* is there such a thing as a kingdom of the devil, but instead a kind of demonic conspiracy against the saving plan of God for humanity. Rather than a positive force or entity, evil is, as the tradition expresses it, a privation of being.

this world lock in mortal combat. So, too, for Ignatius, one who chooses to follow Christ must expect to struggle against the enemy's attacks.

Again like the New Testament, Ignatius speaks of good and bad spirits (demons and angels) involved in this struggle. That language indicates the subtle, all-pervasive character of good and evil in the world and the deception and illusion involved in the struggle between them. This, too, we should note, because strong currents in our culture foster the notion that the choice between good and evil, even if sometimes difficult, presents itself in clear terms, like a market choice between apples and oranges. But in real life we are rarely faced with "good guys" in white hats and "bad guys" in black. Rather, everything has an ambivalent character. Every human being, every action and institution, everything historical mixes good and evil, wheat and weeds.² Besides that, the weeds often look like wheat! The "enemy of our human nature"--Ignatius's expression for the devil--frequently disguises himself as an angel of light.³ Without and within, sin can steal upon me unawares to turn my best intentions to evil.

We may not want to attribute this subtle power of deception to a personal demon, but we cannot deny the fact of life without suffering the fate of the naive bumbler or the self-deceived. To this the Crusades, PTL ministries, and all the evil done in the name of good bear eloquent witness.

Obviously, if life is like this, those who accept God's call to love and to serve will have a lifetime struggle on their hands. Ignatius presents the meditation on Two Standards in this context to those who have already responded to the call of Christ.⁴ Those

2 Augustine gave classic expression to this truth. See R. A. Markus, *Saeculum: History and Society in the Theology of St. Augustine* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), chapters 2-4. See *SpEx* 141.

3 This is a basic presupposition of the Rules for the Discernment of Spirits. See *SpEx* 328-336.

4 Conversion from sin is associated with the First Week of the Exercises, conversion to Christ with the meditation on the Kingdom, or Reign (*SpEx* 91-

who want to stay faithful and distinguish themselves in Christ's service (*SpEx* 97) will have to know how to *discern* the influence of two subtle forces or spirits which pervade daily life. This requires knowing the strategies and tactics of the two leaders, Christ and the enemy.

The two strategies. - Ignatius writes that the enemy tries to ensnare and enslave us:

He summons innumerable demons, and scatters them . . . throughout the whole world. . . . [He] goads them on to lay snares for people and bind them in chains . . . (*SpEx* 141-142).

Christ, on the other hand,

chooses so many persons, apostles, disciples, etc.⁵ and sends them throughout the whole world to spread his sacred doctrine among all persons . . . (*SpEx* 145).

What strategy does each leader employ? The enemy directs his agents (it sounds like CIA or KGB networks!):

first . . . to tempt people to covet riches, as he [the enemy] is ordinarily accustomed to do, that they may the more easily attain the empty honors of the world, and then come to swollen

98). The Two Standards, as we shall see, presents a stiff challenge to endure hardship and privation. But the First Week has prepared the disciple for this, having bathed the sinner in the ocean of God's forgiving love. Since the Two Standards presupposes a conversion, there is no question of choosing between these standards. That choice has already been made. The Two Standards is the first exercise that directly prepares for the "election" which is the heart of the retreat. That election has to do, ordinarily, with major life choices such as whether to marry or choose religious life or ministry, or with removing an obstacle to the complete service of God.

5 Notice that while Christ's emissaries are human beings, the enemy's are immaterial demons. There are no grounds here for "satanizing" concrete persons, institutions, or movements in history--as has been done by certain commentators in the past, for example, during the Cold War period when the work of the devil was facilely identified with atheistic Communism. Indeed, "while the tradition, at least since the time of St. Augustine in his *City of God*, draws a clear line between the fronts of the two kingdoms . . . , Ignatius emphasizes the mutual penetration of both kingdoms. . . . The Kingdoms of Christ and Satan as described by St. Ignatius embrace the whole world" (Karl Rahner, *Spiritual Exercises*, trans. Kenneth Baker, S.J. [New York: Herder and Herder, 1965], p. 171).

pride. The first step, then, will be riches, the second honor, the third pride. And from these three steps, he leads to all the other vices (*SpEx* 142).

The strategy is to tempt the decent person by means of a first step that appears innocent enough, the possession of riches. Honors, good in themselves, follow.

In parallel fashion, Christ's strategy is to "recommend" that his "servants and friends"

seek to help all, by attracting them,⁶ first to the highest spiritual poverty, and, if his divine Majesty should so be served and he should wish to choose them for it, even to actual poverty. Secondly, they should lead them to a desire for insults and contempt, for from these two things follows humility. Hence, there will be three steps: the first, poverty as opposed to riches; the second, insults and contempt as opposed to worldly honor; the third, humility as opposed to pride. And from these three steps, let them lead them to all the other virtues (*SpEx* 146).

Christ proposes poverty, insults, humility. Now, we might want to jump in here and say, "All this is too complicated. Only one thing is necessary, love." True. But it is not always obvious what love looks like in the concrete and over the long haul. Furthermore, since love is always under attack from the enemy, we have to know his strategy and resist the attacks.

What is at stake in the Two Standards? - The progressions "riches, honors, and pride" and "poverty, insults, humility" are not an outline for a moralistic treatise on key virtues and vices. The Christian life is neither a Hellenistic striving for excellence nor a Pharisaic obedience to law, but a walking according to the

⁶ Commentators frequently point out how gentle Christ and his helpers are. They respect our freedom. Christ "recommends." The disciples "help" and "attract." Christ is presented attractively (*SpEx* 144). By contrast, the enemy sits on an imposing throne and has a frightening appearance (*SpEx* 140); he "summons" demons, "goads them on to lay nets and chains" and to "tempt." He deceives and coerces.

Spirit of Christ. Therefore Ignatius stresses the discernment of interior movements which are the traces of different spirits affecting us. The evil spirit manifests itself as a tendency to slavery and death by means of avarice, love of honors, and pride, while the Spirit of Christ leads to freedom, life, and joy through poverty, humiliations, and humility.⁷ For the Spirit of Christ reproduces in us the life pattern of Christ, poor, insulted, and lowly. Our way, like his, must be the way of the cross.

This is the fundamental issue in the Two Standards. In this meditation the disciple confronts nothing less than what Christ confronted in the wilderness when he faced the tempter at the beginning of his mission.⁸ Would Jesus try to gain a hearing by the common-sense means of catering to the people's hunger for bread alone, for ostentatious wonders, for a powerful political leader? Would he seek to become the kind of "great man" the Messiah was, after all, expected to be? Or would he assume the role of the suffering servant, the servant of all (Mt 20:28), emptying himself and humbling himself in obedience even to death on a cross (Phil 2:8-9)?⁹

7 The Rules for the Discernment of Spirits presuppose that the Spirit (Ignatius spoke of "God and his angels" [*SpEx* 329], the "good angel" [331], etc.) is the principal guide of Christ's followers.

8 Many commentators stress this. See especially Stanislas Lyonnet, "Deux Etendards" (see note 1, above); David M. Stanley, *Call to Discipleship* (note 1, above), chapter 8; idem, *A Modern Scriptural Approach to the Spiritual Exercises* (Chicago: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1967), chapter 14.

For the biblical background to the Two Standards see: Manuel Ruiz Jurado, S.J., "Los dos campos," *Manresa* 39 (1967): 63-74; Gilles Cusson, S.J., *Pédagogie de l'expérience spirituelle personnelle: Bible et Exercices Spirituels; Essais pour notre temps*, 4 (Montreal: Desclée de Brouwer, 1968), pp. 301-302; Santiago Arzubialde, "Raíces de la teología espiritual en Dos Banderas," *Manresa* 56 (1984): 291-319; Erich Przywara, S.J., *Deus Semper Maior: Theologie der Exerziien*, Erster Band (Vienna: Verlag Herold, 1964), pp. 299-315; and the exhaustive catalog of Gabriel Ochoa G., S.J., *La Escritura al ritmo de los Ejercicios* (Mexico City, 1977).

9 The centrality of this theme of the suffering servant-Messiah in all four gospels and throughout the New Testament is clear. So, too, the Two Standards meditation which stresses this theme for followers of Christ is central to the Spiritual Exercises. Moreover, Ignatius notes the sufferings of Christ during the First Week on sin (*SpEx* 53) and at the Nativity meditation in the Second Week (*SpEx* 116). The Third Week is taken up completely with the

In the Two Standards, the same issue is at stake for Jesus' followers. Will they recognize what a great trap it is to try to follow him and at the same time seek riches and so attain prestige and power, inviting the rebuke that Peter heard, "Get behind me, Satan; you are a stumbling block to me!"; or will they recognize the way of the cross as the way of life and, denying themselves, take up their cross and follow him (Mt 16:23-24)?

As Jesus warned his disciples, Ignatius has us consider the same warning, or better, the invitation to follow the Savior along the path of lowliness and persecution. Indeed, the disciple begs to be chosen for this path (*SpEx* 147).

But why does Ignatius specify the two triads--riches, honors, pride and poverty, insults, humility--in just this way?

Riches, honors, pride . . . poverty, insults, humility. - For our purposes we need to explain briefly what these six words mean in the Two Standards. (Those who wish to follow a more detailed argument for this interpretation can refer to Appendix I, page 41, below.)

These triads are not, as we said, the summary of a treatise on virtues and vices, especially on how they are linked either psychologically or metaphysically. Ignatius, as usual, is reflecting here on the practical order. He is concerned, it seems, with a sequence that frequently occurs in real life. When he describes the enemy's strategy, he explains that as a rule (*ut in pluribus*, as he says) the enemy's first tactic in subverting the commitment of a good, converted person is to attract that person to covet riches. The riches in question here are material things: wealth, money. It is not a question of "disordered attachment" to *any* created good whatever, such as a "long life, health, honor, one's career" (see *SpEx* 23) or a generic option for the creature over

sufferings of Christ. Perhaps most significant of all, the retreatant employs the colloquy of the Two Standards meditation in all subsequent contemplations of the Second Week. It is for Ignatius the key to understanding what it means to be a follower, or companion, of Jesus (and also what it means to be a Jesuit).

the Creator. Here it is a question of covetousness, greed. That is the first step.

