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Giving Ignatian Exercises at Ecclesial Frontiers

Word count: 99. 987 words

Date of submission: 16 March 2011
Date of viva voce examination: 31 May 2011

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Acknowledgments

I would like to record my deep gratitude to Dr. Philip Endean SJ, my supervisor, for his support ever since this project was first conceived a few years ago in a simple café at King's Cross underground station, London. Already then I knew that Dr. Endean, with his theological and Ignatian knowledge, creative mind and critical thinking, would be the ideal interlocutor. In a Socratic fashion he has not only developed some of the basic intuitions that were there from the outset, but also challenged me in ways that has stimulated a necessary reconsideration of some of the more crude and unimaginative standpoints.

The Jesuit community of Campion Hall has been a source of encouragement and joy during the writing of the thesis. I also acknowledge the decision of my Jesuit provincial Stefan Dartmann SJ who sent me to Oxford and the financial support from the German Province of the Society of Jesus.

Those who have helped with valuable comments and proofreading should not be forgotten: Margaret Bateson-Hill, Andreas Bergmann SJ, Susanne Carlsson, Juan Enrique Casas SJ, Scott Hendrickson SJ, Gerard J. Hughes SJ, Sofi Lindfors, Martin Maier SJ, John Moffatt SJ, Kenneth Overbergh SJ and Mikael Schink SJ.

The dissertation is dedicated to the Jesuit mission with and for the Maya ethnic group *tseltal* in Chiapas, Mexico. My general assumptions concerning community, history and culture stem to a significant degree from *Maya-tseltal* indigenous people and Jesuit friends I have been privileged to encounter in this materially poor but culturally rich Mexican region.

Fredrik Heiding SJ

Campion Hall, Oxford
March 2011

I also wish to express a sincere thanks to my internal examiner Dr. Philip Kennedy and my external examiner Dr. Michael Kirwan SJ (Heythrop College, London) for a good viva voce examination in the Tower Room of Mansfield College, Oxford, on Tuesday 31 May 2011.

Abbreviations

Aut	*Autobiography* of Ignatius of Loyola
Chron.	Polanco, *Vita Ignatii Loiolae et rerum Societatis Iesu historica*
Const.	*The Constitutions and their Complementary Norms* (Padberg, 1996)
Dicc. EI	*Diccionario de Espiritualidad Ignaciana* (2007)
Epist. Mix.	*Epistolae mixtae ex variis Europae locis ab anno 1537 ad 1556*
FN	*Fontes narrativi de S. Ignatio de Loyola et de Societatis Iesu initiis*
LI	Ignatius of Loyola, *Letters and Instructions* (Palmer, Padberg, McCarthy)
M Fabri	*B. Petri Fabri primi sacerdotis e Socetate Jesu Epistolae*
M Lain.	*Epistolae et acta Patris Jacobi Lainii*
M Nadal	*Epistolae et acta P. Hieronymi Nadal* (I–IV) and *Commentarii* (V)
Orat. Obs.	Jerónimo Nadal, *Orationis observationes*
MI Const.	*Sancti Ignatii de Loyola Constitutiones Societatis Jesu*
MI Dir.	*Directoria exercitiorum spiritualium* (1540–1599)
MI Epp.	*Sancti Ignatii de Loyola epistolae et instructiones*
MI Ex.	*Exercitia spiritualia S. Ignatii de Loyola et eorum directoria*
MI FD	*Fontes documentales de San Ignacio de Loyola*
OG	*On Giving the Spiritual Exercises* (Palmer, 1996)
PW	Ignatius of Loyola, *Personal Writings* (Munitiz & Endean, 1996)
SpEx	*Spiritual Exercises* of Ignatius of Loyola
SW	Karl Rahner, *Sämtliche Werke*
TI	Karl Rahner, *Theological Investigations*
TM	Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method*
YY	Polanco, *Year by Year with the Early Jesuits* (Donnelly, 2004).

Abstract

The Spiritual Exercises of Ignatius of Loyola, the founder of the Jesuit order, presuppose Roman Catholicism, but are today made by many who are not Catholics. Moreover, even Roman Catholics who make Ignatian Exercises often are not spontaneously inclined to obey Roman ecclesiastical authority. Neither avoiding the ecclesial dimension nor an authoritarian 'follow the rules!' provides spiritual directors with adequate orientation when working with issues at Church frontiers. This dissertation in pastoral theology seeks to navigate a middle position by moving beyond the individualism and the a-historical assumptions of the existing relevant literature.

The dissertation remains close to the Ignatian primary sources, in the awareness that the Ignatian tradition needs to be constantly updated and that the contemporary ecclesial frontiers are not fully foreseen in the canonical texts. The main hypothesis is that a notion is needed of a 'pilgrim Church' in space and time, with Christians who are related to one another in a deep and fundamental sense. The minor hypothesis is that the individual needs to be open towards and prepared to learn from the Roman Catholic Church, in order to understand and to be profoundly moved by these exercises, but not necessarily to become a Roman Catholic.

Having presented and discussed various approaches in the writings of twentieth-century and recent thinkers, this thesis puts forward its own ecclesiological position informed by Charles Taylor, Hans-Georg Gadamer and Karl Rahner. The aim is to take Ignatian studies forward by combining relational anthropology, hermeneutics and a sacramental understanding of the Church, and to apply this synthesis to the practice of giving Ignatian Exercises. The final chapter discusses a selection of cases in the light of my ecclesiological position. The synthesis and application claim originality.

Longer Abstract

The overall topic of this dissertation in pastoral theology is the practice of the *Spiritual Exercises* of Ignatius of Loyola, the founder of the Jesuit order. In our pluralistic society Ignatian Exercises are today made both in and beyond Roman Catholicism. But Catholics as well as other Christians who make these exercises are not always spontaneously inclined to obey Roman ecclesiastical authority. This perceived disharmony could be called 'ecclesial frontiers' and is a challenge for spiritual directors. How does one guide a non-practising Catholic who has a desire for spirituality, but is alienated from the Church? What is the appropriate reaction when a Roman Catholic claims to be led in prayer towards a position at variance with official teaching, for example, a Catholic woman who believes that she has a vocation to the diaconate or the priesthood? Does it matter if the non-Catholic Christian making Ignatian Exercises lacks a devotion to the Virgin Mary and has reservations about developing one? All these situations, which share an unsettled relationship with Roman ecclesiastical authority in common, still require some sort of attitude towards the community of the Catholic Church.

The main hypothesis in this dissertation is that the ecclesiology of the Spiritual Exercises needs to work with a notion of a 'pilgrim Church' in space and time, and a version of the Church of Christ, wider than the Catholic Church in which it subsists. The minor hypothesis is that the individual retreatant (Catholic or other Christian) needs to be open towards and prepared to learn from the Roman Catholic Church, in order to understand and to be profoundly moved by these exercises.

There is no coherent and satisfactory pastoral theology for spiritual directors faced with challenges at ecclesial frontiers. Two extreme positions seem equally unhelpful for the spiritual director. On the one hand, the tendency in contemporary popular Ignatian literature is to avoid the ecclesial dimension. Among these popular authors, both Catholic and Protestant, are: William Barry, Gerard W. Hughes, Joyce Huggett and Margaret Silf. Ignatian Spirituality is seen as a toolbox from which selections can be made, and the Catholic Church is understood to be secondary or nearly irrelevant. The alternative extreme position, assumed before the twentieth century, implies that discernment can occur only within the framework of the visible Catholic Church. This position says,

metaphorically, that there is only one hymn tune that everybody sings in unison the same way. Jesuits such as Richard Clarke and Paul Dudon took such a standpoint. The individualistic and a-historical (the latter insisting on truths) assumptions behind both models give unsatisfactory orientation. A middle position questions the individualist and a-historical presuppositions behind these extremes. The thesis develops such a position.

The relevant primary sources on Ignatius's own ecclesiology and that of the early Jesuits are displayed and their status briefly assessed in Chapter 2. A selection of statements from these sources is mapped out in three groups depending on whether priority is given to the ecclesiastical authority, to the individual, or somehow to both. The aim of this exercise is to identify the problem of authority more precisely, to explain its nature, and thereby also to illustrate that a straightforward solution cannot be found easily. Strong criticism over the years of all conceivable standpoints is a witness to the controversial nature of the problem. Twentieth-century and recent thinkers have advocated approaches that in various ways form a developed 'Ignatian ecclesiology', based on the primary sources and data presented in this chapter.

This dissertation presents and critically evaluates approaches of five thinkers, all of whom move away from Clarke's and Dudon's unison position, while still articulating a significant ecclesiastical dimension. The German Jesuit Hugo Rahner paved the way for a pluralistic account that allowed for more diversity and process (Chapter 3). In terms of a musical metaphor, Hugo Rahner represents an approach which is like polyphony, a harmonious combination of a number of individual melodic lines, which we can perceive as such, thus moving away from the unison of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Hugo Rahner portrays an Ignatius who was in direct contact with the Holy Spirit, and hence actively needed to unite the mystical dimensions of his life with the ecclesiastical. Hugo Rahner states that the spiritual director and ecclesiastical authority both help the person to discern between good and evil spirits, without, however, any serious tensions or conflicts emerging. He also asserts that the Holy Spirit is behind the different manifestations of mysticism throughout history. Judged by the conditions of Ignatian studies at the time, Hugo Rahner's scholarship must be regarded as a considerable achievement. Now, however, the hermeneutical limitations are apparent.

The Spanish Jesuit Santiago Madrigal has taken Hugo Rahner's approach further. He diligently analyzes the meaning of the Ignatian term 'hierarchical church,' and asserts that Ignatius had a mystical (pre-tridentine) notion of the Church as opposed to a merely institutional and clerical one. Thanks to Madrigal's research a good approximation to Ignatius's understanding of the Church has been established. The Roman Catholic Church of today is in many ways different from that of the sixteenth century. It is therefore important to determine what these differences consist of, which presupposes that we have a clear idea of Ignatius's standpoint. Madrigal's account, nevertheless, is not entirely satisfactory as it remains too cautious and does not offer many categories for situations of real tension and conflict.

The Swiss Jesuit Raymund Schwager also moves away from the authoritarian standpoint, but offers an alternative perspective to Hugo Rahner, as the former takes for granted that there are difficult tensions of perceived disharmony (Chapter 4). Using the musical metaphors, Schwager's approach thinks in terms of a euphony that seems like cacophony: good music in God's ears even if it does not sound like it to the human. Schwager is important for our purposes because he examines situations where Ignatius was at odds with ecclesiastical authority. Schwager also begins to develop an account of how to make sense of these situations theologically. This account is satisfactory because it articulates a variety of ways in which the individual and Church authority can relate, and centres on the Holy Spirit who is able to contain what seem to be irreconcilable differences. The dissertation acknowledges the general thrust of Schwager's model, even if it is too individualistic and is dependent on a pragmatic and instrumental view of the Church.

Chapter 4 also presents Philip Endean and Jon Sobrino, who in various ways extend Schwager's approach. The English Jesuit Philip Endean has an approach that supposes that the ecclesiastical authority guarantees that that which seems to be out of tune is actually a symphony. Endean assumes that diversity is good and provides a basis for tolerant attitudes. He makes a close reading of a wide range of primary sources, and suggests creative views on both the Ignatian correspondence and the 'Rules for thinking with the Church.' Endean discusses the nature of ecclesiology and claims that there are limits in spiritual discernment. His account is relevant for this thesis because it introduces several distinctions and nuances; one of them being criteria for pronouncing dissent. Moreover, his

account states convincingly that ecclesiastical authority can be challenged legitimately. Endean's reflections, however, marginalizes the public and institutional sphere.

The Jesuit Jon Sobrino, residing in El Salvador, has an approach that is similar to Schwager's and can be compared with euphony, provided that the Church absorbs that which seems to be cacophony, namely the prophetic voices. Prophecy is crucial for progress in the Church, according to Sobrino. He stands out as different from the other thinkers in that he is not so much considering a single person who faces ecclesiastical authority, but rather a whole group, namely the poor. His account is important for our purposes because he suggests an explanation for the sources of tensions and conflicts. Moreover, he has criteria for discernment in those conflicts, and offers solutions. His approach, however, is hampered by generalisations and stereotypes. It may also be hard to determine on whose side Jesus Christ stands, and how to tell the difference between true and false prophecy.

The thinkers so far presented have contributed resources so that we are now better equipped to deal with situations of perceived disharmony in Roman Catholicism. By way of summary, they have taken Hugo Rahner's approach further by drawing on a wider range of Ignatian and patristic sources. They have, moreover, developed the ecclesiology of Ignatian Exercises conceptually thanks to different categories and models for spiritual discernment. They have also benefited from a richer and more open ecclesiology articulated immediately before, during and after the Second Vatican Council. The general limits of their approaches are addressed in Chapters 5 and 6, as the thesis develops its own theological position. The aim is to take Ignatian studies forward by combining relational anthropology, hermeneutics and an understanding of the Church as a sign of Christ, and to apply this synthesis to the practice of giving Ignatian Exercises. The final chapter discusses a selection of cases in the light of my ecclesiological position. The research claims to be original thanks to the synthesis and the application to the pastoral situation.

One philosophical problem is, that an Enlightenment understanding of the human person seems to influence the thinkers above. That is to say of an autonomous self who in principle takes priority over the communal. This understanding of the person needs to be replaced with a more relational concept. In Chapter 5, I offer a definition of 'person' understood in a relational way and focus on the corporate conditions of religious

experience. Such anthropology suggests that the specific will of God is found in interpersonal spiritual discernment. The Canadian philosopher Charles Taylor is of particular use when contrasting the human person understood in a relational way with the autonomous self of the Enlightenment. The main conclusion I want to draw from Taylor's philosophy is that the will of God – found through Ignatian Exercises – involves some kind of interaction *between* people, and is not to be located exclusively either in the individual or in external authority. With Taylor's philosophy, categories like 'inner' and 'outer', 'subjective' and 'objective' now seem unhelpful. We no longer need to presuppose that either ecclesiastical authority or the individual possess truth, once the autonomous self has been replaced. Rather, the search for the will of God takes place *between* people, which I argue on philosophical as well as theological grounds.

Chapter 6 will take a closer look at the temporal dimension of the Church. The historical perspective both looks back to the past and ahead towards the future of the Church in the Kingdom of God. Seven basic theses will be defended. First, tradition should neither be ignored nor blindly followed. By contrast, creativity is always faithful to tradition and fidelity to tradition is always creative. A consequence of the spatial and temporal dimensions of the Church is, in my view, that creative fidelity to tradition is an essential attitude through which a congregation moves forward in a sustainable way. By 'creative fidelity' I mean to take the tradition seriously while doing so with critical engagement. One major hermeneutical problem today is that Ignatian Exercises are understood as a toolbox from which arbitrary selections can be made pragmatically. The thesis challenges that view by leaning on the hermeneutics of Hans-Georg Gadamer, who states that texts do not exist in themselves as such, but with their author and his or her context (together with the tradition) form a horizon. A consequence of this is that an interest for the Catholic tradition before and after the publication of the *Spiritual Exercises* is in order, hence an argument in favour of instruction. The thesis will at the same time acknowledge that our horizon of understanding is very different from the sixteenth century, mainly because our society today is much more diverse and has had bitter experiences of totalitarian systems in the twentieth century.

The second thesis is that the Church is a Sacrament of Christ and in mission for the sake of the Kingdom. Third, the Church is healed through the wound of Christ. Fourth, frontiers are the home territory of the pilgrim Church – not a foreign land. Fifth, the

manifestation of the Sacrament of Christ is public. Sixth, development and change are normal and there are grounds for it. Seventh, it matters *how* alternative views are communicated. Dispositions favourable when expressing critique and animating development and change will be explored with the view particularly towards the future. It is thereby a question of the attitude underlying communication, not only *what* to say, but also *how*. My own ecclesiological position is informed by the German Jesuit Karl Rahner. He gives us a theological foundation for Ignatian ecclesiology and richer resources for dealing with disharmony. Karl Rahner was groundbreaking in his version of how the Church is a sign (sacrament) of Christ and at the same time sinful, even at the level of its leadership. Furthermore, Karl Rahner suggests a thoughtful clarification of various degrees of obligation with regard to ecclesial statements, as well as dispositions that the parties ideally must have when expressing criticism.

Chapter 7 will support spiritual directors by providing guidelines and recommendations when faced with pastoral challenges at ecclesial frontiers. These guidelines will be based predominantly on my own ecclesiological position developed in Chapters 5 and 6, summarized in the notion of a pilgrim Church that gathers Christians who are related to one another in the overarching categories of *space* and *time*. Thanks to the systematic reflections in Chapters 5 and 6 we have now reached a stage in which we may face some of the pastoral cases not only with historical awareness, but also philosophically and theologically equipped for our contemporary reality. The emphasis is here on Ignatian ecclesiology of today. Apart from my own account, occasional references will also be made to accounts of twentieth-century and contemporary scholars (Chapters 3 and 4) in so far as they are convincing. In some instances direct reference will also be made to the primary sources (Chapter 2).

This directory which has the purpose to aid the director in that task will be structured, approximately and loosely, in each section of this chapter as follows: A fictitious case-scenario with several different examples in each type of case; statements of guidelines; reasons or grounds for these suggested guidelines taken from Chapters 5–6 (and occasionally from Chapters 2–4). Finally, some comments on the implications and possible difference for each case when a non-Catholic Christian spiritual director guides a Catholic (as well as non-Catholics).

1. Introduction

1.1 Status quaestionis and definitions

In 1548 Ignatius of Loyola, the founder of the Jesuit order, published the *Spiritual Exercises*. This handbook for spiritual directors gives instructions on examination of conscience and various other forms of prayer. The spiritual exercises take the meditating person through creation, human sinfulness and God's mercy, and through the birth, life, passion, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The aim is to help the individual to enter into a process of seeking and finding the will of God in one's own life and to make decisions based on these discoveries. The Christian tradition, including Ignatius, assumes that knowledge of God's will is within reach. One feature here is the 'discernment of spirits,' which sometimes attempts to distinguish the good spirits from the evil. But Ignatius also presupposes that choices are made between morally licit alternatives.[1]

Moreover, discernment is not just a private matter, as the Church is indeed involved. Ecclesial participation can be seen explicitly and implicitly in several passages in the *Spiritual Exercises*. One of them is the following condition: "It is necessary that all the things about which we want to make an election are morally indifferent or good in themselves, and that they are on the side of our holy mother, the hierarchical Church, and are not bad or opposed to the Church."[2] The individual is in Ignatius's mind clearly related to ecclesiastical authority. This dissertation will explore to what extent there is in the literature a satisfactory account of the situation when the person is not spontaneously inclined to obey Roman Catholic Church authority. Such a situation is probably not uncommon, even though it might vary as to which norms are disputed.

[1] *Spiritual Exercises* [*SpEx*], nn. 149–168, 'Three classes of persons' and 'Three kinds of humility'; Ignatius of Loyola, *Personal Writings* [*PW*], trans. and ed. by Joseph Munitiz and Philip Endean (1996), pp. 312–316.
[2] *SpEx*, n. 170, *PW*, p. 316.

Imagine a spiritual director who is also a parish priest of a Catholic parish in a secular European capital, where Catholicism constitutes a small minority. What happens when the person believes one thing and the Roman Catholic ecclesiastical authority another, and how should a spiritual director respond to this situation? He is at home in the Catholic Church, attracted to its intellectual and spiritual tradition as well as its global network and multicultural nature. After some years of giving Ignatian retreats, however, he senses that there is a gap between what people expect from Ignatian spirituality on the one hand, and basic Catholic commitments on the other, and on some points he is no longer sure what to make of some aspects of the Roman Catholic Church's teaching. One reason why he senses that there are problems here, in the first place, is that he (in contrast with most contemporary popular authors) understands and defines Ignatian spirituality as being intrinsically connected to the context of the Roman Catholic Church, not in principle separated from it. (The nature of the Roman Catholic Church and its relationship to other Christian denominations will be defined in Chapter 6.)

Some questions that go through the spiritual director's mind surround perceived disharmony in Catholicism, such as: How does one guide a non-practising Catholic who has a desire for 'spirituality' but is alienated from the Church? What is the appropriate reaction when a Roman Catholic claims to be led in prayer towards a position at variance with official teaching, for example, a Catholic woman who believes that she has a vocation to the diaconate or the priesthood? Moreover, can a homosexual person, living in a stable relationship, convincingly be barred from Holy Communion? How does the supremacy of the Latin language over the vernacular, as seen in current worship and in translation policies in the forthcoming English translation of the Roman Missal, affect the congregation's world-view and way of prayer? The parish priest also has connections with

missions among indigenous ethnic groups in Latin America, and wonders why married men cannot be ordained permanent deacons on a larger scale in a Maya culture that equates maturity with being married. Other issues surface in the ecumenical context where there is a growing interest for Ignatian spirituality. For example: Are non-Catholic Christians who make Ignatian Exercises meant and expected to 'cross over to Rome'? Does it matter if the Christian making Ignatian Exercises lacks a devotion to the Virgin Mary and has reservations about developing one? (Some of these pastoral issues will be addressed in Chapter 7.)

The metaphorical expression 'ecclesial frontier' is appropriate for these situations because of their challenging and unresolved character. All these situations, which share an unsettled relationship with Roman ecclesiastical authority in common, still require some sort of attitude towards the community of the Roman Catholic Church. Even if I use words like 'unresolved' and 'unsettled', I do not imply that ecclesial frontiers are problematic, inappropriate or unfortunate. By contrast, in section 6.4, I will argue that frontiers are where ecclesial existence is best lived. (This dissertation will only consider baptised Christians, in the awareness that other religions as well as non-believers indeed make up another interesting ecclesial frontier.) The subject matter of this dissertation is primarily the art of giving Ignatian Exercises at these ecclesial frontiers. It provides historical and theoretical orientation for the pastoral setting. This practical focus means that general reflections on affiliation to Roman Catholicism and issues such as Jesuit obedience are relevant and will feed into the narrative, but will not be at the very centre of the problem and its solution.

The main hypothesis in this dissertation is that a theological orientation through the notion of a pilgrim Church will begin to settle the unresolved situations. Christians in a pilgrim Church are related to (not isolated and independent from) one another in *space* and *time*. The image of a pilgrim Church – a congregation that gathers and moves – illustrates that the Church itself develops in a dynamic process throughout history. Key passages in the Acts of the Apostles will give a biblical grounding for this theological orientation (Chapter 5 and 6). A relational anthropology in a deep and fundamental philosophical sense is needed for the challenges at ecclesial frontiers, and a relational perspective may be symbolically captured in the *space between* pilgrims (as opposed to God's will either being exclusively 'within me' or outside in external authority). With 'deep and fundamental philosophical sense' I mean that the human person cannot exist nor make sense of him- or herself without relationships. Christians, therefore, share the challenges collectively because each individual cannot radically live independently from others.

Christians in a pilgrim Church also relate to one another in *time*, that is to say pilgrims of today are building on those of yesterday and look ahead towards the Church of the future. We need to debunk the illusion that knowledge is somehow timeless. Instead, creative fidelity to the traditions and an eschatological view is here necessary in order to deal with the present. The Roman Catholic Church is understood to be a sacrament, in the sense of being a sign of Jesus Christ. This sign also points to the future, the Christian community which is broken at the moment may be conceived of as the whole of humanity being drawn by Jesus Christ to God the Father at the end of time. This theological vision towards the future contains an ecclesiological position that is inclusive in terms of various Christian denominations and indeed other religions, while still accommodating a distinctive role for Roman Catholicism and its basic commitments. My ecclesiological position

consists of a version of the Church of Christ, wider than the Catholic Church in which it subsists. There is a sense here of the Church as both a sign of Christ and an imperfect community, being engaged in cultures, as well as constantly transcending itself in the sense of going beyond its on limits. This kind of ecclesiology is one way in which we can reconcile authority-claims with openness and a readiness for conversion.

Christians, particularly at ecclesial frontiers, need to have the spirit of wanting to learn from one another both within and beyond the confessional divide. Mutual learning is desirable, but in our Ignatian context the proportions are not quite symmetrical. Based on faith and conviction, I will hold that the Roman Catholic Church has a privileged place in the pilgrim Church. It offers the normative and ordinary, but not the only, means to salvation. The chief reason, in my view, is that it includes and integrates people from such a variety of cultures and nations ('catholic' means 'spread over the whole world') and thereby encourages diversity. At the same time, this inclusive characteristic not only tolerates but also builds on brokenness and human shortcomings (it is not elitist, not only for the elect). It accommodates failure and carries an invitation to grow and to mature. With this conviction in mind, I agree with the standpoint in the decree *Unitatis redintegratio* on ecumenism from the Second Vatican Council, where it says: "For it is only through Christ's catholic church, which is the all-embracing means of salvation, that the fullness of the means of salvation can be attained (*quae generale auxilium salutis est, omnis salutarium mediorum plenitude attingi potest*)."[3] Therefore, the Roman Catholic Church has a privileged position generally, and in the context of Ignatian Exercises particularly.

[3] *Unitatis redintegratio*, n. 3 (Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, II (1990), p. 910. Alternative translation for *auxilium*: 'aid' or 'help'.

In relation to the past the Roman Catholic Church also has a privileged position since Ignatian Exercises stem from the history of Catholic tradition going back before the time of Ignatius of Loyola (1491–1556). Arguably, Roman Catholicism of the twenty-first century is also connected to its sixteenth-century manifestation and therefore significant for contemporary Ignatian spirituality. A minor hypothesis in this dissertation is, therefore, that the individual (be they Catholic or of other Christian persuasion) who makes Ignatian Exercises needs to be open towards and prepared to learn from the Roman Catholic Church, in order to understand and to be profoundly moved by these exercises. That does not mean that the Roman Catholic Church is an end in itself, but rather that it possesses the means to salvation on its way to the Kingdom of God. With 'Ignatian Exercises' I mean a residential retreat lasting six days or more, or a so-called retreat in daily life that may take several months. Those involved in an unsettled relationship with Catholic teaching (*i.e.* at ecclesial frontiers) need to be open to what I call the horizon of Ignatian Exercises, which includes the tradition of the Roman Catholic Church. By 'openness' I mean a disposition of curiosity and a willingness to explore what the Catholic Church teaches and why. This does not mean, however, that the individual needs to be in full agreement with all aspects of Roman Catholic teaching. I make, thus, a distinction between understanding and agreeing. Given an understanding of Ignatian Exercises as being intrinsically related to Roman Catholic theology, the spiritual director has a responsibility to raise awareness of Roman Catholic teaching and to guide the individual with pastoral sensitivity when views do not match and assist the individual in dealing with the situation. This dissertation, consequently, seeks to help the spiritual director who faces the kind of pastoral cases at ecclesial frontiers outlined above.

We need what I will call a 'creative fidelity' in our attitude to the tradition. With that I mean that we need to take what 'Ignatius says' seriously and the intentions he had, and do this with critical engagement. Moreover, since nearly 500 years separate us from Ignatius and the early Jesuits, our situation is often different and we face problems on which Ignatius has not pronounced at all. Creativity, therefore, is called for in relation to the Ignatian tradition. As a matter of fact, a creative attitude is built in as part of the tradition. With the purpose and intention of the *Constitutions* in mind, the Superior General may dispense someone from these same *Constitutions*: "… he will have the power to grant dispensations in particular cases which require such dispensation, account being taken of persons, places, times, and other circumstances."[4] The spiritual director may proceed in a comparable way. The openness to Catholic tradition entails a creative fidelity to it in the sense that there is room for development and change. Some mechanisms for handling that will be explored. My own account which attempts to provide such mechanisms is informed by the philosophy of Charles Taylor and Hans-Georg Gadamer as well as the theology of Karl Rahner (see Chapters 5 and 6), and these chapters together with the final pastoral chapter are intended to be my main contribution.

The thesis falls into the general discipline of pastoral theology; it is rooted in church history and uses systematic resources, that is to say philosophical and theological. Hence, the dissertation has an admittedly broad scope as it draws on history, philosophy and theology to discuss a pastoral reality, and in so doing attempts to connect theory with practice. Generally, Ignatian Exercises, and 'spirituality' for that matter, are a broad phenomenon and touch multiple disciplines. In particular, a reason for this broad scope is that the kind of pastoral problem the dissertation faces is one in which something as general

[4] *MI Const.* II, p. 673. *Const.*, n. 746, p. 362.

and vague as the (Catholic and ecumenical) *context* of Ignatian Exercises is addressed and formulated. The context will be defined and articulated in historical, philosophical and theological categories. Most people would be willing to say that there is a context, though it is more difficult to outline its precise nature. It ought to be evident that Ignatian Exercises need a historical perspective. Philosophical hermeneutics enters the stage because contemporary practice of Ignatian Exercises needs to discuss how the tradition is received. Good hermeneutics may help us to take the voice of Ignatius seriously but also to integrate it critically. Theology, then, is helpful in terms of defining the nature of the Church and the individual's relationship to it and to God. The academic mind may place these different disciplines alongside one another as unconnected 'ologies,' but I hold that these disciplines are rather like perspectives that help us to see aspects of a concrete reality. Moreover, it may seem that there is a gap between very specific and concrete pastoral problems on the one hand, and the theoretical level on the other. The gap is bridged once we acknowledge that the theory gives a foundation for action.

The major contribution to Ignatian studies that this dissertation seeks to make is a synthesis of different systematic resources with historical awareness, and an application of this synthesis to some pastoral cases that arise at ecclesial frontiers. With these resources we will be able to see and explain the problems in clearer light, and hopefully begin to solve them. The originality of my own ecclesiological position lies in the synthesis of accounts from different scholars rather than in each particular aspect. It is the combination of categories and concepts (chiefly in Chapters 5 and 6) as well as the application of these to the practice of giving Ignatian Exercises that makes a contribution. The hope is that this will contribute to the discussion of the (Roman Catholic and ecumenical) context of Ignatian Exercises, a topic that is seldom raised. Moreover, another contribution that this

thesis makes is to offer an overview of the way in which the topic has been addressed (particularly through Chapters 1 to 4). This investigation is, in particular, worth pursuing mainly for three reasons. First, contemporary popular authors (as we will see in section 1.2) as well as those Ignatian scholars whose position I otherwise mostly endorse (Chapter 4) advocate approaches that in my view do not give sufficient weight to the claims of the visible Catholic Church. Second, appropriate criticism in combination with a sense of the Church as a sacrament is rarely held. Much more common is an attitude of *either* criticising ecclesiastical authority *or* presuming that the Church's authority simply equates with Christ's. Third, the ecumenical field is still in a stage of experiment and largely remains under-articulated. This ecumenical atmosphere definitely raises more ecclesiological questions than the current theology and practice has resources to answer.

The dominant perspective will be that of the Roman Catholic spiritual director, but in a comparable sense non-Catholic spiritual directors may in their own churches also face conflicts between the discernment of the individual and the teaching of their church. In principle, the problems arise both for the directors and for those who make Ignatian Exercises. It has to be said that all those involved may not necessarily themselves realise and perceive that there are considerable issues at stake. The Catholic parish priest definitely perceives the situation (of which we saw examples above) as disharmonious, particularly if he is simultaneously involved in the teaching within the RCIA-programme (Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults) or catechism for those asking for reception in the Catholic Church. In such courses active participation in a parish and a positive attitude to the universal Catholic Church is presupposed. He cannot, therefore, with integrity in adult catechesis convey that Catholic theology, community life and public witnessing of faith is important, while ignoring it at the retreat centre.

Non-practising Catholics themselves normally realise that Ignatian Exercises live in the Catholic Church context, but exceptions nevertheless occur. In their turn, other Christians in the ecumenical context may not know the Catholic Church well enough to see that there are ecclesial issues at stake here. However, a glimpse on the primary sources referred to in section 2.2 below makes it clear that an ecclesiastical reality belongs to the picture. Any marginalization of Roman Catholicism must at the very least acknowledge that such an attitude does not correspond to what 'Ignatius says' in these primary sources. Lack of awareness of this may, it could be added, be the case both for spiritual directors and for those who make Ignatian Exercises. Why they do not perceive and realise the problem is open to query. We will explore these possible reasons in section 1.2 when going through contemporary popular literature.

It is notoriously difficult to define what is meant by 'Ignatian Exercises' and what counts as such. This dissertation will sway between a broad and a narrow definition. The broad definition is based on the notion in the first annotation in the book *Spiritual Exercises*. Ignatius here declares: "The term 'spiritual exercises' denotes every way of examining one's conscience, of meditating, contemplating, praying vocally and mentally, and other spiritual activities, as will be said later".[5] The narrow definition, on the other hand, contains the whole scope of the 30-day retreat envisaged in the book *Spiritual Exercises* with all its norms, theology and so on. Because of this wide span between a loose and a strict definition, I will attempt to avoid the article 'the' as I talk about this subject matter. Such a move is in line with the title of the book in Spanish (*Ejercicios espirituales*). To exaggerate the point: there is no such thing as 'the' Ignatian Exercises. On the other

[5] *SpEx*, n. 1, *PW*, p. 283.

hand, as soon as someone invokes Ignatius and Ignatian Exercises, there is some sort of claim of an association with the again very wide scope of Ignatius's life, Catholic theology and a particular way of procedure known as 'Ignatian spirituality'.[6]

Some distinctions and precisions in terms of defining concepts and limiting the scope of the work are necessary. First, this dissertation will make a distinction between Ignatius's and Ignatian ecclesiology, even if the two are not always easy to separate and the thinkers presented seldom keep them apart. 'Ignatius's ecclesiology' refers to the understanding of Church that Ignatius of Loyola had. It is in that regard important to underline that the text of the *Spiritual Exercises* has shown to provide insufficient material for delineating Ignatius's understanding of the Church in general, as well as dealing with the specific problems I am concerned with in particular. Even if the centre of gravity will be on the book of the *Spiritual Exercises* when establishing its ecclesiology in practice, other sixteenth-century sources are inevitably called for as a supplement (as we will see in Chapter 2). Ignatius's ecclesiology is reflected in the images he used such as 'mother', 'bride of Christ,' 'hierarchical' and 'congregation', as well as in the historical events in which his churchmanship is expressed. I will also reconstruct his ecclesiology by imagining how he might have envisaged the sixteenth-century church, characterized by mission, mysticism, devotional literature, academy, and renaissance mindset (see Chapters 3 and 4). 'Ignatian ecclesiology' on the other hand denotes the tradition (or traditions) that has developed since the sixteenth century. The thought of the second generation of Jesuits, such as Juan de Polanco and Jerónimo Nadal, as well as of modern thinkers would fall under the category of Ignatian ecclesiology. My own ecclesiological position, summarized on pages

[6] In terms of phrasing in this dissertation, *Spiritual Exercises* with capital letters in italics refers to the book. 'spiritual exercises' with small letters, on the other hand, refers to the practice or use. For sake of variety the phrase 'Ignatian Exercises' will also be employed, mostly then being synonym with the sense of practice. The abbreviation '*SpEx*' will be employed when referring to paragraphs in the text of the *Spiritual Exercises*.

4–5 above, seeks to contribute to 'Ignatian ecclesiology.' The word 'Church' will predominantly refer to the Roman Catholic Church, but the scope will be as wide and ecumenical as possible, focusing on 'pilgrim Church.' Ecumenical aspects will then be specifically addressed in the latter part of the dissertation, particularly in Chapters 6 and 7.

Second, a distinction needs to be made between the authority of officeholders in the Church and the Church as the entire community. In this dissertation 'Church authority' and 'ecclesiastical authority' will be used interchangeably when referring to the authority of officeholders. But these officeholders are not *the* Church, since that term covers the whole reality of the Christian faithful. In this respect the term 'ecclesial' represents something wider than 'ecclesiastical'. It could be added here that there is an issue here in terms of what is meant by 'Magisterium.'[7] Third, a distinction between ecclesial obedience and Jesuit obedience needs to be made; the former refers to a loyalty all Christians are expected to show and the latter refers to a vow in a religious order. Fourth, the metaphorical language of 'frontiers' may lead the mind to think in terms of a border between a centre located somewhere and the periphery. I want, nevertheless, to avoid the assumption that it is given and obvious who is at the centre and which norms are held there. Instead, the term 'frontier' conveys first of all that standpoints do not match.

In this introductory chapter we will now visit two implicitly extreme and outrageous positions in unreflective literature, both of which still have some life. These extremes will later on be contrasted with the writings of twentieth-century scholars as well as with my own position. In the next section 1.2, we will visit positions that largely avoid

[7] Yves Congar, 'A Brief History of the Forms of the Magisterium and Its Relations with Scholars', (1982) p. 315.

and even deny the ecclesial dimension and institutional reality. This extreme, present in contemporary popular literature, is in my view unhelpful for a spiritual director faced with difficult questions at ecclesial frontiers. We will then, in section 1.3, go to the other extreme of blind obedience, which turns out to be equally unhelpful at ecclesial frontiers.

1.2 Avoidance and denial in contemporary popular literature

Since the 1980s there has been a flood in Ignatian literature of a popular nature. This outpouring of books corresponds to a growing interest in spiritual exercises and a greater variety of opportunities to make such retreats. In short, Ignatian spirituality has become fashionable and attracts a wide population.[8] In some European countries, in Australia and in the United States, it has also become more and more common that other Christians than Roman Catholics not only make Ignatian Exercises, but also function as spiritual directors. This ecumenical reality is seldom reflected in the literature. To get an impression of the current situation (lack of statistics unfortunately makes coverage over the development over the last 20 years difficult) I have made the following modest and simple survey among four retreat houses. The four retreat centres are: Loyola Hall (Rainhill, England), Hoheneichen (Dresden, Germany), Lassalle-Haus (Bad Schönbrunn, Switzerland) and Los Altos (San Francisco, USA). This is in no sense a survey that matches canons of social science, but people in the field would confirm the situation. The standard notion of 'retreat' is an individually guided residential retreat over 6 days or longer (plus accompaniment in retreat in daily life in the case of Hoheneichen, Germany). The statistics below are estimates from the retreat centres.[9] Among the spiritual directors the distribution in the year 2010 is as follows:

	Jesuits	Other RC	Other Christians
Loyola Hall, England	13 (32,5 %)	20 (50 %)	7 (17,5 %)
Hoheneichen, Germany	5 (30 %)	7 (50 %)	2 (20 %)
Lassalle-Haus, Switzerland	10 (59 %)	7 (41 %)	0 (0 %)
Los Altos, USA	70 (70 %)	30 (30 %)	0 (0 %)

[8] For a survey of this development see: Joseph A. Tetlow, 'The Remarkable Shifts of the Third Transition' (1999), 18–30.

[9] Ruth Holgate (Loyola Hall), Markus Franz S.J. (Hoheneichen), Christian Rutishauser S.J. (Lassalle-Haus), and Leelamma Sebastian (Los Altos) have kindly provided the statistics.

Gender balance among spiritual directors in the year 2010: Loyola Hall: 57,5 % female and 42,5 % male; Hoheneichen 60 % female and 40 % male; Lassalle-Haus: 41 % female and 59 % male; Los Altos 23 % female and 77 % male. There is an increase in the total number of retreatants from the year 2000 to 2010.

	Year 2000	Year 2010
Loyola Hall, England	246	256
Hoheneichen, Germany	204	245 (including 60 non residential)
Lassalle-Haus, Switzerland	372	412
Los Altos, USA	164	341

Distribution of retreatants in year 2010 according to Christian denomination:

	Roman Catholic	Other Christians	Beyond formal Christianity
Loyola Hall	60 %	35 %	5 %
Hoheneichen	65 %	30 %	5 %
Lassalle-Haus	---	---	--- (no statistics available)
Los Altos	97 %	3 %	0 %

We need to remember that Ignatian Exercises on a large scale for the laity is a recent phenomenon; particularly the ecumenical field is still in a stage of experiment and largely remains under-articulated. Moreover, it has to be kept in mind, that pieces written by non-Catholic authors are few and far between.[10] It is, nonetheless, important to browse through the accounts in this literature, because the popular authors are influential in the contemporary practice of giving Ignatian Exercises. Their not-yet-ecclesial approaches, which are mostly pragmatic and impressionistic rather than historical and systematic, are also relevant in that they contrast in various ways with the twentieth-century and contemporary historically-minded systematic thinkers who appear in Chapters 3 and 4. Now, let us imagine that a spiritual director, whether Roman Catholic or of other Christian persuasion, seeks guidelines from contemporary popular authors for the pastoral cases that

[10] Apart from the instances in the books referred to in this chapter, the most comprehensive attempt so far is: *The Way Supplement*, 'Ignatian Spirituality in Ecumenical Context', 68 (1990).

may come up in retreats and that will be discussed in Chapter 7. What follows is in no way a comprehensive survey, but the authors' basic and uniform response (wherever the strand on the ecclesial spectrum) to ecclesial boundaries is to assert that they are insignificant.

I will make the case that contemporary popular Ignatian literature marginalizes the ecclesial dimension of spiritual discernment. It is, admittedly, difficult to prove the negative, and to demonstrate that a void exists, but I will give some indications in two sections. Section 1.2.1 looks at the understanding of the human person as it is portrayed in relation to selected techniques that generate interior religious experience. Section 1.2.2 observes that Scripture is a preferred mediation over other forms of mediation, and looks at the estimated relevance of sacraments and Church. In the critical evaluation (section 1.2.3) I will make some comments about consequences of the mindset and philosophical assumptions underlying these accounts.

1.2.1 Selected techniques for evoking interior religious experience

By way of summary the contemporary popular Ignatian literature conveys that Ignatian spirituality is about adapting to the individual with selected techniques and methods so that the individual gains certain religious experience in his or her interior life. The focus on the individual is manifested in the vocabulary through words such as 'inner' and 'experience'. Some examples of this will be given in what follows. For William Barry, a US Jesuit and clinical psychologist, spiritual direction seems to be chiefly about helping others to discover their interiority. William Barry and William Connolly, another US Jesuit, argue that religious experience – defined as experience of God – is crucial today, because there is little external support as civic society does not take faith for granted and ecclesial institutions are

weakened.[11] In his introductory book to Ignatian spirituality, *Finding God in All Things*, Barry states that the person who prays is meant to disclose his or her 'inner life': "The fact that the one who makes the full Spiritual Exercises has to be able to notice and talk about his or her inner life implies something about the relationship between the individual and the director of the Exercises."[12] Worth noticing is also the focus on inner life in a statement such as: "Throughout the history of the church people have sought the help of other members of the church to nurture their interior life."[13] Moreover, in *Finding God in All Things* versions of the word 'experience' occurs on 141 occasions on the 136 pages, a statistical record that indicates both where the starting-point and the goal lie. Barry's definition of 'religious experience' is indeed relational: "Experience is an encounter between a being that exists and a person capable of being conscious of the encounter."[14] The approach seems, notwithstanding, to centre very much on the individual and his or her needs; an impression I will return to in the critical evaluation (section 1.2.3) below.

A similar account of Ignatian spirituality is manifest in Margaret Silf's writings. Silf is English and author of several spiritual books and regular columnist for the journal *America*. She is a Roman Catholic, yet she describes herself as a 'boundary dweller' who no longer belongs to a particular Christian denomination, more at home outside the institutional church than within.[15] Her interpretation of Ignatian spirituality is that it is an inner journey for which a 'inner compass' is required.[16] The centre of attention on interiority is evident in the terminology. Let me use some statistics from her book *Landmarks* to illustrate the point. On the 251 pages of *Landmarks*, the reader meets various

[11] William A. Barry & William J. Connolly, *The Practice of Spiritual Direction* (2009 [1982]), pp. 15–18. Chapter 2 is entitled 'The Centrality of Religious Experience'.
[12] Barry, *Finding God in All Things* (1991), p. 18.
[13] Barry, *Spiritual Direction and the Encounter with God* (1992), p. 7.
[14] Barry, *Finding God in All Things*, p. 15.
[15] Interview: www.rec.net/newyork
[16] Margaret Silf, *Landmarks: An Ignatian Journey* (1998), Chapter 6 'The Inner Compass', pp. 99–110.

forms of the word 'experience' as many as 134 times, versions of the word 'inner' 77 times, and different usages of the term 'heart' 83 times.[17]

We will now look at the individualistic starting-point from a different angle. The dominant strand in the popular literature is the perspective to adapt to the individual and offer suitable techniques in order to evoke religious experience. Let me give some examples of the rhetoric of adapting to the individual. Barry and Connolly claim: "For the direction must begin with the way the Lord is encountering him [a human person], not with some plan in the mind of the director."[18] In Barry's *Finding God in all Things* we read: "Adaptation is the name of the game, and the director of the Exercises has to be someone who has the art to make the appropriate adaptations to the persons involved."[19] Another example of this is found in an article by the Protestant Linda Mary Evans: "The approach of the First Week Exercises will be dictated by the individual's needs rather than by any more abstract criteria."[20] We are not told what such 'abstract criteria' might be.

It is striking that several authors use technical language to which the language of adaptation is connected: We see examples of this in the writings of the Scottish Jesuit Gerard W. Hughes. He opens Chapter 4 entitled 'Tools for Digging – Some Methods of Prayer' in his book *God of Surprises*, by saying: "This chapter suggests some methods of prayer. They are suggestions, not prescriptions, and describe only a few methods. If you do not find them helpful, it does not follow that you cannot pray, but only that you do not find these methods helpful."[21] Similarly, Margaret Silf maintains that: "Ignatian spirituality

[17] 'Heart' in 'heart of Stoke-on-Trent' not included, Silf, *Landmarks*, p. 203.
[18] Barry & Connolly, *The Practice of Spiritual Direction*, p. 66.
[19] Barry, *Finding God in all Things*, p. 19.
[20] Linda Mary Evans, 'Catholic and Protestant Approaches to the First Week' (1990), 12.
[21] Gerard W. Hughes, *God of Surprises* (2008 [1985]), p. 41.

offers powerful tools to assist us in this quest [for authentic spiritual freedom]."[22] The perspective of a toolbox is even more evident when Joyce Huggett, who is English and describes herself as evangelical, comments on the triple colloquy: "Many evangelicals and charismatics, for example, prefer, when they write the colloquy, to pray to the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit rather than write to the Father, the Son and Mary. If we are to take seriously St Ignatius' guidance, 'Whatever helps', we need to be sensitive to such qualms."[23] The popularized ground-rule 'whatever helps' has its origin in the 'Principle and foundation' of the *Spiritual Exercises*: "one must use other created things in so far as [Latin: *tantum quantum*] they help towards one's end, and free oneself from them in so far as [*tantum quantum*] they are obstacles to one's end."[24] It is doubtful that Ignatius's intention was to include the Virgin Mary as one of the obstacles.

Akin to this technical stance is the selective approach, which surfaces in various ways, predominantly through omission. Susan Anderson, a Mennonite, comments on the 'colloquy' which is situated towards the end of contemplations: "Whether of a conservative or liberal strain, many directees of the Reformed tradition will have a problem with some aspects of Roman Catholic theology. Often the problem can be dealt with by omitting a practice, e.g. not taking Communion or not including Mary in the triple colloquy. Again directees are usually quite flexible and either alone or with the help of their director can reframe an exercise or an image so that it is better understood in the light of their own experience"[25] There are, however, also witnesses to the benefit of making an attempt to

[22] Silf, *Companions of Christ: Ignatian Spirituality for Everyday Living* (2004), p. 79.
[23] Joyce Huggett, 'Why Ignatian Spirituality Hooks Protestants' (1990), 33.
[24] *SpEx*, n. 23, *PW*, p. 289.
[25] Susan Anderson, 'Reflections on the Experience of Making and Giving the Exercises' (1990), 19.

include Roman Catholic aspects, such as the Virgin Mary in the meditation, that is to say *not* leaving out.[26]

Another kind of example of selection is that whole sections of the *Spiritual Exercises* are left out. Magnus Malm, who belongs to the Swedish Lutheran church and has connections with several other Christian denominations,[27] manages to omit the entire First Week (one fourth!) of the *Spiritual Exercises*, as he situates the Contemplation on the Incarnation "at the beginning of this process."[28] That exercise is as a matter of fact located in the Second Week, already a good way into the spiritual process. Yet another kind of selection is expressed through the fact that the process of election (compare sections 2.2 and 2.3 below) in most cases is placed in the background. To my knowledge Karin Johne, a German evangelical Protestant and US Jesuit Dean Brackley, who resides in El Salvador, are exceptional popular authors who take the election seriously, yet even in their accounts the ecclesial dimension of Ignatian decision-making is downplayed.[29] It is also striking that the theme of the suffering, which may follow a decision to heed Christ's call, is absent in most accounts. Brackley is an exception as he does talk about passion and suffering, material that belongs to the Third Week of the *Spiritual Exercises*.

[26] Graham Chadwick, 'Giving the Exercises and Training Directors in an Ecumenical Context' (1990), 38. Margaret Silf, *Landmarks*, pp. 226–227.
[27] Magnus Malm, *I lammets tecken* (1996), pp. 8–9.
[28] Malm, *Viskningar från katakomberna* (2006), p. 145: "*At the beginning* of this process one meditates on the perspective that the triune God has on the whole world: how God sees the conflicts in the world and its disintegration, and how he has made the decision to descend, in Christ, to this world in order to save it." (my italics and my trans.).
[29] Karin Johne, *Geistlicher Übungsweg für den Alltag* (1986), pp. 160–163. Dean Brackley, *The Call to Discernment in Troubled Times* (2004), pp. 127–172.

1.2.2 Preference of Scripture over other forms of mediation

How does contemporary popular Ignatian literature envisage mediation of the religious experience of God? By 'mediation' I mean that through which a person encounters God. By way of summary, popular Ignatian literature claims that Scripture is a privileged medium over against other forms of mediation. A side effect of this is that sacraments, doctrinal teaching and tradition and the community become secondary. These various forms of mediation cannot, of course, be compared as equal alternatives; theologically some differentiation has to be made between the ways of mediating grace. Moreover, sacraments, life and teaching are rooted in the Bible. My point is rather that there is a tendency to resort to Scripture alone (*sola scriptura*). Let me give some examples. In *The Practice of Spiritual Direction*, Barry and Connolly address the question whether there are privileged places in which the individual meets God, that is to say through certain mediations: "The traditional answer has been that there are, and they include the sacraments, especially the Eucharist, Church teaching, the Scriptures, and other works of the Lord, especially nature. Nature and the Scriptures are the privileged places most often recommended by spiritual directors and so deserve particular attention."[30] Barry and Connolly then single out the Bible as mediation *par excellence* as they assert: "Scripture is not the Lord, but a privileged place to meet him."[31] Barry and Connolly show little interest in doctrine as is reflected in their job description of the spiritual director. "But spiritual directors have as their central task the facilitation of the relationship between directees and God. They offer direct help with that relationship. Teaching, preaching, and moral guidance are not the proper task of spiritual directors. Their task is to help people experience God's action and respond to him. Fostering discovery rather than teaching doctrine is their purpose."[32] It is worth noticing that the Sacraments of Confession and Eucharist play a peripheral role in Barry's writings.

[30] Barry & Connolly, *The Practice*, p. 53.
[31] *ibid*., p. 55.
[32] *ibid.*, p. 43.

These sacraments seldom occur and the one and only instance I have come across is not particularly essential.[33]

From her evangelical perspective Joyce Huggett finds easy access to Ignatian spirituality thanks to its biblical scope. She understands the *Spiritual Exercises* as a "method of Bible reading" and says that: "This method of reading the scriptures involves replaying in one's mind and heart a particular episode from the Bible. The idea behind the technique is that the reader relives the event which the gospel writer describes."[34] Huggett maintains that one key explanation why 'Protestants' find Ignatian Exercises so accessible is the biblical approach.[35] Susan Anderson echoes this assertion.[36]

In order to hammer home the point of exclusive biblical mediation some examples of *not* accrediting other forms of mediation will now follow. In Gerard W. Hughes's writings the Sacraments of Confession and Eucharist have but a marginal significance. When the topic does turn up it is couched in terms of problems, the negative experience of them are highlighted on the few occasions these sacraments enter the narrative.[37] Moreover, as far as I can see, Margaret Silf does not refer to the sacraments of Confession and Eucharist on any occasion in her Ignatian writings. Susan Anderson, by contrast, does reflect briefly both on intercommunion and Confession.[38] This line of thought of not paying much attention to sacraments is consequently treating the Church as such as secondary, of limited importance in terms of mediating the experience of God. There is a variety of slightly different positions with regard to the status of the Church.

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[33] Barry, *Finding God in all Things*, p. 135.
[34] Joyce Huggett, *Listening to God* (1986), p. 153.
[35] Huggett, 'Why Ignatian Spirituality Hooks Protestants' (1990), 22–34, particularly 25.
[36] Anderson, 'Reflections on the Experience' (1990), 17–18.
[37] Hughes, *God of Surprises*, pp. 4–5. 'Church' and 'creation' are posited as sacraments on pp. 32, 57. *God in All Things* (2003), pp. 223–227.
[38] Anderson, 'Reflections on the Experience' (1990), 16, 19–20.

All authors share in common that they do not claim that the Roman Catholic Church embodies a particular or privileged way of mediation. Secondly, no author asserts positively and explicitly that the church, regardless of which version of Christianity it might take, mediates experience of God in any important sense. There are, nonetheless, various different positions of saying that the Church has *some* relevance. Barry and Connolly assert that the authority of a spiritual director derives from his or her belonging to a Christian community.[39] Dean Brackley is on the whole silent about the ecclesial dimension, but talks about the mission of the church and community aspects briefly as counter-cultural to individualism.[40] For Gerard W. Hughes the Church is decidedly secondary as we see in the following assertion: "As an organization of human beings, the Church must have structures, laws, discipline, a body of teaching and ways of communicating, but its structures are provisional and it must constantly be developing. God is always greater, greater than his Church."[41] He also holds: "Spirituality without some visible form is like breath without a body. On the other hand, a visible form (Church) without spirituality is like a body without breath."[42] Yet the church is mostly presented as a problematic and bad reality in Hughes's writings. *God of Surprises* was written "for bewildered, confused or disillusioned Christians, who have a love-hate relationship with the Church to which they belong, or once belonged."[43] Moreover, Hughes returns frequently to poor catechism and bad education in the Catholic Church; he does *not* state that education could illuminate and guide the Christian faithful.[44]

[39] Barry & Connolly, *The Practice*, p. 122.
[40] Brackley, *The Call to Discernment,* pp. 6–7, 166–167.
[41] Hughes, *God of Surprises*, p. 32.
[42] Hughes, *God in All Things*, p. 2.
[43] *ibid*., p. ix.
[44] Hughes, *God of Surprises*, pp. 10, 14, 67

For an author such as Margaret Silf the Church is mostly unfavourable when it does come up in the narrative. For example: "Often it is good to meet in each other's homes where the group size permits. Church halls and school classrooms are not congenial on the whole, and tend to be loaded with denominational bias or negative memories."[45] It is noteworthy that, after introductory ecclesial remarks in Silf's *Landmarks*, the word 'church' does not appear a single time between page 31 and the final page 251. Silf also asserts: "Thank God, Ignatian spirituality lets you do that – explore God and God's ways for yourself, discover for yourself what it all means for you, and how you want to respond to the call of Christ in your life, whether within, or beyond the boundaries that we traditionally call 'Church'."[46] The ecclesial reality is here swaying between being secondary and irrelevant.

It is also noteworthy that several authors think that confessional differences are insignificant; in fact do not matter at all. Barry speaks of a 'universal community', without any denominational distinctions.[47] Linda Mary Evans states: "It matters little, then, in my view, whether the retreatant is Catholic or Protestant, theologically clued-up or ignorant."[48] In some cases this position is backed up with the second generation Jesuit Jerónimo Nadal. In 1990 Graham Chadwick, an Anglican bishop of Salisbury, quoted a statement that Jerónimo Nadal allegedly had uttered, namely that the Spiritual Exercises were 'For Catholics, Protestants and pagans'.[49] The statement is presented as a slogan without any qualifications or even a minimal context, and the reader is meant to conclude that Nadal

[45] Silf, *Landmarks*, p. 17.
[46] Silf, *Companions of Christ*, p. ix. On the back cover of this book, the Church is even explicitly portrayed as an obstacle: "Is your spiritual journey more like a trudge? Does the Church hinder more than it helps? Here is a warm, welcoming and realistic guide from an immensely popular author for all who may be feeling spiritually jaded."
[47] Barry, *A Companion*, p. 132; *Spiritual Direction and the Encounter with God*, p. 23.
[48] Evans, 'Catholic and Protestant Approaches to the First Week' (1990), 6.
[49] Chadwick, 'Giving the Exercises and Training Directors in an Ecumenical Context' (1990), 37.

was unreservedly generous and inclusive. The slogan has also been transmitted by Gerard W. Hughes in 1977 and in the preface to Silf's *Landmarks*, in his book *God in all Things*, and on his homepage.[50] It also found its way into a recent book by Michael Campbell-Johnston.[51] Hughes uses pneumatological authority as he points out the insignificance of church affiliation: "One of the joys of working ecumenically is the discovery that the Holy Spirit does not appear to be a respecter of Christian denominations, but seems to be happily at work across them all, and in people of differing religious faiths and of none."[52] Silf is also quite confident in prophesying what Ignatius would have thought: "He [Ignatius] would surely welcome the fact that we come from many different Church traditions or even from none at all."[53] Magnus Malm, in his writings that builds substantially on Ignatian spirituality, in turn, frequently speaks of 'the church' (*kyrkan*).[54] This comprehensive and all-inclusive jargon is inviting, but at the same time problematic when Malm without much discrimination criticizes 'the church' (*kyrkan*) for various shortcomings.[55] Which Christian denomination is targeted? The universal notion of 'the church' is also problematic from a historical point of view as it fails to acknowledge the ecclesial community in which Ignatian spirituality originated and has been preserved over centuries.

[50] Hughes, 'Jesuit Schools and the Apostolate to the Unbeliever' (1977), 49. Hughes, *God in All Things*, p. 166. http://www.gerardwhughes.com/autobiography.htm
[51] Michael Campbell-Johnston, *Time to Change* (2010), p. 8.
[52] Hughes, *God in All Things*, p. x–xi.
[53] Silf, *Landmarks*, p. 21.
[54] Malm, *Ett hjärta större än världen* (2009), pp. 157, 232–233. *Viskningar från katakomberna* (2006), pp. 8, 14–15, 67, 79, 86, 91, 212, 214–216. *I lammets tecken* (1996), p. 7.
[55] Malm, *I lammets tecken* (1996), pp. 13, 64–65. *Viskningar från katakomberna* (2006), pp. 67, 79, 86.

1.2.3 Critical evaluation

The language of 'experience' and interiority seems to be a way of avoiding exteriority, anything external to the self, thus exaggerating the private sphere. In a sense, therefore, these accounts are in the not so straightforward situations at ecclesial frontiers for the spiritual director as unhelpful as the blind obedience standpoints of perfect unison that will be referred to in section 1.3 below. How would a spiritual director even begin to interact with or discuss, let alone challenge, an inner religious experience? The inner and private life has put itself in an untouchable position. The radically interiorized spirituality has firmly located spiritual discernment beyond any common dialogue between people. Conversely, a devout Christian who is at variance with ecclesiastical authority cannot argue publicly and enforce a dialogue if the spiritual discernment is confined to the private religiosity sphere. The person is unable to assert herself in the public sphere if the reference point is utterly private.

The kind of statements and considerations displayed in the review of the primary sources and data (in Chapter 2) are strikingly absent in the contemporary literature, with the exception of priority given to the individual (section 2.3). There is no trace of the ecclesiastical reality so evidently present in the primary sources (section 2.2 and 2.4). Moreover, Nadal's statement 'infidels, heretics and bad Christians' has been radically reinterpreted to the extent that its meaning has become almost the exact opposite of the original (compare section 2.5). We also notice that in the whole supply of popular books and articles the ecclesial frontiers in which Catholics are involved are seldom addressed head-on, and few authors discuss potentially controversial ecumenical matters (Chapter 7).

This evaluation does not rule out that the discourse of inner, religious experience reflects authentic Christianity. But this rhetoric could be seen as a sign of individualism, especially in combination with a weak account of the Church, of it being secondary. The theologian Nicholas Lash, who worked at Cambridge, expresses himself critically about this individualistic line of thought: "Not to put too fine a point on it, the contrast between material and spiritual, or 'external' and 'internal' religion, as that contrast was persistently drawn in the dominant narrative of both Liberal Protestantism and its secularized successors, expressed deep-rooted anti-Catholic and anti-Semitic prejudice."[56] The tendency in contemporary Ignatian writings to focus on interiority is part of a wider mentality of avoiding realities external to the self. The philosopher Charles Taylor, whose ideas we will see more of in Chapter 5, paints a picture of a general attitude towards religion. In his book *A Secular Age*, which not only describes secularisation in the sense of loss of Christianity, but also the new conditions for faith, Taylor speaks about the current mindset in matters concerning religion:

> And, crucially, this is a culture informed by an ethic of authenticity. I have to discover my route to wholeness and spiritual depth. The focus is on the individual, and on his/her experience. Spirituality must speak to this experience. The basic mode of spiritual life is thus the quest, as Roof argues. It is a quest which can't start with a priori exclusions or inescapable starting points, which could pre-empt this experience. This kind of search is often called by its practitioners "spirituality", and it is opposed to religion.[57]

Taylor is quite hard in his assessment: "These features of 'spirituality', its subjectivism, its focus on the self and its wholeness, its emphasis on feeling, has led many to see the new forms of spiritual quest which arise on our society as intrinsically trivial or privatised."[58] A softer critique would point out that there is little trace of a common project, apostolic endeavour or mission in contemporary Ignatian popular literature. This tendency

[56] Nicholas Lash, *Easter in Ordinary* (1988), p. 54.
[57] Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age* (2007), pp. 507–508.
[58] *ibid*., p. 508.

may be contrasted with the view advocated by the French Jesuit Joseph de Guibert, for whom 'service' was an essential Ignatian characteristic. In a book published in 1953, posthumously after his death in 1942, he delineated Ignatian (Jesuit) spirituality in the sense of unselfish, apostolic service.[59]

The selective approach of seeking appropriate tools could indeed be seen as a reflection of creativity and imaginative flexibility. I want, nevertheless, to suggest that there might be an element of instrumentalism, in the sense of a technical and consumerist attitude, involved in this. At the very least, there is a distinction to be drawn between creative adaptation, on the one hand, and instrumental reason that picks and chooses in the supermarket, on the other. The concept of instrumental reason refers originally to a notion developed by the philosophers Horkheimer and Adorno (Frankfurter School) who in *Dialectic of Enlightenment* (1941) argued that capitalism and the process of instrumentally dominating nature leads to dehumanization and the domination of human beings. There is something mechanic about instrumental reason, since a pragmatic attitude tends to use things for a benefit. In a similar way, Ignatian Exercises are arguably dominated and used as a commodity of selection according to taste.

Another angle on this is that the instrumental reason by its very nature reveals that the centre of the universe is the individual and its needs instead of something greater outside its own horizon. Charles Taylor explains this shift historically in terms of the loss of a cosmic, hierarchical world order, of not considering a universe of integrated meaning:

> Living a godly life in this world is something very different from living in the ordered Aristotelian Cosmos of Aquinas, or the hierarchy of Pseudo-Dionysios. It is no longer a matter of admiring a normative order, in which God has

[59] Joseph de Guibert, *The Jesuits* (1986 [French 1953]), pp. 174–181; 538.

> revealed himself through signs and symbols. We rather have to inhabit it as agents of instrumental reason, working the system effectively in order to bring about God's purposes; because it is through these purposes, and not through signs, that God reveals himself in his world.[60]

I will challenge this instrumental reason and toolbox-approach in section 6.1 by drawing on the hermeneutics of the German philosopher Hans-Georg Gadamer.

[60] Taylor (2007), p. 98. See also p. 543.

1.3 Perfect Unison

Nineteenth and early twentieth-century Jesuits such as the French Jesuit Paul Dudon, the English Jesuit Richard Clarke, the Swiss Jesuit Moritz Meschler, or the General Superior Wlodimir Ledóchowski, would have given an uncompromisingly authoritarian response to the question of possible attitudes to ecclesiastical teaching. This position says, metaphorically, that there is only one hymn tune that everybody sings in unison the same way. For them, Ignatian Exercises at ecclesial frontiers were inconceivable. One can only infer what they would have thought from their statements about the authority of Church, and about Jesuit obedience. The standpoint of perfect unison in relation to non-Catholics comes through in Paul Dudon's writings. In a chapter called 'The Spiritual teaching of St. Ignatius' in a book written 1921–1933, he asserts:

> And if in the thick of these painful efforts which one makes to put the divine will above all else, the misleading talk of heretics or tepid Christians threatens to obscure the faith, to chill love, to shaken courage or slacken enthusiasm, we should always remember that Christ has promised to the teaching Church of Rome the assistance that shall keep it in the truth. To listen with docility to this Church in all that she teaches, commands, or counsels; to believe her dogmas, obey her laws, respect her institutions, practice the observances of her worship–this is duty and security; in this way each one will prove his faith in the promises made by Christ to His spouse, his love for the Church his mother, and the sincerity of this Catholic spirit.[61]

If we were to transfer this and the following statements from the category of Jesuit obedience to ecclesiastical orientation, it would seem impossible even to begin to reflect on Ignatian Exercises at frontiers. In 1896 Campion Hall in Oxford was founded, then known as Clarke's Hall after its first Master, Richard Clarke. That same year he published an article on Jesuit training, which reflects an almost totalitarian view of leadership. Clarke describes the goal of fostering obedience in the novitiate:

[61] Paul Dudon, *St. Ignatius of Loyola* (1949 [1934]), pp. 457–462.

> At the end of two years the young Jesuit takes his first vows and ceases to be a novice. The special object of his life in the noviceship has been to train him up in that spirit of implicit and unquestioning obedience […] The novice is taught to obey his superior without ever questioning the wisdom of the order given.[62]

Clarke admittedly nuances the account of blind obedience by referring to situations in which it does not apply (no obligation to obey an order that would lead to sinful action, representation, right to appeal to higher order), but the general thrust remains. Moritz Meschler took a similar stance. In a chapter on obedience he says:

> The order (*Befehl*) corresponds to obedience and the governing authority to the subjection (*Unterwürfigkeit*). The head of a community (*Gemeinwesen*) is actually the principle of unity and order only insofar as there is subordinate attachment (*untertänige Anhänglichkeit*). That applies also for each religious community. The Popes therefore so strongly emphasized, in the foundational bulls of the Society of Jesus, obedience under the appointed superiors.[63]

Wlodimir Ledóchowski (1866–1942), of Polish origin, was Superior General of the Society of Jesus 1915–1942. In 1916 Ledóchowski writes to his fellow Jesuits concerning the importance of Thomas Aquinas's teaching. Unmistakably, the Jesuits are subordinate to the Papacy. Jesuits are expected to execute whatever the Pope demands: "[W]e must inquire further whether we are required to defend and teach those theses either because of the special obligation to follow St. Thomas which our Institute approved by the Church imposes, or out of deference to the Holy See, whose mere wish is for us a command."[64]

With this mentality Ignatian Exercises for those who are not in concord with Roman Catholic teaching is unthinkable. There is a static binary-thinking here of either being right or wrong, in or out, orthodox or heretic. For such authors, there are indeed

[62] Richard F. Clarke, 'The Training of a Jesuit' (1896), 219. Moreover, Clarke holds that the virtue of blind obedience explains the high quality of Jesuit performance. *ibid*., 225.
[63] Moritz Meschler, *Die Gesellschaft Jesu* (1911), pp. 85–86.
[64] Letter from Father General Wlodimir Ledóchowski to the Universal Society, 8 December 1916, in *Selected Writings of Father Ledóchowski* (1945), p. 504.

people and opinions outside what authority sanctions, but there is no possibility of a positive theological evaluation of this situation, no imagining that the Holy Spirit could be at work beyond the boundaries of established Roman Catholicism (an observation that is, of course, easy to make thanks to Catholic theological reflection before, during and after the Second Vatican Council). The theological problem of what is to be learnt from a divergence from authority is just not admitted. We will see in Chapters 3 and 4 that twentieth-century and contemporary Ignatian scholars, quite rightly in my view, move away from these authoritarian standpoints of perfect unison.

1.4 Outline of the thesis

This dissertation will navigate between two extremes: the position of radical interiority (section 1.2) and incontrovertible external authority (section 1.3). This thesis will reflect on the development in the practice of Ignatian spirituality during the twentieth century, in particular with regard to Church affiliation (Chapters 3 and 4). In the mid twentieth century Jesuit scholars moved away from an institutional and unreflected stance of perfect unison (section 1.3), as indeed did Catholic renewal at large as seen in the writings of such figures as the French Dominican Yves Congar and the French Jesuit Henri de Lubac. 'Ignatian' now connotes a pluralistic (various positions in coexistence) rather than an authoritarian and uniform attitude, and as a result of this, we are better equipped to deal with situations in which the individual is not spontaneously inclined to obey Roman ecclesiastical authority. The non-authoritarian approaches during the twentieth century have also opened up possibilities for Ignatian Exercises to be made by Christians other than Roman Catholics. At the same time, these scholars take the ecclesial reality more seriously than the contemporary popular authors (section 1.2 above). The accounts of selected recent and contemporary scholars, whom I suggest represent two different approaches, will be presented and critically evaluated. The German Jesuit Hugo Rahner (1900–1968) proposed one approach, which the Spanish Jesuit Santiago Madrigal (b. 1960) has developed (both presented and examined in Chapter 3). Hugo Rahner paved the way for a pluralistic account which allowed for more diversity and process. For Hugo Rahner, Ignatius was a 'man of the Church' who relied on personal discovery and vivid mystical experience. Using a musical metaphor, Hugo Rahner represents an approach which is like polyphony, a harmonious combination of a number of individual melodic lines, which we can perceive as such, thus moving away from the unison of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.