Then, with some wealth one ordinarily begins to receive social recognition, credentials--"honors."¹⁰ From there it is a short step to pride.

Of course, "riches" and "honors" are created *goods*. They can at times serve the kingdom well. What is not good is the disordered desire for them, something which may appear only later. But Ignatius's stress falls on the overall strategy. Let Christ's disciples be aware that these goods--riches and honors--typically serve as nets by which the enemy subverts their commitment.

By pride Ignatius means, again, not first of all a generic element at the base of all sin, for example the refusal of the creature to submit to the Creator. He seems instead to have in mind a concrete vice with social manifestations: arrogance, selfish ambition, will to power, a "superiority complex." From here the enemy leads to all vices. In other words, once this point has been reached, the commitment of a good person to the Reign of God (*SpEx* 91-98) has been pretty much undermined.

Now, Christ proposes to his followers a strategy exactly contrary to that of the enemy. As opposed to (quite material) riches, Christ invites people to seek "the highest spiritual poverty" and, if God so chooses, even "actual poverty" (*SpEx* 146). The "highest spiritual poverty" refers to detachment from *material* wealth (not *any* created good whatever); and therefore it constitutes a readiness for "actual poverty," that is, actual material deprivation, should God choose one for that experience.

Secondly, Christ invites his followers to desire "insults and contempt," that is, quite concrete contempt in the world's eyes, the opposite of "honors"--but, again, only if this brings equal or more glory to God.

¹⁰ This is how Ignatius's commentators ordinarily interpret him--correctly, I think.

Note how neither actual poverty nor humiliations are desirable or good in themselves. There is only *one* absolute: the service and praise of God (*SpEx* 23), the service of the Kingdom (*SpEx* 91-98).¹¹ One may, perhaps, in a given set of circumstances, serve God best as a member of Congress or a college president.

Finally, from these two desires (for poverty and insults) comes the chief weapon against the enemy: humility. From there Christ can lead us to all the virtues that will bear fruit for the Kingdom.

Again, humility here is not primarily a generic form of subordination to the Creator metaphysically grounding all specific expressions of virtue. Rather, it is a concrete pattern of living humbly, above all in the spirit of what Ignatius calls "the third kind of humility" (*SpEx* 167; see below). "Humility" means following Christ along the way of the cross. So we can summarize the message of the Two Standards like this: Those who wish to be Jesus' companions in mission will have to resist temptations to wealth, prestige, and ambition and beg to follow him in poverty, service, and persecution.

Having spelled out this fairly traditional "exegesis" of Ignatius's text, we can now proceed to the challenging task of interpreting its meaning for us today and, in particular, its *social* implications.¹²

11 Although the context does not specify it, the humiliations and actual poverty are understood within the context of apostolic labor in service of Christ (*SpEx* 98). They should be understood in the spirit, say, of the "apostolic" sufferings of Paul. See 2 Cor 4:7-12; 7:3-10; 1 Cor 4:9-13; Phil 3:10-11; etc.

12 The methodological issues involved in interpreting the *Exercises* for our time are well laid out and put to fine use in Thomas E. Clarke, S.J., "Jesus at Table: The Ignatian Rules and Human Hunger Today," in G. Schner, ed., *Ignatian Spirituality in a Secular Age* (Waterloo, Ont.: W. Laurier University Press, 1984), pp. 1-112.

The social meaning of the Two Standards¹³

The Spiritual Exercises are addressed to individuals, and they seek to enable a person to have the interior freedom to serve God (*SpEx* 1, 21). Therefore, it should not surprise us that the neighbor and the wider society are only implicit in the Exercises--although we can reasonably suppose that, were he to rework them today, Ignatius would make the neighbor and society more explicit. In any case, a series of exercises which so deeply touches the reality of the individual can hardly be without profound social implications. We want to explicitate these for the Two Standards, working on the assumption that the individuals addressed by Ignatius live out their relationship with God in relation to the world and especially to other human beings.

The importance of the social context. - Jorge Centelles, a Jesuit writing in Bolivia on the Two Standards, argues that the structure of temptation depends in part on one's social context. Sometimes power or status (honors) is primary and leads to wealth; other times the reverse is true.¹⁴ According to Centelles, the Two Standards reflects Ignatius's own social context: In the Two Standards riches is primary and leads to the honors which signify status and power. However, not only does power seem to be at least

13 Since around 1970, especially, some fine reflections on the social dimensions of Ignatian spirituality have been published. We list some of them below, in Appendix B.

14 Jorge Centelles Vives, S.J., "Valor social de 'Dos Banderas,'" *Manresa* 56 (1984): 59-75. Centelles draws on S. Ossowski's social theory which distinguishes three interpretations of social stratification, corresponding to three kinds of privilege: (1) rulers and ruled (hegemony based on political power), (2) rich and poor (wealth), and (3) employer and employees. Centelles believes the Two Standards reflects 2, an interpretation based on economic factors. Note how Centelles tends to identify honor with power. Max Weber distinguishes them and relates both wealth and honor to power in complex ways. See Max Weber, *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, trans., ed., and with an Introduction by H. H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills (New York: Oxford University Press, 1958), p. 180. Thomas Hobbes made the primacy of power a universal principle: "In the first place, I put for a generall inclination of all mankind, a perpetuall and restless desire of Power after power, that ceaseth only in Death" (Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, ed. C. B. MacPherson [Harmondsworth, England: Penguin Books, 1968], p. 161).

as conducive to pride as riches are, things went differently for Ignatius himself. His conversion involved more a renunciation of noble status (the power of the aristocracy of the late Middle Ages) than wealth. His "disordered affection" was not riches but honor.¹⁵ Why, then, place riches before honors in the Two Standards?

Ignatius put riches first, says Centelles, because riches functioned as the key to power and self-sufficiency for the "bourgeois plebeians who [less so than the aristocracy] had to produce, buy, sell, transport . . . in order to live and, beyond that, to get rich."¹⁶

The environment in which he moved, once having left Loyola, was that of mighty mercantilism-- . . . with all its lust for individual lucre--which was the origin of the later capitalism. Let us remember that Ignatius moved about in the most mercantile cities of his day and there perceived its internal mechanism: Barcelona, Genoa, Venice--the republic of traders--Antwerp, London. . . .

By stressing first riches, then honors, Ignatius "struck at the nerve of the ambition of the two powerful classes of his day": the old aristocracy and the rising bourgeoisie of the dawning capitalist societies. But he put poverty as a sure remedy against pride for everyone.¹⁷

15 "In the Ignatian world, . . . with its conception of the human ideal of medieval knighthood, . . . honor was the same as life, and to lose one's honor was to lose one's life" (S. Arzubialde, "Raíces de la Teología" [see note 8, above], p. 297).

16 Centelles, "Valor social," p. 61

17 Ibid., p. 71. French Jesuit Jean-Claude Dhôtel also offers a reflection on the social import of the Two Standards ("The Place of the Election," in *The Exercises and the Collective Dimension of Human Existence*, CIS [Centrum Ignatianum Spiritualitatis], vol. X (1979), no. 3, pp. 72-82). Dhôtel believes that the standard of the enemy applies more to collectivities than to individuals. For example, the bourgeoisie first achieved economic hegemony in Europe (riches), and this permitted the later conquest of political power (honors, prestige). Dhôtel holds that the prophets of Israel had a similar understanding of how the world works. However, he does not relate the larger social processes to the problematic of the individual, which is what is at stake in Ignatius's text.

In fact, long before the sixteenth century, Christian theology consistently placed avarice for riches first in the strategy of temptation.¹⁸ But Centelles shows us how one's social context can profoundly affect the structure of temptation (and that, in particular, capitalism can even heighten the primacy of avarice). In a given historical context, "Satan appropriates the 'kingdoms of the world' (Mt 4:8) which he offered to Christ in the desert as though they were his own."¹⁹

We can build on this important insight for our purposes. While a great deal about our human situation remains constant, even essential to being human, we know today that our social-historical context conditions everything about us to some extent. That includes the structure of temptation and the following of Christ itself. This means that those who share a common social context--not just individuals but whole social classes and perhaps nations--will be subject to that pattern. We can use this insight to bridge the gap between the individual (the subject of the Exercises) and the larger society. Beginning with the individual in the context of historically conditioned *social relations*, relations that are "close" to the individual, we can move outward to consider larger social processes and institutions.

Individuals in relation. - Our approach assumes that individuals belong to their environment, an interrelated whole, the world. No one is an island. Each one depends on nature for survival, on others for survival and love, and on God utterly. Therefore, human beings can only be rightly understood in relation to: (1) nature and "things," (2) other persons (society) and themselves, and (3) God.²⁰ It follows that one's social context

18 See Appendix I, p. 41.

19 Centelles, "Valor social," p. 67.

20 Aristotle taught that human beings are "social animals." Modern philosophers of internal relations, like Spinoza, Hegel, Marx, process philosophers, and their followers, have sought to interpret human sociality in a stronger sense than Aristotle's. Their general effort has been confirmed in

conditions the problematic of interior freedom. The New Testament assures us, further, that our relationship to God depends directly and decisively on our relationship to human beings (Mt 25:31-46; Mk 12:28-34; 1 Jn 4:20-21; etc.) and indirectly on our relationship ("freedom," "detachment") to things. Therefore, we want to explore the *social* dimensions of riches and poverty, honors and insults, pride and humility.

Peruvian Jesuit and scholar Ricardo Antoncich takes a similar approach in his recent comments on the Two Standards. Antoncich builds on the anthropology of relatedness that one finds in the document of the Latin American bishops' meeting at Puebla, Mexico, in 1979.²¹ Reflecting on the standard of Christ, Antoncich distinguishes poverty in relation to the world, to others, and to God. In relation to the world, poverty is a "lack of goods" and may be "an individual virtue." In relation to God it is an "interior emptiness before the free gift of God." But in relation to others it means "insertion into conflict and into the cause of the poor." Similarly, as isolated events, humiliations might be considered simply the hurts that come from personality conflicts, and so forth. But considered relationally, they have a richer meaning: In relation to the world they are "consequences of material poverty [and] lack of social influence"; in relation to God, "acceptance

recent decades by biologists and cultural anthropologists who argue that the human identity is to a great extent constituted through social interaction. See, for example, Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays* (New York: Basic Books, 1973), chapter 2, "The Impact of the Concept of Culture on the Concept of Man," and chapter 3, "The Growth of Culture and the Evolution of Mind," p. 55-83; Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge* (Garden City, N.Y.: Anchor Books, 1967); John Macmurray, *Persons in Relation* (vol. 2 of *The Form of the Personal*) (London: Faber & Faber, 1961; reprint ed. Atlantic Highlands, N.J.: Humanities Press, 1979).