The Swiss Jesuit Raymund Schwager (1935–2004) also moves away from the uniformity standpoint, but offers an alternative perspective to Hugo Rahner, as the former takes for granted that there are difficult tensions and perceived disharmony. Schwager's approach, which has been developed by the English Jesuit Philip Endean (b. 1954) and the Basque Jesuit Jon Sobrino (b. 1938), will be presented and examined in Chapter 4. Their dramatic approach offers a nuanced and rich understanding of spiritual discernment and its complexities and paradoxes. It can be compared with euphony that seems like cacophony: good music in God's ears even if it does not sound like it to the human.[65] These five thinkers complement each other as their studies were conducted at different stages in the twentieth century and at the beginning of the twenty-first, and their approaches to the Ignatian sources come from different cultural settings and theological frameworks. As a qualifying remark it has to be added that both Philip Endean and Jon Sobrino are more corporate and more aware of hermeneutics than Raymund Schwager was. Endean and Sobrino therefore come closer to my own ecclesiological position.

In Chapter 5, I will outline ways forward for the ecclesiology of Ignatian Exercises, by arguing that the Enlightenment understanding of the human person is unhelpful when attempting to understand Ignatius or contemporary Ignatian ecclesiology. Instead, a person understood in a relational way is called for. The philosophical reflections of the Canadian philosopher Charles Taylor will here be of help. In Chapter 6 a hermeneutical cornerstone for a foundation of Ignatian ecclesiology, which is informed by the German philosopher Hans-Georg Gadamer (1900–2002), will be laid down. That same chapter will use aspects of the German Jesuit and theologian Karl Rahner's (1904–1984) theology. In connection with Schwager's achievement, Karl Rahner will in various ways

[65] I am deliberately avoiding labels on the approaches, because possible classifications end up being misleading or at least not fully representative.

provide a satisfactory account for cases when conscience is disinclined to obey ecclesiastical authority.

The dissertation, thus, has four blocks. First, a review of primary sources (Chapter 2). The relevant primary sources on Ignatius's own ecclesiology and that of the early Jesuits are displayed and their status briefly assessed. A selection of statements from these sources is mapped out in three groups depending on whether priority is given to the ecclesiastical authority, to the individual, or somehow to both. The aim of this exercise is to identify the problem of authority more precisely, to explain its nature, and thereby also to illustrate that a straightforward solution cannot be found easily. A review of early Jesuit pedagogy and policy when giving Ignatian Exercises to 'bad Catholics' and misbelievers is also made. Strong criticism over the years of all conceivable standpoints is a witness to the controversial nature of the problem. The purpose of this review is to prepare a reflection for our time in terms of what can still be learned ecumenically from the first generations of Jesuits. Twentieth-century and contemporary scholars have advocated approaches that in various ways form a developed 'Ignatian ecclesiology', based on the primary sources and data presented in this chapter. On that follows a block with a review of the secondary literature (Chapters 3 and 4). The third block consists of systematic resources (Chapters 5 and 6). Finally, a chapter of ground-rules for three pastoral cases at ecclesial frontiers (Chapter 7).

2. Review of historical sources and data

In early modern Christianity a question emerged, and quite strikingly so, concerning the location of authority. The relationship between the individual's own judgment and that of Church authority surfaced, for instance, in views on handling Scripture. Erasmus of Rotterdam may serve to illustrate the tendency to entrust biblical interpretation to the laity. In the preface to his edition of the New Testament, Erasmus hopes to "see the countryman chant the Bible at his plough, the weaver at his loom, the traveller on his journey – even women should read the text."[1] Erasmus certainly endorsed interactive reading and personal judgment, but he did not advocate complete independence from the Church. In his debate on free will with Martin Luther, for instance, he says: "I should like the reader to consider whether he [Luther] thinks it right to condemn the opinion of so many Doctors of the church, approved by the consensus of so many ages and nations."[2] Thus, the voice of the Church interacted with the voice of conscience in early modern Christianity.

What do the *Spiritual Exercises* and other primary Jesuit sources say to this set-up of dual authority? The first section of this chapter will display the range and briefly introduce the status of the primary sources. Some extracts from the primary sources, on which the twentieth-century thinkers make comments, will then be put forward in order to give a first impression of what is at stake. Viewing this dual authority, the intellect instinctively envisages two parties. Without further ado, the mind also sets up the categories as one being subordinate to the other. Priority or weight will consequently be given to one party over the other. A third and less intuitive construction, is to take both seriously. We will therefore follow an outline according to the three possible positions: priority given to church authority, to the authority of the individual, or a position in which both are valid.

[1] Diarmaid MacCulloch, *Reformation: Europe's House Divided* (2003), p. 101.
[2] Erasmus of Rotterdam, *De libero arbitrio*, in *Collected Works*, vol. 76 (1999), p. 88, see also pp. 14–20.

The aim thereby is not only to clarify the problem and to help the reader simply to see the alternatives, but also to get a sense that the issue cannot be settled straightforwardly.

The theme of authority obviously gravitates towards the 'institutional Church'; therefore the spotlight in this dissertation will be on this particular side of ecclesiology.[3] This, however, does not mean that Ignatius and the early Jesuits necessarily limited their understanding of the Church to the institutional field. In an undated catechetical instruction, for example, Ignatius defines the Church simply as: "a congregation of the Christian faithful, illumined and governed by God our Lord".[4] The way in which the early Jesuits understood Church as a congregation is also reflected in their ministries: preaching, teaching, distributing sacraments, and giving spiritual exercises. Church was the space in which interaction between individuals took place. Furthermore, Ignatius spoke of the 'bosom of the Holy Church' and used images such as 'mother' and 'bride' as titles for the Church, images that suggest a personal and intimate relationship. A lot is therefore lost if the early Jesuits are simply understood as executors of the Council of Trent and instruments of the Papacy.[5] Moreover, the mission and expansion of Christianity to continents outside Europe almost certainly affected their concept of Church, in so far as the Church had to incorporate other cultures.[6]

Three further preliminary remarks are in order. First, this dissertation deals with a fairly narrow ecclesial topic associated with Ignatian spirituality and cannot cover a wider

[3] I am here using the term 'institutional church' as a model, borrowing from Avery Dulles, *Models of the Church* (1974).
[4] *MI Epp*. XII:671, appendix 6:10, *De Doctrina christiana*: "Essendo la Chiesa una congregatione delli fideli cristiani, et illuminata et governata da Dio N.S. ..."
[5] John W. O'Malley, *Trent and All That* (2000), especially pp. 23, 56, 77.
[6] For the bigger picture of the history of the early Jesuits, their ministries and churchmanship, the outstanding scholarship of John W. O'Malley is worth consulting. See *The First Jesuits* (1993). As a supplement to this work earlier studies are still of some use: James Brodrick, *The Origin of the Jesuits* (1994 [1940]); Joseph de Guibert, *The Jesuits: Their Spiritual Doctrine and Practice* (1986 [French 1953]). André Ravier, *Ignatius of Loyola and the Founding of the Society of Jesus* (1987 [French 1973]).

spectrum of themes.[7] Second, the statements in the categories of priority are grouped according to the first impression. The categories are not absolute in the sense that one party entirely trumps the other. Priority does not mean that the other party is not considered at all, in the sense that ecclesiastical authority would have a totalitarian character or that complete autonomy would prevail on behalf of the individual. Third, some scholars use binary terms such as 'inner' and 'outer', or 'interior' and 'exterior', or 'subjective' and 'objective', or 'direct, divine, communication' and 'ecclesial mediation'. One can, for instance, speak of inner authority as opposed to exterior Church authority. I prefer, however, to speak of the individual's authority and ecclesiastical authority, for reasons that will become clear in my argument.

[7] The need for an encompassing perspective on the *Spiritual Exercises* is met brilliantly in works of the English Jesuit Michael Ivens and the Catalan Jesuit Javier Melloni: Ivens, *Understanding the Spiritual Exercises* (1998); Melloni, *La mistagogía de los ejercicios* (2001). As for spiritual discernment, which is obviously a key theme in this dissertation, the essays of the US Jesuit Michael Buckley are particularly helpful. Buckley, 'The Structure of the Rules for Discernment of Spirits' (1973), 19–37; 'Ecclesial Mysticism in the *Spiritual Exercises* of Ignatius' (1995), 441–463; 'Discernimiento', in *Dicc. EI*, pp. 607–611. As mentioned above the writings of Jules Toner are also useful: Toner, *Discerning God's Will* (1991).

2.1 Display of primary sources

The critical edition of early Jesuit sources is found in the collection *Monumenta Historica Societatis Iesu*, which consists of some 130 volumes. This collection is the result of intensive scholarly research that was accomplished predominantly during the first decades of the twentieth century. Hence, for twentieth-century thinkers primary sources were available to a much higher degree than for scholars working before the 1920s. Most of the writings relevant to this dissertation – *Spiritual Exercises*, *Directories*, *Constitutions*, the correspondence, *Autobiography* and the apologetic writings – have been translated into English.

There is little doubt that Ignatius of Loyola is the author of the *Spiritual Exercises*, but there is some disagreement as regards to whether Ignatius wrote the book independently or was influenced by other traditions and writers. Some modern scholars are of the same view as the second generation Jesuit Jerónimo Nadal, who in a preface to the Latin (Vulgate) version of the text stated that the book was a result of Ignatius's own experience and inspiration from the Holy Spirit without consulting any spiritual literature.[8] Other scholars have discovered parallels between the text of the *Spiritual Exercises* and earlier material and suggest that Ignatius might have borrowed some expressions, images and conceptual structures from other mystics and theologians.[9]

[8] *MI Ex*., p. 79.
[9] *Las Fuentes de los Ejercicios Espirituales de San Ignacio*, ed. by Juan Plazaola (1998); Javier Melloni, *The Exercises of St Ignatius Loyola in the Western Tradition* (Herefordshire: Gracewing, 2000); *Compendio breve de Ejercicios Espirituales*, ed. by Javier Melloni (2006). Another recent manifestation of the interest in Patristic roots is an article by Stephan Ch. Kessler, 'Von der 'Imitatio' zur 'Indifferenz', in *Zur größeren Ehre Gottes*, (2006), pp. 35–49. Johannes Maria Steinke, 'Hat Ignatius seine Exerzitien abgeschrieben?' (2009), 38–52.

In terms of dates, the Catalan Jesuit Cándido de Dalmases suggested a timetable for the conception of the book, with dates that are now widely accepted.[10] The book was developed between the years 1522 and 1541, and gained papal approval in 1548. During this period Ignatius lived in seven different cities: Manresa, Barcelona, Alcalá, Salamanca, Paris, Venice, and Rome. As Ignatius's secretary Juan de Polanco points out in his preface, the Exercises were actually not meant to be read, but to be made.[11] The reading of this handbook was reserved to the spiritual directors; the text was actually not intended for those who made spiritual exercises. Pope Paul III even announced a prohibition to reprint the book, without Ignatius's permission that is, to prevent wide distribution.[12]

For a variety of reasons the twentieth-century and contemporary scholars in this dissertation use a set of primary sources, apart from commenting on the text of the *Spiritual Exercises*, in the quest for establishing its ecclesiology. One reason is that the *Spiritual Exercises* does not offer a systematic treatise in ecclesiology, which is by no means extraordinary. Before the mid-sixteenth century very few works appear on the Church.[13] Furthermore, the handbook is not comprehensive but rather laconic in style. The scholars, consequently, work with a combination of sources, often claiming that there is a relationship between them. For instance, the *Spiritual Exercises* can be understood in the light of the *Autobiography*, or in association with some letters that are useful commentaries on them.[14] It could be added to these comments, that lived religion in the actual personal encounter between the spiritual director and the person praying may be richer than the statements in the text of the *Spiritual Exercises*. As far as the statements in the text with

[10] Ignacio de Loyola, *Ejercicios Espirituales*, Cándido de Dalmases (1990), pp. 11–16.
[11] *MI Ex*., p. 81.
[12] *MI Ex*., *Litterae Apostolicae 'Pastoralis Officii'* (31 July 1548), p. 77.
[13] Diego M. Molina, *La vera sposa de Christo* (2003), pp. 181–183.
[14] A recent study comes to the same conclusion, namely, that a variety of sources need to be studied in order to grasp Ignatius's ecclesiology. Molina (2003), pp. 37–38.

ecclesial relevance are concerned, it needs therefore to be kept in mind that the event of a person making Ignatian Exercises is not necessarily a mirror image of the text.

The *Constitutions* of the Society of Jesus – together with the *Formula of the Institute* and the *Spiritual Exercises* – are equivalent to Benedict's rule for Benedictines. The text of the *Constitutions* was produced in various stages between 1539 and 1558.[15] As from 1547 the *Constitutions* are the result of a joint venture between Ignatius and his secretary Juan de Polanco. The intended recipients or readers of the *Constitutions* were Jesuits and ecclesiastical dignitaries, as the rule of the order needed official approval. The genre is juridical (canonical), but the text also belongs to spiritual writings.[16] The statements about religious obedience and manifestation of conscience in it can with some caution be used as a guideline for ecclesial obedience. It is, nevertheless, questionable how far the analogy can be made and in what way, for instance, a religious superior can be compared with an ecclesiastical officeholder.

A correspondence of more than 6,800 letters has survived, many of them relevant for our purposes. Unlike the *Spiritual Exercises* and the *Constitutions*, the letters respond to specific situations, and the image of the Church very much depends on the recipient and the particular situation. Precisely because of this flexibility, the correspondence offers a rich and interesting insight into Jesuit churchmanship from a variety of angles. The letters cited in this dissertation range from 1536 to 1555. As regards to authorship, Juan de Polanco assisted or was delegated by Ignatius in many cases.

[15] Ravier, *Ignatius of Loyola and the Founding of the Society of Jesus*, pp. 216–250.
[16] José Carlos Coupeau, 'Constituciones', in *Dicc. EI*, pp. 435–445.

Another primary source, which in its original carries the title *Acts of Ignatius Loyola* (*Acta Patris Ignatii*) is a biography, or to be more precise a text covering his mid-life (30 to 48 years of age). In modern translations it is often given the title *Autobiography* or *The Pilgrim's Story*. It is a result of conversations between Ignatius and the Portuguese Jesuit Luis Gonçalves da Câmara. In his capacity as procurator of the Portuguese Province Gonçalves da Câmara spent more than two years in Rome (May 1553 to October 1555).[17] It is during this stay that the *Autobiography* took shape. The intended readers were Jesuits. Suggestions have been made as to genre and purpose. Leo Bakker suggested that the *Autobiography* was written with a didactic purpose, namely to illustrate the *Spiritual Exercises* in general and the rules for discernment of spirits in particular.[18] The English Jesuit Philip Endean has interpreted the *Autobiography* as a formation-inspired text for Jesuits in training.[19] In this connection of displaying primary sources, it can also be pointed out that several secondary sources portray Ignatius of Loyola, yet the full story of his life cannot be told here.[20]

Two other primary sources will come into play. One of them is the so-called *Directories* of the *Spiritual Exercises*. These are supplementary instructions written between 1553 and 1599, on how to give spiritual exercises. Finally, there are the apologetic writings of the second generation Jesuit, Jerónimo Nadal, who responded to charges of illuminism.[21] We shall now turn to statements in the primary sources that give weight to ecclesiastical authority.

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[17] For 'procurator' see definition above.
[18] Leo Bakker, *Freiheit und Erfahrung* (1970), p. 132.
[19] Philip Endean, 'Who Do You Say Ignatius Is? – Jesuit Fundamentalism and Beyond' (1987), 1–53.
[20] For a vivid and colourful but admittedly less well-documented biography on Ignatius, I recommend the Spanish historian José Ignacio Tellechea Idígoras, *Ignatius of Loyola: The Pilgrim Saint* (1994 [1990]). Worth consulting also is the extensive volume by Ricardo García-Villoslada and the, albeit now somewhat dated, book by Cándido de Dalmases. García-Villoslada, *San Ignacio de Loyola: Nueva Biografía* (1986); Dalmases, *Ignatius of Loyola: Founder of the Jesuits* (1985 [1980]).
[21] *M Nadal,* IV:820–853. 'P. Hieronymi Natalis: Apologia pro Exercitiis S. P. Ignatii'.

2.2 Priority given to ecclesiastical authority

Ignatius expects the person making spiritual exercises without much discussion to follow the Church's precepts on fasting and other guidelines.[22] In fact, it is clearly stated that actions contrary to Church teaching are regarded as sinful: "One should take as subject-matter the Ten Commandments, the precepts of the Church and the recommendations of superiors; any action against any of these three is a greater or smaller sin depending on the greater or lesser importance of the matter."[23] In the context of the so-called 'election', that is to say the phase of making choices, which could be considered as the climax or focal point of the spiritual process, Church authority is given weight in that it defines the panorama from which a person may choose. The condition is as follows: "It is necessary that all the things about which we want to make an election are morally indifferent or good in themselves, and that they are on the side of our holy mother, the hierarchical Church, and are not bad or opposed to the Church."[24]

Without intending to enter into a discussion at this stage, let us just make a few observations. There is a question here, of course, as to what 'hierarchical Church' means and whether Church teaching is understood to be static or dynamic. Another issue is where the boundaries of the Church go, how tight they are and whether these boundaries are subject to alteration. Moreover, once the frame for the election has been marked out, the actual situations (times) of election actually safeguard personal authority, as we shall see in section 2.3 below.

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[22] *SpEx*, n. 18 and n. 229, *PW*, p. 287 and p. 328.
[23] *ibid*., n. 42, p. 293.
[24] *ibid.,* n. 170, p. 316. The idea of freedom within a given frame is also mentioned elsewhere in the text: "To do this we need to make ourselves indifferent to all created things, provided the matter is subject to our free choice and there is no prohibition." *SpEx*, n. 23, *PW*, p. 289.

The final section of the *Spiritual Exercises* is often referred to as 'Rules for thinking with the church'; its full title reads: "Rules to follow in view of the true attitude of mind that we ought to maintain within the Church militant." It includes 18 rules, in what is regarded to be two sections. The first section was written in Paris between 1528 and 1535. It states attitudes towards the sacraments, divine office, monastic life, matrimony, veneration of saints, and pilgrimages. The French Jesuit Paul Dudon has discovered striking similarities with the Episcopal Synod of Sens 1528, and Ignatius most probably took these records as a basis for his own rules.[25] The other set of rules were written in Italy 1537 to 1541 and mainly concern the theme of justification (the righteousness of the human person before God). These 18 rules for thinking with the Church can certainly not be omitted from any serious treatise on Ignatius's ecclesiology, and numerous articles have been written on the subject. The book *Sentir la iglesia* by the Spanish Jesuit Jesús Corella offers a way into this topic; it also has a valuable bibliography.[26] Nonetheless, it is important to remember that the second and third generation of Jesuits thought that these rules were of limited importance, relevant only in special circumstances.[27] Of these 18 rules, three are of more general nature. The opening paragraph definitely gives priority to Church authority, to the extent that the individual should leave his or her own opinion out of account. One's own view should not prejudge the view of the Church: "Laying aside all our own judgements, we ought to keep our minds open and ready to obey in everything the true bride of Christ Our Lord, our holy mother, the hierarchical Church."[28]

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[25] Paul Dudon, *St. Ignatius of Loyola* (1949 [1934]), pp. 457–462. For context see also Georg Schurhammer, *Francis Xavier: His Life, his Times* (1973), vol. 1, pp. 189–234.
[26] Jesús Corella, *Sentir la Iglesia* (1996).
[27] Several directories assert that the rules should only be conveyed to those who are well advanced in spiritual matters: Everard Mercurian, Doc. 18:17; Juan de Polanco, Doc. 20:43; Diego Miró, Doc. 23:92; Fabio de Fabi Doc. 25:20; Short Directory Doc. 26:79, Antonio Cordeses, Doc. 32:89, in *On Giving the Spiritual Exercises* [*OG*], trans. and ed. by Palmer (1996), pp. 104; 127; 180; 201; 276. The rules are also relevant in regions of 'heretics': Juan de Polanco, Doc. 20:112; Gil González Dávila, Doc. 31:176; Antonio Cordeses, Doc. 32:158; Official Directory 43:271, in *OG*, pp. 148; 264; 285; 346.
[28] *SpEx*, n. 353, *PW*, p. 356.

A similar standpoint is reiterated in two other rules. Christians are encouraged to avoid challenging decrees and regulations publicly, even if these would seem to be deficient:

> We should be more inclined to approve and praise the decrees and regulations of those in authority, and their conduct as well; for although some of these things do not or did not in the past deserve approval, more grumbling and scandal than profit would be aroused by speaking against them, either in public sermons or in conversations in front of simple people. In that way people would become hostile towards authority, either temporal or spiritual. But just as harm can be done by speaking ill to simple people about those in authority in their absence, so it can do good to speak of their unworthy behaviour to the actual people who can bring about a remedy.[29]

The closing paragraph of the first set of rules, again, gives considerable weight to the hierarchical Church:

> To maintain a right mind in all things we must always maintain that the white I see, I shall believe to be black, if the hierarchical Church so stipulates; for we believe that between Christ Our Lord, the bridegroom, and the Church, His bride, there is the same Spirit who governs and directs us for the good of our souls because it is by that same Spirit and Lord of us all who gave the Ten Commandments that our holy mother Church is directed and governed.[30]

To sum up, these rules sound authoritarian, indeed bordering on the repressive. For our purposes it is important to note, that it is presupposed in these three principal rules that the individual has a position that potentially goes in another direction than that of ecclesiastical authority. This is evident in the expressions ‘our own judgment’, ‘not in the past deserve approval’, as well as ‘what I see’.

Church teaching is explicitly mentioned in some paragraphs of the *Constitutions*, such as those related to conditions for accepting candidates to the Society of Jesus:

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[29] *SpEx*, n. 362, *PW*, p. 357.
[30] *SpEx*, n. 365, *PW*, p. 358.

> He [the candidate] should be asked whether he has held or holds any opinions or ideas different from those which are commonly held in the Church and among the teachers whom she has approved; and whether he is willing, if at some time he should hold any, to defer to what may be determined in the Society as to what ought to be held about such matters.[31]

The unity of the Church is cherished and any schismatic tendencies are regarded as a threat to that unity. "To have separated oneself for a time from the bosom of the Holy Church (*gremio de la santa Iglesia*)" is considered as an impediment for acceptance to the Society of Jesus.[32] Another aspect of the *Constitutions* is obedience. The *Constitutions* primarily deal with religious obedience, but there is also reference to the Pope in the section on that religious vow:

> … by applying all our energies with very special care to the virtue of obedience shown first to the sovereign pontiff and then to the superiors of the Society. […] ready to receive its command just as if it were coming from Christ our Savior, […] ready to leave unfinished any letter or anything else of ours which we have begun […] as if he were a lifeless body.[33]

Considering other statements in the *Constitutions* it has to be added that obedience in the special vow to the Pope is not of total or global nature. It is restricted to assignments with regards to missions (*circa missiones*), which means that the Jesuits promise to be open to commitments that the Papacy finds worthwhile.[34]

Between 1547 and 1553 Ignatius, assisted by Polanco, wrote several letters to his fellow Jesuits on religious obedience. The most famous of these is dated 26 March 1553 to the Jesuits in Portugal, known as the 'Letter on Obedience' and it became part of standard Jesuit socialisation.[35] The letter motivates obedience through an argument from

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[31] *MI Const*. II, p. 35. *Const.*, n. 47, p. 32. See also n. 22 & 24, *Const.*, p. 28 (*MI Const*., pp. 21, 23).
[32] *MI Const*. II, p. 285. *Const.*, n. 165, p. 80.
[33] *MI Const*. II, pp. 518–524. *Const.*, n. 547, pp. 220–222.
[34] *Formula of the Institute*, n. 3, and *Const.*, n. 603 & 633, pp. 6–7; 276; 292.
[35] *MI Epp*. IV:669–81. Letter from Ignatius to the Jesuits in Portugal, Rome, 26 March 1553. Ignatius of Loyola, *Letters and Instructions* [*LI*], trans. and ed. by Palmer, Padberg, McCarthy (2006), pp. 412–421.

tradition, in that several Church fathers and medieval mystics are invoked, such as Benedict, Gregory the Great, Cassian and Bernard of Clairvaux. There are instances of authoritarian views, as blind obedience is encouraged.[36] In terms of Church, these letters are interesting from two points of view. The situation of crisis among Jesuits in Portugal in the years previous to 1553 may help to explain why there is such firm language.[37] As a qualifying remark, if the Jesuit, in a spirit of prayer, disagrees with the view of the superior, then so-called representation is foreseen.[38]

In 1555 Ignatius, or more probably Polanco, wrote a letter to the Emperor of Ethiopia. His oriental Church espoused views and had customs that were not in harmony with the Roman Catholic Church. One theme in the letter is loyalty to the Papacy and it encourages the Emperor to join Rome. The letter declares that unity and conformity with the Catholic Church is desirable, and uses authoritarian expressions such as: "it is necessary for all the faithful to believe and obey the Church in whatever it ordains."[39]

There are a few events in the *Autobiography* that have relevance for the topic of authority. The first incident that has bearing on authority is Ignatius's relation to St. Peter; he is said to have had a 'regular devotion to St. Peter'.[40] Ignatius's secretary Juan de Polanco adds to this that Ignatius in his youth venerated St. Peter by writing poems.[41] This could be interpreted as an embryonic affinity for the Papacy. A clearer example of the interface between Ignatius and ecclesiastical officeholders occurred in Jerusalem. The

[36] *MI Epp*. IV:679. *LI*, p. 419.
[37] O'Malley, *The First Jesuits*, pp. 329–333.
[38] *MI Epp*. IV:680. *LI*, pp. 419–420.
[39] Letter from Ignatius of Loyola to Cladius, Negus of Ethiopia, Rome, 23 February 1555, *MI Epp*. VIII:460–467 [at 466]. *LI*, p. 548. The Spanish manuscript has "obey the Church in what it ordains" (*obedecer a la Iglesia en lo que ordenare*), which is not as absolute as the 'whatever' in the English translation above.
[40] *Autobiography* [*Aut*], n. 3, *PW*, p. 14.
[41] *FN* II, p. 517.

Autobiography relates how Ignatius was firmly convinced that it was God's will that he should go to the Holy Land with the purpose of visiting holy places and 'helping souls', the latter possibly equivalent to spreading the Gospel among Muslims.[42] However, the provincial of the Franciscan order, who had authority over Christians in Israel, forbade Ignatius to remain there, presumably for reasons of safety. Ignatius at first insisted on staying but eventually yielded and obeyed when the Franciscan Provincial threatened him with excommunication.[43] The *Autobiography* laconically states: "now that it was not the will of Our Lord that he should remain in those holy places".[44] The *Autobiography*, furthermore, reports three trials that the Spanish Inquisition imposed on Ignatius. It may therefore come as a surprise to learn that Ignatius, in 1542, urged cardinals to encourage the Pope to set up a Roman Inquisition against 'errors'.[45]

[42] *Aut*, n. 45, *PW*, p. 34.
[43] *Aut*, n. 46, *PW*, pp. 34–35.
[44] *Aut*, n. 47, *PW*, p. 35.
[45] *MI Epp*. I:218–219. Letter from Ignatius to Simão Rodrigues, Rome, 28 July 1542.

2.3 Priority given to the authority of the individual

Priority given to the authority of the individual is manifestly stated in some of the annotations, that is to say introductory guidelines to the *Spiritual Exercises*. It is by means of withdrawal from society, going on retreat, that the voice of God is heard. "As a general rule in making the Exercises, the more one disengages oneself from all friends and acquaintances, and from all worldly preoccupations, the more profit will there be."[46] The very first annotation, in which the purpose of the Exercises is declared, likewise, reflects a trust in the capacity of the human person to discover God's will: "one might seek and find the divine will in regard to the disposition of one's life for the good of the soul."[47] The second annotation also goes down the road of exploration. The spiritual director should leave the person alone in his or her encounter with God:

> Whether this [understanding the history] results from one's own reasoning or from the enlightenment of divine grace, this is more gratifying and spiritually profitable than if the director had explained and developed at length the meaning of the history. For it is not so much knowledge that fills and satisfies the soul, but rather the intimate feeling and relishing of things (*el sentir y gustar de las cosas internamente*).[48]

God and the human person are assumed to communicate directly with one another, a fact which leaves the spiritual director in a peripheral position:

> The giver of the Exercises should not be swayed or show preference for one side rather than the other, but remaining in the middle like the pointer of a balance, should leave the Creator to work directly with the creature, and the creature with the Creator and Lord (*deje inmediate obrar al Criador con la criatura, y la criatura con su Criador y Señor*).[49]

The relationship with Jesus Christ is very individual. God's call is unique, in that "to all and to each one in particular His call goes out" as seen in the meditation on

[46] *SpEx*, n. 20, *PW*, p. 288.
[47] *SpEx*, n. 1, *PW*, p. 283.
[48] *SpEx*, n. 2, *PW*, p. 283.
[49] *SpEx*, n. 15, *PW*, p. 286.

Christ the eternal King.[50] The response is also meant to be individual; the person praying speaks with Jesus, asking him- or herself: "what ought I do for Christ?"[51] The climax of this personal response is at the election mentioned above. Ignatius sees three situations (literally: 'times') in which a choice is made. All of them give weight to the individual:

> FIRST TIME This is when God Our Lord so moves and attracts the will that without doubting or being able to doubt, such a dedicated soul follows what is shown, just as St Paul and St Matthew did when they followed Christ Our Lord.
> SECOND TIME A time when sufficient light and knowledge is received through experience of consolations and desolations, and through experience of the discernment of different spirits.
> THIRD TIME This is a tranquil time. It considers first of all the purpose for which human beings exist, viz. to praise God Our Lord and to save their souls. Desiring this end, one chooses as means of life or state within the limits set by the Church, in order to find thereby a help to the service of one's Lord and the salvation of one's soul. I called this 'tranquil' time as then the soul is not disturbed by different spirits and can use her natural powers freely and calmly.[52]

All three times are undertaken within the provision of not moving into a territory that the 'holy mother church hierarchical' would condemn. Yet, within that space there is room for the individual to explore. Notice that in the 'third time' the person chooses and "uses her natural powers freely and calmly". There is no coercion from Church authority, even if presumably the tranquillity in question describes the absence of movements either by good or evil spirits. In the 'second time', when there are movements of spirits, the person is meant to explore their character. Ignatius explains this in his directory on the *Spiritual Exercises* as he assumes that God moves the person:

> Among the three modes [times] of making an election, if God does not move him in the first he ought to dwell on the second, that of recognizing his vocation by the experience of consolations and desolations. Then, as he continues with his meditations on Christ our Lord, he should examine, when he finds himself in consolation, in which direction God is moving him; similarly in desolation.[53]

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[50] *SpEx*, n. 95, *PW*, p. 304.
[51] *SpEx*, n. 53, *PW*, p. 296.
[52] *SpEx*, n. 177, *PW*, pp. 317–318.
[53] *MI Dir.*, p. 76. Autograph Directory of Ignatius, Doc. 1:18; *OG*, p. 9.

The emphasis on the individual's judgement is balanced with a control mechanism, stated in one of the directories, in order to assess the movements of the spirits, namely the 'magisterium' of the Church. González Davila claims in his directory that

> This testing and scrutiny must be done with light, for 'all that is made manifest is light, but all things that are reproved are made manifest by light' [see Eph 5:13]. St. Paul was speaking of the Gnostics, who were the *alumbrados* of ancient times. This light is the word of God, the Church and the public magisterium of God in the Church, together with human reason; all these are from God and cannot be mutually contradictory, 'for he is not the God of dissension but of peace' [1 Cor 14:33]. So the inspiration should be examined by means of the three above-mentioned principles.[54]

The interpretation of this passage is, of course, dependent on what is meant by 'magisterium' and what the early Jesuits understood by the term. In modern times the term is reserved for Congregations within the Holy See. But the French Dominican Yves Congar has drawn attention to changes in meaning throughout the centuries, bringing out that Aquinas distinguished between the 'magisterium of the pastoral or pontifical chair' and the 'magisterium of a master's chair'.[55] Regardless of the type of 'magisterium' that Dávila had in mind, that magisterium does not claim the duty of testing exclusively, since it is supplemented with Scripture, 'the Church' and 'reason'.

In 1552 Ignatius wrote a letter to 'Those Sent on Mission', with messages that would later be included in part VII of the *Constitutions*. Ignatius instructs his fellow Jesuits on the need to consider what kind of spiritual method would be appropriate in a given situation. The key is to adapt to the circumstances that are always going to be so particular

[54] *MI Dir.*, p. 521. Gil González Dávila, Doc. 31:138; *OG*, p. 258.
[55] Congar, 'A Brief History of the Magisterium…' (1982), p. 318.

and unique that no principle could offer a detailed enough norm:

> He [the fellow Jesuit] should preserve the proper manner of proceeding, aiming at humility by starting from below and not getting involved in higher matters except when invited or asked, unless discretion should dictate otherwise, taking into consideration time, place, and persons. This discretion cannot be confined within any rule (*la quale discrezione non può essere compressa per regole alcune*).[56]

The focus in the *Autobiography* is predominantly on Ignatius's intimate relationship with God. The whole tone in the biography may be summarized in Ignatius's experience in the town of Manresa, northwest of Barcelona. Da Câmara says of it: "At this time God was dealing with him in the same way as a schoolteacher deals with a child, teaching him."[57]

[56] *MI Epp*. XII:252–253. Letter from Ignatius To Those Sent on Missions, Rome, 8 October 1552. *LI*, p. 394.
[57] *Aut*, n. 27, *PW*, p. 25.

2.4 Authority of the individual and Church authority both valid

There are cases of dialogue, mutual listening to one another in the primary sources. This is of particular interest, as the dissertation will search for a beginning to the solution of ecclesial problems in this sort of terrain of reciprocal communication. The clearest example is stated in the so-called presupposition of the *Spiritual Exercises*. It claims that Christians need to listen to one another and always start with a benevolent interpretation before any challenge and possible objections:

> So that the director and the exercitant may collaborate better and with greater profit, it must be presupposed that any good Christian has to be more ready to justify than to condemn a neighbour's statement. If no justification can be found, one should ask the neighbour in what sense it is to be taken, and if that sense is wrong he or she should be corrected lovingly. Should this not be sufficient, one should seek all suitable means to justify it by understanding it in a good sense.[58]

Such a tolerant attitude is in principle open to various points of view. For full credibility this norm also needs to give account for how this divergence could be reconciled theologically. The rule above containing the expression "there is the same Spirit who governs and directs us for the good of our souls" was identified as giving priority to ecclesiastical authority. There are, however, three letters in which the expression 'same spirit' could be interpreted in another direction, opening up for a more reciprocal relationship between the individual and the Church. In a letter from 1536 Ignatius wrote to Benedictine sister Teresa Rejadell of the convent of Santa Clara in Barcelona. The main topic in the letter is spiritual discernment. One passage entertains the view that the person's judgment ought to be consistent with ecclesiastical authority.

> Finally, we need to say something about how to understand things which we experience as coming from God our Lord, and how, once understood, to make use of them. It often happens that our Lord moves and drives our soul to one action or another by opening the soul up, that is, by speaking inside it without the din of words, lifting the soul wholly to his divine love so that even if we

[58] *SpEx*, n. 22, *PW*, p. 289.

> wished to resist his impression, we could not. The impression of his which we receive must be in conformity with (*necesario es conformarnos con*) the commandments, the precepts of the Church, and obedience to our superiors, and entirely filled with humility, for the same divine Spirit is present in all this.[59]

There are issues here about how *necesario es conformarnos con* should be translated and interpreted and what kind of status the 'same spirit' has. The necessity could be interpreted as one that excludes all other movements than those consistent with Church teaching as *per se* sinful. In that case it could be slotted in section 2.2 above. It could however be interpreted as accommodating one's own certainty to the prevailing norms of the Church. What is more, translating "we must conform ourselves to" is, more active than letting the impression "be in conformity with".[60]

Another letter is certainly a shining example of an account in which the Holy Spirit, in Ignatius's world-view, can tolerate opposite positions. The Emperor Charles V had asked Pope Julius III to confer the cardinal's hat on the early Jesuit, Francis Borja. Coming to the position after a three-day long discernment that he was against the appointment, Ignatius came to a theological conclusion:

> However, I held then and hold now that there would be no contradiction in its being God's will for me to take this course while others take a different one and the dignity to be conferred upon you. The same divine Spirit could move me to this course for one set of reasons and move others to the opposite for different ones, with the outcome being what the Emperor indicated.[61]

There are other examples of deliberations in connection with possible appointments of Jesuits as bishops or cardinals. As far as the example with Claude Le Jay is concerned, Ignatius does not deny that King Ferdinand of Austria, who wished to appoint Jay bishop, had holy intentions. Ignatius, nevertheless, vigorously resists and posits four

[59] *MI Epp*. I:105. Letter from Ignatius to Teresa Rejadell, Venice, 18 June 1536. *LI*, pp. 21–22.
[60] Philip Endean, 'Discerning Behind the Rules: Ignatius's First Letter to Teresa Rejadell' (1989), 37–50.
[61] *MI Epp*. IV:284. Letter from Ignatius to Francis Borja, Rome, 5 June 1552. *LI*, pp. 376–377.

arguments against such an appointment.[62] On this occasion Ignatius seems to favour his own authority and does not theologically explain how his view can be reconciled with the King's, in the same way he intended to in the letter to Borja. The absence of theological categories may be due to the fact that Ignatius wrote to a king and not to clergyman, theological explanations would all the same have been interesting.

A third instance of the expression 'same spirit' is to be found in the letter to the Emperor of Ethiopia mentioned above. In the draft version of this letter, the idea of the 'same spirit' comes up: "We must consider it as a unique grace (which it is), that we are united with the mystical Body of the Catholic Church. For the Church receives life and guidance from the Holy Spirit. And the very same Spirit teaches the Church and inspires her with every truth."[63] The function of the Spirit is to warrant unity, implicitly acknowledging that there are different views. Moreover, towards the end of the letter, acceptance of doctrine among the faithful appears in the notion of *sensus fidelium* (sense of the faithful): "This is what the councils have decreed; this is what has been approved by the common consent of all the faithful servants of Christ our Lord."[64] So, Ignatius assumes differences, but he seeks to avoid controversy, a 'spirit of contradiction', at least publicly. For example, a question arose whether students at the Jesuit College in Gandía, Spain, should swear an oath that they believed in the Immaculate Conception of Our Lady (which became a dogma only in 1854). In a letter to the rector of the college, Ignatius holds that, even though the Jesuits themselves believed in the doctrine, such an oath would not be appropriate because: "Although all of us in the Society whom I know hold that it was so, it is not appropriate for us to condemn the opposite view since the Church does not condemn

[62] *MI Epp*. I:450–453. Letter from Ignatius to Ferdinand of Austria, Rome, December 1546. *LI*, pp. 154–156.
[63] *MI Epp*. VIII:473. Letter from Ignatius to Claudius Negus of Ethiopia, Rome, 16 February 1555.
[64] *MI Epp*. VIII:467. Letter from Ignatius to Claudius Negus of Ethiopia, Rome, 23 February 1555. *LI*, p. 549.

it. Nor is it suitable to adopt a spirit (as some would interpret it) implying overt contradiction."[65]

There is, accordingly, respect for views that are contrary to one's own, here with the concern not to create divisions. As far as the *Constitutions* are concerned, they presuppose that an inner authority guides the person. The *Constitutions* were nevertheless necessary, partly because the Pope ordered them, as is expressed in the preface:

> […] although on our own part what helps most toward this end must be, more than any exterior constitution, the interior law of charity and love which the Holy Spirit writes and imprints upon hearts; nevertheless, since the gentle disposition of Divine Providence requires cooperation from his creatures, and since too the vicar of Christ our Lord has ordered this, and since the example given by the saints and reason itself teach us so in our Lord, we think it necessary that constitutions should be written.[66]

Authority of the individual Jesuit and authority of the order are, therefore, both taken into account. In section 2.2 above religious obedience was predominantly understood as giving priority to superior authority, qualified by the principle of representation. The letters on obedience to the Jesuits in Portugal need to be supplemented with passages from the *Constitutions* on governance. Governance in the Society of Jesus is very much based on the principle of listening to the subjects. Each Jesuit is meant to give an account of conscience, the purpose of which is clearly and repeatedly stated as that the superior should be equipped to better direct the subjects and treat them "with so much greater diligence, love and care".[67] The better informed the better are the resources to direct individually and accurately.

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[65] *MI Epp*. II:549. Letter from Ignatius, Juan de Polanco on commission, to Andrés de Oviedo, Rome, 5 October 1549.
[66] *MI Const*. II, p. 260. *Const.*, n. 134, p. 56.
[67] *MI Const*. II, p. 75. *Const.*, n. 92, p. 43, see also nn. 91, 93–98, 551.

The way the Society of Jesus took shape also shows how the early Jesuits saw authority as something to be shared. In 1539 those who were to become the first Jesuits gathered for a deliberation, several months long, with two questions. First, whether they should form a religious community so as to be united even though dispersed in the world. Second, whether they should elect one among them to be superior, displaying the advantages and disadvantages of that. Particularly noteworthy is the concern to stimulate free judgment and to avoid coercion: "The second was a way of making sure that the advantages or disadvantages anyone proposed for or against the vow of obedience would be his own, coming from his prayer and reflection rather than from hearing what others thought."[68] A sense of collegiality is also manifest in the first General Congregation in 1558 and in subsequent Congregations. (For sake of clarification, it needs to be stated that the themes of manifestation of conscience and collegiality among the early Jesuits are under-articulated in the writings of twentieth-century and contemporary scholars.)

[68] Toner, *Discerning God's Will*, p. 186, also p. 176.

2.5 Jerónimo Nadal on 'bad Catholics' and misbelievers

The Spanish Dominican inquisitor Thomás de Pedroche made charges against the *Spiritual Exercises* for giving excessive priority to the individual. The early Jesuit Jerónimo Nadal responded to this by steering away from the focus on the individual, while at the same time not leaving spiritual discernment entirely to customs, the tradition and ecclesiastical office-holders. His standpoint acknowledges personal discovery and experience on the one hand, holding on to and even defending Church teaching on the other. In the end he sets severe limits to which Christian decisions are a matter of private judgment. It could be argued that Nadal favours the position that authority of the individual and ecclesiastical authority are both valid (section 2.4 above), even though the stress in his argument is more on Church in the sense of community than of hierarchy. Nadal's views are particularly relevant for our discussion because he is one of the few early Jesuits who pronounces on the question under what conditions '*malos christianos*' (in some way comparable with what today are known as 'lapsed Catholics') and those Nadal calls 'heretics' (some comparison possible with non-Catholic Christians of our time) can make Ignatian Exercises. A condition for them, in Nadal's mind, is that they undergo 'conversion', which may be understood both in moral, intellectual and denominational terms (even if different Christian churches had not yet acquired organizational structures in the 1550's). Nadal carries the conviction that the teachings, values, norms and practices of the Roman Catholic Church are true and worth striving for. Making spiritual exercises can be seen as a process by which the goal of conversion to this truth is reached, and in this connection Nadal asserts that Ignatian Exercises can be 'accommodated' to 'infidels, heretics and bad Christians' (*infideles, haereticos, malos christianos*). The way towards the goal can be 'accommodated', not truth itself.

Jerónimo Nadal (1507–1580) was born in Majorca in a family with Jewish background, so-called *conversos*, new Christians. He studied humanities at the University of Alcalá de Henares as from 1526, that is to say at the same time as Ignatius of Loyola. The two knew of one another, but did not, however, develop any close friendship at that stage. In 1545, some twenty years later, Nadal joined Ignatius's group, living in the novitiate in the house near the chapel *Santa Maria della Strada* (today *La chiesa del Gesù*) in Rome. He proved to be an extraordinarily receptive learner of the Ignatian charism. In a letter to Diego Miró, the Jesuit provincial of Portugal, Ignatius's secretary Juan de Polanco testified that Nadal's grasp of these things was pre-eminent: "He knows our Fr. Ignatius very well, since he has had extensive dealings with him. I think that he has grasped and penetrated the Society's Institute better than any other I know in the Society."[69] Nadal was consequently entrusted with a range of key tasks in the nascent Society of Jesus. In 1553 he was appointed general's delegate (*commissarius*) of the Society in Spain and in Portugal. There and in other European countries he visited Jesuit communities and institutions with the main assignment to explain the Jesuit *Constitutions*, but also to convey the essence of the *Spiritual Exercises* and narrate the life of Ignatius for the rapidly growing order, many of whose members had never met its founder personally. Ignatius's trust in Nadal's judgement was unrestricted, as Polanco notes: "When Father Ignatius sent him as commissary to Spain and Portugal, besides the letters sent to princes and many other people, showing how confident he was he gave [Nadal] many blank pages to be used for both private letters and letters patent, each bearing his signature and stamped with the seal of the Society."[70]

[69] Bangert, William V., *Jerome Nadal, S.J. 1507–1580* (1992), p. 91.
[70] *Chron.* III:439. *YY*, p. 312. Bangert (1992), p. 91.

That Nadal was a man of prayer, and reflected attentively on prayer, is evident from his *Orationis observationes*, a composition of notes taken down over the period of time between 1545 and 1577. By way of simplification, it could be said that a typical characteristic of his view on spirituality was to unite prayer and action. He is the one who, when describing Ignatius, coins the phrase *simul in actione contemplativus*.[71] (This phrase appears only once in a single text and is much more frequently used now than it was then.) In various ways Nadal saw a circle of prayer and work, the one feeding the other.[72] There is a cyclical movement: "A Jesuit leaves his formal morning prayer with certain convictions, attitudes, and ideas that remain in his memory and inform the action of the day. These fruits of prayer (*reliquiae cogitationum, ex oratione remanentes*) penetrate his interior and help him to labour with fervour."[73] Nadal also articulated this in terms of the triad of 'spirit, heart and practice' (*spiritu*, *corde*, *practice*).[74] Moreover, Nadal drew on Denys the Areopagite mainly with regard to human limits of knowing the divine, and on Bonaventure as regards spiritual senses.[75] In conlusion, when the Spanish Inquisition comes along Nadal is suited to reply, thanks to his knowledge of Ignatius's intention and mindset, his knowledge of the *Spiritual Exercises* and spirituality generally as well as his position as the general's delegate for Spain and Portugal.

In 1548 Melchor Cano, the Spanish Dominican teaching in Salamanca, held Lenten sermons very critical of the Jesuits in general and the *Spiritual Exercises* in particular.[76] To Juan Silíceo, the archbishop of Toledo, he sent a copy of the *Spiritual*

[71] *M Nadal*, V:162; *M Nadal* IV:651.
[72] Bangert (1992), 119; *M Nadal* V:92; *Orat. Obs*. n. 301, p. 120,
[73] Bangert (1992), p. 118. *M Nadal* V:92.
[74] Nadal, *Orat. Obs*. n. 817, p. 252; n. 464, p. 163; Bangert (1992), pp. 218, 247.
[75] Bangert (1992), pp. 17, 53–54, 155, 257.
[76] *Chron.* I:260–261. *YY*, pp. 80–81.

Exercises considering them worthy of condemnation.[77] In other words, this became a matter for the Spanish Inquisition. Another Dominican, Thomás de Pedroche, a lecturer in theology at the College of St. Peter Martyr in Toledo, made his observations known in *Censura exercitiorum S. Ignatii confecta et archiepiscopo toletano oblata anno 1553*.[78] Pedroche had difficulties with the idea that God would communicate directly with the human person, the notion of indifference, how the elections were made, as well as with the rules for discernment.[79] In short, he is sceptical and critical towards what he perceives to be exaggerated reliance on grasping messages from the Holy Spirit internally. He rejects this as illuminism:

> Similarly, it should be noted and pondered over, that this aforementioned Ignatius or Iñigo drew and put together these exercises and spiritual documents more out of his experience within his own breast, and out of the inner anointing of the Holy Spirit, than from the books. The source from which he knows all this is the *dejados* and the *alumbrados*. These have left aside and put behind them that which is revealed in books, and remit and hand themselves over to what the spirit says to them within their breast. They hold as infallible that the spirit of God is always speaking to them.[80]

As he comments on the 'first time' to make an election (section 2.3 above) Pedroche queries the conditions and circumstances around the choice:

> How do the Gentiles, and others who–to put it negatively–are infidels, make a choice, since they don't have that love infused from heaven, nor that theological virtue of charity? And how do the heretics, who also are lacking that charity communicated to them, make an Election? And how do believers who are in mortal sin make a choice.[81]

[77] Sometime between 1552 and 1556 he also specified his critique in *Censura y parecer que dio contra el Instituto de los PP. Jesuitas*. See Terence O'Reilly, *From Ignatius Loyola to John of the Cross* (1995) p. 370.
[78] *Chron.* III:503–523.
[79] *Chron.* III:505, 509, 510, 530, 563.
[80] *Chron.* III:505.
[81] *Chron.* III:515–516. Nadal, Jerónimo, 'Exercises for Infidels, Heretics and Sinners', *The Way* (2004), 44.

In actual practice it was a rare event that 'heretics' prayed the Ignatian Exercises, only a handful have in fact been recorded.[82] Nadal, nevertheless, ventures into responding extensively in a sort of speculative way.[83] His initial comment is unambiguous:

> […] we give Elections of this kind to people who, after a general confession and holy communion, are examining their conscience as often as daily, who are going to confession and attending Mass regularly, who are giving themselves to devout meditation on the sacred gospel, who have set aside all the impediments that could alienate them from holiness, and thus are approaching the Election devoutly and piously. First convert the infidels and heretics, first set the wayward faithful in order and give them the proper disposition so that they have the capacity for our Elections; then we'll teach them (*converte tu primum infideles, haereticos, perversos fideles compara ac dispone, ut nostrarum sint electionum capaces; eos tunc docebimus*).[84]

Nadal's starting-point is, thus, that all human beings are in need of conversion. The universality of this need is also expressed in *Orationis observationes*: "The threefold way is always to be practised by the religious, and indeed by any Christian. I am saying this also after he has been purged by the sacraments and contrition."[85] On another occasion Nadal writes: "Do you wish to progress to enlightenment and contemplation? Cleanse your heart!"[86]

The term 'conversion' may, here in Nadal's *Apologia*, mean raising moral standards as well as doctrinal reorientation, but possibly also conversion in terms of Christian affiliation (even if ecclesiastical structures had not yet been set up in the 1550s). It is certainly a matter of intensifying sacramental life and meditating the Gospels, and to 'set aside all the impediments'. This conviction of everyone's need of conversion governs Nadal's overall pedagogy that is slightly different for each group: 'infidels', 'heretics' and

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[82] *Chron.* I:102–103; *M Fabri*, p. 353.
[83] 'Apologia pro Exercitiis S. P. Ignatii', *M Nadal* IV:820–826, *Chron.* III:527–583, *M Nadal* IV:827–873. Spanish trans. by Miguel Lop Sebastià (www.ignaziana.org). Sections translated into English in: *The Way* (2004), 43–50.
[84] *M Nadal* IV:848; *The Way* (2004), p. 45.
[85] Nadal, *Orat. Obs.*, n. 56, p. 47. See general confession, *Orat. Obs.*, n. 40, p. 43.
[86] Nadal, *Orat. Obs.*, n. 47, p. 44. See also *Orat. Obs.*, n. 478, p. 166.

'bad Christians'. The view conveyed in the quotation above is a sort of principal norm, but further down in the argument, Nadal proves to be flexible and sees ways of proceeding both for 'infidels' (which we will not discuss here since the dissertation is interested in baptised Christians) and for 'heretics' and 'bad Christians'.

> And so much so, if you want to hear my opinion, that this is my belief: for all of these [the infidel, heretic or faithful] our Exercises can be accommodated (*posse exercitia nostra accommodari*), even for infidels, if we draw on the principles of the law of nature in the teaching of Paul (Romans 1 and Acts 17–the speech to the people on the Areopagus).[87]

Paul at the Areopagus is the biblical basis for openness in giving the Ignatian Exercises to infidels, but in the context of the quotation it may also count for the two other groups. What, then, does 'accommodation' actually mean for 'bad Christians' and for 'heretics'? Dealing with 'those who are in mortal sin' is 'really easy', Nadal maintains.[88] The spiritual director should 'confront them' if they attempt to jump over necessary stages: "… when they have been purged and justified, we will give them the Elections. If they want to take counsel about their state of life before they have wept over their sins and before they have come to the sacraments of penance and of Holy Communion, then we confront them (*cum his nos contendemus*)."[89] In a way Nadal's pedagogy for 'those who are in mortal sin' is not very different from letting a 'good' Catholic go through the Exercises.

As far as the 'heretics' are concerned, 'accommodation' consists in that this group need not participate in the sacraments. "Indeed, they will easily receive the whole Foundation and the whole First Week. And if there is no compulsion arising from its being Holy Week and Easter, they can accomplish the First Week without confession or

[87] *M Nadal* IV:849; *The Way* (2004), p. 46.
[88] *M Nadal* IV:850; *The Way* (2004), p. 49.
[89] *M Nadal* IV:851; *The Way* (2004), p. 49.

communion."[90] The possibility that 'heretics' could at all receive Communion reflects the historical circumstance that the Roman Catholic Church was not yet fully divided in a structural sense in the 1550s. Nadal made a similar concession some years earlier, presumably in 1552, in *Orationis observationes*. The important condition this time, however, was that the 'Lutherans' would submit themselves to the spirit of the Lord and to the Church (*tantum spiritui Domini sese subdant et Ecclesiae*).[91] 'Accommodation' seems, then, to mean also that there is a step-by-step pedagogy of teaching the 'heretics' so that they return to the right path. This is done in given moments during the process, as follows. Nadal initially puts discussion about doctrine on hold: "it is not, however, necessary for them to deal with the truths in which they offend, just as has been said regarding infidels. At this point, if they really exercised themselves in penitence, I hope they will manage this anyway. For as they move away from these sins, which are the reason why God gave them over into error and into perverse feeling, they will be the more fit to recognise the error of their understanding, and to admit the light of faith."[92] Should this fail, however, the 'heretic' is supposed to meditate the life of Christ, which follows in the Second Week of the Exercises (presumably without, however, making the election). If that, in its turn, does not help either, then disputation is called for.

> If by these meditations they do not become more free from what has taken their fancy, then peacefully and quietly we should move on to disputation. In this case, as if according to the third 'time' of Elections, the person should put their arguments forward, and the instructor set Catholic truth against that.[93]

The spiritual director, thus, has an active role. If even this too fails, there remains only one, drastic measure: "Finally, if no movement occurs, they are to be shunned, unless they can be handed over to the judge; for they are condemned by their own

[90] *M Nadal* IV:850; *The Way* (2004), p. 48.
[91] Nadal, *Orat. Obs*., n. 228, p. 100.
[92] *M Nadal* IV:850; *The Way* (2004), p. 48.
[93] *M Nadal* IV:850; *The Way* (2004), p. 48.

judgment."[94] The drastic measure of employing a judge, in other words to a public heresy trial, illustrates that Nadal definitely has conversion at the heart of his pedagogy.

In order to put the exposition above into context, it should be remembered that sacraments were part and parcel of the spiritual exercises in early Jesuit practice. It is noteworthy that Ignatius's secretary, Juan de Polanco, mentions spiritual exercises together with confession and Holy Communion in a triad as he describes the ministry in his *Chronicle*.[95] Similarly Nadal reports from the Jesuit college in Messina, Sicily, that the "Exercises were given to men and women in our church" (*si danno essercitii a homini et donne nella chiesa nostra*) and that they made confession and received communion.[96] Moreover, 'accommodation', or rather 'application', was a standard way of proceeding. As far as the Jesuits themselves were concerned, the duration and presumably the form could vary.[97] For others a diversity of forms was offered, most commonly the model which today is known as 'retreat in every day life'.[98] In terms of the contents the *Constitutions* stated that the Exercises would only in some cases go beyond the 'First Week', and seldom reach the 'Election'. "Generally, only the exercises of the First Week ought to be given. When the Exercises are given in their entirety, it should be to exceptional persons or to those who desire to decide upon their state of life."[99] Ignatius makes this point also in a letter, written on commission by Polanco, from 1554.

> Regarding the Spiritual Exercises, Our Father has commissioned me to send a reminder everywhere that we should endeavour to make use of them with both men and women (the latter, however, should come to the church to receive them). This refers to giving the exercises of the First Week and leaving the persons with some methods of prayer suitable to their capacity; and to Exercises where the person is not put into seclusion but takes a few hours each day for

[94] *M Nadal* IV:850; *The Way* (2004), p. 48.
[95] *Chron.* I:236. *YY*, p. 74. *Chron.* I:276–277; IV:410.
[96] *M Nadal* I:121–122. Letter from Jerónimo Nadal to Ignatius, Messina, December 1551.
[97] Ignacio Iparraguirre, *Historia de los Ejercicios de San Ignacio de Loyola*, vol. II (1955), pp. 257–276.
[98] Iparraguirre, *Práctica de los Ejercicios de San Ignacio de Loyola* (1946), pp. 76–82; 145–148.
[99] *MI Const*. II, p. 449. *Const.*, n. 409, p. 170.

> this purpose. In this way we can extend to large numbers of people the usefulness of the Exercises up through the general confession and methods of prayer, as already stated.[100]

Let us return to Nadal's defence. It needs once again to be said that he had probably not met any 'heretics' in real life when he wrote the *Apologia* in 1553, save for what he might have experienced while studying theology in Paris 1532–1533. He basically reacts within a Spanish context and its version of illuminism, as expressed in *alumbrados*, whereas 'heretics' and 'Lutherans' are projected images based on hearsay of something going on abroad. Nadal's perspectives arguably shifted when he set foot in Germany in 1555. The *Apologia* (from 1553), therefore, might have been even less generous towards 'heretics' had the encounter with actual people taken place. Apart from conveying the charisma of the Society of Jesus to his fellow Jesuits, Nadal was also drawn into the highest official scene of assemblies. He participated in the theological deliberations of the third and final session of the Council of Trent (1562–1563).[101] But he was confronted with the confessional divide, albeit not yet fully developed, already in 1555. Pope Julius III asked Ignatius of Loyola to send two representatives from the Society of Jesus to attend the diet of Augsburg in 1555. He chose Laínez and Nadal. In his biography on Nadal, Bangert states: "What Nadal derived from these men and from his personal observation in Augsburg shocked him. All he knew about the Lutheran religion he had learned from books."[102] What, more precisely, caused the shock? Based on a letter he wrote to Ignatius on 30th of March 1555, it seems to have been a very general assessment of Germany:

> Father, I thought it good to represent to your Paternity, although certainly you know this better than we do, the extreme need and total misery of this nation. It

[100] *MI Epp*. VI:281. Letter from Ignatius to Filippo Leerno, Rome, 3 February 1554. *LI*, p. 468.
[101] Bangert (1992), p. 305.
[102] *ibid*., p. 141.

> is such, as I was saying today to the Count of Laubach, that one cannot consider any aspect of it except with intense tears and infinite compassion.[103]

Moral decay, confessional split, lack of education among the clergy may have been what he had in mind. In a more private setting, Nadal could be quite rude about 'heretics'. He could be sharp and express strong views. It is worth noting that Nadal did not find unanimous support for his opinions about 'Protestants': "At dinner at Cardinal Morone's residence, he [Nadal] spoke bitingly about the Protestants. Apparently the cardinal and Laínez admonished him that he was going too far."[104] Nadal, moreover, was not precisely diplomatically minded when he explained to the Jesuits at Cologne in 1567, with some confusion of dates, that: "So, in the same year Luther was called by a demon, Father Ignatius was called by God" (*Eodem itaque anno, quo fuit Lutherus a daemone vocatus, Pater Ignatius a Deo*).[105]

The point I want to make is that doctrinal teaching and church affiliation did matter for Nadal. In the college in Vienna, Austria, Nadal attempted, unsuccessfully, to confiscate books and catechisms written by Protestants.[106] He was also instrumental in various publications that emphasised the characteristics and the continuity of the Catholic Church. In a letter to Ignatius in 1555 Nadal says:

> For this reason, Father, we have been trying, through the Austrian Chancellor, a very Catholic and learned man, to have set up in Vienna a good printing press in the King's name. From it should be published a daily stream of Catholic books and other works free of error. Also new books should be written against the plague spread by Luther. The Chancellor agreed on a text to go to His Majesty, asking him to command a Catholic history writer of his realm to produce a book that would demonstrate historically the succession of the Holy Church, telling of its councils and of the opposed heretics and heresies. Especially important is

[103] *M Nadal* I:289. Letter from Jerónimo Nadal to Ignatius, Augsburg, 30 March 1555. Translation from Italian made by Jared Wicks. Laubach was a small principality in southern Hessen, Germany, north of Frankfurt and west of Passau.
[104] Bangert (1992), p. 140.
[105] *M Nadal* V:780.
[106] Bangert (1992), p. 146.

> to show the authority and succession of the Roman Church, with its continuity in faith and doctrine, and the obedience due to the Apostolic See. This should show concisely everything that can help against the heretics in Germany, for refuting them and for confirming the Catholics.[107]

In letters to Ignatius, Nadal declared his disposition, with great emotional commitment, to stay in Germany and work in the mission there.[108] He went so far as to claim that the purpose of the Society of Jesus was to do mission in Germany. "I believe that God Our Lord raised the Society and gave it to the Church to down these heretics and infidels."[109] Nadal, thus, spread the (false) interpretation that the Society of Jesus was founded with the aim of combating Protestantism.[110]

We have seen that Jerónimo Nadal grappled with the question regarding Ignatian Exercises at ecclesial frontiers. By way of summary, Ignatian Exercises may under certain conditions be given to 'bad Christians' and to 'heretics'. Nadal says 'yes, but' to them. Nadal's wrestling with the issues also confirms the impression throughout this whole chapter, namely that the relationship between spiritual discernment and ecclesiastical authority is not straightforward. It can be argued that the text of the *Spiritual Exercises* and the pastoral policy outlined by Nadal give some indication and orientation in terms of how to proceed with non-practising Catholics and with non-Catholic Christians. Yet, our contemporary reality is significantly different from Nadal's, since the Enlightenment and modernity stands in between. Urbanization, modern means of communication and different (improved) ecumenical relations may also be mentioned. Moreover, Nadal does not give much guidance for the case, which will be explored in Chapter 7, with the devout Catholic who is at variance with ecclesiastical teaching.

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[107] *M Nadal* I:309–310. Letter from Jerónimo Nadal to Ignatius, Venice, 6 July 1555. Bangert (1992), pp. 146–147. Translation from Italian made by Jared Wicks.
[108] Bangert (1992), pp. 142, 147, 201.
[109] *M Nadal* I:298. Bangert (1992), p. 144.
[110] For the purpose of the origins of the Society of Jesus and the question of 'Counterreformation' see O'Malley, *The First Jesuits*, pp. 321–328; *Trent and All That*, pp. 25, 127–128.

2.6 Sceptical or hostile reactions from all sides

Reactions from various historical periods illustrate how controversial the topic of authority has been. A series of authoritarian statements were presented in section 2.2. Polemical writings against the Jesuits have played on extreme versions of this weight given to Church authority. *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, for example, would talk about the Jesuits as 'shock troops of the Counter reformation'. In the works of serious twentieth-century scholars such as the German church historian Hubert Jedin one still finds images such as:

> Not only theologians went to battle; the whole church was filled with a militant spirit. The warrior Ignatius Loyola gave his company both the structure and spirit of a Christian soldiery; through his *Spiritual Exercises*, this spirit disseminated widely. Just as St Augustine saw world history as a great struggle between the Two Cities, Ignatius presented everyone the choice of fighting with one or the other army. There could be no passive bystanders![111]

A series of statements entrusting judgment to the individual were displayed in section 2.3. That too has caused suspicion. This kind of spirituality with emphasis on the person's judgment led to various Inquisitorial trials as well as the rumour that the early Jesuits were disguised Lutheran preachers. In short, it has provoked charges of illuminism, as we saw in section 2.5. A series of statements suggesting that both ecclesiastical authority and the individual's judgment are valid were displayed in section 2.4. It could be argued that this position was unfolded and developed by moral philosophers belonging to the Society of Jesus in the sixteenth century through Luis de Molina, but above all in the seventeenth century in what became known as probabilism. Probabilism (from Latin *probare*, to test, to prove) is the ethical standpoint that when choosing between different causes of action one may opt for a way that is probable (worth testing) even if the opposite line of action is more probable (has often proven to be right). Jesuit moral theologians examined this theory through various cases, in what became known as casuistry. In mid-

[111] Hubert Jedin, 'Catholic Reformation or Counter-Reformation?' (1999 [German 1946]), p. 41.

seventeenth century thinkers who perceived of Jesuit ethics as lax, complacent and manipulative criticized this model. One of them was Cornelius Jansen, from whom the Jansenist school of thought arose. Another figure was the French scientist and mathematician Blaise Pascal who expressed his reservations couched in terms of ironic language, in the form of satire. In *The Provincial Letters*, published 1656–1657, he ridicules Jesuit moral teaching by letting a fictitious Jesuit say:

> But when people are not in this unhappy state of mind then we try and put into practice our method of *directing the intention*, which consists in setting up as the purpose of one's action some lawful object. Not that we fail to deter men as far as we can from forbidden things, but when we cannot prevent the action, at least we purify the intention; and thus we correct the viciousness of the means by the purity of the end.[112]

Ten years later, in 1667, the polemical discourse continued when a book by the Sorbonne professor Nicolas Perrault (1611–1661) was published anonymously and posthumously under the title *The Jesuits' Morals*. Perrault maintains that "the Doctrine of probability is the most dangerous that ever appeared in the Church and in the world."[113] He claims that a Jesuit moral theologian "makes use of the pretence of a good intention to justify usury."[114] Perrault, furthermore, expounds on a whole series of reasons that Jesuits allegedly used to justify murder.[115] Sometime in this polemical atmosphere the phrase 'the end justifies the means' was eventually coined and attributed to the Jesuits. To my knowledge, this false description of Jesuit ethics appears for the first time in the early nineteenth century, in a German collection on history of philosophy by Johann Gottlieb Buhle. In there, we find the following statement: "To the most odd and pernicious characteristics of Jesuitical ethics belongs the principles: that the purpose sanctifies the means […] that a probable opinion one should act in such and such a way would justify the

[112] Blaise Pascal, *The Provincial Letters* (1982), ch. VII, p. 104.
[113] Nicolas Perrault, *The Jesuits' Morals* (1679), p. 133.
[114] *ibid*., p. 92.
[115] *ibid*., pp. 302–332.

action."[116] It is, moreover, worth noticing that Buhle maintains that Nicolo Machiavelli wrote *The Prince* precisely with the intention to illuminate how malicious the tyrants were who used any means available to hold on to their power.[117]

[116] Johann Gottlieb Buhle, *Lehrbuch der Geschichte der Philosophie*, vol. 6 [Sechster Teil], section 20 [Abschnitt XX], (1800), p. 471.
[117] *ibid*. p. 456.

3. Harmony

The German Jesuit Karl Rahner was one of the most influential theologians in the twentieth century. In the 1940s and 1950s, however, his brother Hugo older by four years, who was also a Jesuit, was actually better known. Hugo Rahner (1900–1968) was a professor in Church history and patristics, and he taught these disciplines at the University of Innsbruck, Austria, between the years 1935 and 1961 (he resided in Switzerland during the Second World War).[1] He was appointed dean of its theology faculty in 1945. Of Hugo Rahner's extensive production, his contributions in the field of Ignatian spirituality belong to his main and lasting achievement.[2] Two pieces stand out: *Ignatius von Loyola und das geschichtliche Werden seiner Frömmigkeit* (1947) and *Ignatius von Loyola als Mensch und Theologe* (1964), the latter being a collection of previously published articles.[3] He also edited, translated and commented on selections from Ignatius's correspondence, and published a picture-book biography.[4]

This chapter will present and critically evaluate Hugo Rahner's approach with regard to the authority of the individual and ecclesiastical authority. His approach is worth examining because it offers a more satisfactory account than both the standpoint of perfect unison (section 1.3) and the mindset of contemporary popular Ignatian authors (section 1.2) provide. One reason for this is that Hugo Rahner assumes that personal relationship with

[1] His doctoral thesis was on falsified papal letters (*Die gefälschten Papstbriefe aus dem Nachlass von Jérôme Vignier*) and his post-doctoral thesis discussed the birth of Christ in the heart of each believer.
[2] As many as 848 titles, if all book reviews and dictionary entries are included, stem from Hugo Rahner, according to Holdt, *Hugo Rahner* (1997), p. 63. His major works in ecclesiology are: *Mater Ecclesia* (1944); *Church and State in Early Christianity* (1961); *Our Lady and the Church* (1961); *Symbols of the Church* (1964).
[3] Hugo Rahner, *The Spirituality of St. Ignatius Loyola: An Account of Its Historical Development* (1970). *Ignatius von Loyola und das geschichtliche Werden seiner Frömmigkeit* (1947, 2nd edn 1949). *Ignatius the Theologian* (1968); 'The Vision of St. Ignatius in the Chapel of La Storta' (1979); 'Ignatius: The Man and The Priest' (1982). All three translated from: *Ignatius von Loyola als Mensch und Theologe* (1964).
[4] Otto Karrer & Hugo Rahner, *Ignatius von Loyola: Geistliche Briefe* (1942); Hugo Rahner *Ignatius von Loyola: Briefwechsel mit Frauen* (1956); Hugo Rahner ed. by Paul Imhof, *Ignatius von Loyola: Trost und Weisung*, *Geistliche Briefe* (1979); Leonard von Matt and Hugo Rahner, *St Ignatius of Loyola: A Pictorial Biography* (1956).