21 Ricardo Antoncich, S.J., "Notas para la elección en los Ejercicios," *Cuadernos de espiritualidad* 19 (Sept. 1981): 17-26. According to the bishops at Puebla, we cannot understand human beings except in relation to nature and the economy, to others, and to God. "Puebla notes that none of the three dimensions (world, others, God) can be isolated; they must be integrated in real life" (*ibid.*, p. 25). See III General Conference of Latin American Bishops, *Evangelization at Present and in the Future in Latin America* (Washington, D.C.: NCCB Secretariat, 1979) pp. 82-84 (nn. 321-329 in the standard numbering of paragraphs).

of the personal and collective reality of sin and the need for redemption"; and in relation to others, "the consequences of assuming poverty as collective cause" of the poor.

Our approach in what follows is similar. Naturally, we are concerned, not with the social context of Ignatius's Europe, but with the ethos of the West in our late twentieth century. We will elaborate an understanding of the standard of the enemy in terms of social climbing, upward mobility, and an understanding of the standard of Christ in terms of downward mobility leading to solidarity with the poor and outcast.

PART II. THE WAY OF THE WORLD: UPWARD MOBILITY

Our insecurity in the modern world

From now on, rather than "the way of the enemy," I will speak of "the way of the world" as a more acceptable expression today and one which suggests the social and cultural dimension of evil.²²

How does the world work? First, it preys on our *insecurity*. Indeed, insecurity gives rise to *all* temptation; for we are insecure at our deepest center.

To be human, in all ages, means to depend on a natural and human environment we cannot control. We need to work to eat; we seek security in community even as we give it. But these needs themselves express and reflect a much deeper need for a God we control not at all. Augustine spoke of an infinite poverty at our center when he declared that we have, or *are*, a tremendous longing for God who alone can fill us. However, our insecurity tempts us to work and to interact socially in such a way that we substitute

22 Ignatius rarely mentions the devil in the *Spiritual Exercises* (see note 2, above); he also refers to the sinful world (*SpEx* 63) and to "sensuality and carnal and *worldly* love" (*SpEx* 97; emphasis is mine).

In the Bible, "the world" sometimes has a positive meaning, sometimes a negative one. Here and in what follows, "the world" refers to the world insofar as it opposes God's saving project.

creatures, idols, to fill our vast emptiness and make us truly secure. For this reason the quest for security, so natural and human, is fraught with ambiguity. A senior citizen takes out an insurance policy, a farmer struggles for solvency, an entrepreneur scrambles for power at the top. When is this striving faith-filled, when idolatrous? For there have always been, at root, only two solutions to our radical insecurity: (1) by a way of being, called faith, that accepts our insecurity and turns to God, who alone can fill our void or (2) by trying to solve the problem ourselves, without God.²³

Citizens of today's modern societies are in many ways less secure than their forebears. Modernity discredits traditional sources of meaning. Flexible, dynamic modern societies subject even the rich to the uncontrolled forces of the modern market. They introduce a degree of social mobility that erodes previously unquestioned social roles so that, unlike the peasant of the Middle Ages, we do not know for sure who we are or how we ought to behave.

Modern societies, both capitalist and socialist, likewise wage relentless war on the bonds that held people and communities together in earlier times. In so doing they give rise to that curious animal, the modern *individual*.

Today we all walk about *less secure* and *more anxious*--as individuals, communities, and nations--in the face of the dangers of nature and the uncertainties of history and society;²⁴ we are *more alone*, as well. Small wonder that a striving for certitude and predictability suffuses our culture or that we appeal to

23 Throughout the Judeo-Christian tradition, this is what is meant by pride in the deepest and most general sense. See Appendix I, pp. 43-44 and note 7.

24 This situation has given rise to much philosophical and theological reflection, beginning especially with Kierkegaard and the existentialists. Reinhold Niebuhr capitalized on it in his description of the human condition: Reinhold Niebuhr, *The Nature and Destiny of Man: A Christian Interpretation*, 2 vols. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1964); Vol. I, *Human Nature*; Vol. II, *Human Destiny*. See *Human Nature*, pp. 137-141, 182-186. For our North American context see Robert Bellah et al., *Habits of the Heart: Individualism and Commitment in American Life* (New York: Harper & Row, 1985), pp. 117-121.

science and technology to guarantee them. The temptation to self-sufficiency has led us modern individuals to try to control our lives and the world around us. In our century of total war, totalitarianism, and nuclear weaponry, this *hubris* has taken on breathtaking, and catastrophic, proportions. The modern individual has indeed become the autonomous, God-less individual.²⁵ We have come to try to solve the insecurity of life more and more by ourselves, without God--and without others.

"Upward mobility" means many things

The modern individual seeks security through upward mobility.

Modern societies offer more opportunities for social mobility, including upward mobility, than do traditional ones. Even in societies which remain largely traditional today, the prospect of economic growth conjures up the dream of material improvement for everyone, at least someday.

Upward mobility has been a special hallmark of the American experience, even when blacks and others were denied it. A powerful symbol, even a myth, "upward mobility" evokes a range of images, feelings, and values in this country: It is the "American way," the "American dream" of success. It is a college education, a home in the suburbs, and a two-car garage. It is hard work and initiative. It is also rugged individualism and the devil take the hindmost. It is the rat race.

Ambiguous and many-sided like all quests for security, upward mobility can be a genuine good--or a god. But it is always at least a little dangerous.

First, upward mobility can be a good thing. A decent job for the Salvadoran mother we met; food, clothing, and education for her children--this would be good. It was also good, even though many were denied opportunities, when poor immigrants struggled during two centuries to take advantage of an expanding U.S. economy

²⁵ Reinhold Niebuhr, *Nature and Destiny*, and Jacques Maritain, *Integral Humanism*, trans. Joseph Evans (New York: Scribner's, 1968), have provided trenchant analyses of modern Western culture in these terms.

and a relatively free and open society to pull themselves out of poverty and "take their rightful place" in that society. This historic success story indicates important positive elements in the liberal ethos reflected in the nation's history. Poverty is evil; moving out of poverty, generally speaking, is a good thing.

However, when regarded as the road to happiness, even to salvation, upward mobility turns into an idol. If necessary, I will sacrifice my neighbor's upward mobility to mine. The more materialistic side of "yuppiedom," the me generation, worships at this shrine: You *can* have it all. But upward mobility can just as easily ensnare the poor. We can have bread without justice, without community, without love. This, too, belongs to our history, and it is an evil.

Because of this, upward mobility always stands before us as something of a danger and a temptation. Although every quest for security--indeed, all of creation--is good and a temptation at the same time, upward mobility constitutes a spiritual danger in a peculiar way for at least three reasons. In the first place, even when it means escaping from poverty (a very good thing), upward mobility threatens to become an escape *from the poor* themselves (a very bad thing). Which is it really? Which will it become in the long run? Risky for the poor, upward mobility is probably more so for the non-poor. Attachment to riches is less the danger than detachment from my poor neighbor. For this reason, we will speak later of genuine social progress, not as upward mobility, but as a kind of communal forward mobility.

Here, as in the Two Standards, it is not a question of a direct temptation to evil, like adultery or the obviously selfish social climbing already mentioned, but instead a temptation to something really good like Steinbeck's pearl, Faust's success, or the king by which Israel hoped to insure its national security (1 Samuel 8). While perhaps leading to a real good in the short run, upward mobility *can* run in the end to moral and spiritual ruin. In this sense it often functions as the strategy of the enemy in the Two Standards. One first seeks riches and so comes to social prestige and then pride.

In the second place, our immediate social context heightens upward mobility's ambiguity. The U.S. economy has entered what many believe to be a period, perhaps a very long one, of relatively slow growth. In that case there will be less economic opportunity and more losers in our society with fewer social benefits to cushion the fall. Under these conditions we can expect upward mobility from the bottom of the social pyramid to be a rarer and more ruthless game than in the past. This new hardball is already upon us, with profound implications for the pastoral practice of the Catholic Church, which has for two centuries worked for the upward mobility and social assimilation of poor immigrants.

In the third place, what follows in this section seeks to show (1) how, given the dominant ethos of the West, even "legitimate" upward mobility can undermine one's social commitment in the long run; and (2) how upwardly mobile individuals frequently (often unwittingly) serve institutions and social processes that run counter to gospel values.

The way of the world: twelve characteristics

What is the way of *our* world? Twelve characteristics (others might distinguish more or fewer) stand out in a way which helps disclose the coherence of this life-strategy.²⁶ The social meanings of covetousness, honors, and pride are among the first of these twelve features. The social meaning of pride, however, emerges as the nucleus of the way of the world as a whole. From it all the rest unfolds, just as pride leads to all other vices for Ignatius. The last several of the twelve characteristics show how this social pride infects the larger social order.

Hardly a deduction from the Two Standards in any strict sense, this description draws on Ignatius's meditation as starting point and inspiration.

26 Some readers will recognize in these next two sections a kind of construction similar to what Max Weber calls an ideal type, a coherent model which throws light on social reality without itself occurring in pure form anywhere in real life. See *From Max Weber* (cited in note 14, above), pp. 59-60, 294, 323-324.

1. The way of the world in our day is individualistic, as we have seen. Individuals confront the great problems of life: in relation to the self (identity and self-worth), in relation to nature (material needs), and in relation to others (the need to belong). Individuals (and families) tend to pursue private goals to meet these needs.²⁷

2. People are first tempted to solve insecurity by having or consuming things. This is the most immediate and "acceptable" of the paths promising security.²⁸ Individualism and covetousness strengthen each other. Depending little on God and detached from the neighbor, the individualist readily seeks security in things. This reinforces both that reluctance to share which fosters hunger and homelessness and the social alienation that blocks collective efforts to solve common problems.

Beyond that, as Ignatius says, riches bring honors. Society communicates to the well-to-do a sense of self-importance that leads to a pride which devalues others. We will return to this.

Finally, in modern capitalist societies, and others where the ethos is present, covetousness increases greatly, first, because wealth and income have supplanted many traditional bases of security

27 Like security and upward mobility, individualism too is ambivalent. "Individualism lies at the very core of American culture," write Bellah et al. (*Habits of the Heart*, p. 142; see note 24, above). In their brilliant analysis, these authors distinguish utilitarian and expressive individualism. For them individualism in the positive sense refers to the "belief in the inherent dignity of the human person." However, utilitarian and expressive individualism also share an outlook with negative implications, namely "that the individual has a primary reality whereas society is a second-order, derived or artificial construct. . ." (ibid., p. 334). The authors are concerned that, because of this, individualism may have grown "cancerous" in the U.S. today (ibid., p. vii). Keeping in mind the ambivalence of individualism, it is this latter outlook that we have principally in mind when speaking about "the way of the world."

28 What is at stake, as Gilles Cusson's penetrating remarks suggest, is this: "Struck momentarily with the feeling of that [existential] poverty as a threat to their being, human beings have the 'existential' impression of losing themselves, of coming undone, draining away. . . . They grasp avidly (and often unconsciously) at 'goods' they come upon. They lift themselves up to being and life in an artificial way, starting with 'solid goods' that give them the impression of lasting" (Gilles Cusson, S.J., *Pédagogie*, p. 304 [see note 9, above]).

(lineage, established religion, social caste, and so forth) and, second, because of what Marx called the "fetishism of commodities," where the products of labor acquire a mystical character and become little gods with human qualities.²⁹ An extreme example occurs when entire economies are based on the consumption of superfluous goods. In the U.S. fifty billion dollars is spent on advertising each year in great part to stimulate new needs for commodities and to suggest these are the solution to the most fundamental problems of life: Coke is it!

3. If the way of the world is individualistic, it does presuppose a specific understanding of society: The dominant metaphor for the human community is a *ladder*. Some people are worth more than others. This is the key, I believe, to the social meaning of the way of the world. A factor which Ignatius left implicit in the *Exercises*, it constitutes a kind of nucleus from which the social significance of the way of the world unfolds. This crucial assumption of human inequality forms the basis of personal and public-policy decisions and of many social institutions themselves. For the world to work as it does, everything depends on some individuals being more human than others, their differences with others more important than the personhood they share with them. So the human community is understood and lived hierarchically in a radical sense. Real community becomes extremely difficult. All social relations on the ladder are unequal, and each one, regardless of her or his position on the social ladder, can say of those on other levels, "these others"--the foreigner, the addict, the communists--"are really quite different from me."³⁰

²⁹ Karl Marx, *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy*, Vol. I, trans. Ben Fowkes, Introduction by Ernest Mandel (New York: Vintage Books, 1977), pp. 163-177. John Francis Kavanaugh, *Following Christ in a Consumer Society: The Spirituality of Cultural Resistance* (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1981), has provided a penetrating analysis of how the Commodity Form dominates U.S. culture, undermining our ability to appreciate and live the distinctively Personal Form.

³⁰ For a beautiful exposition of the nature and implications of the ladder model of society, see Trina Paulus, *Hope for the Flowers* (Ramsey, N.J.: Paulist, 1972).

This is the social meaning of pride, as both a personal vice and an institutional presupposition. But before considering pride and its consequences, we must first say a word about the social significance of "honors."

4. By means of status symbols, society designates positions on the social ladder and the individuals publicly announce their status. These symbols--credentials, honors and so forth--include such things as a fancy car (or no car), a good job (or no job), beauty, schooling, skin color, social class, ethnic background, and credit cards. These symbols have significance not only for my social position and my need to belong but also for my very identity and sense of self-worth.

While people certainly define their self-worth in reference to their own personal values, these are neither innate nor cut out of whole cloth. Society provides them and the individual interiorizes them as the price of belonging. Parents, first of all, and then other public authorities, such as government, school, church, advertising, and mass media, teach us what it means to be a "good girl" or a "good boy" and eventually a good adult. In this socialization process, one is assigned roles to be filled well or poorly and one learns to identify a person's worth--including one's own--with certain status symbols.

Certainly, one grows in and out of roles and exercises a degree of freedom in determining both who one is and what constitutes human value.³¹ Nonetheless, a society will tolerate only so much dissent and will impose its values in subtle and powerful ways on people who desire to belong. Even the deepest personal needs for identity and a sense of self-worth are bound up with social relations and institutions.³²

31 What counts for human value for some may count less for others. Different people measure human worth by different yardsticks.

32 On the socialization process, see, for example, Berger and Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality* (cited in note 20, above).

What first appeared to be--and to a degree were--innocent personal temptations are embedded in a larger social dynamic. We will see that the personal temptations and, above all, the interpersonal nucleus of the way of the world--human inequality--serve the idols of larger social, economic, and political principalities and powers.

5. The more the way of the world dominates our environment, the more readily we interiorize the ladder model and its pride. Naturally, anyone can be proud, no matter what one's social status. But this pride is socially arrogant, for one prides oneself on being "above" others.

One must do so because on the ladder one's *personal worth depends on relative ranking*. Persons define their worth in relation to others: The fewer people above me and the more below me, the more valuable I am. With the help of status symbols, one can achieve a measure of self-definition over against who one is *not*: I am not like the rest. I am better than . . . and better than. . . . To follow the way of the world requires having others below me, for those with no one below them are on the bottom of the ladder and have practically no value at all. They are outcasts. But to accept this approach to reality is also to accept a measure of self-contempt for being worth less than those above me.

Ignatius tells us that once the enemy has led us to pride all other vices can follow (*SpEx* 142). From the ladder model and its social pride we see how, ultimately (not perhaps at first when a person merely delights in the "empty honors of the world"), others progressively lose their personhood and become flat and two-dimensional, so that I no longer need to do unto them as I would have them do unto me. They become means to my ends. In sexual relations, labor relations, and public policy, the others come to be treated more as objects than subjects who could make effective moral claims on me. (Hunger is not what economists call "effective demand.") Persons and institutions learn to justify and foster inequitable treatment for those below and privilege for those

above. Social pride embodied in the ladder has further consequences as well.

6. At the top of the ladder we find a mythical figure, the ideal human being, the Model; and at the bottom, the Outcast, the measure of the nonhuman. Models and Outcasts are essential to "the world." There can be no ladder without a top and bottom. While they are symbols, they are also very real. On the one hand, we have the movie star, the playboy, the president, the executive, the pope. On the other, the mentally ill person, the homosexual, the ugly woman. While this may seem horrible or even silly, it can be packaged more attractively, as on "Dynasty" or in *People* magazine.

7. Under these conditions, competition characterizes social life.³³ One's security is threatened, principally by others. The neighbor below me threatens not only my material and social security but my value as a human being. The neighbor above devalues me and is threatened by me. Social relations are based, not on mutuality and trust, but on the fear and defensiveness that seeks security through force, deterrents, multiple door locks, pistols, and attack dogs. To control my life I have to control my world.

8. A person's security and self-esteem depend on climbing up the ladder. For the way of the world, life is upward mobility, a scramble upward with status symbols serving as both the means and the assurance of progress toward the goal of success. The pride

33 Not all competition is bad. What we have in mind is competition for basic necessities, including human dignity. "Competition," like "upward mobility," "security," and "individualism," is morally ambiguous. All these terms can refer to a good, or the appearance of a good, which leads at times to an evil. This suggests the fruitfulness of examining all kinds of social phenomena in light of Ignatius's Rules for the Discernment of Spirits proper to the Second Week (*SpEx* 328-336), where we are urged to attend to the beginning, the middle, and the end of a course of events (*SpEx* 333 and 336) in order to detect how the enemy has turned good into evil.

It is helpful to recognize, with reference to competition, that ladders are objectively "more slippery" (greater competition) in some places (free-market or highly bureaucratic situations) than others.

which fuels this process can outpace arrogance to become selfish ambition and will to power.³⁴

Not all upwardly mobile people are arrogant or power hungry. Neither is pride the driving force behind upward mobility in every instance. In fact, some people are quite content with a modicum of security. Yet, in their legitimate search for this, good people do not determine the rules of the ladder game. They need to appreciate the dangers of the contest, know the whole in which they play a part, and recognize that, even as they act with goodwill, they risk serving social processes larger than themselves and contrary to their purposes.

Indeed, this whole complex of social relations typically corresponds to a larger social order that we can describe in a general way. All real societies are mixtures of good and bad in varying proportions. Here we consider some of the bad aspects and ignore the good and graced ones. The following description applies chiefly to larger societies but also, *mutatis mutandis*, to smaller institutions, including, sadly, the Church.

9. The social product of the way of the world is a society in the form of a kind of pyramid. Although competitive individualism tends to produce a formless "sand heap" of separate individuals, groups do band together against the threat from below or even to challenge those above them. Each group can say of the other groups in the social pyramid, "Those people are really quite different from us." In this way, divisions form between groups, divisions based on status symbols but reinforced by various forms of power. Power insures the future of one's status and well-being. It is security. The ladder (a symbol for social relations) runs up through the middle of the pyramid (a social-political symbol).

34 "The spirit of Satan . . . is one of power, dominion and the tendency to ascend in social power apart from the designs of God" (Centelles, "Valor social," p. 67). "Beginning with the spatial metaphor of above and below, in mercantile, and even more in capitalist society, the desire for 'riches' is a desire to 'ascend,' and the desire for poverty is the desire to 'descend'" (ibid., pp. 71f.). See Bellah et al., *Habits of the Heart*, pp. 118-120.

10. All societies require the legitimate exercise of authority and political power, ideally by persons who genuinely represent the people and work to insure the common good. We have something else in mind when we speak of a pyramid. Here authority and power are exercised in oppressive ways. As on the ladder, in a pyramid not everyone can be on top. The status of groups is defined relative to those above and below. Consequently power must be exercised so as to limit the upward mobility of lower groups. These are kept dependent, accountable to those above them, ignorant, and disorganized. Indeed, the pyramid is not only the product of competitive individuals; it also produces them to the extent that it divides people, rewards selfishness, and punishes cooperation.