God is closely related to, even dependent on, a relationship with Church community and tradition. He thereby begins to solve the problem, albeit not once and for all. The first section will briefly sketch the background to and context of Hugo Rahner's scholarship. The second section will go through his understanding of the ecclesial dimensions in Ignatius's biography. The third section will examine Hugo Rahner's conception of the Holy Spirit in the mystical tradition of the Church. The line of argument here leans towards priority given to ecclesiastical authority (compare section 2.2 above). The fourth section will take a close look at the process of spiritual discernment. Preference for the authority of the individual is here balanced with 'same spirit' language (compare sections 2.3 and 2.4 above). In all sections we will see that Hugo Rahner repeatedly emphasises continuity. I will, finally, make a critical evaluation and draw conclusions in the fifth section.

3.1 Beyond a centralized Church and beyond asceticism

In order for us to comprehend fully Hugo Rahner's way of thinking and assess his achievement fairly, the historical ecclesial context as well as the condition of Ignatian studies at the time merits a brief comment. Hugo Rahner's scholarship was significantly conditioned by the frosty relationship between the Catholic Church and modernity. Some features in the complex phenomenon of modernity were: a stress on the present and the future while showing little interest for the past; novelty and progress taking priority over tradition; pluralism in terms of culture and world-view; economic and social progress understood to be under human control; finally, conscience was declared to be autonomous in relation to institutions. These ideas were threatening to Catholicism and did not fit congruently with conventional theology and Catholic intellectual life in the latter half of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century. Catholic thinking was ill-equipped to accommodate this transformation, as its thinking had been fixed and static over the previous centuries.

A particularly clear sign of the Church's reluctance to accept liberalism and modernity is illustrated in the centralizing tendencies of the First Vatican Council (1869–1870). The German Jesuit Medard Kehl mentions three factors that led to the First Vatican Council.[5] First, a movement known as the 'Catholic Restoration', which began in the 1820s, reacted against the Enlightenment project and modern liberal society. Obedience and authority, especially Papal authority, were key values here. Second, Papal authority was further strengthened by the so-called *ultramontanism*, which advocated that a strong Papacy was the best way to keep the Church free from the state. Third, a polarisation between France and Germany arose as regards the Church's relationship with the modern world, in a

[5] Medard Kehl, *Die Kirche: Eine katholische Ekklesiologie* (2001), pp. 354–357.

dispute around the theme of papal infallibility. Inertia in the higher circles of the Catholic Church both in terms of relating to the modern world and of developing theology can be illustrated in the case of the Irish Jesuit, George Tyrrell (1861–1909). In 1899 Tyrrell published an article on the doctrine of hell, entitled 'A Perverted Devotion', for the journal *The Weekly Register*. Luis Martín, Superior General of the Society of Jesus, had difficulties with the text and silenced Tyrrell, forbidding him to write except for the journal *The Month*. We shall not go through the arguments and details of this story here, but rather highlight the discrepancy between the assumptions of Church teaching and the everyday life of the average Catholic in England at the turn of the century.

In connection with Tyrrell's aforementioned article, the English Jesuit, Herbert Thurston writes the following in a letter to the English Jesuit, Peter Chandlery, who was secretary to the Superior General's assistant in Rome:

> But Fr General will say why write such an article at all? What is the object of it? Well I submit with all respect that it is very hard for those who live among Catholics in such countries such as France, Italy or Spain to understand the tone of thought of Catholics here in England and the deplorable change which is coming upon us so fast. Even during the few years you have been out of England the movement has been most rapid. Such articles as those of Mivart, or of [?] Vesey etc. in the Times are read by all Catholics without scruple. One finds the laity now urging their difficulties against all revelation at the luncheon table and in the drawing rooms, condemning the action of the Church right and left, and these are good people, mind you, you wish to be known as practising Catholics.[6]

Thus, Catholic theology generally paid the price of losing contact with the Christian faithful, a gap he sought, however dimly, to overcome. Hugo Rahner's decision to become a Jesuit had been partly due to the Swiss Jesuit Moritz Meschler's (1830–1912) writings.[7] He was a typical example of someone who understood Ignatian spirituality as a

[6] Letter from Fr Herbert Thurston S.J. to Fr Peter Chandlery S.J., London 18th February 1900, *A Jesuit Friendship: Letters of George Tyrrell to Herbert Thurston* (1988), p. 77.
[7] Karl Heinz Neufeld, *Die Brüder Rahner* (2004), p. 34.

counterculture to modernity. In his books themes such as self-denial, mortification, virtues, duties and obedience are central.[8] Yet, it seems that Meschler's stress on asceticism was too narrow for Hugo Rahner. He also judged contemporary theology to be inadequate, as we hear in *A Theology of Proclamation* from 1938: "It is clear to us that a considerable dogmatic emptying characterised the pastoral work during the past decades. A 'magnum chaos' laid between our concepts and theses brought from the studies, and the immediate work with souls. It seemed to us that the 'school theology' had become a purely scientific study and to a large extent was no longer handy."[9] The German Jesuit and theologian, Karl Heinz Neufeld, has argued that Hugo (and Karl) Rahner's scholarship in Ignatian studies attempted to reduce the gap between the values of modernity and those of Catholic thinking at the time:

> Both Rahners saw the beginning of their efforts ahead of them–efforts that on the one hand would be part of a Catholic thinking of renewal and openness, but on the other would, quite unquestionably, be leading Catholic tradition forward. There was something to correct; there was something to renew. There was a need to reach out to people to whom the Church and theology had become noticeably more alien. For this task, the initiatives of Ignatius of Loyola, which had been rediscovered thanks to the intense historical studies that had been going on for some decades, seemed to offer the help needed and a serviceable structure.[10]

The 'intense historical studies' refers to the appearance of volumes of the *Monumenta Historica Societatis Iesu* from the 1890s onwards. Hugo Rahner was effectively the first scholar to work seriously on these primary sources, and he judged that work on them was badly needed as previous Ignatian studies had left unfinished business.

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[8] The emphasis on ascetical features is notable especially in Chapter 2 on 'Overcoming oneself' of Moritz Meschler's *Drei Grundlehren des geistlichen Lebens* (1909). See also "Final word on the asceticism of Saint Ignatius" in *Das Exerzitienbuch des hl. Ignatius von Loyola* (1925), pp. 350–356.

[9] My own translation from Hugo Rahner, *Theologie der Verkündigung: 12 Vorlesungen, I. Teil* (Wien: Seelsorger Verlag, 1938), p. 1. The English translation omits the German 'eine dogmatische Entleerung' and contains other errors, *A Theology of Proclamation* (1968), p. 9.

[10] Neufeld, *Die Brüder Rahner*, p. 108.

Assessing the state of research on Ignatian topics in the year 1940, Rahner outlined three characteristics which were required to take Ignatian studies forward:

> 1. A complete and critically reliable edition of all the sources; 2. A critical presentation of his [Ignatius's] life from a standpoint that is honestly and clearly owned, whether of recognition or rejection; 3. An attempt to come to grips with the Saint's innermost being, *i.e.* to sketch Ignatius's 'theo-logic' (*Theologik*), to 'come to grips' with him by starting from what is not himself: starting from God, starting from his dedication without reserve to his project (*das Werk*), starting from the Church. In other words an Ignatius in radical opposition to psychology and mere historical fact (*Historie*).[11]

Such an enterprise was groundbreaking in several ways. It would mark a new era in Ignatian studies and set the tone for a generation of scholars. What this does not mean, in Hugo Rahner's view, is a historical account of Ignatius that confines itself to the biography of an individual, but one that is informed by what he broadly calls 'theo-logic'.[12] As we see in the quotation above, a 'theo-logic' reading meant to interpret Ignatius from the perspective of his relationships: with God, with his mission among people and with the Church. Previous studies had, at best, focused on historical data and on Ignatius's psychological character.[13] At worst they would have been uncritical pious hagiography or unfounded anti-Jesuit polemic, each of which could be challenged by historical sources. To interpret the biography of Ignatius 'critically', and when so doing openly to declare one's assumptions and presuppositions, had been rare. The *Monumenta* provided resources for a more sophisticated account of Ignatius as Hugo Rahner sought to replace the then conventional, baroque image of Rubens and Titian and to paint the founder of the Society of Jesus with different brushstrokes instead.[14] Hugo Rahner was also dissatisfied with the

[11] Hugo Rahner, 'Iñigo López de Loyola' (1940), 96.
[12] The translation of the German 'Theologik' into 'theo-logic' leaves space for distinguishing it from 'theological'. The latter would imply systematic reflection and a deeper meaning than the one Hugo Rahner seems to have intended.
[13] Hugo Rahner acknowledges the contributions of the Spanish Jesuit Pedro de Leturia and the French Jesuit Paul Dudon, but finds them wanting in terms of spiritual depth. Hugo Rahner (1940), 95; 98.
[14] Hugo Rahner (1940), 95.

idea of associating Jesuits with militarism (in the fascist sense of the word) as well as anti-modern traits.

By depicting and examining Ignatius's relationships, Hugo Rahner began to develop a historical and theological account of Ignatius in which his identification with the Church was not limited to strict discipline and an allegiance of un-reflective loyalty. Instead Ignatius's relationship with the Church had to be understood in conjunction with his mysticism. There was something mystical both in Ignatius and in the Church. An attempt to explore the mystical as something present both in the human person and in the Church can already be seen to be different from mainstream Catholic thinking in the latter half of the nineteenth and early twentieth century (and also different from contemporary popular Ignatian literature, section 1.2). Yet Hugo Rahner's interpretation of spirituality went further still. It rested on the conviction that God could be found in the world. The mystical was present not only in Ignatius himself and in the Church, but also in the world.

Hugo Rahner claimed that openness to the world – and therefore the union of action and contemplation – actually constituted the specific nature of the Ignatian charisma. It could actually be argued that this union is constitutive of any Christian vocation. (His brother Karl arguably articulated and developed this line of thought more fully and creatively than Hugo did.) The Rahner brothers rediscovered an expression of Jerónimo Nadal who had described Ignatius as 'contemplative in action' (*in actione contemplativus*).[15] This would become a symbol for the Ignatian charism. Such spirituality needed to be less dependent on ecclesiastical authority as it presupposed greater flexibility in everyday conduct than any general guideline could give. This language suggested that a

[15] For a fuller account of Jerónimo Nadal and the Rahner brothers see Philip Endean, *Karl Rahner and Ignatian Spirituality* (2001), pp. 68–98.

Christian could live fully in the world while maintaining his or her Christian integrity. By bringing the 'mystical' from a sphere of extraordinary phenomenon, and saying that it was compatible with everyday life, Hugo Rahner was loosening the authoritarian claims of Catholic authority on everyday life (despite the conventional non-threatening tone of his writing).

Through all Hugo Rahner's writings there is an attempt to cross disciplinary borders, notably by assuming that history and theology were definitely connected. The conjunction of two disciplines contrasted with a notion of a neutral understanding of history, detached from the divine. He had already developed his basic ideas about the close relationship between history and theology in *Dialektik der Papstgeschichte* and in *A Theology of Proclamation*.[16] In the former he maintains that Church History should have the supernatural as its actual subject matter.[17] For this reason he thought that Church History could never be isolated from theology: "In Church History there is never only the 'purely historical', rather in analogy with the hypostatic union there is a dialectical interlocking of divine and human, historical and supernatural (*Geschichtlichem und Übernatürlichem*), visible and invisible, namely in the sense that the supernatural shows and expresses itself *in* the historical form."[18] In the latter work he holds: "Hence revelation is always roped in (*eingespannt*) space and time, it is always historical, and yet it is necessarily in its innermost (*Innersten*) (since it is the Word of God) invisible, mental (*geistig*), eternal."[19] In the response (section 3.5) I will critically evaluate the strengths and weakness of this historically- and theologically-minded project.

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[16] Johannes Holdt, *Hugo Rahner* (1997), pp. 68–69.
[17] *Dialektik der Papstgeschichte*, p. 101, in Holdt (1997), pp. 75–76.
[18] *Dialektik der Papstgeschichte*, p. 103, in Holdt (1997), p. 76.
[19] My translation from: Hugo Rahner, *Theologie der Verkündigung I. Teil*, p. 9. The English translation has erroneously translated the German 'eingespannt' into 'extended', 'Innerste' into 'inner nature', and 'geistig' into 'spiritual', *A Theology of Proclamation*, p. 20.

3.2 The ecclesial strand in Ignatius's biography

Hugo Rahner claims that Ignatius was 'a man of the Church', leaving the exact meaning of this title open, as far as I can tell. He asserts that Ignatius instantiated an ideal of perfection (*Vollkommenheitsideal*) of service in and for the Church, and shows how this ideal took shape throughout Ignatius's life.[20] Hugo Rahner couches this in terms of a historical becoming (*geschichtliches Werden*) articulated in terms of Aristotelian metaphysics; a being actually developed presupposes a potentiality to do so. In Hugo Rahner's view this is a process of unfolding the ecclesial attitude that was latent from the beginning. On his account Ignatius was related to the Church from the outset, and his development consisted in an increasingly strong attitude of service in and for the Church.

This interpretation contrasts what could be called the standard version of Ignatius's biography, which emphasises a radical shift in what is perceived to be a sudden conversion. Readers who take the *Autobiography* of Ignatius of Loyola at face value are led to believe that Ignatius underwent a radical conversion and a complete shift from the way of life of his youth, with the implication that he had no contact whatsoever with religion until the age of 30. At the time when Hugo Rahner worked on the Ignatian sources and even for a while thereafter few scholars, apart from Pedro de Leturia as we shall see, paid much attention to Ignatius's childhood and youth. The French Jesuit Joseph de Guibert, for instance, begins his account of Ignatius by claiming: "St. Ignatius (Iñigo de Oñaz y Loyola), born in 1491, was a convert. That is, he passed in 1521 from a worldly life to one completely Christian, and even to a life of piety and sanctity."[21]

[20] Hugo Rahner, *The Spirituality of St. Ignatius* (1970), pp. ix–xv (*Werden Frömmigkeit*, pp. 9–14).
[21] de Guibert, *The Jesuits* (1964 [French 1953]), p. 22.

Hugo Rahner looks at this development from three different angles (*Seiten*): 'from below', 'from the side', and 'from above'. The first perspective, which he designates as a perspective 'from below', covers Ignatius's noble and knightly upbringing, in which devotional elements were present. Hugo Rahner assumes that Ignatius's early years laid the foundation for what was to come.[22] As a consequence, his narrative does not centre on the battle at Pamplona as it is presented in the first pages of what is extant from the *Autobiography*. It is widely acknowledged that the details concerning Ignatius's youth are uncertain. Reliable sources are few and far between. Hugo Rahner relies here on the account of the Spanish Jesuit Pedro de Leturia. In his book *El Gentilhombre Iñigo López de Loyola*, Leturia painted a picture of the kind of religious environment, which would have surrounded Ignatius. To this religious environment belongs the parish church in the city of Azpeitia, of which Ignatius's brother was the parish priest, as well as small chapels in the valleys, and pious folk hymns and dances.[23]

Hugo Rahner, furthermore, takes it as a fact that Ignatius was destined for the clerical state.[24] Furthermore, he assumes that Ignatius "often prayed" before "the beautiful picture of the Annunciation still extant in the domestic chapel of Loyola."[25] This painting was a gift from Magdalena de Araoz, Ignatius's sister-in-law, who had contacts with Queen Isabella (together with her spouse Ferdinand known as 'Catholic Kings'). Magdalena de Araoz had an important role in the family in terms of religious education. The Loyola family was under the Castilian King, and loyalty to him was an important virtue. Especially

[22] Hugo Rahner, *The Spirituality of St. Ignatius*, pp. 17; 22 (*Werden Frömmigkeit*, pp. 27–28; 32).
[23] *ibid*., pp. 4–5 (pp. 17–18). Pedro de Leturia, *El Gentilhombre* (1949), pp. 47–48.
[24] Hugo Rahner, *The Spirituality of St. Ignatius*, pp. 5–6 (*Werden Frömmigkeit*, p. 18). The only primary source that supports this is the trial in the year 1515 against Ignatius and his brother Pero López for an unspecified crime. Ignatius appeals to be exempt from the trial due to his alleged clerical privilege. Two witnesses, however, testify that Ignatius had never been inscribed in the registers as a cleric and they had never seen him tonsured or in habit. *MI FD*, pp. 229–246.
[25] Hugo Rahner, *The Spirituality of St. Ignatius*, p. 18 (*Werden Frömmigkeit*, p. 29).

when being trained as a page at the palace of the treasurer of the Castilian King in the town Arévalo and later while serving the Duke of Nájera, Ignatius learnt courtly manners and acquired a sense of the importance of obedience. Hugo Rahner maintains that this biographical record explains the roots to what became the meditation of the 'Call of the King' in the *Spiritual Exercises*, in which there is a comparison between obeying an earthly king and obeying the eternal King, Jesus Christ.[26] To sum up, Hugo Rahner holds that latent religious elements and values from the aristocratic sphere in Ignatius's upbringing provided favourable conditions for his ecclesial mysticism that unfolded later on, not least in terms of learning from tradition in general and being obedient to superiors in particular. Ignatius was accordingly, disposed to be influenced by the pious books that he was about to read; he was prepared "for the appeal of the traditional voices of Christian perfection".[27] Hugo Rahner's construction is largely based on speculation and projection, since little about Ignatius's childhood and youth is known with certainty.

Let us now turn to the angle 'from the side' in Hugo Rahner's overarching interpretation of Ignatius's ecclesial mysticism already latent before unfolding visibly. Hugo Rahner argues that three books in particular were influential as Ignatius was embarking on the quest for perfection in the service of the Church. These were: *Vita Christi* by Ludolph of Saxony, *Legenda Aurea* by Jacobus de Voragine, and *Imitatio Christi* by Thomas Kempis. Of these three, Hugo Rahner maintains that *Legenda Aurea* was the most important. In particular, the lives of Saint Augustine, Saint Dominic, Saint Francis and Saint Onuphrius presented in the *Legenda Aurea* made a deep impression on Ignatius. As he read and reflected upon their lives, the pious preparation from his childhood and youth began to bear fruit. To sum up, in the perspective 'from the side', Hugo Rahner argues that

[26] *ibid.*, pp. 10–11 (pp. 22–23).
[27] *ibid.*, p. 17 (p. 28).

there was a clear ecclesial mediation through the saints of the Church on Ignatius. This mediation comes from literature: "We must therefore firmly hold to the view that these first spiritual experiences were produced in him, not solely and exclusively by scrutiny of the interior movements in his soul, but also, and accompanying it, by the reading of these two, so to say, 'conversion' works."[28]

Unlike the previous two angles, that focused on the influence of human mediation and mediation from literature, the third perspective 'from above' deals with communication directly with God. This mainly covers the experiences and visions Ignatius had in the city of Manresa, northwest of Barcelona. During his stay there, Ignatius experienced intensely and dramatically how good and evil spirits affected him, an experience through which he started to learn the art of discernment of spirits. The encounter with God is now of an immediate nature and in Hugo Rahner's eyes these events are more intense and powerful than what had gone on so far. It is the perspective 'from above' that "offers a fully satisfactory explanation" to the origin of Ignatius's *Spiritual Exercises* and his strong commitment to the Church. Hugo Rahner imposes a construction on the primary sources as he claims that all spiritual experiences in Ignatius's life converge and that 'a new soldier of Christ' is identical with being a man of the Church: "at Manresa occurred God's mystical invasion into the soul of Inigo, conquering all opposition, linking together all Inigo's previous spiritual experiences, yet at the same time sovereignly transcending them with the object of making them, as he acknowledges in his autobiography, "a new soldier of Christ," a man of the Church."[29] As he interprets the text, Hugo Rahner asserts that this

[28] *ibid.*, p. 29 (pp. 37–38).
[29] *ibid.*, p. 47 (p. 53).

spiritual battle eventually led Ignatius to enter "the ranks of those great men in the history of the Church" who had fought in the *Ecclesia militans* against the powers of evil.[30]

Furthermore, one of the five visions Ignatius had in Manresa took place in a monastery church, while attending Mass. There, according to the *Autobiography*, he clearly saw "how Jesus Christ Our Lord was present in that most holy sacrament."[31] Hugo Rahner connects these mystical experiences with ecclesiology in more general terms, a connection which perhaps is not obvious. This interpretation relies on Jerónimo Nadal's view, whom Hugo Rahner quotes through a homily given by Pedro de Leturia (1891–1955). Nadal claimed: "At that time Ignatius began to probe deeply into his soul and to experience the variety of spirits. And in this the Lord gave him a sublime understanding and very lively feelings (*sentimientos muy vivos*) in regard to the divine mysteries and the Church."[32]

Hugo Rahner also uses Ignatius's exterior behaviour to make his case that Ignatius's experience in Manresa deepened his sense of being a 'man of the church'. The fact that Ignatius eventually gave up his ascetical and penitential rituals is for Hugo Rahner a decisive turning point from inwardness to relationships. He conceives of it as a sign of a turn [German: *Kehr*] towards the 'Church' in the sense of apostolic service: "He [Ignatius] states explicitly that the abandonment of his penance was the consequence of his mystical illuminations and of his turning [*Kehr*] to 'the help of souls', which really is to say to the 'Church'."[33] It is worth noticing that Hugo Rahner does not assert that Ignatius

[30] *ibid.*, p. 47 (p. 53).
[31] *Aut*, n. 29, *PW*, p. 26.
[32] Hugo Rahner, *Ignatius the Theologian*, p. 218. *FN* I, pp. 306–307. According to Diego Laínez, moreover, Ignatius classified his time in Manresa as his 'primitive Church', *FN* I, pp. 138–140.
[33] The original German sentence runs: „er [Ignatius] bezeichnet das Aufgeben seiner Bußwerke ausdrücklich als Folge der mystischen Erleuchtungen und der Kehr zur ‚Seelenhilfe', das heißt eben zur ‚Kirche'." *Werden Frömmigkeit*, p. 60. I have made my own translation, because Francis John Smith deviates significantly from the German text, notably by translating ‚Seelenhilfe' into 'salvation of souls', and by omitting the square quotation marks in the word Church. Hugo Rahner, *The Spirituality of St. Ignatius*, p. 56.

turns his attention to the institutional Church at this stage, but to the people of the 'Church'. As a matter of fact, Ignatius's contact with the institutional Church – be it with the Inquisition or with Papal authority – is left out of Hugo Rahner's story in *The Spirituality of St. Ignatius Loyola*. Any sign of tension, disagreement and conflicts is, thus, bracketed out of the story.

In the article 'Ignatius the Theologian' published in the book with the same title, Hugo Rahner gives another kind of evidence for Ignatius being a 'man of the church', when he explains that the motivation for Ignatius's long and thorough studies is that of respect for intellectual tradition. Having already studied Latin and some philosophy in Spain, Ignatius takes the decision to go to the University of Paris. There, he will study philosophy and theology for seven years. Jerónimo Nadal explains one motivation behind this step: "It is not sufficient that a person should grasp the things of God, even if he does so in virtue of a gift infused by God, but it is necessary that he should proclaim what he has learnt *in facie Ecclesiae*."[34] A case can therefore be made that Ignatius undertook a long period of study, because of his wish to communicate his experience from prayer in a language that was in accord with the Church's teaching and tradition (*in facie Ecclesiae*, before the whole Church). Hugo Rahner does not, however, discuss whether there was a negative motivation (pressure from the Inquisition) or a positive motivation coming from some source, or indeed a combination of the two. In Hugo Rahner's story there is, on the one hand, a potential difference between Ignatius's discoveries in prayer and theological language and norms. On the other hand, Hugo Rahner minimizes any possible tension between the two.

[34] *FN* II, p. 200. Quoted in Hugo Rahner, *Ignatius the Theologian*, p. 10.

These experiences and visions at Manresa function as a definite breakthrough that leads to the *Spiritual Exercises* and a zeal for mission. When Hugo Rahner presents the perspective 'from above', he uses the adjective 'mystical' more frequently than in the previous perspectives. Yet while using that language, Hugo Rahner finds it important to underline in his narrative that Ignatius's experience was different from *devotio moderna* and from the experience of the *alumbrados*.[35] The major difference for Hugo Rahner is that these are inward looking and not particularly concerned with ecclesial matters, whereas Ignatius translates his visions and mystical experiences from the interior realm to the exterior – and does so in and for the Church. What is more, Hugo Rahner sets up two criteria for spiritual discernment, distinguishing authentic movements of the Spirit from false movements of evil spirits. His aim is to demonstrate that Ignatius of Loyola was different from the so-called *alumbrados* just as Church Fathers were different from Gnostic sects. Hugo Rahner specifies his criteria in the following way: "We may sum it [the teaching on the discernment of spirits] up in two basic propositions: the genuine spirit drives (German: *drängt*) us to become like the human being Jesus who proclaimed his divinity in his death on the cross; and the genuine spirit drives (*drängt*) us to obey the humanly visible Church."[36]

The latter part of *The Spirituality of St. Ignatius Loyola* then compares Ignatius of Loyola with Ignatius of Antioch, Basil the Great, Augustine of Hippo, Benedict of Nursia, Catherine of Siena and others, all of whom, in Hugo Rahner's view, are examples of influence by an authentic Spirit. Gnostic groups of various kinds throughout the ages, by

[35] *Alumbrados* (in English: 'the enlightened ones') is a smear name, a term of mockery. Loosely structured groups in Spain, focusing on inner illumination, did not call themselves by that name. Antonio Márquez, *Los Alumbrados* (1980); Alastair Hamilton, *Heresy and Mysticism in Sixteenth-Century Spain* (1992).
[36] *Werden Frömmigkeit*, p. 65. I have made my own translation, partly because Francis John Smith deviates from the German text, partly because he completely misses the subordinate clause: "der im Kreuztod seine Göttlichkeit kundgetan hat." Hugo Rahner, *The Spirituality of St. Ignatius*, p. 61.

contrast, do not belong to that category. One point of comparison which Ignatius of Loyola had in common with Ignatius of Antioch, Basil the Great, Augustine and Benedict is that all of them went through a period of inner loneliness, which finally lead them to obedience to ecclesiastical authority. Hugo Rahner makes some references to cases when Ignatius can be linked to their ideas via written sources, but the main line in the comparison is the ideal of perfection (*Vollkommenheitsideal*) which is a general category and does not rely strictly on instances in the sources. It is noteworthy that Hugo Rahner uses the terms 'obedience' and 'service' interchangeably (or that both flow simultaneously from the same event), as can be seen when comparing the quotation above with the preface to *Mensch und Theologe*. In that preface Hugo Rahner links the theology of Incarnation and Cross with service in the Church: "The incarnation and death on the Cross of the Word of God point inevitably to service in the hierarchical Church of Rome."[37]

The historical narrative actually ends with Ignatius's time in Manresa in 1523 (he dies in 1556) as far as *The Spirituality of St. Ignatius Loyola* is concerned. Hugo Rahner's account of Ignatius's vision at La Storta outside Rome (which occurred in 1537), which he expands extensively elsewhere, deserves attention.[38] The interpretation is based on the notion that mystical experiences can make someone even more, not less, related to the Church. After finishing his studies in Paris, Ignatius went to North Italy (via Spain), where he was to meet up with his companions on the way to the Holy Land. When this project proved impossible, they travelled toward the city of Rome instead. Just outside Rome, in a place called La Storta, Ignatius had a deep experience, seeing in a vision "how

[37] Hugo Rahner, *Mensch und Theologe*, p. 7.
[38] *ibid.*, pp. 53–108. English translation: 'The Vision of St. Ignatius in the Chapel of La Storta' (1979). The fact that Rahner dedicates as many as 56 pages to the vision at La Storta is in itself a sign of his concern to rediscover the mystical Ignatius.

God the Father was putting him with Christ, his Son".[39] Everything was converged here, as Hugo Rahner holds that in this mystical experience, theology, priesthood, Eucharist and service in the Church all come together. He concludes: "So we have come to that point in the description of St. Ignatius' mystical life where we can insert the experience of the Vision of La Storta. The spiritual enlightenment was given him as the peak experience of his new mystical life after his ordination. Daily Communion had strengthened his priestly union with Christ."[40] It is interesting to note that Hugo Rahner on repeated occasions in connection with the vision at La Storta, speaks of Ignatius's quest for solitude almost in the manner of a desert father. Yet, La Storta, was in Hugo Rahner's interpretation not only an experience of direct communication with God of an individual withdrawn in solitude, but also one in which typically ecclesiastical elements fell into place.

[39] *Aut,* n. 96, *PW*, p. 60.
[40] Hugo Rahner, 'The Vision of St. Ignatius in the Chapel of La Storta' (1979), p. 98. 'Das himmlische Gesicht' (*Mensch und Theologe*, p. 93) is here translated as 'The spiritual enlightenment'. Another possible translation is: 'The heavenly sight [or: glimpse]'.

3.3 The early Jesuits in continuity with the Church Fathers

Hugo Rahner's basic position is that harmony prevails between the individual and the ecclesial community. One of his theological reasons for this position is that the Holy Spirit is not only dwelling 'within' the individual, but also informing the ecclesial tradition. In this section, we will take a closer look at Hugo Rahner's view of how the Holy Spirit operates in the mystical tradition of the Church. It has predominantly a unifying function, and unity includes obedience. The Holy Spirit is here the hermeneutical key with which Hugo Rahner interpreted Ignatius's life including his position in the bigger picture of the history of the Church. When Hugo Rahner sought to understand Ignatius's mind, he did this with the conviction that: "it is only in the 'Spirit' that one can grasp the whole of Ignatius (*Den ganzen Ignatius kann man nur vom "Geist" her erfassen*)."[41] Being a patristic scholar committed to Ignatian studies, Hugo Rahner discovered many parallels between the early Jesuits and the Church fathers, and asserted that the Holy Spirit (*Heiliger Geist*) was behind this unity of minds.[42] In the article 'Ignatius and the Ascetic Tradition of the Fathers', Hugo Rahner states his thesis in the following way:

> In the history of the spiritual life mysticism and tradition have always been mysteriously in harmony with one another. For the great figures who created the important elements of spiritual tradition were impelled by that same Spirit who has taken visible shape in that Church, by whose light all true mysticism takes its bearings. The Church bodies forth the Spirit; outside it is nothingness. Since, then, the spiritual origins are always the same, any visible manifested work of a mystic forms part of the external Church from the very start and can subsequently be shown to form part of this visible institution, independently of any historical sources.[43]

Hence, for Hugo Rahner, the Spirit is behind the ongoing and continuous mystical tradition of the Church, which is another way of communicating that the Church is not merely institutional. He provides evidence for this by employing two different methods,

[41] Hugo Rahner (1940), p. 99.
[42] Hugo Rahner, *Ignatius the Theologian*, p. 33. *Mensch und Theologe*, p. 236.
[43] *ibid.*, p. 52 (p. 250).

one of which consists of observations of parallels in ideas and language, without any evidence of literal dependence. The other is by reviewing the instances in which Ignatius and his secretary Juan de Polanco quote or refer to theologians in order to support or illustrate a certain point. The key sources here are some of the letters in Ignatius's correspondence and the *Constitutions* of the Society of Jesus. There are a number of different themes in which Hugo Rahner identifies convergences and we will examine the following, as they have particular relevance for this dissertation: the practice of frequent communion, the monastic vow of obedience, and rules for monastic orders.[44]

Frequent communion was not common in the late Middle Ages, and Rahner holds that Ignatius's preference for such a practice stemmed from his appreciation of the early Church and from the Church fathers. Hugo Rahner presents two letters to illustrate his point. In 1540 Ignatius writes a letter to the inhabitants of Azpeitia, the city near the castle Loyola in the Basque Province. In this letter he encourages the people of that city to receive communion frequently. In order to support this, Ignatius (mistakenly) attributes to Augustine of Hippo the statement: "I neither praise nor condemn daily Communion […] but I do urge you to communicate every Sunday."[45] Three years later Ignatius writes to the Benedictine sister Teresa Rejadell (her first name is conventional):

> Regarding daily Communion, we should recall that in the primitive Church everybody received daily, and that since that time there has been no ordinance or document from our holy mother the Church or the holy doctors, either positive or scholastic, against a person's being able to receive Communion daily if so moved by devotion. And while St. Augustine said that he neither praised nor blamed receiving Communion daily (although elsewhere he said he exhorted all to receive every Sunday), he states later on, speaking of Christ our Lord's most sacred body, "This is daily bread; therefore live in such a way that you can receive it every day."[46]

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[44] Hugo Rahner also sees patristic connections in Ignatius's so-called 'application of senses' (Ignatius the Theologian, pp. 181–213) as well as in the doctrine of the discernment of spirits (section 3.4 below).
[45] *MI Epp*. I:164. Letter from Ignatius to The Townspeople of Azpeitia, Rome, August–September 1540. Ignatius of Loyola, *LI*, p. 50. Gennadius of Marseille, *De ecclesiastibus dogmatibus*, c. 53 (PL 58, 994A).
[46] *MI Epp*. I:275. Letter from Ignatius to Teresa Rejadell, Rome, 15 November 1543. *LI*, p. 110.

Frequent communion was indeed uncommon in the sixteenth century, and we need an explanation for Ignatius's position. The reference to Augustine of Hippo, albeit inaccurate, would suggest that this was not Ignatius's own innovation. Hugo Rahner claims that the idea of frequent communion comes from Ignatius's "ardent love for the primitive Church."[47] This assumption is far-fetched, because it has to be said, as a qualifying remark, that Ignatius was already of the opinion that frequent communion was a good practice when he was in Alcalá 1526–1527, that is to say before he would have had any academic knowledge of the early church (as he studied theology in Paris 1528–1535). The early Church's appreciation for frequent communion could, of course, have been transmitted to Ignatius in some way during his stay in Manresa and Barcelona (1522–1526).

Other parallels that Hugo Rahner has found with regard to patristic sources are more related to the internal discipline of the Society of Jesus as a religious order. The vow of obedience is particularly interesting in the sense that it can be interpreted as a case of ecclesial mediation; another person – the religious superior – mediates the will of God. It is true that the focus here on religious obedience as a vow does not seem to acknowledge the distinction drawn, in the introduction to this dissertation, between ecclesial obedience and religious obedience. The relevance is what ecclesial obedience may learn from the vow. Ignatius reflects on the vow of obedience in various letters during the years 1547 to 1553. Hugo Rahner comments on the patristic references in a letter from 1547 to the Jesuits in Gandía, Spain, and in a letter from 1553 to those in Portugal. In these letters he refers to early and medieval Church fathers to illustrate the meaning of obedience and to provide authority from the tradition. Bernard of Clairvaux, but also Augustine of Hippo, Gregory

[47] Hugo Rahner, *Ignatius the Theologian*, pp. 36–37. *Mensch und Theologe*, p. 238.

the Great, John Cassian and Benedict of Nursia appear frequently in these letters. In 1547 Ignatius, assisted by his secretary Juan de Polanco, writes a letter to the recently established Jesuit community in Gandía, Spain. The immediate background to the letter was that the community needed a superior, and several reasons for that are given.[48]

Ignatius argues first that all civil societies throughout history have had the position of leader. Then he gives biblical reasons for having a superior, stating that Jesus was obedient to his parents, and that St. Peter was chosen to be superior over the disciples, and finally, that this practice continued in the early Church.[49] Ignatius, furthermore, asserts that obedience helps moral conduct as well as the prayer life. In support of this claim, Ignatius attributes two statements to Gregory the Great (in fact both come from Augustine). The statements read: "Obedience is not so much a virtue as the mother of virtues" and "If we are obedient to our superiors, God will obey our prayers."[50] Yet another advantage of obedience is the sense of calm and relief that the handing over of one's concerns and problems to the superior generates. Ignatius refers, in this connection, to Bernard of Clairvaux: "You who handed over concern for your own affairs once and for all to us–why do meddle with yourselves again?"[51] In the final part of the letter, Ignatius gives some guidelines as to how the superior should be elected.

Hugo Rahner then, quite rightly, observes that once Juan de Polanco became secretary to Ignatius, the correspondence contained more references to the Church fathers. Polanco had better knowledge of patristics than Ignatius did, and Hugo Rahner also

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[48] *YY*, p. 58.
[49] *MI Epp*. XII:332–333. Letter from Ignatius to The Jesuits of Gandía, Rome, 29 July 1547. *LI*, p. 196.
[50] *ibid*., p. 333. *LI*, p. 197. Augustine of Hippo, *Contra adversarium legis et prophetarum*, 1,14 (PL 42:613); Augustine of Hippo, *Sermones ad fratres in eremo*, Sermon 61 (PL 40:1344).
[51] *ibid*., p. 335. *LI*, p. 198. Bernard of Clairvaux, *In Cant.*, Sermon 19 (PL 183:866).

observes that there was a difference in style.[52] Ignatius had added references to Church fathers to support his own view, which he had developed fairly independently, whereas Polanco takes his point of departure in the Church fathers. This can be seen in a letter of 1553 to the Jesuits in Portugal, a letter, which has become known as the 'letter of obedience' (see section 2.2 above). By way of summary, the following values are communicated through the Church fathers in the letter of 1553. Obedience is portrayed as the mother of all virtues, and it is better than any sacrifice (Gregory the Great). Disobedience can in no case be good, and advice from elders should be sought (John Cassian). Every subject should avoid any tendency towards manipulation of their superiors, and never get irritated, but remain patient (Bernard of Clairvaux). The superior's order should be accepted in the same way as commands from God are (Bernard of Clairvaux).

Hugo Rahner makes an interesting use of these quotations. He suggests that their purpose is to demonstrate how the recently established Society of Jesus stood in the Church's tradition: "to show the connection between the asceticism of the new Order and the very best of the past."[53] This motivation would colour the Ignatian writings, Hugo Rahner asserts: "From now on an abundance of ancient Christian ideas was to flow into the Society's asceticism of obedience."[54] For instance we find similarities between the Rule of St. Benedict and the *Constitutions* of the Society of Jesus, particularly with regard to the vow of obedience. Hugo Rahner points at a parallel between a readiness to obey as expressed in the *Constitutions*, with the fifth chapter of *The Rule of St. Benedict*, which talks about the need for monks to be ready to drop whatever they are doing at a moment's notice.

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[52] Rahner does not, however, analyze this in terms of a shift in government and policy as some French scholars have done. Dominique Bertrand, *La politique de S. Ignace de Loyola* (1985), pp. 74–81; 275–291.
[53] Hugo Rahner, *Ignatius the Theologian*, p. 39. *Mensch und Theologe*, p. 240.
[54] *ibid.*, p. 40 (p. 241).

3.4 The process of spiritual discernment

Another feature of Hugo Rahner's account illustrative of the basic pattern I am identifying (of unity within the distinction between the individual and ecclesiastical authority) comes in his handling of conflicts of conscience. In principle, no contradiction between the Spirit of Christ and the Spirit of the Church can occur. Rahner anchors this position in the thirteenth rule of the 'Rules for thinking with the Church', to which he frequently refers: "between Christ our Lord, the Bridegroom, and the Church his Bride there is the same spirit who governs and directs us" (full quotation in section 2.2 above).[55] He touches on the problem of incompatible messages, though, in the article entitled 'The Spirit and the Church'. Hugo Rahner begins by postulating two ecclesial criteria for spiritual discernment, which function as an overall framework for the argument.

The first criterion is that spirit leads to what is embodied (*Geist geht immer auf Leib hin*), as understood in the sense found in the letter to the Ephesians 4:12, *i.e*. that the incarnation is a movement of the Spirit, which builds up the Body of Christ.[56] In other words, only those spiritual movements that are directed towards the body (meaning the Church) are trustworthy. The second criterion is that the spirit, which moves the individual, must not contradict the spirit of the Church. Hugo Rahner asserts that: "it is a fundamental proposition of Ignatian theology that the Spirit cannot contradict itself […] Interior and exterior, therefore, both can and must correspond to one another, and here the Discernment of Spirits ties up closely with the *Rules for Thinking with the Church*."[57] It is clear that Hugo Rahner cannot imagine a disagreement, at least not one animated by the Spirit. Such a

[55] *Exx*, n. 365, *PW*, p. 358.
[56] Hugo Rahner, *Mensch und Theologe*, p. 370. The English translation in *Ignatius the Theologian*, p. 214, has erroneously translated the German noun '*Leib*' with 'flesh' instead of 'body' or 'embodiment'.
[57] Hugo Rahner, *Ignatius the Theologian*, p. 215. The language of 'interior and exterior' (German: 'Innen' and 'Außen') might be slightly confusing, but it corresponds to Hugo Rahner's understanding that the Spirit is interior and the Church exterior. See *Ignatius the Theologian*, pp. 217, 233. *Mensch und Theologe*, pp. 371, 383.

tension does not seem to fit his theory. It is, nevertheless, worth remembering *that* Hugo Rahner concedes that a dual authority does exist, whereas the authoritarian figures presented in section 1.3 above do not reckon that there is more than one voice.

In this connection Hugo Rahner refers to Ignatius of Antioch and Bernardino of Siena for patristic support for the idea that the Spirit and the visible Church go hand in hand. Hugo Rahner then gives several examples from Ignatius's life, which are meant to illustrate how these ecclesial criteria were lived in practice. These historical examples have a slightly different character with regard to the relationship between the individual and the Church. The first example is taken from Ignatius's time in Manresa, which (as we saw above) according to Jerónimo Nadal was a time of growing understanding of and affection for the Church. The second example is one of obeying the directives from ecclesiastical authority, which occurred when a Franciscan provincial, with papal authority, forbade Ignatius to stay in the Holy Land. According to Hugo Rahner, Ignatius accepted this unreservedly: "without a single word he allowed this check to be placed upon his zeal, with the result that his whole life was forced into completely different channels by the authority of the visible church".[58]

The third example has the character of avoiding tensions and controversy before they even arise. Hugo Rahner asserts that Ignatius, while studying in Spain, distanced himself from Erasmus, because of the alleged 'absence of the Church' (*das Unkirchliche*) in his spirituality.[59] In this case Ignatius simply abstains from critique of the Church. The fourth example is a case of ecclesiastical authority supplementing the individual person (or here a group, namely the first companions) when his or her discernment process has

[58] Hugo Rahner, *Ignatius the Theologian*, p. 218. *Mensch und Theologe*, p. 373.
[59] *ibid.*, p. 219 (p. 373).

reached its limits. When the plan of Ignatius and his companions to go to the Holy Land is frustrated, they turn to Rome and hand themselves over to be at the disposal of the Roman Pontiff. Hugo Rahner interprets this by saying: "Their obedience to this papal decision would then be the real guarantee of the authenticity of their zeal: for, at a deeper level, there is no contradiction between Spirit and Church."[60]

Hugo Rahner then summarizes the relationship between the individual and the hierarchical Church: "To listen to the Spirit, both within and without–even submitting the unique, individual promptings of the Spirit without any ado to the controls and verdicts of reason, in the conviction that the Spirit behind personal inspiration is ultimately the same as the Spirit behind the hierarchical Church."[61] But can there be no divergence, no movements in different directions, and no disagreement? In fact there may be. Towards the end of his article 'The Spirit and the Church', Hugo Rahner is open to the possibility of 'honest criticism', although it is clear that he prefers to abstain from controversy:

> I can think of no finer example of the unity *inconfuse et indivise* of Spirit and Church, unction and reason, than the soberly enthusiastic love the disciples of Ignatius bore to the papacy. Here was room not only for silent, unconditional service but also for honest criticism, in the balanced way described in the tenth *Rule for Thinking with the Church* (*Exx. 362*). Even here Spirit and Church cannot ultimately contradict one another. In doubtful cases, however, the visible will always resolve the issue: to criticize may be good, but to serve and say nothing is better.[62]

On the whole, however, Hugo Rahner assumes that lack of concord can be explained and he also suggests a mechanism to handle such a situation. The explanation is that the individual has been deceived. The mechanism that comes to the rescue is the competence of the spiritual director, who makes the person aware of how the bad spirit has

[60] *ibid.*, p. 221 (p. 374).
[61] *ibid.*, p. 224 (p. 377).
[62] *ibid.*, pp. 237–238 (pp. 386).

disguised itself as good, and the director subsequently corrects the person. This solution is consistent with tradition, Hugo Rahner holds.

Hugo Rahner can find further documentation for his position, which holds that there is correlation and unity between the individual's spiritual discernment and ecclesiastical authority, in the view that prevailed in the post-Ignatian generation as the Directories were being compiled. The directory of the Spanish Jesuit Gil González Dávila (1532–1596) is central in this connection. González Dávila was rector of the Jesuit College at Alcalá de Henares, Spain, then in different periods provincial of the Jesuit Province of Castile and of Andalusia as well as assistant to the Superior General in Rome. That he was an authority in the field of *Spiritual Exercises* is seen in that he presided over a commission which prepared the *Official Directory of 1599*, and much of his own directory, completed around 1587, was included in this one. When Hugo Rahner approaches the question of spiritual discernment, he centres the narrative round the fact that the suspicion of being sectarian and heretical (by association with the so-called *alumbrados*) haunted Ignatius before the foundation of the Society of Jesus in 1540 and continued to trouble the Jesuits in the first decades of their history. Hugo Rahner asserts that they had to legitimize the Exercises by appealing to the Church fathers: "It was necessary to show that Ignatius's teaching on inner illumination in prayer and on certain knowledge of the divine will from the movement of the spirits was completely in line with the teaching of the Fathers, and absolutely ecclesial."[63] González Dávila gives credibility to Ignatian discernment by emphasizing that there is nothing new or unprecedented in the Ignatian teaching of spiritual

[63] My own translation from Hugo Rahner, *Mensch und Theologe*, p. 314. The English translation in *Ignatius the Theologian*, p. 138, deviates significantly from the German original. My alternative translation of key words italicized in brackets: 'Es musste gezeigt werden, dass die Lehre des Ignatius (*Ignatius's teaching*, not: Ignatian) von der inneren Erleuchtung (*inner illumination*, not: spiritual) im Gebet und von der sicheren Erkenntnis des göttlichen Willens (*certain knowledge of the divine will*, not: the possibility of discerning the divine will with certainty) aus der Bewegung der Geister mit der Lehre der Väter übereinstimme und also durchaus kirchlich sei (*absolutely ecclesial*, not: with the mind of the Church)'.

discernment and decision-making: "The remark here in commendation of the Exercises, to the effect that the treatment of the election contains unprecedented and amazing teaching […] I would drop altogether."[64] He cautiously seeks support from Aquinas to prove a certain level of assurance with regards to knowledge of God's communication in the process of election (section 2.3 above).

> A few final remarks should be made on these two methods of election for further clarification. As for the second method, it is clear that if the soul has reached certainty that the thing is an inspiration or movement from God it should not wait for further consultation, for even Aristotle said (as quoted by St. Thomas, *Prima Secundae*, q. 68, a.1): "Those who are moved by a divine impulse should not take counsel with human reason, for they are moved by a principle higher than human reason."[65]

The Ignatian assumption that the individual could receive "an inspiration or movement from God" may have sounded almost illuminist, but it could obviously be legitimised with invocation of precedent in keeping with the teaching of Thomas Aquinas. However, Hugo Rahner, even as he makes this point, is also concerned to counteract any sense that external authority is superfluous. But, Aquinas' position does in fact seem to make both the spiritual director and the Church redundant in the discernment process. Hugo Rahner attempts to conceal the contradiction here by highlighting that González Dávila insisted that accompaniment, especially in the context of the election, is essential. There is furthermore, in Hugo Rahner's view, an allusion to patristic thinking in the way the role of the spiritual director during an election was understood. He compares the decision making

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[64] *MI Dir*., p. 488. Gil González Dávila, Doc. 31:133; *OG*, p. 237. This statement reacts against the directory of Everard Mercurian, the fourth Superior General of the Society of Jesus. Mercurian had claimed that the *Spiritual Exercises* contained novelties: "Our Spiritual Exercises comprise everything on the topic of the election which can be found in all the doctors and saints regarding this point. Indeed, much of what the Exercises provide, especially on the three times of election, is new and unprecedented." Counsels of Father Everard Mercurian to Fabio de Fabi, Doc. 19:9; *OG*, p. 115. Palmer's translation makes Mercurian sound as if he is contradicting himself. His apparent contradiction can be avoided if the second sentence from the original Latin is translated differently. It starts: "imo pleraque nova et inaudita…", in which 'imo' could be taken as 'and indeed', 'no indeed', 'but', 'but as a matter of fact', rendering the meaning: "And indeed much of it is new and unheard of". *MI Dir*., p. 269.

[65] *MI Dir*., p. 519. Gil González Dávila, Doc. 31:133; *OG*, p. 257.

with a bringing of birth, at which the spiritual director acts as midwife.[66] Rahner claims that this connects with the patristic theme of the birth of God in people's hearts.[67]

In a way González Dávila is ambivalent about whether he accepts or rejects the principle that there can be clear and certain illumination from God. This caution was not only driven by the possible accusation of illuminism, but also and perhaps chiefly by the fact that the bad spirit often operates under false appearances, disguised as the good spirit. Hence, the risk of being deceived is great, and this is the main reason why the spiritual director and the Church at large are not redundant but rather essential. The person praying does some of this testing him- or herself and is meant to verify the movements of the spirits by using reason and following the rules for discernment of spirits. This, however, is then done together with the spiritual director, because "It is easy to be deceived in one's own affairs and where self-love is so sophistical and comes up with such plausible arguments that it carries conviction."[68] In order to warrant that it is actually God's will that comes through, the person needs to be accompanied by a spiritual director and the decision-making has to consider the teaching of the Church. This setting and procedure is, again, common to patristic thought; Hugo Rahner maintains: "it is almost impossible to open the works of the desert monks without coming across a mention of the need to submit all suggestions of the good or evil spirit to the judgment of the *pater spiritualis*."[69] Hence, the spiritual director is not there to be prescriptive or authoritarian, but rather to react and assist, as one equipped with the tools for discernment of spirits.

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[66] *MI Dir*., p. 511. Gil González Dávila, Doc. 31:100; *OG*, p. 252. The image of bringing to birth and the midwifery were not included in the *Official Directory of 1599*.
[67] Hugo Rahner, *Ignatius the Theologian*, p. 140 (p. 315).
[68] *MI Dir*., p. 514. Gil González Dávila, Doc. 31:111; *OG*, p. 254. Hugo Rahner, quite rightly, claims that many directories insist on the need of a spiritual director, *Ignatius the Theologian*, p. 151 (p. 323).
[69] Hugo Rahner, *Ignatius the Theologian*, p. 154 (p. 326). Hugo Rahner states that the directories of Polanco, Miró, Canisius, Nadal and Dávila all share this position unanimously.

For evaluation of the movements of the spirits González Dávila suggests: "the word of God, the Church and the public magisterium of God in the Church, together with human reason."[70] Confirmation is needed. It is interesting to note that the Magisterium comes in as last resort. Both the spiritual director and the Church in a wider sense are indeed necessary in this process, but they remain in the background. Every measure is taken to make space for the individual's own discovery. The spiritual director facilitates this, without being prescriptive. The Magisterium comes in to legitimize the preliminary decision. The implicit conclusion is that God would not move a person, either immediately or through intermediaries, in a direction that would be at odds with the Magisterium. In Hugo Rahner's theology, such a movement would, undoubtedly, be from the evil spirit.

The solution for González Dávila and for Hugo Rahner, it seems to me, was to build up a support structure of control mechanisms and criteria, which could accurately assess the spiritual movements. Put briefly, the method of the third time of election is used to confirm the second, as its function is: "to test the movements of spirits in the light of the exercitant's gifts of nature and grace, the limits imposed by the Church, and the example of Christ's life."[71] It has to be said that there is no textual evidence for the thesis that the third time of election (human reason) should revise or control the first and the second (section 2.3 above).

To sum up, in this section we have seen how Hugo Rahner argues that there, in principle, can be no contradictions between the individual and the Church. If such, nevertheless, would arise, the situation is due to deceptive moves from the evil spirit, which

[70] *MI Dir*., p. 521. Gil González Dávila, Doc. 31:138; Palmer, *OG*, p. 258. Compare full quotation above in section 2.3.
[71] Hugo Rahner, *Ignatius the Theologian*, p. 151 (p. 323).

the spiritual director is meant to detect. Human reason is thereby an important control mechanism. In González Dávila's and Hugo Rahner's reading, the role of the Magisterium in the election is to confirm or reject a preliminary decision. It remains unclear what kind of decisions the Magisterium needs to legitimize, and at what level it needs not intervene. Hugo Rahner does not state whether the matters at stake are doctrinal views, moral issues, practical decisions or state of life. It surely makes a difference whether the election concerns something that relates to dogma or something of a lesser degree of obligation. Moreover, what happens if there are no guidelines or explicit doctrine in a certain case? How can the Magisterium then contribute?

3.5 Response

A central aspect in Hugo Rahner's approach is to interpret Ignatius's biography (history) through a 'theo-logic' perspective. He also interprets spiritual discernment (theology) from a historical perspective. Both also come together in the early Jesuits' use of Church Fathers (section 3.3). The big difference with mainstream theology of the first half of the twentieth century was that Hugo Rahner's interpretation of theology contrasted with the standard understanding of grace as an essentially other-worldly reality, beyond history and human nature. Hugo Rahner insisted that theology should be allowed to shape history and that grace somehow belongs to this-worldly history. This version of history as informed by theology was unfashionable then as now and was not fully thought through, particularly in the sense that the divine (theological) dimension is hard to demonstrate empirically. In general, nevertheless, I support this attempt, and in particular with regard to the thesis in this dissertation, I hold that pastoral theology in the Ignatian field cannot be done without historical awareness. My basic position for Ignatian Exercises at ecclesial frontiers is to include both the 'mystical' and the ecclesial dimension. What Hugo Rahner does not help us with, however, is exactly *how* history and theology, and nature and grace relate. A question is whether, for instance, truth, in the sense of God's will, is historically conditioned and to some extent dependent on the reception and perception.

Hugo Rahner linked, both in Ignatius's life and in the spiritual discernment of anyone who makes spiritual exercises, what could otherwise easily be perceived as separate dimensions: the mystical and the ecclesial. In fact, mystical and ecclesial can be seen as aspects of one reality.[72] The overall thesis that mystical experiences are connected with and

[72] This has been argued by Michael Buckley, 'Ecclesial Mysticism in the *Spiritual Exercises* of Ignatius' (1995), 441–463. Buckley takes his point of departure in Hugo Rahner's scholarship (p. 441) and concludes: "The mystical in the Exercises, in its dimensions of service and of union, is not opposed to the institutional. The

not dissociated from service in the Church is difficult to challenge, unless, of course, mysticism is principally defined in opposition to Church. The evidence in Hugo Rahner's reading of Ignatius for this connection, and above all the link that obedience to ecclesiastical authority follows from mystical experiences is, nevertheless, thin. The hermeneutical method is vague, with connections that are not obvious. A desire to help souls is, for example, translated into concern for the 'Church'. The connection, moreover, between mystical experiences, theology, priesthood, Eucharist and service in the vision at the chapel at La Storta is, similarly, possible, but not necessary.

Hugo Rahner contributed to Ignatian studies by arguing that obedience need not be understood as subordination under a coercive authority. This opened up a certain space for personal freedom and for conscience, on the basis that good would come out of prayer and dialogue with the spiritual director responsible for guarding against deception by the evil spirit. The limitation here, though, is that his argument works as long as spiritual discernment of the individual does indeed coincide with the teaching of the Church. It must be said that Hugo Rahner's particular understanding of the Holy Spirit as the one who unites and brings together, prevented him from exploring cases of conflict. His harmonizing approach does not, therefore, really offer a satisfactory account for how to handle situations where the individual and ecclesiastical authority is in disagreement. We will see in the presentation of the 'dramatic approach' below (Chapter 4) that idea that the Spirit and the Church of Rome never contradict each other must be qualified and even challenged. Hugo Rahner's account of Ignatius was partly driven by a pastoral experience in the first half of the twentieth century in which it became obvious that Catholic theology had lost touch with many of the Catholic faithful. It may be the case that Hugo Rahner, consciously or

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mystical is served by the institutional, and in turn the mystical must inform and characterize the institutional. In sharing in the relationship between the entire Church and Christ, the contemporary exercitant is drawn into a deeper union with God, into a personal embodiment of the nature and the mission of the Church." (p. 463).

unconsciously, responded to modernity by presenting an Ignatius in direct contact with the Spirit and in one sense, therefore, independent; but he set his narrative up in such a way that conflict between this 'theo-logic' Ignatius and ecclesiastical authority could never arise. A sense of renewal within stable continuity is reflected in that there is no drastic change in Ignatius's life nor does his spirituality imply a radical shift either. This kind of cautious experimentation was about as much as ecclesially socialised Catholics of the time could deal with. The development in theology in the second half of the twentieth century has shown that there was much more to say about conscience, grace, Holy Spirit and Church.

Hugo Rahner does not discuss whether the early Jesuits had original ideas on spiritual discernment and then sought support from the Church fathers who then confirmed what the Jesuits had already thought, or whether the references to the Church fathers were a protection strategy over against the Magisterium, and that patristic theology actually changed the Ignatian understanding of spiritual discernment. Would the second generation (González Dávila and others) have made the patristic connections even if the *alumbrados* hadn't been around? The idea that Ignatius kept the tradition of spiritual discernment intact without introducing new perspectives can certainly be challenged. It could be argued that Ignatius addressed situations with choices between two good alternatives, in which the choice was to be made between *good* spirits. This was unique and innovative in the Christian spiritual tradition, an assessment we are able to make today on the basis of comparison of texts. Ignatius himself may, however, not have had sufficient patristic knowledge to be able to realize his originality in comparison with the early Church. In his talk on discernment in *The Conferences*, John Cassian is mostly concerned with understanding evil spirits, and the *Monastic Institutes* is even more strikingly exclusively

preoccupied with mortal sins and evil spirits.[73] In his discussion on discernment, in the twenty-sixth step of *The Ladder of Divine Ascent*, John Climacus similarly emphasizes evil spirits, and does not compare signs of the good spirits nor suggest how to choose between them.[74]

The major problem with Hugo Rahner's method is that it remained within the confines of a mindset of a necessary continuity. In Hugo Rahner's account Ignatius comes across as much more conformist to ecclesiastical authority than the historical sources and data lead us to believe. One reason for this conformist image is that Hugo Rahner compares Ignatius with the saints of the Church by using the general concept of the ideal of perfection (*Vollkommenheitsideal*) and makes it look as if Ignatius was attracted automatically to the visible Church in the same way as they were. But the Society of Jesus understood consecrated life as something radically different from conventional monasticism, and their understanding of priesthood was different from clergy-life as it was known at the time. Ignatius's and the Jesuits' unique contribution in relation to the Church tradition seems to have been lost, as Hugo Rahner focused on explaining how and why Ignatius and the early Jesuits were different from religious groups that paid less attention to and showed less interest in ecclesial mediation such as the *alumbrados* and even promoters of the *devotio moderna*. It is worth noting that Hugo Rahner leaves Ignatius's experience with the Spanish and Roman Inquisitions out of the story. The Spirit that moved Ignatius was actually regarded, at least by the Inquisition, as leading him to the margins of the Church rather than to its centre. There was, as a matter of fact, very little that distinguished Ignatius from, for instance, the *alumbrados* until roughly 1540. Others certainly perceived Ignatius and even

[73] John Cassian, *The Conferences* (1997), pp. 77–112. *The Monastic Institutes* (1999).
[74] John Climacus, *The Ladder of Divine Ascent* (1982), pp. 229–255.

the Jesuits during the 1540s and 1550s as sectarian (compare for instance Cano's and Pedroche's critique in sections 2.5 and 2.6 above).

Moreover, his early Church and patristic sympathies make Hugo Rahner's account anachronistic at times and not particularly able to grant that change and transformation occur in society over the centuries. Hugo Rahner rather anachronistically equates Gnosticism, the *alumbrados*, and the individualism of modernity. Ignatius might have been much closer to, for instance, someone such as the contemporary Franciscan friar, Francisco de Osuna (1492–c.1540), than he was to the Christians of the early Church. Hugo Rahner's understanding of Ignatius and the sixteenth century is shaped by the patristic era to the extent that he does not see the novelties. A more thorough exposition of the sixteenth-century historical context could have avoided this patristic bias. This would include a new understanding of the human person that began to emerge during the early modern era. We can note that Hugo Rahner limits the context to the *alumbrados*, while the bigger picture of the Reformation and the crisis in Europe in the mid sixteenth century is not taken into consideration. Several scholars, such as Marcel Bataillon, Terence O'Reilly and John W. O'Malley have refuted the brief assertion that Ignatius was anti-Erasmian.[75] Hugo Rahner's assumption that criticism of ecclesiastical teaching and customs, as found in the writings of Erasmus, is identical with disloyalty and demonized, prevented him from reading the historical sources critically.

Let us now turn to some critical comments with regards to Hugo Rahner's interpretation of the parallels between the early Jesuits and Church fathers. Hugo Rahner was one of the first scholars who claimed that Ignatian spirituality ought to be seen from the

[75] Bataillon, *Erasmo y el Erasmismo* (1977), pp. 203–244. O'Reilly, 'Saint Ignatius Loyola and Spanish Erasmianism' (1973), 301–321; 'Erasmus, Ignatius Loyola and Orthodoxy' (1979), 115–127; 'The Spiritual Exercises and the Crisis of Medieval Piety' (1991), 101–113. O'Malley, *The First Jesuits*, pp. 260–264.

context of the ongoing tradition of the Church, which is to say both the tradition before and after Ignatius's lifetime. We may conclude that one of Hugo Rahner's achievements was that his patristic viewpoint contributed significantly to subsequent scholarship. Influenced by Hugo Rahner's patristic concern, a number of Ignatian scholars have done further research on the Church fathers, including the Spanish Jesuit Santiago Madrigal, whom we will consider soon. One purpose that Hugo Rahner had in making comparisons was to show that Ignatius was following the mystical tradition of the Church. The evidence for that statement is thin. How do we know what motivation Ignatius had? Hugo Rahner does not go beyond the comparison of words and similar ideas, and does not really enter into a discussion about the possible differences in understanding of the vow of obedience among Benedictines, Cistercians and Jesuits. The desert-father spirituality of John Cassian or the monastic lifestyle of the Benedictines and the way the Jesuits proceed, do not overlap in all aspects.

It seems to me that there is at least one novel aspect of obedience in Ignatius's approach. In the letter of 1553 as well as in the *Constitutions*, Ignatius talks about the right of the subject to make a so-called representation. 'Representation' means to have a follow-up conversation with the religious superior, when prayer has prompted the need for clarification or even reconsideration of a decision. Even if there is something of this in chapter 68 of *The Rule of St. Benedict*, representation is much more emphasized in the Jesuit tradition. Yet, by not mentioning representation at all nor the fact that Jesuits are often scattered (which presupposes personal responsibility in making decisions in situations often geographically far from their religious superior) in comparison with the *stabilitas loci* of the Benedictines, Hugo Rahner gives undue emphasis to ecclesial mediation (here through the superior) over against direct communication with God. A sense of mission also

remains under-articulated, due to the strong link with monasticism. Hugo Rahner's focus on letters in the Ignatian corpus that are directed to Jesuits in formation (training) generates the disproportionate stress on control, whereas the fully trained Jesuits are expected to act on the basis of delegation. Hugo Rahner, furthermore, does not distinguish between obedience to a religious superior and obedience to ecclesiastical authority. Rahner blurs the even more important distinction between obedience and service. He does not distinguish between *obedience* to the Church's teaching and what could be called *commitment* to the Church or a basic sense of solidarity with the Church. Hugo Rahner uses the terms 'service' and 'obedience' interchangeably, whereas they need not always go together, and especially not if there is such a thing as a dysfunctional authority.

Despite these serious criticisms, I want to emphasize Hugo Rahner's contribution to Ignatian studies and its relevance for this dissertation. Hugo Rahner's interpretation of Ignatius and Ignatian spirituality as ecclesial mysticism remains a helpful starting-point. He opened the question of the individual's relationship with ecclesiastical authority and Church community by drawing them closer to one another. Hugo Rahner's intuition that theology and history are complementary and equally important perspectives is worth endorsing. After Hugo Rahner's scholarship the extreme and outrageous positions of treating the ecclesial dimension as secondary or irrelevant (section 1.2 above) and of asserting that ecclesiastical authority leaves no space for personal judgment (section 1.3 above) both seem unacceptable.

3.6 Ignatius's pre-Tridentine notion of the Church

The Spanish Jesuit Santiago Madrigal, Professor of Ecclesiology at the Faculty of Theology at the Pontifical University of Comillas in Madrid, has published a number of articles about Ignatian studies, some of which have been collected in his book *Estudios de eclesiología ignaciana*.[76] He has also recently published *Eclesialidad, reforma y misión*, on ecclesial dimensions in Ignatius of Loyola, Pierre Favre and Francis Xavier.[77] Madrigal continues Hugo Rahner's project of seeking to root Ignatian texts in patristic and medieval sources. Madrigal also follows Hugo Rahner's footsteps in that he takes a harmonizing position with regard to conscience and ecclesiastical authority. Three circumstances, however, enable him to offer a different and perhaps richer account. Madrigal can benefit from the findings of Ignatian scholars after Hugo Rahner, such as Leo Bakker.[78] Secondly, Madrigal has theologians such as the French Dominican Yves Congar and the Second Vatican Council (1962–65) as important resources, and reads Ignatian primary sources and data in the light of these resources.[79] He has, furthermore, reflected extensively on the reception of Vatican II.[80] Thirdly, Madrigal's Spanish style and rhetoric obviously differ from Hugo Rahner's German discourse, a cultural difference that is difficult to explain and demonstrate but is something one feels while reading.

I will argue that Madrigal's main achievement is that he helps us to see how Ignatius understood divine mediation and to reach an approximation of what Ignatius meant by the 'hierarchical Church'. The term 'hierarchical Church' in Ignatius's mind seems to have been a pre-Tridentine concept (that is to say before the Council of Trent, which gave a

[76] Santiago Madrigal, *Estudios de eclesiología ignaciana* (2002a).
[77] Madrigal, *Eclesialidad, reforma y misión* (2008a).
[78] Leo Bakker, *Freiheit und Erfahrung* (1970).
[79] Madrigal (2002a), see especially pp. 127, 163–167, 182–183, 239–250.
[80] Madrigal, *Vaticano II: Remembranza y actualización* (2002b). *Memoria del Concilio* (2005). *Karl Rahner y Joseph Ratzinger* (2006). *Iglesia es Caritas* (2008b).

clerical definition of 'church hierarchy'), a unique combination of Denys the Areopagite's and Aquinas's teaching. The significance of this is that every Christian is closer to those in holy orders than the Tridentine model envisages, and at the same time less dependent on them. Madrigal's exegesis of Ignatian texts, namely, gives reason to hold that the distinction between clergy and laity is blurred, contrary to what might be expected given the Ignatian title 'hierarchical Church'. These findings are relevant for this dissertation not only because they challenge the blind-obedience approach (section 1.3 above), but also because they suggest that the Church is more than a necessary evil (section 1.2 above), in fact it is sacred and mystical in a positive sense.

We need to undertake various hermeneutical enterprises in order to establish an approximation of Ignatius's vision of the Church. The first section will present Madrigal's thesis that Denys the Areopagite (presumably at the beginning of the sixth century) and Thomas Aquinas have had an influence on the *Spiritual Exercises*.[81] The second section will expound Madrigal's interpretation of the concept 'hierarchical Church', which is based on 'hierarchy' in the theology of Denys the Areopagite with its modifications in Thomas Aquinas. A critical evaluation in the response will follow (section 3.9). I will suggest that Madrigal is not dealing satisfactorily with cases when the individual's conscience is, in fact, disinclined to obey the teaching of the Church. The reason for this being that he obscures and plays down the possible conflict by using phrases such as 'dialectic tension'.

[81] Denys the Areopagite is also known as Dionysius or Pseudo-Dionysius. The adjective 'Pseudo' clarifies that the, presumably, sixth-century thinker was erroneously identified with Dionysius the Areopagite of Acts 17:34. This dissertation will refer to him as 'Denys', while occasionally using the adjective 'Dionysian'.