11. Social class, race, sex, sexual orientation, schooling, health, physical appearance, age, and many other factors form the bases of divisions in the pyramid. Some divisions are more decisive than others for a given social order, especially those based on unchanging characteristics (sex and race, for instance) or on the keys to other status symbols and power. Because one's social class represents the chances one has to succeed economically, it constitutes a key factor in a capitalist society where other more traditional forms of privilege have been undermined. Today most status symbols can be bought, and that was not the case anywhere until some two hundred years ago.

12. Finally, under the conditions we have described, competition between groups and between societies fosters political relations based not on trust and cooperation but on fear and mistrust. Fear breeds defense measures: discrimination, police surveillance, armed neighborhood security forces, inflated military budgets, and arms races.

We have tried to describe Ignatius's "standard of the enemy" as a disease which desensitizes individuals to their neighbors' humanity and spreads, with a logic conditioned by the social context, to social, economic, and political life. According to this logic, pride, as the conviction that some are more human than others, leads to all other social evils; and the upwardly mobile

person of goodwill frequently plays a game that is more dangerous than appears on the surface.

PART III. THE WAY OF CHRIST: DOWNWARD MOBILITY

The wider context: forward mobility

It is important to locate the discussion of the way of Christ as "downward mobility" within the wider framework of what I will call--for the sake of a consistent use of metaphor--"forward mobility" toward the Kingdom, or Reign, of God. Jesus was not sent to mount the cross but to proclaim and bring about the Reign of God. He knew that the way of the cross was the way to do this. The goal and absolute value was the Reign of God; the necessary means were poverty, insults, lowliness--in the end, the cross. Indeed, all this manifested God's Reign. In Ignatian language, the one absolute is the "praise and service"--or the "glory"--of God, the Reign. The privileged means to realize the goal is the following of Christ poor and persecuted.³⁵

The social meaning of "the glory of God" was well captured by Archbishop Oscar Romero of El Salvador when he paraphrased St. Irenaeus's famous dictum, *Gloria Dei, homo vivens*, the glory of God is the human person fully alive. *Gloria Dei, pauper vivens*, wrote Archbishop Romero, the glory of God is the poor person fully alive.³⁶ In other terms, the social meaning of the Reign of God is a community with no outcasts. Throughout the Bible we see God laboring to form first Israel and then the New Israel into a community with no outcasts. This is what the Reign of God meant

35 That is, the Two Standards fits within the larger framework of the Principle and Foundation (*SpEx* 23) and the Kingdom meditation (*SpEx* 91-98).

36 Oscar A. Romero, "La dimensión política de la fe desde la opción por los pobres," in idem, *La voz de los sin voz: La palabra viva de Monseñor Romero*, Colección La Iglesia en América Latina, Vol. 6, ed. and with Introductions and Commentary by J. Sobrino, I. Martín-Baro, and R. Cardenal (San Salvador: UCA editores, 1980), p. 193.

for Jesus. Therefore, happy are all the outcasts and second-class citizens: the poor, the publicans and sinners, women and children, the sick (especially lepers), the Samaritans, and (eventually) the pagan nations. While all must repent and accept God's unconditional amnesty, woe to the "excluders"!--the Pharisees who exclude on religious and moral grounds and the rich and powerful who exclude on social grounds.

This means that the service of God and the Kingdom entails participation in the struggle for justice, for a kind of "forward mobility" for all. Poverty is evil. We speak positively of downward mobility only because the forward advance toward dignity for all requires of the non-poor genuine solidarity with the poor.

After he had washed their feet, he put his cloak back on and reclined at table once more. He said to them: "Do you understand what I just did for you? You address me as 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and fittingly enough, for that is what I am. But if I washed your feet--I who am Teacher and Lord--then you must wash each other's feet" (John 13:12-14).

The way of Christ is a completely different response to our existential insecurity. Instead of trying to solve this by ourselves, attempting to control everything, we try to solve it in dependence on God. This is a different way of facing up to our material needs, our need to belong and to be free, and our need for identity and self-esteem. We call this way of being-in-the-world faith, trust in God. It must be lived out *over against* the corrosive influence of the historically conditioned way of the world. Ladder and pyramid will persist both objectively in human society and in our distorted views of life as long as we remain "in the flesh."³⁷

37 The idea of going against (*agere contra*) what would enslave us is fundamental for Ignatius. See *SpEx* 16, 146, 157, etc. It means taking the initiative in the struggle against evil.

The way of Christ: ten characteristics

Taking the Two Standards as our starting point and inspiration, we can distinguish some ten features that help us describe the social implications of the standard of Christ in a coherent way. (Since clarity guides the presentation, one should not expect a perfect parallel with the twelve characteristics of the way of the world.) Poverty, insults, and humility appear early among the ten features, with humility emerging as the nucleus from which the way of Christ as a whole unfolds. From humility, understood as solidarity, flows all social good. The last few of the ten characteristics show how this social humility forms the basis of a just society.

1. If as a rule the enemy attacks through the desire to possess, trust in God leads Christians to spiritual poverty, or freedom in the use of things. While this means rejecting compulsive consumption and, ordinarily, adopting the cultural resistance of a simple lifestyle, its social meaning is above all the freedom to share with those in need. "Spiritual detachment" can be genuine only if it allows the poor to detach us materially from what we do not really need. Christians desire to live in actual poverty, not primarily for personal discipline or asceticism, but out of love for Christ present today in the poor. We desire a share of actual poverty because we want to be friends with the poor, identified with them in a practical solidarity. There are many ways to concretize this friendship, and how it is done depends on God's invitation to each one, discerned in view of many factors.

2. The sharp contrast between the two ways emerges clearly around the question of personal worth. Instead of measuring themselves against those above and below them, instead of defining themselves at the expense of others, and instead of identifying themselves with their status and role in society, followers of Christ receive their identity and self-worth from the experience of God's love, despite all their defects and limitations, and from others who love in the same way. Who am I? What am I worth? I am the one unconditionally loved and accepted by God who gave his Son for my sake. I am worth dying for. If God accepts me, who has a right to reject me because I'm black or handicapped or don't wear designer jeans? Simply as a human being, I have a right to

belong, to share in the group, to participate in economic and political life.

Through the experience--and practice--of this love, I can learn to be indifferent to status (*SpEx* 23). The ladder as dominant metaphor for human community is radically called into question by this unconditional love.

3. The social meaning of the way of Christ, like the way of the world, seems to unfold out of a central core. One's own experience of God's love goes hand in hand with a new experience of the neighbor. But not just any neighbor.

Imagine an encounter with an "outcast" like the Salvadoran refugee we met earlier,

. . . with no form or comeliness that we should look at her,
Despised and rejected by others.

A woman of sorrows and humiliated with her sickness,
One of those from whom people hide their faces.
Despised, we esteemed her not (see Isaiah 53:2-3).

But you do not turn away your face, and you resist the temptation to dismiss her by interposing a coin between you. Instead, you allow her eyes to meet yours, to see there for a brief instant your reflection and to be thunderstruck by the recognition that she is a human being--just like you.

The encounter challenges all our pretensions. But our own acceptance by God gives us the courage not to turn away. In fact, there is something eternal and beckoning about this meeting which invites us to stay awhile and be a friend and find here--who knows?--a reintegration of our own broken and scattered lives.

Christ addresses his disciples today through the outcast's eyes, seeking to help us, as Ignatius says (*SpEx* 146), attracting us to share her poverty and insults--and his.

The courage not to turn away but to identify with the outcast

is the social meaning of humility. It is solidarity with the poor.³⁸

Ignatius explains what he means by humility shortly after the Two Standards meditation in the Three Kinds of Humility (*SpEx* 165-167). Many have pointed out that these are really three degrees of love for Christ.³⁹ The first way to be humble is to obey God; the second, to eliminate our own desires as criteria for decision. The social dimension of humility is suggested most clearly by the third, and best, form of humility: to desire to be like Christ poor, despised, "foolish." As J. M. Rambla puts it, the third kind of humility "presents the definitive criterion: the love of Christ poor among the poor. . . . This Christ, the absolute, is mediated by the historical sacrament of the poor."⁴⁰

Just as from humility, as Ignatius says, we are led to all virtue, likewise, all of the social meaning of the way of Christ depends on and flows out of this recognition of our oneness with the outcast. It must be precisely the outcast "despised and rejected" by the world whom we recognize as one of us, because there is no challenge to the world in recognizing the humanity of those to whom the world already accords it.

4. This vision reveals a fundamental equality of all human beings that overshadows all differences. In other words, the outcast has the potential to shatter my world. When I can identify with the outcast, allowing her to come crashing in on my world,

38 The capacity to identify with the outcast is a gift of God. Humility must include an awareness of its gratuity so that the option for the poor does not become another merit badge with which to exalt oneself again, this time above those who have not received this grace.

39 ". . . In the notes of Dr. Ortiz, exercitant of Ignatius at Monte Cassino, in place of kind of humility one reads 'kind and degree of love of God'" (S. Ignacio de Loyola, *Obras completas*, eds. I. Iparraguirre and C. de Dalmasas, 2nd edn., p. 230, note 104). José M. Guerrero, S.J. ("Tres maneras de humildad [= amistad]," *Manresa* 54 [1982]: 261-268) has fruitfully developed the social implications of Ignatius's three kinds of humility in terms of progressive degrees of friendship with Christ.

40 J. Ma. Rambla, S.J., "Ejercicios para la fe y para la justicia," *Manresa* 55 (1983): 291-315. See Jean-Marie LeBlond, "Deux Etendards," *Christus* 33 (1962): 78-96, p. 85.

the ladder collapses, at least for me, exposed as a colossal fraud. The superiority of the great dissolves together with the inferiority of the small. If only for a moment, we all appear naked and on an equal footing. This crucial experience shows that identifying with the outcast enables us to identify with *everyone*. I can say, "These people are all just like me." They emerge as three-dimensional beings who can make moral claims. Hunger becomes an effective demand, discrimination more an outrage than a tolerable shame.

5. But this momentary revelation does not destroy the way of the world. The ladder rises vertically again, as though nothing had changed, insinuating and imposing itself from outside and from within me to threaten the vision of our equal dignity. While it is a gift, this vision of our equal dignity is not maintained over against "the world" without a struggle. How can the vision be kept alive?