3.7 Traces of Denys the Areopagite and Aquinas in the *Spiritual Exercises*

Madrigal feels committed to respond to a phenomenon that is becoming more and more common, namely, a sceptical attitude towards the institutional Church. (There is a contrast here in that Madrigal can no longer presuppose a cultural Catholicism in the way Hugo Rahner could). The extreme expression of this is a complete separation of spirituality and Church summed up colloquially as 'Christians without Church' or 'Christ yes! Church no!' Madrigal asserts that this sceptical attitude of quite a number of contemporary Christians calls for a "need to clarify and balance the relationship between the freedom and authority of the Spirit on the one hand, and the authority and obedience to the hierarchical Church on the other."[82] He attempts to do this in various ways mainly through the question of how mediation works. Our focus here will be the kind of clarification and balance that an analysis of Ignatius's mindset in relation to medieval theology offers. In his conclusions in *Estudios de eclesiología ignaciana*, Madrigal emphasises the contrast between communication through intermediaries on the one hand, and immediate communication between God and the human person on the other. He even speaks of these two ways in terms of a 'paradox' and 'dialectic'.

> A surprising paradox beats at the heart of Ignatian spirituality. On the one hand it underscores the commitment to the individual human being and his personal destiny; it is that for which we call and what our era demands: privacy. On the other hand, along with this individual and ascetic aspect, it emphasises the institutional, the authority, the submission and obedience within the Church. In other terms: the ecclesiastical. As opposed to the challenge encapsulated in the phrase "Christ yes, Church no!" the spiritual ideal of Ignatius locates itself *in medio Ecclesiae*. Divine immediacy and ecclesial mediation of grace are another way of expressing this dialectic.[83]

What makes Madrigal think in terms of 'paradox' and 'dialectic'? He spells out that there are traces both of Aquinas' and of Dionysian thinking in the *Spiritual Exercises*,

[82] Madrigal (2002a), p. 16.
[83] *ibid*., p. 395.

and this combination creates 'dialectic'. Madrigal endorses the view that Everard Mercurian, the fourth Superior General of the Society of Jesus, had with regard to Dionysian patterns in the *Spiritual Exercises*:

> The Spiritual Exercises are divided into three parts: the purgative part or way, the illuminative, and the perfective. This division is mentioned in some texts of the Exercises and is the one traditional with the doctors and with perfect spiritual men, including St. Dionyisus in the *Celestial Hierarchy* and the *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*, where he divides all hierarchical acts into those of cleansing, enlightening, and perfecting.[84]

It is through the hierarchy of deacons, priests and bishops that the individual is purified, illuminated and perfected (as will be explained with some more detail below). Madrigal also sees Dionysian-type ideas in the 'Contemplation to attain love', the final exercise, where the gifts of God are thought to come from above (Spanish: *de arriba*). This comes from a Dionysian, neo-platonic framework, by which God's grace descends from above. The frequent presence of angels in the *Spiritual Exercises* is a further point of comparison between Denys and Ignatius. Angels appear as many as thirty-one times in the *Spiritual Exercises*. The person who prays Ignatian Exercises meditates how angels have a role in creation, and in the fall, as well as in salvation. Madrigal points out that the angels serve as intermediaries, as the one praying Ignatian Exercises asks for their intercession.[85] More generally, Madrigal holds that the Ignatian notion of the 'hierarchical Church' contains the idea that the Church is a mystery in that it mediates the divine grace to human beings. The 'hierarchical Church' is therefore a richer concept than simply being identified as the teaching Magisterium. In other words, the Church is a mystery thanks to her mediation: "Her mystery stems from just in the way that she mediates the divine grace".[86] In another exercise, moreover, Ignatius speaks of the 'heavenly court', albeit not including

[84] *MI Dir*., p. 246. Everard Mercurian, Doc. 18:13. *OG*, p. 103. Madrigal (2002a), pp. 255–256.
[85] Madrigal (2002a), p. 351. *SpEx*, n. 232, *PW*, p. 329.
[86] Madrigal (2002a), p. 375.

angels in it.[87] Madrigal gives several other examples of what he calls 'implicit' or 'latent' ecclesiology of the *Spiritual Exercises*, particularly as he connects the angels with the celestial hierarchy. The language in some exercises is at once angelogical and social, political, ecclesiological. The hierarchical Church becomes, nevertheless, more explicit and tangible at the stage of the 'election' (sections 2.2 and 2.3 above).

> It is at that point, when the election begins, that the hierarchical Church enters into consideration, because its object must be serving "within the holy mother Church hierarchical". Or, to put it in another way: the election becomes 'ecclesial' (*se 'eclesializa'*). Located in the set of rules for discernment, the Exercises conclude with rules for discernment *within the Church*. One could say that the Ignatian dogmatics begin with angelology and flow into ecclesiology.[88]

Madrigal gives priority to Denys throughout his reflection while the perspective of Aquinas is adapted and accommodated to the Dionysian pattern. Therefore, he sees Ignatius as predominantly influenced by Denys with some elements from Aquinas. Now, the influence from Aquinas is not easy to reconcile with Denys. Aquinas enters into the analysis when Madrigal reflects on the so-called 'Rules for Discernment of Spirits', and the discussion centres around God's grace being communicated with or without intermediaries. According to one of these rules God is able to act without intermediaries ('cause' in Ignatius's language):

> Only God Our Lord gives consolation to the soul without preceding cause; for it is the Creator's prerogative to enter the soul, and to leave her, and to arouse movements which draw her entirely into love of His Divine Majesty. When I say 'without cause' I mean without any previous perception or understanding of some object due to which consolation could come about through the mediation of the person's own acts of understanding and will.[89]

Madrigal points out that Ignatius found support for the principle 'without preceding cause' in Aquinas' writings. In early Latin manuscripts of the *Spiritual Exercises* (and originally also in the Spanish manuscript but in the end erased from it) reference to

[87] *ibid*., p. 351. *SpEx*, n. 98, *PW*, p. 304.
[88] Madrigal (2002a), p. 340.
[89] *SpEx*, n. 330, *PW*, p. 351.

Aquinas was made.[90] It is beyond the scope of this dissertation to explain all details in this rather complex subject-matter. Madrigal quotes article 6 of question 9 of *Summa theologiae* Ia2ae, where Aquinas asks "whether the will is moved by God alone, as exterior principle?" Aquinas' overall response is affirmative: "None other than God can be the cause of man's willing."[91] An argument ('objection' in Aquinas' language) is raised with reference to Denys: "Again, the activity of will follows that of mind. But men's minds are brought to activity, not by God alone, but also, as Dionysius says, by angelic enlightening. Equally also their wills."[92] To this, Aquinas responds: "Man's mind is moved by angels, but this motion rises from the object presented to his knowing in virtue of angelic light. In this way, on the part of the object, as we have already noted, the will can be moved by a creature outside it."[93] But even if a person can be moved by an angel, an angel is never the cause of the will. None other than God is. The reasons Aquinas brings are: "First, because the will is a power of the rational soul, which is caused by God alone by creation, as we have shown in the *Prima Pars*. Second, because of the will's bearing on universal good, none other than God, who is the universal good, can cause it to act."[94] It is important to recall that Aquinas in his theology of grace asserted that the human person is moved by God in a primary sense and by creatures, such as angels, in a secondary.

Madrigal does not explain exactly how Aquinas provides support for the Ignatian rule, but the reader is meant to see how Aquinas assumes that God can move the human person without intermediaries. Based on the research that Leo Bakker has undertaken, Madrigal seeks to clarify the significance of Aquinas for Ignatius in relation to

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[90] *MI Ex*., *Versio P1* and *P2*, p. 389. "Hoc probat B. Thomas Ia2ae q. 9 art. 1 et 6, et q. 10 art 4". Madrigal (2002a), p. 367.
[91] *Summa theologiae*, Ia2ae q.9 a.6, trans. by Gilby (1970), p. 81.
[92] *ibid*., p. 79. The editor refers to *De coelst. hier*, chapter 4.
[93] *ibid*., p. 81.
[94] *ibid*., p. 81.

'without preceding cause'. Bakker draws on another Thomistic source, *Summa contra gentiles*, and from another Denys, Denys the Carthusian (1402–1471).[95] By way of summary, Bakker asserts that Ignatius expressed rather obscurely what Aquinas and Denys the Carthusian uttered in a simpler way. Namely, that God can move the will of a creature directly, without being dependent on mediation through something else, that is to say not dependent on the law of divinity (which says that mediation is indispensable and that inferior beings are lifted up by superior beings and never vice versa) as all creatures are.

Now, as to Ignatius's 'hierarchical Church' Madrigal holds that it certainly retains the Dionysian idea of subordination and mediation from higher ranks to lower, but Ignatius also assumes that God communicates to the human person without intermediaries. Madrigal suggests, as we shall see, that this is not only of epistemological relevance, but matters for the way in which the individual relates to the Church. We shall now take a closer look at the more precise meaning of 'hierarchical Church'. The key question, in my opinion, is how the *Spiritual Exercises*, as a whole relate to Denys and Aquinas. Is Ignatius closer to one or the other, or does his synthesis actually introduce a third way? Madrigal can help us bring out how Ignatius envisaged the flow of communication in the Church, that is to say in which direction(s) it goes; whether it is static or dynamic; how much space there is for dialogue and so on.

[95] Bakker, *Freiheit und Erfahrung*, pp. 175–179. *Summa Contra Gentiles*, ch. 88, pp. 33–35.

3.8 The hierarchical Church

In 1970 Yves Congar suggested that Ignatius had coined the phrase 'hierarchical Church', the meaning of which Congar understood in the following way:

> It is this Church militant which is the City of God; the church represents this idea in historical and social terms. There is no opposition, not even a gap between the structures of law or authority on the one hand and the designation of 'moral' or 'spiritual' on the other. There is identity between what God asks and service in this Church, between discernment of the spirits and judgement of the hierarchical Church (cf. *Exercises* nr. 170, 352, 365; 13th rule of orthodoxy; the letter of 18 June 1536 to Sister Teresa Rejadell). There is a rigorous bond, a dynamic interchange [French: *passage dynamique*], between the terms: God, Church, obedience, mission.[96]

For Congar, Ignatius's 'hierarchical Church' is a mystical reality, associated with the Church structure, including spiritual discernment rather than being alienated from it. Congar carefully distinguishes between the notion of 'hierarchical Church' and 'hierarchy'. He states that Denys the Areopagite introduced the word 'hierarchy' and that it basically meant "degree of initiation into holy things" and "that there is a hierarchy of the initiated".[97] Congar does not claim that Denys influenced Ignatius, but he does not exclude it either. Congar points out that the way in which the term 'hierarchy' was understood in Congar's day is different from the Dionysian sense. Congar holds that the contemporary meaning (in the year 1970) was based on the way the twenty-third session (15th July 1563) of the Council of Trent (1545–1563) defined 'hierarchy'. This session reacted against some reformers on topics related to the sacramental nature of ordained priesthood and the idea of a common priesthood of all the baptized. Against some reformers Trent stipulated:

> If anyone maintains that all Christians without distinction are priests of the new covenant, or that all are equally endowed with the same spiritual power, he appears to be openly overthrowing the church's hierarchy, which is *drawn up as*

[96] Yves Congar, *L'Eglise de saint Augustin à l'époque moderne* (1970), pp. 369–370. It seems that Congar made this discovery earlier, already in 1960, but expressed this hypothesis more tentatively then. "A very close identification between the kingdom of God and the Church militant, between the discernment of what is of the Spirit and the judgement of 'the hierarchic Church' (was it not Ignatius who coined this expression?)." Congar, *Tradition and Traditions* (1966 [French edn 1960 and 1963]), p. 176, n. 3.
[97] Congar (1970), p. 369, footnote 2.

> *a battle line*, just as if (against the teaching of blessed Paul) all were apostles, all prophets, all evangelists, all pastors, all teachers.[98]
> If anyone denies that there exists in the catholic church a hierarchy consisting of bishops, priests and ministers, instituted by divine appointment: let him be anathema.[99]

Even in Congar's short reflection there are already three notions of hierarchy: the Dionysian 'hierarchy', Ignatius's 'hierarchical Church', and the modern concept derived from the Council of Trent which essentially omitted the laity, or at least made a sharp distinction between laity and clergy. Madrigal takes his departure from Congar's reflections and carries them forward in a lengthy and thorough analysis of what Ignatius might have meant by 'hierarchical church', and to what extent he might have been influenced by Denys the Areopagite and other thinkers. There are no direct quotations or an explicit reference to Denys in Ignatius's writings (merely one indirect, via Aquinas). Notwithstanding, Madrigal asserts that Ignatius must have had access to Dionysian theology, at least through some late medieval thinkers whom he definitely knew. Among them Madrigal particularly highlights the Carthusian mystic Hugo of Balma and Thomas Aquinas.[100]

Denys's ecclesiology was widely known but also modified in the late Middle Ages, particularly by Bonaventure and Aquinas. Madrigal points out that there are over 500 references to Denys in the *Summa theologiae* of Aquinas. One of these passages is, as we have seen, quoted in early Latin versions of the *Spiritual Exercises*, in the context of the rules for discernment of spirits (n. 330). Since Ignatius studied at a Dominican convent in Paris and since there is evidence that he quoted Aquinas, Madrigal suggests that Ignatius knew of the modifications Aquinas had made of Dionysian ecclesiology.[101] Apart from that,

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[98] Trent, session 23, 'The true and catholic doctrine of the sacrament of orders, to condemn the errors of our time', (Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, II) p. 743.
[99] *ibid.*, session 23, 'Canons on the sacrament of order', p. 744.
[100] Madrigal (2002a), pp. 302–303.
[101] *ibid*., pp. 302–303.

Madrigal also draws attention to a biography of the life of Ignatius written by the early Jesuit Diego Laínez. There are various manuscripts of Laínez's account (which appears in a long letter from 1547 to Juan de Polanco), and in the one Madrigal refers to, there is a reference to Denys. Laínez reports from a conversation with Ignatius: "I remember him saying that as to the things of God our Lord, he remained more passive than active, an attitude which people who contemplate – such Hierotheus (Saint Denys says) and others – attribute to the highest degree of perfection."[102]

Let us now turn to Madrigal's interpretation of the Dionysian hierarchical understanding of reality as well as the reception of Denys in the Middle Ages, particularly in Thomas Aquinas. We need this background to distil the concept that Ignatius might have had of the 'hierarchical Church'.

3.8.1 Denys the Areopagite's understanding of hierarchy

When Madrigal presents the Dionysian line of thought he starts off by summarising the book *The Celestial Hierarchy*, interpreting the celestial hierarchy as: "an exposition of the world of the angels, organized and ordered in a triadic and hierarchic way, in their task of mediating between God and human beings."[103] The network of angels is ordered in three triads. Most holy thrones, cherubim and seraphim belong to the first triad. Authorities, dominions and powers are in the second. Angels, archangels and principalities belong to the third.[104] There are ranks of highest, middle and last in each triad, hence an element of

[102] *FN* I: Mon. 6, Epistola P. Lainii, n. 59, pp. 138–141. The apparatus informs that one manuscript has: "as Saint Denys said of Hierotheus". Another manuscript has "as Sagerus says". Using the work of the historian Antonio Astráin, Madrigal focuses on the former version. Madrigal (2002a), p. 302. In his *The Divine Names*, Denys refers to a certain "Hierotheus, or famous teacher". It has, however, been impossible to establish historically who this person was.
[103] Madrigal (2002a), p. 261.
[104] Pseudo-Dionysius, *The Celestial Hierarchy* 200D–205A, in *Complete Works* (1987), pp. 160–161. Madrigal (2002a), p. 261.

subordination in a structure of inferior-superior. Denys's concept of hierarchy, however, does not just map out an order for the distribution of power. This becomes clear from his definition of hierarchy, which comprises 'knowledge' and 'activity': "Hierarchy is, as I understand it, a sacred order, knowledge and activity, which is being assimilated to likeness with God as much as possible and, in response to the illuminations that are given it from God, is raised to the imitation of Him in its own measure."[105] The purpose is important too. The goal for the hierarchy is to "enable beings to be as like as possible to God and to be at one with him."[106]

In the Dionysian world the ecclesiastical hierarchy (treated in *The Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*) resembles the celestial. Madrigal claims that for Denys "the order of the ecclesiastical hierarchy is no other than the image of the order of the celestial hierarchy."[107] Madrigal illustrates that the hierarchies are mirror images of one another, by highlighting various analogies (without, however, providing a detailed account of how everything fits together). The ecclesiastical hierarchy has, in its turn, various triads. One of them consists of sacraments, the initiators and those being initiated.[108] Although the network is not entirely clear (in Denys's own work), as Denys expresses himself in different ways on different occasions, 'sacraments' seem to correspond to the sacred order of bishops, priests, and deacons. Yet these clerical orders are also initiators. Those being initiated are the catechumens, but so also are the monks. The joint effort consists of bringing humanity to a unity with God, an activity that mirrors that of the angels in the celestial hierarchy. The

[105] Translation from Louth, *Denys the Areopagite* (1989), p. 38. Madrigal (2002a), p. 264.
[106] Pseudo-Dionysius, *The Celestial Hierarchy* 165A, in *Complete Works* p. 154. Madrigal (2002a), pp. 264–265. The nature of the 'beings' in the quotation is not specified, but earlier in the same chapter Denys refers to 'every being', so presumable both human and angelic beings are intended.
[107] Madrigal (2002a), p. 266.
[108] Pseudo-Dionysius, *The Ecclesiastical Hierarchy* 501A to 505A, in *Complete Works*, pp. 233–236. Madrigal (2002a), p. 268.

chief activity of both hierarchies is to mediate. (There is a visual image of the triadic structure of the hierarchies on exhibition in the Sainsbury Wing of the National Gallery in London. *The Palmieri Altarpiece* by Francesco Botticini (c.1446–1497) partly resembles the hierarchies of Denys.)

Madrigal interprets Denys to suggest that there is no access to God except through mediation. This mediation is, in the ecclesiastical hierarchy, accomplished by deacons, priests and bishops. To these sacred orders three essential activities correspond: to purify, to illuminate and to make perfect. Human beings are, thus, brought to a union with God through the mediation of these sacred orders. We are not told how angelic mediation is related to the purification, illumination and perfection, that is to say if and how the angels are participating in these activities. It is clear, though, that the angels on the one hand, and deacons, priests and bishops on the other, coincide in the role of bringing people to a unity with God. Madrigal points out that, for Denys, mediation is absolutely essential because there is no other access to God. Madrigal quotes chapter four from *The Celestial Hierarchy* in which Denys states: "Someone might claim that God has appeared himself and without intermediaries to some of the saints. But in fact it should be realized that scripture has clearly shown that 'no one ever has seen' or ever will see the being of God in all its hiddenness."[109]

In that same chapter Denys states what is known as the law of divinity (*lex divinitatis*), namely that mediation is indispensable and that inferior beings are lifted up by superior beings and never vice versa. All divinization comes from above in Denys's

[109] Pseudo-Dionysius, *The Celestial Hierarchy* 180C, in *Complete Works*, p. 157.

theology, and mediation therefore descends from above.[110] There are, nevertheless, movements from below, a so-called 'ascending mediation'. The descending movement means that grace comes from the higher ranks to the lower. Ascending mediation refers to conversion, and being elevated to higher ranks, or rather to unity with God. The relevance of this structure, for our purposes, is that this pattern is the framework for subordination and delegation. The mediating activity of the hierarchies is conditioned by the sacred hierarchy in so far as the mediation follows a direction (from above, downwards). The purpose or aim of the activity is to divinize, that is to say to unify with and to assimilate to God. The final word in the definition of hierarchy, *i.e.* 'a state of knowledge', in Madrigal's view, conveys the idea that there is a progression in knowing God more and more. It is a gradual process: "Purified intelligence takes progressive consciousness of the divine realities that operate in it and is gradually initiated into the mysteries of the transcendent."[111]

We may draw the conclusion that in the Dionysian version of hierarchy each person is dependent on mediation from superior beings. Grace is mediated from above and descends in this neo-platonic vision. It is a highly relational ecclesiology, yet the relationships are asymmetric and unequal. The authority is, nevertheless, not absolute, since both the celestial and the ecclesiastical hierarchies do not exist for their own sake, but are instruments for a higher good, which is the unity between humanity and God.

[110] Madrigal (2002a), pp. 272, 369. *Summa contra gentiles*, III, ch. 88, n. 2.
[111] Madrigal (2002a), p. 274.

3.8.2 Aquinas modifies the Dionysian understanding of hierarchy

According to Madrigal the idea that the earthly Church should follow the example of the celestial Church continued to be accepted in the high Middle Ages. This can be seen in Bernard of Clairvaux's work *On Consideration*, published around 1150.[112] The rise of mendicant orders in the thirteenth century, however, generated a shift in the understanding of the ecclesiastical hierarchy, which altered the Dionysian model. These itinerant preachers who pursued an apostolic life (*vita apostolica*) modelled on the early Church, without established links to a monastery and without subjection to a bishop, subverted the traditional order of Church structure.[113] The mendicant orders operated directly under the obedience to papal authority. As a consequence a debate arose about obedience and jurisdiction between mendicant orders and secular priests who were subjected to the local bishop. Aquinas participated in this debate, arguing that the Pope could authorize and commission those in consecrated life without consulting the bishop, a system which subverted patterns of ecclesiological thinking informed by Denys. The way of proceeding of the Society of Jesus, of course, subverts this pattern even more.

Madrigal expounds Aquinas' modifications of the Dionysian hierarchies. Aquinas follows Denys in so far as he acknowledges angelic mediation, and that the ecclesiastical hierarchy, generally speaking, corresponds to the celestial. Yet, for Aquinas, the former imitates the latter only up to a certain point. Aquinas held that the ecclesiastical hierarchy cannot be an exact copy of the celestial, because human beings have a different ontological status from angels. Unlike Denys who maintained that human beings receive God's grace in varying degrees according to their different proximity to God (just as angels differ in their respective proximity), Aquinas insisted that human beings are in principle

[112] *ibid*., p. 277. Bernard of Clairvaux, *Selected Works* (1987), pp. 152–157.
[113] Madrigal (2002a), p. 278.

equal before God in terms of their essential spiritual capacity.[114] All human beings are potentially united with God through so-called 'sanctifying grace'.[115] In Madrigal's reading of Aquinas, sanctifying grace is received by all people in the same way, regardless of their position in the ecclesiastical hierarchy. Madrigal then refers to another passage in Aquinas' *Summa theologiae*, on angelic illumination. Aquinas here opens with an observation that lower angels are able to inform higher:

> A lower angel does seem capable of enlightening one higher. The Church hierarchy descends from and represents the heavenly hierarchy; thus the heavenly Jerusalem is called *our mother*. In the Church, however, even inferiors enlighten and teach superiors: *You may all prophesy one by one, that all may learn and all may be exhorted*. In the hierarchies of heaven as well, then, the superior can be enlightened by the inferior.[116]

In his response, Aquinas again subverts the Dionysian view:

> The Church hierarchy does imitate the heavenly to a degree, but does not become its exact replica. For in the hierarchy of heaven the whole basis for its order is proximity to God; this is why those closer to him are more sublime in rank and more resplendent in knowledge, and why the greater are never enlightened by the lesser. In the hierarchy of the Church, however, in some cases those nearer to God through holiness are humbler in rank and undistinguished for learning; some also excel in one area of knowledge, but are weak in others. The greater, then, can be taught by the lowlier.[117]

Thus, Aquinas challenges the Dionysian understanding that superior ranks always inform inferior and never the other way round. In so doing Aquinas introduces into ecclesiology and the theology of grace a consideration not easy to accommodate in Dionysian thought-patterns. By way of summary, the major difference between Denys and Aquinas, in Madrigal's view, concerns the way in which union between God and the human person is established. For Denys the human person is elevated to a union with God by the hierarchy. While Aquinas acknowledges the law of divinity – angelic mediation being one

[114] *ibid*., p. 282.
[115] *Summa theologiae* Ia2ae, q.111 a.1, trans. by Ernst (1972), pp. 126–127. Partly quoted in Madrigal (2002a), p. 283.
[116] *Summa theologiae* Ia2ae, q.106 a.3., trans. by O'Brian (1974), p. 99.
[117] *ibid*., p. 101. Madrigal (2002a), p. 284.

form of causation – and that God acts through human beings (secondary causes in Aquinas' language), he underscores that God is not dependent on this law.[118] Aquinas' teaching implies less emphasis on the clerical state than the Tridentine hierarchy does, and important messages may come from below.

3.8.3 Madrigal's conclusions

From this material Madrigal draws two different conclusions that can be contrasted. In his book *Eclesialidad, reforma y misión* (2008), he draws a broad conclusion based on the impression that Ignatius did not apply Denys strictly. Denys did influence Ignatius, but only to a limited degree:

> I think, therefore, that when Ignatius speaks of the 'hierarchical Church' he is not referring simply to the framework of the ecclesiastical hierarchy consisting of clergy and religious, bishops and the Pope. Nor do I believe that one has to assume the entire, complex, theological elaboration of the doctrine of Pseudo-Dionysius in its speculative details (with the succession of states and functions), since the study of the texts does not give a basis for this.[119]

The main point here is that Ignatius, in Madrigal's view, has an inclusive notion in mind when he refers to the 'hierarchical Church', it is a community for all. Moreover, it is a community in which the members are connected in a network.[120] The community as a whole ('totality' in Madrigal's language) is considered, including the laity.[121] By contrast, throughout *Estudios de eclesiología ignaciana* (2002) Madrigal draws a narrower conclusion based on a strong and irreconcilable influence by both Denys and of Aquinas on Ignatius. On one occasion, Madrigal speaks of a 'mystical tension', of 'dilemma' on another: "This is the deepest dimension of the fundamental ecclesiological dilemma that runs through the experience of making the Exercises: the immediacy of the believer with

[118] For an introduction into this material see: Fergus Kerr, *After Aquinas* (2002), pp. 42–51; 149–161.
[119] Madrigal (2008a), p. 98.
[120] *ibid*., p. 98.
[121] cf. Madrigal, 'Jerarquía', in *Dicc. EI*, pp. 1061–1063.

God in the Spirit and the mediation of salvation within the Church, the bride of Christ."[122] If we then consider Madrigal's broad conclusion (from 2008) and narrow conclusion (from 2002) together, he seems to hold that Ignatius incorporated *some* of Denys's mediation-mentality and *some* of Aquinas's immediate communication. This somewhat swaying and contradictory position may be due to a reluctance to acknowledge a break in Aquinas's thinking in relation to Denys, and indeed that Ignatius went beyond both. On the whole, the assumption of disharmony and conflict being absent in the Church generates a mild confusion on the conceptual level.

[122] Madrigal (2002a), p. 239. For similar statements see also pp. 180, 334.

3.9 Response

Santiago Madrigal has given an elaborate account of the medieval roots (chiefly in Denys and Aquinas) of Ignatius's ecclesial vision and his move beyond them. Ignatius's vision is at the same time not Tridentine, that is to say it does not react against the Reformation by way of emphasising the role of deacons, priests and bishops over against the common priesthood of all baptised. Madrigal's analysis of the 'hierarchical Church' permits a safe hypothesis that Ignatius had a pre-Tridentine (pre 1563) concept in mind, one that was mystical and included the laity. Thus, I agree with Madrigal's broad conclusion that 'hierarchical Church' stands for the whole of the community and wish to strengthen his case on this point. The section on ecclesial rules in the *Spiritual Exercises* is often referred to as 'Rules for thinking *with* the Church'. This goes back to the Latin title in the Vulgate manuscript: "Regulae aliquot servandae, ut cum orthodoxa Ecclesia vere sentiamus".[123] The preposition 'with' (Latin: *cum*) may generate the idea that the Church is something out there with which the person can interact from a certain distance. The title in the Spanish manuscript, however, indicates a higher level of participation as it pressuposes a perspective from the inside: "Para el sentido verdadero que *en* la Iglesia militante debemos tener, se guarden las reglas siguientes [my italics]."[124] Whether the Spanish 'en' is translated 'in' or 'within', the person is here already part of a community.

Historical evidence also proves that the laity was significant in Ignatius's vision of the Church. This evidence also suggests that Ignatius's synthesis, for all similarities and overlaps, went beyond both Denys and Aquinas due to the developments in the sixteenth century. Three kinds of historical evidence from Ignatius's life illustrate that he integrated the laity, and did not identify 'the Church' entirely with its officeholders. First, in the

[123] *MI Ex*., *Versio Vulgata*, n. 352, p. 404.
[124] *MI Ex*., *Autographum*, n. 352, p. 404.

Autobiography the term 'church' usually designates the building in which worship took place, and never a word used for clergy or even for the inquisitors. Thus, Ignatius did not refer to the Inquisition as 'the Church' scrutinizing him. The absence of the word 'church' in Ignatius's letter to King John III of Portugal, in which Ignatius reports on his run-ins with the Inquisition, confirms this.[125] He does not identify 'the Church' exclusively with its higher leadership; the rulers and teachers are instead mentioned as being part of a bigger reality. Included in a list of 'most holy gifts' is: "humility and reverence towards our holy mother the Church and her established rulers and teachers (*gobernadores y doctores*)."[126]

Second, predominantly those in consecrated life, but with important connections with lay people, wrote the late-medieval devotional literature and that contemporary with Ignatius. This too is a ground for assuming that 'our holy mother the Church' refers to the whole community. The so-called *devotio moderna* belongs to that genre. This was essentially a lay movement with origins in the Low Countries and the Rhine area, even if many of its authors such as Geert Groote, Thomas Kempis and Jan van Ruusbroec were ordained. The Catalan Jesuit, Javier Melloni, has asserted, persuasively, that Ignatius came in contact with *devotio moderna* through the Benedictine monastery of Montserrat, northwest of Barcelona.[127]

Third, the geographical and cultural boundaries of the Church were expanding dramatically in the sixteenth century. As Superior General of the Society of Jesus, Ignatius sent Jesuits to countries that did not even have an ecclesiastical structure that could generate a gap between the laity and the clergy: Brazil, Japan and India to name only a few. A

[125] *MI Epp.* I:296–298. Letter from Ignatius to King John III of Portugal, Rome, 15 February 1545. *LI*, pp. 118–119.
[126] *MI Epp.* II:236. Letter from Ignatius to Francisco de Borja, Rome, 20 September 1548. *LI*, p. 255.
[127] *Compendio Breve de Ejercicios Espirituales*, ed. and pres. by Javier Melloni (2006), pp. XV–LV.

Church with a wide horizon may even have shaped Ignatius early on as one of his brothers, Ferdinand of Loyola, renounced his right to heritage and left the Basque country in 1510 for the 'Indias' (America).[128]

Madrigal's argument becomes less convincing on the occasions when he assumes a strict dependence and strong influence of both Denys and Aquinas on Ignatius. It remains unclear why mediated (Denys) and immediate (Aquinas) communication needs to be presented as a 'paradox', a dialectic relationship or even a 'dilemma'. Madrigal seems to have the idea that any communication through intermediaries is always on the side of the Church. But there is no reason why a tension could not also occur through intermediaries. In principle, the individual might in his or her conscience (which is informed by Scripture, sacraments, another person or whatever mediation it might be) come to a conclusion, which is different from the Church's teaching. On the other hand, God's immediate dealings with the individual *may* generate the idea that ecclesial mediation or even the Church as such is superfluous. It could indeed be argued that the pedagogy of the *Spiritual Exercises* focuses on the free will of the human person to make decisions and that these decisions are related to ecclesiastical authority either in a smooth or in a complicated relationship. But the possible tension between the individual and ecclesiastical authority, in my view, is found regardless of the way in which God communicates with the human person. There is nothing epistemological that prevents immediate divine action from being ecclesial. So, once the ghost of the *alumbrados* is removed from the discussion, we see that there is nothing in the Ignatian sources themselves that provides evidence for thinking in terms of 'paradox', 'dialectic tension' or 'dilemma'.

[128] *MI FD*, Mon 38, 'Ferdinandi de Loyola renuntiatio in favorem fratris sui, Martini García de Oñaz', Azpeitia, 27 May 1510, pp. 202–205.

Madrigal argues that all discernment takes place within the Church (*in medio ecclesiae*). The potential tension, that in Madrigal's view exists, is handled in the Church, and is overcome mainly by subordination and obedience. The motivation to obey ecclesiastical authority is encouraged by the awareness that the ecclesiastical hierarchy is related to the celestial with its angels and other heavenly beings. While acknowledging that Madrigal has contributed to the studies of Ignatian ecclesiology by showing the positive motives for obedience, I argue that the nature of the tension he has set up is actually a distraction that draws attention away from the real dilemma. He actually moves what we could call a problem of epistemology and theology of grace into the realm of ecclesiology. Madrigal draws what began as a question of how God interacts with the human person into a discussion about accepting or rejecting the Church as such. I have therefore suggested that hermeneutical tools and perspectives from historical and ecclesiological situations are imposed on the text and create this divide. As a final remark, I would suggest that the theme of communication with or without intermediaries touches on both the image of God and God's relationship with the world. It can be said that the neo-platonic philosophy, which Denys had a certain affinity to, might have regarded mediation as absolutely necessary so as to avoid God being contaminated by impure creatures. It is debatable whether Ignatius had such a negative view of creatures.