Only to the extent that I can somehow make the identification with the outcast real and practical can I challenge the world and the barriers--of color, nationality, status, and so on--which it throws up to separate me from those "above" and "below" me. So the way of Christ will have to take the form of downward mobility, an ongoing struggle to concretize my identity with the outcast; or, if that sounds too "muscular," downward mobility is a constant vigilance in the face of the social and interior drift toward pride and hierarchy.⁴¹ Just as those who follow the world's way strive to be like the Model on top, those who follow Christ paradoxically assume the Outcast as the measure of humanity: *Ecce homo!* We desire to "have the mind of Christ":

41 The third kind of humility "presupposes . . . that a person *decides* to descend, step by step, . . . by the same *incarnating process* which leads to finding Christ in a human reality that is at times impoverished, humiliated and frequently contradictory" (Arzubialde, "Raíces de la Teología," pp. 316-317; see also p. 312).

According to Centelles, "social descent was an indispensable and essential step" in Ignatius's own conversion; and "if St. Ignatius had been aware of sociology as we know it today, his decision, without losing any of the motivations it had, would have been enriched and broadened in this aspect" ("Valor social," p. 62).

He did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but he emptied himself, taking on the form of a slave (Phil 2:6-7; see Mk 10:42-45; 2 Cor 8:9).

6. How each one struggles to accept and maintain identification with the outcast will vary widely and depend on many factors. It certainly implies doing for the outcast what I would wish done for me. That means sharing with those in need but from within their world and on their terms. So it means entering their world and making it ours. It implies the freedom to lose wealth, status, and privilege.

This freedom does not come cheap. In the face of the persistent influence of the world, Christ invites and attracts us (*SpEx* 146) to desire to give up wealth and status in order better to identify with him and his poor, and so undermine the hierarchical model of human community so as to be able to identify with all.

Entering the world of the poor and making it our own does not mean excluding the non-poor from our love. On the contrary, this is the condition for our love to be genuine and universal. It does not necessarily mean living in destitution, much less denying my talents, training, and status. But all I have and all I am does become less private property than material and human capital stewarded by me, with others' help, for the benefit of those who need it.

We can judge whether we are friends with the poor not so much from the things we have (relationship to things) as from whether we are comfortable in the homes of the poor and they at home in ours and whether we have made their cause our own (relationship to persons). To this extent the poor are no longer "them" but "us." How much we have or do not have will follow from friendships that help us joyfully appreciate how "No one is justified in keeping for their exclusive use what they do not need, when others lack necessities" (*Populorum Progressio*, 23). Our attachment to the poor will govern our "detachment" from things. All of us must face this issue with humble courage in a world of hungry children.

What about saving for retirement or the education of the young? Saving now may mean surviving in old age. What about cars and personal computers? These may constitute real necessities and be well stewarded. We middle-class people face serious questions about property and lifestyle. Without solving these questions automatically, the criterion of solidarity helps put them in perspective as we seek to follow the Spirit's call to each of us.

7. To live in solidarity with the outcast means to be free to lose status as well. (Indeed, losing our life in order to save it, we no longer have a personal career or agenda apart from God's project, the Reign.) First, solidarity means sharing the obscurity of the poor of whom the world takes no account. Second, it means sharing the insults suffered by the poor. Finally, since it implies assuming the cause of the poor, solidarity means enduring misunderstanding, injuries, and rejection from those who oppose that cause. This is the social significance of the desire for insults and humiliations (*SpEx* 146, 167). Although we do not seek this obscurity and misunderstanding, when we side with the poor it comes inevitably. And, indeed, we do feel bad if our friends suffer these things and we do not.

8. *Social relations* for the way of Christ are the opposite of those of the way of the world (see Lk 22:25-26). They are fundamentally equal.⁴² Only in this soil can trust, love, and community grow. Only through mutual respect can we find a way out of the blind alley of domination and submission, fear, threat, and one-up-manship. The recognition in our national heritage that all people are created equal supports this key gospel value.

To relate to others as equals does not mean ignoring the differences between people. Personal talents, far from enhancing some at others' expense, are stewarded by each for the benefit of all. Together, and only together, we can make a whole.

⁴² To say social relations should be essentially equal does not mean that parents ignore the differences between them and their children or that authority, social organization, and some economic differences have no place, but that all differences have as their basis the mutual need and complementarity of persons of fundamentally equal dignity.

With equal social relations, cooperation is stressed over competition, the communitarian over the individualistic. Together we face our common needs for security and fulfillment and pursue common goals to meet them. That makes it easier, through trust in God, to accept the deepest insecurities that are never eliminated in this life.

9. All this discloses a further striking difference between the two "ways." The dual experience of the love of God and of my identity with the outcast reveals my existential poverty and insecurity as a question first of all of my relation to God and to others and only secondarily a matter of my relation to things. It is fundamentally a religious and political (that is, social) issue, not a technical one. For "the world," security means having enough things and then protecting them from others. Relations to things (possessions) come first, my relation to others (and God) are secondary. For the way of Christ, security comes from trusting in God and loving the neighbor. The problem of having enough is subordinate to the problem of community. If there is justice, everyone will have enough (see Mt 6:33).

10. Solidarity with outcasts includes taking up their cause. But we cannot simply construe that agenda according to the way of the world.

Some years ago, while visiting an elementary school in a slum outside Lima, Peru, I was struck by the fact that all the little desks were pushed together and the students were being encouraged to *cheat*! The principal, however, called this cooperation. "We want to overcome poverty," she explained, "but if we are moving up, we are all going to move up together."

The goal is not that the poor climb the ladder and join the rich. Better that the rich join the poor.⁴³ For the only answer is community, right social relations. We do not seek to make the

43 The suffering of the rich and in the middle class is very real and acute. What we cannot afford to ignore is the social roots of this suffering in the alienation from the poor which the pyramid fosters and which undermines real community.

outcast rich but to build a community with no outcasts. If there is to be any moving up, or better forward, we will all have to move ahead together. Neither can this agenda be limited to our little group, as though we could achieve a separate peace. We cannot be free unless all are free. Because of this and because the pyramid contravenes God's plan, the cause of the poor everywhere today is a political cause, and the way of Christ leads us today to a specifically political task. (I use political here in the broad sense to refer to the way societies are organized and social and economic relations are institutionalized; this includes but goes far beyond politics in the narrow sense of the partisan struggle for power in government.) This does not mean we reduce discipleship to a political task; it is obviously more than that. Still less can we deduce political recipes from theology. Moreover, how individuals respond to the political challenge of suffering will depend on local circumstances, on people's talents, roles, and responsibilities in the Christian community and in the wider society, and on many other factors. Much more could be said about all these important issues, but this is not the place for it. However, this much can be said with assurance: The way of Christ today is a commitment to work for a society with no outcasts. It opposes the domination and discrimination that characterize the pyramid. It stands instead for interdependence (rather than one-way dependency), self-determination, and mutual accountability among social groups. Only under these conditions can we find a way out of the hell of mutual mistrust, oppression, and suicidal arms races.

CONCLUSION

We began by asking ourselves how we who live in the liberal West can better confront the challenge of poverty and the demand for change which face us in the Third World and the poor of First World nations. How can our commitment last and deepen over the long haul despite the pitfalls and trials which continually beset us?

Feeling a need to understand the cultural forces that can hold us back or undermine our response, we turned to Ignatius's meditation on Two Standards, which frames the question in terms of the following of Christ, who was faithful under trial.

To grasp the social significance of the logic of temptation and the strategy of Christ today in our liberal society, we set about to articulate the social and political meaning of covetousness, honors, and pride, of poverty, insults, and humility. In fact, we expected to discover in their social character deeper and richer theological meaning which could rescue them from the privatization that truncates Christian life and practice.

For we live out our relationship to God in relationship to the world--principally in relation to others and secondarily in relation to things. It is true that attachment to God depends on a kind of detachment from riches and honors, but it depends more on attachment to people, especially the poor and outcast. The way of the world is upward mobility, a flight from the poor. The way of Christ is downward mobility, a quest for ever more authentic solidarity with the poor. Avarice and honors are the first dangers to this solidarity because they lead us away from the poor; poverty and humiliations, on the other hand, cement the friendship.

Entering and sharing the world of the outcast can be done in a variety of ways and in different degrees. But whether we are plumbers or pastors, teachers or lawyers, after we have taken due account of all the specifics that affect each one's response to the Spirit of God, what is most fundamental is the courage not to turn away from the eyes of the poor but to allow them to break our heart and shatter our world, to let them share with us how their children suffered preventable early deaths, how they spent the winter without heat, how their whole village has never seen a doctor. This kind of encounter, assimilated with prayer and faith as an encounter with Christ today, will be our gyroscope and compass in the struggle of day-to-day commitment.

However, poverty, even poverty shared with friends, is an enemy to our strategy. Downward mobility is only the essential

foundation of a struggle to move all of us forward to a new society. As upward mobility demands economic growth, forward mobility requires distribution of wealth and power, an issue we will have to face squarely, as a Church and a nation, as the U.S. economy reaches new limits to its growth.

The present conservative mood should not deceive us. These are revolutionary times around the globe. And we who started out non-poor could have an important role to play. Ideologies, parties, movements, and social analysis will be indispensable to social change. But these instruments cannot serve their proper purpose unless our commitment is solidly grounded and nourished by the experience of friendship with Christ, indispensably present in poor and outcast people. This alone can keep us on course, progressively deepen our commitment, and prepare us for the difficult and confusing times that lie ahead.

APPENDIX I. THOMISTIC INFLUENCE ON IGNATIUS'S TWO STANDARDS

In 1927 the Spanish Ignatian scholar Luis Teixidor pointed out an apparent dependency, whether direct or indirect, of Ignatius on St. Thomas Aquinas with regard to "covetousness" in the Two Standards.¹ When Ignatius says that the enemy "tempt[s] people to covet riches," he adds "as he [the enemy] is ordinarily accustomed to do." This last expression, added to the Spanish autograph of the *Exercises* in Ignatius's own hand, includes the Latin words *ut in pluribus* for "ordinarily." In the *Summa*, where Thomas treats of "one sin as the cause of another" (1a 2ae, q. 84), under the article "whether or not covetousness is the root of all sins" (art. 1), he argues that, yes, it is, though not in every specific case, since "judgment in the moral order considers what is usually [*ut in pluribus*] the case, not what is always the case."² Both the context and the expression concur with the text of the *Exercises*.

Teixidor's discovery would amount to little more than a curiosity were it not for other parallels that he failed to pursue. These not only confirm the link he discovered but also seem to shed light on the Two Standards meditation itself. In particular, while article 1 considers "whether or not covetousness is the root of all sins," the next article treats "whether *pride* is the beginning of all sin." This catches our attention when we recall that in the same *SpEx* 142 Ignatius notes how after first tempting to covetousness the enemy "leads to all other vices" from the three-step progression riches-honors-*pride*. Can the two articles from the *Summa* shed further light on the Two Standards?

1 Luis Teixidor, "Un pasaje difícil de la meditación de Dos Banderas, y una cita implícita en el mismo de Santo Tomás de Aquino," *Manresa* 3 (1972): 298-309.

2 *S.T.*, 1a2ae, 84, 1 ad 3. Quotations from the *Summa* will be taken from St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, Latin text and English translation, Introductions, Notes, Appendices and Glossaries (New York: Blackfriars and McGraw-Hill, 1965-), with an occasional slight alteration by the writer.

The key features of the *Exercises*, all agree, come from Ignatius's own experience. The main lines of the Two Standards date from Ignatius's Manresa days (1522-1523) and even earlier from his convalescence and reading at Loyola. However, we know that he went on to add to, refine, and perfect his early jottings up until 1535 with the help of his studies in the scholastic tradition at the University of Paris³ and in reaction to attacks on his orthodoxy and investigations by the Inquisition.⁴ So, finding traces of links like this between the *Exercises* and the *Summa* should come as no great surprise.

Like others before him,⁵ St. Thomas refers to the basic scriptural text on the primacy of covetousness (*cupiditas* = *avaritia*):

Those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and the snare of the devil, into many senseless and hurtful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. *For the desire for riches is the root of all evils* (1 Tim 6:9-10).

3 "In the definitive verbal formulation of the meditation on the Two Standards, Ignatius, without doubt, had consulted the results of the theological investigations of his own time" (Hugo Rahner, S.J., *The Spirituality of St. Ignatius Loyola: An Account of Its Historical Development*, trans. Francis John Smith, S.J. [Westminster, Md.: The Newman Press, 1953], p. 94). See also pp. 89-90 and idem, *Notes on the Spiritual Exercises*, trans. Louis Munteer (Woodstock, Md.: Woodstock College Press, 1956), pp. 286-287, 323. For a concise exposition of the genesis of the *Exercises*, see Ignacio Iparraguirre, S.J., "Introducción" in San Ignacio de Loyola, *Obras completas*, eds. I. Iparraguirre, S.J., and Cándido de Dalmases, S.J., 2da edición (Madrid: B.A.C., 1963), pp. 162-194.

4 We don't get many particulars about the accusations, but we are told by Ignatius that in Salamanca in 1527, when questioned by the Dominican subprior about his teaching, he answered that he and his companions spoke about *virtues and vices* and that this raised the suspicions of his investigators. See *The Autobiography of St. Ignatius Loyola*, with related documents, ed. with an Introduction and Notes, by John C. Olin, trans. Joseph F. O'Callaghan (New York: Harper and Row, 1974), p. 67 (no. 65 according to the traditional paragraph numbering). Did questioning like this spur Ignatius to seek theological support for the triads of virtues and vices in the Two Standards?

5 For example, Augustine in *De Div. Quaest.* 83, 33 and 35; PL 40, 23-24.

Aquinas argues that covetousness is the root of all sins in the narrow "materialistic" sense of the word, that is, as greed for material wealth. "For we observe that because of riches a person acquires the power to commit any kind of sin" or "to obtain all manner of temporal goods, as the text of Ecclesiastes says, 'all things obey money' (Eccles 10:19, Vulgate)." In other words, wealth is power.

In arriving at this conclusion, Aquinas considered two broader senses of the word "covetousness," namely, "the immoderate craving for any sort of temporal good" (including, e.g., "health, a wife, . . . knowledge, and high places"⁶) and "the propensity of corrupt nature to crave transient goods inordinately." Certain authors, he notes, say that covetousness is the root of all sins in this last sense, since "all sin grows out of love for the goods of this earth." However:

All this, while true, does not seem to be in accord with St. Paul's meaning [in 1 Tim 6]. . . . For he is clearly speaking in the text against those who, *because they seek to become rich, fall into temptation and the snare of the devil*. . . . Hence it is manifest that he is speaking of covetousness as the immoderate desire for riches.

In the next article (q. 84, art. 2), on pride as "the beginning of all sin," Aquinas comments on the traditional basis for this thesis, Eccles 10:14 (Vulgate): "Pride is the beginning of all sin." (Indeed, pride has consistently been so understood in the West in the Catholic as well as the Lutheran and Reformed traditions.⁷) Once again, Thomas considers three possible meanings.

6 *S.T.* 2a2ae, 118, 2, where Thomas treats covetousness itself. See 2a2ae, 119, 2 ad 1. Compare *SpEx* 23.

7 Augustine is the fundamental authority. The sin of the angels was one of pride (*City of God*, xii, 6), as was the sin of Adam and Eve (*ibid.*, xiv, 13). Thus, the earthly city is based on pride, "love of self reaching the point of contempt of God" (*ibid.*, xiv, 28; I follow the translation of Henry Bettenson [Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1972]). This tradition has recently been challenged by Judith Plaskow and other feminist theologians who argue that, while pride has indeed been the beginning of sin for men, *acedia*, or excessive timidity, has been the chief fault of women. We cannot develop here the

Pride "stands, first, for the disordered will for personal excellence." Secondly, it means "a particular sort of explicit contempt for God, the refusal to be subject to this command." In this sense, *all* sins have an element of pride. Third, pride "stands for the proclivity arising from fallen nature towards this contempt."⁸

These three senses parallel the three meanings of covetousness in the previous article. Once again Aquinas notes that certain authors consider that it is as a general proclivity (*inclination*, the third, most general sense of pride) that pride is the beginning of all sin. They argue that, just as covetousness (as a general proclivity) "concerns sin as a turning to a passing good," pride as a general proclivity concerns "sin as a turning away from God," something that is part of all sin. However:

While this may be true, it is not according to the mind of the Wise Man [Jesus son of Sira, author of *Ecclus*], who said, *The beginning of all sin is pride*. He obviously is speaking of pride as it is the inordinate desire to excel. This is clear from what he adds, *God has overturned the thrones of proud princes* [*Ecclus* 10:17], and from the import of the whole chapter.

Thus Aquinas prefers to understand the beginning of all sin to be pride in the sense of the "inordinate desire to excel," by which Aquinas means arrogance, personal ambition, will to power--in accord with *Ecclus* 10.

Finally, St. Thomas explains the relationship between covetousness as root of all evil and pride as the beginning of sin. He says that pride is what is first intended (order of intention, final cause) whereas covetousness is the first to go into action (order of execution): "The end in acquiring earthly goods is that through them a person may attain distinction and eminence," that

distinctions necessary to discuss this important point. However, it is significant in this connection, that, as we shall see, this "pride" has decidedly "patriarchal" features for St. Thomas and, by implication, for St. Ignatius.

8 See also *S.T.*, 2a2ae, 162, 3.

is, honors. Thomas continues: "Hence, from this point of view, pride, or the will to excel, is put as the beginning of sin."⁹ Here is a striking agreement with the *Spiritual Exercises* (*SpEx* 142), where the enemy first tempts people to covet riches "that they may the more easily attain the empty honors of the world, and come to swollen pride. . . . And from these three steps, he leads to all the other vices."

Teixidor believed he found a link between what Ignatius says about coveting riches (*SpEx* 142) and what Thomas says about covetousness as root of all evil. We now see this connection further confirmed by Aquinas's next article which (1) articulates a second key point of Ignatius, namely, that the enemy leads people from pride to all other vices, and (2) explains the connection between covetousness and pride in the genesis of sin just as Ignatius does: Riches lead to honors and honors to pride. This link has implications for our interpretation of the Two Standards.

First, it suggests that when Ignatius says the enemy *first* tempts people to covet riches, he means *material* riches. This is an important point because commentators on the *Exercises* frequently interpret riches in *SpEx* 142 to be *any* created good--wealth, yes, but also health, a long life, intelligence, a career, honor, and so forth. They note how this accords perfectly with Ignatius's Principle and Foundation (*SpEx* 23), where the rule of life is "indifference" to (better: relative detachment from) "*all* created things," including health, riches, honor, and a long life (*SpEx*

9 "The vices, such as avarice, called the 'root' of sin, and pride, called the 'beginning' of sin . . . are first absolutely speaking in the genesis of sins" (*S.T.*, 1a2ae, 84, 3 ad 1). Thomas holds that from pride spring the "capital vices" and from these all other vices. See 2a2ae, 162, 8, and 1a2ae, 84, 4 ad 4. This, of course, accords with the Two Standards. In the quotation just cited in the text, Thomas holds that riches are sought with the intention of acquiring honors. Ignatius simply says that honors come with riches, not that they are desired or sought. Ignatius does not mention vainglory as such, just the danger inherent in the empty honor of the world. For Aquinas, vainglory springs from pride: *S.T.*, 2a2ae, 162, 8 ad 2.

W. de Broucker, S.J. ("La primera semana de los ejercicios," *Boletín de Espiritualidad* 65 [1980], pp. 1-30), cites Cassian in support of the idea that riches, honors, and pride correspond to the traditional grouping of the eight (or seven) capital sins into three categories--pride and vainglory ("honors") each forming one group and all the others, including covetousness, the third.

23). They rightly point out the centrality of this doctrine and go on to infer that this is precisely the "highest spiritual poverty" which Ignatius proposes (*SpEx* 146) as the first step in the "standard of Christ" directly opposing the covetousness of riches.

However, paraphrasing St. Thomas, we can reply that, while the centrality of this doctrine of indifference is clear and important, it does not seem to be what Ignatius has in mind when he says that the enemy *first* tempts people to desire riches. Here Ignatius appears to be thinking, not about what is "a generic element in all sin," namely, "the immoderate craving for *any* sort of temporal good," nor what is metaphysically first in sin, namely, "the propensity of corrupt nature to crave transient goods inordinately." (These are the two meanings of avarice that, as we noted, Thomas argued were not what Paul had in mind in 1 Timothy.) Rather, as is his habit, Ignatius is thinking concretely and practically--in this case about what usually (*ut in pluribus*) constitutes the first step on the road to a fall, that is, the first step the enemy takes to draw people, including "converted" disciples, away from their commitment to God. This, he says, is the desire for quite concrete riches: "Turn these stones to bread."¹⁰

This interpretation finds further support in Ignatius's understanding of evangelical poverty as a "firm rampart" of religious life, the outside wall which resists the first assaults of the enemy.¹¹

10 "The question here is: where and how do the Kingdom of God and that of the devil begin to take hold in the soul" (Hugo Rahner, *Ignatius the Theologian*, trans. Michael Barry [New York: Herder and Herder, 1968], p. 124. See also Juan Rovira, "Cómo se entiende que la primera tentación es la de codicia de riquezas," *Manresa* 4 (1928): 120-132.

11 See the *Constitutions of the Society of Jesus*, no. 553. Ignatius conceived of the way of the evangelical counsels as an institutionalization of the *magis*, that greater self-offering of those who would distinguish themselves in the service of God and Christ the King (*SpEx* 97). But he felt that many religious orders—including those in need of reform in his day—had become lax because they relaxed the practice of poverty ordained by their founders. To avoid this for the Society of Jesus, he stipulated that professed Jesuits were

The Thomistic link suggests, secondly, that Ignatius understands pride to be the beginning of sin in the same way as St. Thomas: The beginning of sin is pride understood as a concrete, "specific" sin, as seen in Eccles 10: selfish ambition, arrogance, will to power. The enemy tries, as a rule, to bring the disciple precisely to this point. This kind of pride springs easily from honors.

This interpretation finds further confirmation in Ignatius's opposition to honors for Jesuits, his complete abhorrence of and strictures against ecclesiastical and social ambition in the Society of Jesus,¹² and his insistence on humble tasks and obedience in the Society. All such measures (together with the strictures regarding poverty) constitute so many practical means of implementing the principles embodied in the Two Standards.

These conclusions have further implications for the meaning of the triad poverty, humiliations, and humility to which Christ invites his followers in the Two Standards. The disciples are urged, first, to seek "the highest spiritual poverty" and, if God so chooses, even "actual poverty" (*SpEx* 146). The actual poverty means material want. What about "the highest spiritual poverty"? In Ignatius's time "spiritual poverty" could mean detachment from material riches or, in a wider sense, detachment from all created things (as in the Principle and Foundation).¹³ However, if the enemy tempts first to material riches and if actual poverty means material poverty, then "spiritual poverty" in the Two Standards clearly means detachment from *material* riches. It does not mean detachment from health, honors,¹⁴ a long life, and so forth. This

to promise not to change the statutes on poverty in the Society except to make poverty more strict. See *Constitutions*, nn. 553-554.

12 Jesuits promise not to seek prelaties and to report on another Jesuit who seeks them.

13 It also could refer to our absolute poverty before God, as it frequently does in the *Imitation of Christ*, for example.

14 The fact that "honor," included in the Principle and Foundation, is mentioned as a separate element following covetousness of riches in the Two

"poverty of spirit" constitutes a specific instance of the more general "indifference" of the Principle and Foundation. Again, it is not a question of the most fundamental virtue from an ascetical, psychological, or ontological point of view, but of a practical tactic against the first attack of the enemy: "Not by bread alone. . . ."

"Humiliations," then, are quite concrete insults, contempt in the eyes of the world, the opposite of the "honors" in the enemy strategy.

Finally, humility will not be a generic element of all virtue or a general subordination of the creature to the Creator, which would be the ground of all virtue. Rather, humility would be a practical form of lowliness with social implications the opposite of arrogant pride.¹⁵

We must recall, however, (and this further confirms the general thrust of these reflections) that, when we speak of virtues and vices in connection with Ignatius's Two Standards, meditation goes beyond the somewhat moralistic approach of Aquinas's treatise on the virtues, which has to do above all with personal moral and spiritual perfection. The Two Standards deals with commitment to the person of Christ and an apostolic project called the Kingdom. It presents the chief obstacles to that commitment and the means to counter them.

Standards shows that "riches" (*SpEx* 142) does not include honors.

15 Note how our *concrete* interpretation of poverty, humiliations and humility corresponds to the third kind of humility which is that of those received under the banner of Christ to share his sufferings (*SpEx* 167). The second kind of humility (*SpEx* 167) refers to indifference to riches (the spiritual poverty of the Two Standards), to honors, and to all created things (*SpEx* 166). See José Calveras, "¿De qué humildad se habla en las Dos Banderas?" *Manresa* 9 (1933): 12-22 and 97-106. Calveras stresses that the third kind of humility includes the first two.

APPENDIX II. IGNATIAN SPIRITUALITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE: A SHORT BIBLIOGRAPHY OF RECENT WORKS

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Editor:

A satisfactory reply to Fr. Haight's long essay (*Studies* 19/4, Sept. 1987) would far exceed the limits of a simple letter. Nevertheless, I will try to give you the essential . . .

First, I consider highly questionable what the author has to say (p. 2, note 2) about the importance of the sixteenth century as compared with the seventeenth and eighteenth. Serious scholars tell a quite different story: they speak of a *cultural revolution* (Renaissance and Reformation) comparable only to that which we have been going through for the past 40 years or to that which accompanied the conquests of Alexander the Great in the Mediterranean basin: three massive and acute cultural crises.

But there is a more serious problem. On page 5, note 6, after saying that he is not "an historian of the Exercises," "not engaged in historical source criticism or exegesis of Ignatian texts," the author makes the "assumption that as a sixteenth-century figure Ignatius did not and could not have had a twentieth-century horizon of consciousness." This might appear logical conceptually but is not necessarily so on the level of experience and life. Broadly speaking, I refer you merely to the judgment of Karl Rahner who (*Revue d'Ascétique et Mystique* 35 [1959], p. 151) takes a completely different view, reaching beyond the cultural limitations of a period to get at the *spirit* which is not irremediably bound to the period.

This systematic reduction on the part of the author stems partly from his making Ignatius tributary to the nominalist theology of his time. This too is a serious historical mistake. Certainly Francis, Dominic, A Kempis, and many others influenced Ignatius. But none of them constitutes in any way the source of the basic core and dynamic inspiration of his spirituality. I replied directly to this argument many years ago in my *Pédagogie de l'expérience spirituelle personnelle*.

In the erroneous or seriously reductive interpretations to which his basic presuppositions lead him regarding the topics in the *Exercises* he deals with, the author has missed the essential point. He has failed to see that the Exercises are first and foremost an *experience of the gospel* in the fullest sense of the term. Moreover, one need only reflect upon the level of commitment produced by the Exercises in Ignatius and in those to whom he gave them. The Society of Jesus would never have sprung from the Exercises if we stuck with the narrowly literalist interpretation--analogous to fundamentalist Bible interpretation with its disregard of literary, historical or experiential context--set forth by the author.

I wish to illustrate these judgments by reference to at least one point. The Foundation, when restricted to the text of *SpEx* 23, in no way corresponds to Ignatius's spirit or practice. There is a whole history of this text and its employment of which the author is apparently unaware. Consequently, he draws from it a literalist interpretation devoid of historical or experiential context which ends up falsifying the Ignatian meaning of the text itself. For example, according to Leturia, in his *Génesis de los Ejercicios de San Ignacio y su influjo en la fundación de la Compañía de Jesús* (AHSI 20 [1941], p. 32), to grasp the "spirit" of Ignatius's Foundation as he actually practiced it you have to go behind the bare text of *SpEx* 23 to the great illuminations at the Cardoner.

These few remarks must suffice for the moment. Many other points of interpretation would need similar rectification. This is enough to indicate my disappointment at reading arguments which I had thought outmoded since the 50s, from the time of the French periodical *Christus*.

I conclude with the suggestion that we have to work hard to renew our spiritual language, as well as that of the faith in general. For the Exercises in particular, we can be helped by three resources--provided that we learn to use them and to grasp the spirit of the texts we wish to interpret and reformulate. They are (1) Ignatian exegesis: an intelligent return to the literary, spiritual, social, historical, and experiential sources from which emerges a *spirit*, still largely to be discovered, through a *letter* which is often poor and antiquated; (2) biblical exegesis, which connects us more authentically with revelation itself which is the *primary object* of the experience of the Exercises; and (3) the human sciences such as psychology, sociology, and anthropology, which aid in better understanding the personal and social reality of the exercitant, who is the *primary subject* of the experience of the Exercises.

I regret that the brevity of these remarks does not allow a complete grounding or detailed application of my criticisms of Haight's essay--or to point up the real or potential value of his approach.

I continue to read *Studies* with interest, perhaps more than ever.

Rev. Gilles Cusson. S.J.
St. Foy, Québec, Canada

(Fr. Cusson, of the Centre de Spiritualité Ignatienne, is editor of Cahiers de Spiritualité Ignatienne. The Institute of Jesuit Sources will in late Spring, 1988, publish a translation of his *Pédagogie de l'expérience spirituelle personnelle* under the title *Biblical Theology and the Spiritual Exercises*.)

Editor:

My commendations to the Jesuit Seminar for a series of splendid articles appearing in *Studies*. I especially liked Fr. Gelpi's article on Jesuit vocation and the article on Jesuit foundational issues. The latter has relevance to religious communities studying their charisms.

Br. Don McGovern, C.F.C.
Birmingham, Michigan

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As a young Jesuit priest, Cándido de Dalmases became a member of the Jesuit Historical Institute in Rome in 1938, where he is still active. His chief work soon became the editing of critical editions of primary sources about St. Ignatius—notably the four volumes of *Fontes narrativi de Sancto Ignatio* (1943-1965), *Exercitia Spiritualia: Textus* (1969), and *Fontes Documentales* (1977). He has also published many other books and articles.

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