4. Harmony that only God can hear

The perspectives of Hugo Rahner and Santiago Madrigal could be regarded as variations of an approach that moves away from authoritarianism. This approach creates a balance in so far as other voices are seriously considered, not simply that of ecclesiastical authority. Their account of mysticism is ecclesial; the individual's spiritual discernment is integrated in the Church community. While Hugo Rahner and Madrigal both acknowledge some tensions, they nevertheless essentially evade situations where opinions do not match. In their world, the inspirations of the Holy Spirit in an individual are always consistent with those informing Church authority. The conscience of the human person conforms to the Church community and Church teaching in one way or another. We now move to a thinker who takes a step further and more explicitly addresses tensions, lack of harmony and even conflicts: the Swiss Jesuit Raymund Schwager (1935–2004). His approach comes through in his doctoral thesis written in 1967–1969 at the University of Fribourg, Switzerland, and published in 1970 under the title *The Dramatic Understanding of the Church in Ignatius of Loyola*.[1] Schwager conceives of 'dramatic' as follows:

> [H]ow true union with the Church is something to be sought by working through all the prejudices, affective limitations and sinfulness of individual Christians and of the representatives of the Church. It would become clear that union with the Church takes place in humane encounter–encounter with human beings among whom something like the various phases of a drama can be played out and indeed must be played out: development, conflict, tension, crisis, catastrophe, and final reconciliation and denouement.[2]

From 1977 Schwager was Professor of Dogmatic and Ecumenical Theology at the Faculty of Catholic Theology at the Leopold-Franzens University, Innsbruck, Austria. He was Dean of that faculty 1985–1987 and again 1999–2003. He gained an international profile as a theologian by developing 'dramatic theology' and initiating the research

[1] Raymund Schwager, *Das dramatische Kirchenverständnis bei Ignatius von Loyola* (1970).
[2] Schwager (1970), p. 186, quotation translated by Endean, 'Ignatius and Church Authority' (1991), 89.

programme ‘Religion - Violence - Communication - World Order’. Schwager was also co-founder of the ‘Colloquium on Violence and Religion’ based at Stanford University, California. He was its first president (1991–1995) and an honorary member of its advisory board from 1999 until his unexpected death in 2004. Schwager has published a number of articles, some of which are directly related to our topic.[3] In the English-speaking world Schwager is known for works on redemption and salvation such as *Must There Be Scapegoats?*, *Jesus in the Drama of Salvation* and *Banished from Eden*.[4] In these works his concept of ‘drama’ draws on the French philosopher René Girard and his sociology of violence as well as on the theology of Hans Urs von Balthasar. It is important to point out that the meaning of ‘dramatic’ in Schwager’s earlier Ignatian research is different from the Girardian and Balthasarian sense, a matter that I will return to. The Ignatian ‘dramatic’ in the sense presented here predates Schwager’s encounter with the French philosopher René Girard, and differs somewhat from the ‘dramatic theology’ developed in Schwager’s writings on salvation and redemption.[5] There ‘dramatic’ is related to rivalry, violence, the scapegoat-mechanism, and so on. Even if that is a different story, it is worth pointing out that the solution of that drama too involves the Holy Spirit.[6]

I will argue that Schwager has convincingly asserted that Ignatian ecclesiology cannot be caught in a few definitions and principles, but rather we need to reflect on various significant situations in the course of Ignatius’s life. He provides historical evidence that depicts a rich ecclesiology, that takes the specific situation into account and lets the quality of the relationship to the Church vary according to times, circumstances and places. In these

[3] Schwager, ‘Gehorsam und Widerstand’ (1974), 202–213; ‘Geisterfahrung am Cardoner – Geisterfahrung in den Exerzitien’ (1978), 444–460.
[4] Schwager, *Must there be Scapegoats: Violence and Redemption in the Bible* (2000 [1987]); *Jesus in the Drama of Salvation* (1999 [1996]); *Banished from Eden* (2006 [1997]).
[5] An account of dramatic theology in the cooperation between René Girard and Raymund Schwager can be found in: Michael Kirwan, *Discovering Girard* (2004), especially pp. 76–81; 106–114.
[6] Schwager, *Jesus in the Drama of Salvation*, p. 143. (*Jesus im Heilsdrama*, p. 184.)

particular situations Ignatius's conscience was occasionally at odds with ecclesiastical authority. By displaying examples from Ignatius's life Schwager has successfully shown that challenging Church authority could be regarded as legitimate in Ignatian ecclesiology. Schwager, furthermore, began to develop an articulated account in which the Holy Spirit guides ecclesiastical authority and the human person in a variety of ways, including those that do not automatically lead to consensus.

Schwager's ambition was to say something about the ecclesiology of Ignatian Exercises to his contemporaries. His doctoral thesis from 1970 is therefore both a historical and a pastoral-theological study. When reading it, it is essential to be aware that he (as any historian for that matter) understood the past through the present. It is therefore important, in order to understand his thesis, to remember the context in which it was written. The 1960s was an era when institutions and authorities were called into question, a development which also went through ecclesial structures. Hugh McLeod, Professor of Church History at the University of Birmingham, reflects extensively on this in *The Religious Crisis of the 1960s*. Scepticism towards the institutional came across as anticlericalism: "Anti-clerical ribaldry was an old theme in some parts of Italy and France, but less so in the United States where, above all in Irish or Polish districts, the cassock evoked respect. But the new theme in the 1960s was the increasing priority given to individual identity and freedom, and the consequent horror of uniforms of all kinds."[7] As this mentality coexisted with a new sense of community and common responsibilities, a high value placed on freedom did not necessarily lead to alienation from corporate enterprises as such. An atmosphere of openness and exploration prevailed. The Catholic Church was alert to these signs of the times and articulated them at the Second Vatican Council (1962–1965) in a way that

[7] Hugh McLeod, *The Religious Crisis of the 1960s* (2007), p. 191. See also pp. 73–79 and 151–160.

changed the Church's self-understanding.[8] The Church as a social, liturgical and mystical communion was rediscovered, while maintaining its hierarchical aspect. One could say that the Second Vatican Council paradoxically renewed the sense of Church not by emphasising discipline and structure but by loosening up and broadening these concepts.[9]

In this chapter, I want to explore four ways in which Schwager develops his 'dramatic' perspective of Ignatius's understanding of the Church. The first section will present Schwager's reading of the *Autobiography*, focusing on Ignatius's interaction with ecclesiastical authority in that source. The second section will explicate Schwager's interpretation of Ignatius's period as Superior General of the Society of Jesus (1541–1556). Here we will look at cases in which Ignatius responds to the Pope, kings and princes and see how he guides his own Jesuit companions. The third section will present Schwager's interpretation of the role of the Church in the *Spiritual Exercises*. In his view, Ignatian Exercises predominantly encourage personal reflection and above all aim to foster a mature conscience.[10] I will finally respond to Schwager's approach with some further considerations. The latter part of this chapter will then present and critically evaluate two scholars who have developed Schwager's reflections: Philip Endean (sections 4.5) and Jon Sobrino (section 4.6).

[8] See for instance: O'Malley (2008), pp. 163–165 with brief comments on *Lumen gentium*. O'Malley also observes that the Second Vatican Council signified a linguistic change (pp. 48–49): "What kind of words are absent? Words of alienation, exclusion, enmity, words of threat and intimidation, words of surveillance and punishment. Although in the documents of Vatican II the hierarchical character of the church is repeatedly stressed and the prerogatives of the pope reiterated almost obsessively, the church as a monarchy or the members of the church as subjects–a significant departure from previous practice."

[9] "Whereas 'reform' was traditionally a code for a stricter or at least more precise discipline, Vatican II seemed to aim at loosening what had become too tight." O'Malley (2008), p. 36.

[10] In his book Schwager has another order of disposition, commenting on the *Spiritual Exercises* before interpreting Ignatius's period as Superior General. In the epilogue he explains how his dissertation came about. Schwager (1970), p. 192.

4.1 Church in the life of Ignatius as found in the *Autobiography*

A key assumption, for the Swiss theologian, is that Ignatius's religious approach pointed inward, without any obvious connection with the Church. This presupposition is obviously very different from Hugo Rahner's outlook, according to which Ignatius was 'a man of the Church' all the way along.

> Although he himself had lived absolutely naturally in the great structure of the almost medieval world of chivalry, his religious starting-point was nevertheless clearly an inward and subjective one. This religious starting-point did not have a direct relationship with the Church. We will therefore have to pay particular attention to how he in the true sense 'nonetheless' arrived at the Church.[11]

Whereas Hugo Rahner tells the story in a way that stresses affiliation, Schwager's language is biased towards tension. Ignatius comes across as an independent person, a spiritual explorer who relied on his own judgment, and it needs to be explained why and how he connected with the Church. With such a starting-point not much weight is given to the possible ecclesial aspects of Ignatius's upbringing in the Castle of Loyola, in the neighbouring Basque city of Azpeitia and in the Castilian city of Arévalo or even in the period around his conversion. Unlike some other thinkers, Schwager does not make much of Ignatius's veneration of Saint Peter in his early life, which could be taken as an embryonic affinity for the Papacy.[12] In Schwager's view, the first relevant interaction between Ignatius and the Church occurred in Jerusalem, where the provincial of the Franciscan order prevented him from staying in the Holy Land.[13] Schwager uses the metaphor of a fence to elucidate Ignatius's relationship with ecclesiastical authority: "Yet he was by no means a man of the Church even after Jerusalem. The Church, in the form of

[11] Schwager (1970), p. 16.
[12] Burkhart Schneider has suggested such an interpretation. "We cannot regard this special reverence for Peter as simply like the devotion to any other saint, it should be interpreted much more as expression of an emphatically Church-oriented attitude, since in the Middle Ages Saint Peter was indeed specially understood and honoured as representing the Church itself. […] It is above all important to realise this in order to be able to understand Ignatius's later life's work, the founding of his Order which should be wholly at the Pope's disposal." Ignatius von Loyola, *Der Bericht des Pilgers*, trans. and comm. by Schneider (1977), p. 137.
[13] Compare section 2.2 above.

the Franciscan provincial, was crossing his path, but only as a negative entity. She was the fence, over which he was not allowed to jump."[14]

This boundary was, according to Schwager, helpful in the sense that it led Ignatius to develop a new criterion for testing his own spiritual discernment. The pattern of the confrontation with the Franciscan Provincial would repeat itself many times in Ignatius's life, namely that when his own conviction was challenged by authority, he would "time and again question the reliability of inner illuminations" (*immer wieder die Frage nach der Zuverlässigkeit innerer Erleuchtungen zu stellen*).[15] This interpretation seems to suppose that Ignatius had in fact erred and was mistaken about the will of God, and thanks to Church officials now, in hindsight, realized that he was wrong. This is the view that Schwager seems to hold.[16] The Swiss Jesuit discusses the depth of the reasons that brought Ignatius to abandon his conviction and obey. The simple answer would have been that he was threatened with the possibility of excommunication. But, Schwager considers, he could have ignored the order, even if this would have had radical consequences. Schwager suggests that Ignatius, formed by the prevailing religious and social mores, obeyed spontaneously. It is, however, difficult to tell the exact nature of those social conventions, and Schwager points out that they may not have been particularly deeply rooted:

> On the basis of Ignatius's concrete behaviour towards the Church or the representatives of the Church, it is only with difficulty that one can distinguish how far he acted out of a deeper insight into the mystery of the Church or out of loyalty to the religious-social order of his time.[17]

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[14] Schwager (1970), p. 26.
[15] *ibid*., p. 26.
[16] "The clear insight, that he needed to stay in Jerusalem, turned out to be a delusion." "It was only the Franciscan provincial's threat of excommunication that managed to shake him out of this obsession and bring him back to reality." Schwager (1970), pp. 30, 77. "The insight, however, proved itself to be a delusion. He was ordered to return to Europe, in the name of obedience to the Church." 'Geisterfahrung...' (1978), 448.
[17] Schwager (1970), p. 27.

Schwager does not discuss further how 'deeper insight' and 'loyalty to the religious-social order' are related. In the end Schwager also seems to leave open whether Ignatius, while still in Jerusalem, was persuaded to change his mind or obeyed even though he thought the Provincial was wrong. It could be either, as the record in the *Autobiography* merely laconically states: "[…] now that it was not the will of Our Lord that he should remain in those holy places."[18] It is worth noting that the *Autobiography* was written 1553–1555, that is to say some 20 years after the event in question. Back in Spain Ignatius ran into the Spanish Inquisition, and faced trial on three occasions: twice in Alcalá and once in Salamanca. At Alcalá Ignatius had given a form of spiritual exercises. Ignatius and his followers were suspected of being *alumbrados* and some who made those exercises behaved in a way that was psychologically unbalanced.

The Inquisition in Salamanca forbade Ignatius to continue to give spiritual exercises until he had studied for several years. This he did; it would seem that he had no choice but to comply with the inquisitors. Diego Laínez, one of the first Jesuits, held that Ignatius did not perceive this merely as an imposition: "Once this judgment had been delivered in Salamanca, he took it as an opportunity to go to Paris and study. By not knowing the language or to have means by which to practice, he would be less prevented and more helped by the community of studies there."[19] Laínez's interpretation, which might have been shaped by a concern to edify Jesuits in training, makes Ignatius look less passive and more enterprising. Ignatius internalizes an idea that came from someone else. Schwager, however, is sceptical about Laínez's account: "He would thereby voluntarily

[18] *Aut*, n. 47, *PW*, p. 35.
[19] *FN* I:99. Letter from Diego Laínez to the secretary Juan de Polanco on his memories of Ignatius and the first stages of the Society, Bologna, 16 June 1547, n. 27. It is not clear from the text what Laínez means by 'practice', but there is reason to believe that it refers to ministry, similar to that he had been engaged in. In Paris he would be able to concentrate on the studies and not be impeded by the ministry ('practice').

have imposed upon himself precisely that restriction which he did not want to accept from the representatives of the Church."[20]

Since Ignatius resisted the trials and did not show much sign of conformity, Schwager hypothesises that Ignatius's experience with the Inquisition taught him that he needed to cooperate with ecclesiastical authority for the sake of his apostolate. On this assumption Ignatius would have had a pragmatic approach – greater fruits would come out from his apostolic commitment if he had a good relationship with Church authority.[21] Without necessarily accepting the values of the Inquisition, Ignatius would understand cooperation with it as an unavoidable condition: "When in this way it became evident to him over the years that as close a tie as possible to the highest hierarchy of the Church was necessary for the sake of the greater effectiveness of his apostolic work, this remained for him not just a temporary demand, but became at the same time a matter of general law."[22]

Hence, in Schwager's reading, Ignatius did not simply do what he was told but reflected on the meaning of these incidents for his work. In his conscience he reserved a space in which he thought differently from ecclesiastical authority, and yet he found it useful to follow its orders. It should, at this stage, be pointed out that Schwager does not hold that Ignatius would merely identify the Church with Church authority. When commenting on Ignatius's time in Paris, Schwager, albeit only in passing, remarks that, by forming a group of followers in Paris, Ignatius began to build up a Church community. "He had indeed come a long way from the solitary penitent to the leader of a stable group. In this way he made his first step in orientation to the Church."[23]

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[20] Schwager (1970), p. 29.
[21] *ibid*., pp. 30–31. See also p. 161.
[22] *ibid*., p. 31.
[23] *ibid*., p. 34.

A few years after their studies in Paris, Ignatius and his companions arrive in Rome in 1537 and make themselves available to the Pope. Schwager asserts that there were three motives for this move. First, as the companions had not reached clarity as to what to do once the plan to go to the Holy Land had been frustrated, they assumed that the Pope would have a general overview of where the need was greatest and where they could work fruitfully. This criterion we might call a judgement about apostolic opportunities. Second, according to canonical legislation the Pope had jurisdiction over priests from different countries and dioceses. Third, an affiliation with the Papacy would protect the companions from further confrontations with the Inquisition.[24] Again, we see that Schwager favours an interpretation along pragmatic and ad-hoc lines, in the sense that the Pope would help the companions in their apostolic project. This is in stark contrast to the writings of the Jesuit Burkhart Schneider, whom Schwager had read. Schneider emphasised Ignatius's loyalty and inner, personal, affective relationship with the Pope: "'romanità' is thus quite a distinctive form of personal churchmanship that involves the whole human being and that sees the Church in a relationship to the Papacy that is conscious and highlighted."[25] The idea of Ignatian 'Romanità' goes back to the Spanish Jesuit Pedro de Leturia, whom Schwager distances himself from. Leturia had argued that Ignatius actively committed himself to strengthening the Papacy against the Protestants: "Ignatius sought to fortify the divine institution of the Papacy at a critical moment in the struggle against Protestantism, and to spread due obedience to the Vicar of Christ throughout the world."[26]

[24] *ibid*., pp. 34–39.
[25] Burkhart Schneider, 'Die Kirchlichkeit des heiligen Ignatius von Loyola', in *Sentire ecclesiam* (1961), p. 269.
[26] Pedro de Leturia, *Estudios Ignacianos I* (1957), pp. 240–241.

To conclude then, Schwager's Ignatius is one whose starting-point is personal conviction based on inner and subjective reflection, and from this position he interacts with the Church. Three metaphors might be helpful as a means of summarizing the role of the Church as seen in Schwager's reading of the *Autobiography*. The Church is a fence, preventing Ignatius from going astray. The Church is an insurance company, protecting him from accusations and giving credibility. The Church is a springboard, providing apostolic opportunities. Schwager's reading of the *Autobiography* suggests that the relationship with ecclesiastical authority is not as straightforward as simply a matter of unquestioned obedience. In a way Burkhart Schneider brings out more clearly what Schwager wants to communicate, even if Schneider's tone is slightly different:

> The way he acts is the same in all cases. On the one hand he fits in with the hierarchical order of the Church, whose authority he recognizes as a self-evident given. On the other hand he is careful to defend his being in the right and his reputation for the sake of the mission. In relation with ecclesial authority Ignatius does not become a revolutionary, but is never servile either.[27]

We will now turn to Ignatius's period as Superior General of the Society of Jesus, as seen in sources other than the *Autobiography*. There is historical evidence for situations in which Ignatius is, in fact, disinclined to follow the guidelines of Church authority, and Schwager reflects theologically on these.

[27] Schneider (1961), p. 273.

4.2 Ignatius's attitude towards the Church as Superior General

In this section we shall explicate the great variety of ways in which Ignatius related to Church teaching, to the Pope, to kings and princes and to his fellow Jesuits. Ignatius's attitude in part depends on the type of question or issue at stake. For our purposes it is particularly interesting to see that Ignatius's conscience on several occasions was disinclined to follow ecclesiastical authority and to observe how he then reacts. The first issue Schwager comments on is Ignatius's attitude towards the teaching of the Church. In Schwager's view Ignatius was not prepared to discuss the validity of doctrinal teaching. This is evident in the *Constitutions* from the criterion for accepting candidates.[28] In his letter to the companions on their way to the Council of Trent, Ignatius also expresses reservations about debating Church teaching. To sum up, with respect to doctrinal teaching of the Church Ignatius was reluctant to say anything controversial.

As regards possible appointments of Jesuits to become bishops or cardinals, by contrast, Ignatius was more prone to challenge and not at all easy to be persuaded otherwise. Schwager goes through four cases that are similar, though Ignatius's way of presenting the argument differs slightly. In 1546 King Ferdinand I of Austria requested the appointment of the Jesuit Claude Le Jay as Bishop of the diocese of Trieste in north-eastern Italy. Ignatius is manifestly against this idea and writes directly to King Ferdinand, saying: "we are convinced in conscience that for us to accept the prelacy would be to demolish the Society."[29] Unwilling to concede, King Ferdinand then involved Pope Paul III in the matter. Ignatius remained reluctant, as a letter shows, written on commission by his secretary Bartolomeu Ferrão (1545–1547) to Miguel de Torres who was at the Jesuit College in

[28] Schwager (1970), p. 133. *MI Const*. II, p. 35. *Const.*, n. 47, p. 32. See quotation above in section 2.2.
[29] *MI Epp*. I:451, Ignatius of Loyola, letter to Ferdinand of Austria, king of the Romans, Rome, December 1546. *LI*, p. 154. The wording in the Spanish manuscript is: "juzgamos, conforme a nuestras conciencias, que …," which could also be translated as: "in conformity with our conscience, we judge that…".

Alcalá in Spain at the time and Ignatius wanted to keep him informed. Ignatius conversed with Master Bernardo Maffei, the Pope's secretary several times and finally presented a number of arguments against the appointment in a personal audience with the Pope.[30] The arguments centre on a quest for humility and simplicity as well as the more universal good, the possibility of being able to help many people. The role of being bishop would not advance either of those goals, ran the argument. Pope Paul III, however, pointed out that the Holy Spirit had guided King Ferdinand in his choice of Claude Le Jay, who was also the Pope's preferred candidate. Despite this claim of spiritual authority: "Our Father [Ignatius] resumed his quest for any possible means of preventing the matter, unable to rest until he got this as he wanted."[31] His last measure was to turn to Princess Margarita of Austria (known as 'Madama' in the correspondence), who wrote to the Pope. Schwager does not discuss at this point any ways of interpreting Ignatius's actions, which seem to challenge Paul III's claim that the Holy Spirit was on King Ferdinand's side. Either Ignatius ignored the Pope's claim, or he took it seriously but thought that the Spirit was equally behind his own arguments and subsequent measures.

In 1552 Emperor Charles V instructed his ambassador in Rome to propose to Pope Julius III to confer the cardinal's hat on the Jesuit, Francisco de Borja. Ignatius opposed this appointment instantly and a three-day long discernment process confirmed his opposition. Schwager reports an interesting take on this affair by the second generation Jesuit, Pedro de Ribadeneira:

> I will not here go into the means he used to persuade the Pope about this, for the sake of brevity. Still, it is certainly something worth remembering and it shows how the servants of the Lord ought to make use of human prudence (with men

[30] *MI Epp*. I:463–464. Ignatius of Loyola, letter by commission from Bartolomeu Ferrão to Miguel de Torres, Rome, 2 March 1547. *LI*, pp. 161–162.
[31] *MI Epp*. I:464. *LI*, p. 162.

> who are not that spiritual), in order to persuade them about what is fitting for divine service.[32]

This statement both conveys that prudence is necessary in encounters with people whose spiritual capacity is limited and that the Emperor and/or the Pope were such people. In a letter to Borja himself Ignatius is notably more charitable, balanced and nuanced than in Ribadeneira's version. In contrast with the case of Claude Le Jay, Ignatius is clearer in giving an account of the work of the Holy Spirit in the context of what would appear to be irreconcilable positions. In a letter to Francisco de Borja, Ignatius writes:

> Despite all this, I have believed and still believe that there would be no inconsistency at all were it to be the divine will that I should set myself in this direction and others on the opposite one, with the result that this dignity was given to you. It could be the same divine spirit moving me this way for some reasons, and others in the opposite way for other reasons, with what the emperor has in mind thus coming about. May God our Lord act in the whole thing in such a way as will nevertheless constitute his greater praise and glory.[33]

Ignatius's theology of the 'same divine spirit' expressed in this quotation may indeed seem puzzling and contradictory and maybe even unconvincing. The possibility of the spirit moving in different directions is, nevertheless, particularly important for the pastoral practice at ecclesial frontiers, since it offers a step towards a theological orientation for dealing with contrasting views. I therefore need at this stage to anticipate the response in section 4.4 and digress from the presentation with some judgments. To begin with, however, I refer to Schwager's own comment. In a footnote the Swiss theologian refers to a similar line of thought that Aquinas presents in his *Summa theologiae* on the question whether an act of the human will, for it to be good, needs to be conformed to the divine will. Aquinas argues that opposing views can both be good, as he gives the following example: "Thus a judge's will is good in passing a sentence of death for this is just, but another's will,

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[32] *FN* II, Mon. 14, 'P. Petri de Ribadeneyra: De actis Patris nostri Ignatii 1559–1566', n. 74, p. 371.
[33] *MI Epp*. IV:284. Ignatius of Loyola, letter to Francisco de Borja, Rome, 5 June 1552. Quotation translated by Endean (1991), 83. Endean's translation is, in my view, more faithful to the Spanish manuscript than *LI*, p. 377. Schwager (1970), pp. 137; 151.

for instance of the criminal's wife or child, is also good in opposing the execution, for this is a real evil."[34] This passage in Aquinas's *Summa* is only referred to in a footnote in Schwager's text without further comment, but it could be seen as supporting Ignatius's subtle position. Let me give four other references that invite us to think about the Holy Spirit as a sender of contrasting messages. First, there is certain affinity here with the ethical theory of probabilism briefly exposed in section 2.6 above. One line of action may be appropriate even if another has often proven to be adequate. Second, an allusion could be made to John's Gospel, which gives an account of the Holy Spirit as being unpredictable: "The wind [*pneuma*] blows where it wills, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know whence it comes or whither it goes; so it is with every one who is born of the Spirit." (John 3:8). Third, the Pentecost event contains a diversity of languages (Acts 2:1–13). Fourth, in a conversation between the Austrian Jesuit Georg Sporschill and Cardinal Carlo M. Martini, the cardinal said this about youth: "The contribution of the youth is essential. Are the young today still interested in criticising those in power, the Church, or do they distance themselves tacitly? Where there is still conflict, there the fire is burning, and there the Holy Spirit is at work."[35]

King Ferdinand I also hoped to make the Jesuit Peter Canisius Bishop of Vienna. Schwager reports that the King's messenger had a dialogue with Pope Julius III. The messenger urged that a direct order should be sent to Ignatius without being concerned about his reaction. The Pope, however, responded: "Not this, My Lord Ambassador, we have need of them" (*Questo no, Signore Ambasciatore, habbiamo bisogno de loro*).[36] In a letter written by Juan de Polanco, by commission from Ignatius, to Jesuits active in Spain, the language is direct, using words such as 'fight' and 'defend': "I forgot to say that we are

[34] *Summa theologiae*, Ia2ae q.19 a.10, trans. by Gilby, vol. 18 (1966), p. 79.
[35] Kardinal Carlo M. Martini and Georg Sporschill, *Jerusalemer Nachtgespräche* (2009), pp. 71–72.
[36] *FN* II, Mon. 14, Ribadeneira, n. 74, p. 372.

having a fight (*combate*) on our hands like the one in defending Father Don Claude (who is in glory) from the bishopric of Trieste."[37]

Our fourth case comes from 1555 when Pope Paul IV sought to confer the cardinal's hat on the Jesuit, Diego Laínez. According to Pedro de Ribadeneira's account, which Schwager relies on, Ignatius reacted emotionally to this and made no secret about it: "He said to me [Ignatius to Ribadeneira]: - If our Lord does not intervene, we will have Master Laínez made cardinal. But I can assure you, that if this happened it would be with so much noise that the world would understand how the Society takes these things -, etc."[38]

The appointment of Jesuits to positions in the hierarchy was not the only issue that moved Ignatius to challenge Church authority. Schwager also comments on the circumstances surrounding the foundation of the Jesuit order.

> Finally we can add still further examples which show clearly that Ignatius made a stand against the Pope in his very capacity as supreme pastor of the Church. For he deployed his method of finding ways of exerting moral pressure for the first time in the context of the problems he had to overcome to achieve the official approbation of his new Society.[39]

The foundation of the Society of Jesus required written approval in the form of a papal Bull, which certain cardinals were reluctant to support. Objections were raised to the exemption from common prayer in choir, the exclusion of penitential acts by rule, and the vow of obedience to the Pope. Sceptical voices also protested against the very idea of a new religious order. The early companions encouraged friends and benefactors, among them the

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[37] *MI Epp*. V:323. Ignatius of Loyola, letter by commission from Juan de Polanco to Jesuits living in Spain, Rome, 12–13 August 1553.
[38] *FN* II, Mon. 14, Ribadeneira, n. 74, p. 372. The Spanish manuscript is ambiguous. Ignatius is either saying that the Society of Jesus would be upset with this decision and protest (make much noise), or that the world around them would hold it to be scandalous that the Jesuits accept an appointment to the cardinalate. The translation and the argument above opt for the former reading. (*me dijo: – Si nuestro Señor no pone la mano, tendremos a Maestro Laynez cardenal; pero yo os certifico, que si lo fuere, que sea con tanto ruido, que el mundo entienda cómo la Compañía acepta estas cosas*.)
[39] Schwager (1970), p. 141.

cardinal of Ferrara, the cardinal legate of Bologna and King John III of Portugal, to send letters to the reluctant cardinals in Rome. This diplomatic lobbying turned out to be successful as Pope Paul III confirmed the Society of Jesus in 1540.[40] Now, the first Jesuits had a flexible attitude even towards this Bull (apostolic letter), as seen in the first version of the *Constitutions* from 1541.

> We also wish that this Bull be revised, that is to say by removing, or adding to, or confirming, or changing the things that are contained in it, according to that which will seem best to us. It is on these conditions that we understand and wish to take the vow of keeping the Bull.[41]

Schwager makes a concluding interpretation of the *Constitutions* from 1541, particularly the passage just quoted: "If his [Ignatius's] own conviction stood opposed to it, he would even reinterpret a papal Bull to its uttermost permissible limit and internally dissociate himself from it."[42] The Swiss theologian has given a series of examples in which there were contrasting views, Ignatius having one position and ecclesiastical authority another. It is interesting to compare Schwager's interpretation with that of Hugo Rahner and Santiago Madrigal particularly from the point of view of spiritual discernment. In cases of tension and conflict, Hugo Rahner and Madrigal (by and large) would suspect that once the evil spirit has been identified, the tension is resolved. Schwager, by contrast, gives the individual the benefit of doubt, assuming that he or she is driven by the good spirit. Such a stance seems promising for spiritual direction at ecclesial frontiers. It recasts the perspectives, from assuming that the good spirit is located in *one* of the parties, the spirit can now be in *both*. Several questions, however, remain. Are the parties equally strong? Should they even be perceived of as parties? From a human point of view, it seems to be the case, but are there other perspectives? From the spirit's point of view, the binary polarity

[40] Bull of Pope Paul III, *Regimini militantis Ecclesiae*, 27 September 1540, *MI Const*. I, pp. 24–32. *Const.*, pp. 3–14.
[41] *MI Const*. I, Mon. 9, 'Constitutiones anni 1541', n. 38, pp. 45–46. Schwager (1970), pp. 143–144.
[42] Schwager (1970), p. 144.

seems to disappear and there is only one and the same spirit. A hitherto unresolved question is also: what is the outcome, the end result or consequences, of contrasting views?

4.2.1 Synthesis: The Holy Spirit and the Church

Schwager attempts to make sense of the whole spectrum of attitudes in the cases above, seeking a synthesis by giving an account of the Holy Spirit. Again, this is important, because at ecclesial frontiers there is a need of theological orientation. This account centres on the notion of the 'same spirit' and reference is made chiefly to the notorious rule in *SpEx* 365, which he suggests is to be understood as paramount.

> To maintain a right mind in all things we must always maintain that the white I see, I shall believe to be black, if the hierarchical Church so stipulates; for we believe (*creyendo*) that between Christ Our Lord, the bridegroom, and the Church, His bride, there is the same Spirit who governs and directs us (*mismo espíritu que nos gobierna y rige*) for the good of our souls because it is by that same Spirit and Lord of us all (*mismo Espíritu y Señor nuestro*) who gave the Ten Commandments that our holy mother Church is directed and governed.[43]

Schwager suggests that the sense of this rule could be understood in three different ways. Already the proposal of different interpretations was innovative at the time when the Swiss theologian published his dissertation (in 1970). The three ways he saw were:

> The formula can mean the unity between the individual and the Church comes about more or less spontaneously, since the same spirit leads both equally. It can also mean, the Church and individuals would have to search together, until they are in the unity and thus in the same spirit. It can finally be understood in the sense that the spirit alone leads and governs the Church directly and merely spurs on the individual to submit to this leadership (*dass der Geist allein die Kirche direkt führe und leite und den einzelnen nur antreibe, sich dieser Führung zu unterwerfen*).[44]

[43] *SpEx*, n. 365, *PW*, p. 358.
[44] Schwager (1970), p. 132.

Out of these three possible interpretations of what Ignatius might have meant, for Schwager, the third, submission to the guidance of the Church/Spirit, is the most plausible. What makes him, then, think that there is a case for the first (spontaneous unity) and the second (common discernment) interpretation at all? One reason is that his reading of *SpEx* 365 is developed not only on the basis of the use of the phrase 'same spirit' in this text, but takes into account the letters to Francis Borja and to Teresa Rejadell (compare section 2.4 above) in which the 'same spirit' could tolerate contrasting views that eventually converge or could at least be reconciled at some level.[45] The other reason is that he acknowledges that the examples from Ignatius's conduct, just displayed above, provide evidence that conflict with this third interpretation of straightforwardly doing what you are told: "But we had to recognise that the formula of the 'one divine spirit' in connection with obedience did not always adequately correspond to Ignatius's actual conduct."[46] Schwager's innovative threefold interpretation of *SpEx* 365 may be compared with the approaches of Hugo Rahner and Santiago Madrigal. Those to thinkers would hardly have invested energy in the second possibility ('Church and individuals searching together') and would have presumed that Ignatius's conduct always corresponded with Schwager's third interpretation of *SpEx* 365.

The Swiss theologian offers us four explanations as to why Ignatius's actual conduct did *not* correspond to the (third interpretation of the) rule in *SpEx* 365. The first is that an underlying principle of what Ignatius was aiming at was 'service', a value so high

[45] *ibid*., pp. 130–132. This is obvious in the letter of 1552 to Borja. Scholars are divided as to whether contrasting views are also implied in the letter of 1536 to Teresa Rejadell. Schwager does not explicitly assert this, but seems to assume such a possibility. In his book review Manuel Ruiz Jurado maintained that Schwager had misunderstood the Rejadell letter, since the 'same spirit' is "precisely avoiding dispersion and contradiction". Manuel Ruiz Jurado, *Archivum Historicum Societatis Iesu*, vol. XLI (1972), 308–309. Philip Endean suggests an interpretation which is closer to Schwager's overall argument. Endean, 'Discerning behind the Rules' (1989), 43–44.
[46] Schwager (1970), p. 149.

for him that it even motivated him to resist an authority. The notion of 'service' drove Ignatius to argue against the Pope: "As far as it can be determined at all, it was just this concern for the greater service that was nearly always the reason, why the Superior General could take a stubborn attitude even towards the Pope."[47] In other words, the vision of 'service' legitimizes Ignatius to do "the white I see", even if the Pope says that is black. A weakness in Schwager's argument of 'service' is that he does not provide evidence of concrete instances when Ignatius would have used this category. Furthermore, 'service' is like a knock-out argument that puts the other side in a position of seemingly not favouring 'service'. Despite these reservations I will, in the response in section 4.4 below, defend Schwager's move of using the category of 'service'.

Another explanation is the use of diplomatic lobbying to persuade Church officials, as seen in the case above when establishing the Society of Jesus. In a sense that procedure is close to Schwager's second interpretation of a common search for the divine will. A third explanation for Ignatius's departure from the most plausible interpretation of the rule above is that one is always obliged to follow one's conscience. There may be situations in which the person can accept, without confrontation, the opposite view to that which the hierarchical Church takes. But Schwager also holds that Ignatius was certain that a chosen path of resistance should not be judged as sinful. In fact, such resistance could be fuelled by the Spirit:

> Furthermore he [Ignatius] was convinced that the hierarchical Church could, at least in certain cases, instruct under pain of sin (*unter Sünde befehlen*), even if he was convinced of the correctness of the opposite. Such instructions should in all circumstances be avoided. At the deepest level, however, Ignatius was actually convinced that the divine Spirit could, precisely through his efforts and through his resistance, inspire the representatives of the hierarchical Church to that, which he had already sensed in himself.[48]

[47] *ibid*., p. 148.
[48] Schwager (1970), p. 151.

Schwager refers to two hypothetical examples of resistance. The first relates to the election of the first Superior General of the Society of Jesus. In his deliberation whether to accept or reject such an office, Ignatius "would follow the verdict of his confessor, even if the Pope ordered him to the contrary, provided that he was not convinced of its being a sin" (*de la sentencia de su confesor un punto no saldría*, *etiam si el papa le mandase al contrario*, *donde no fuese convencido de pecado*).[49] Ignatius would, thus, rely on the judgment of his confessor, even if the Pope told him the opposite. Of course, Ignatius adds, that he would not follow the confessor's suggestion if he judged that action to be sinful. The other example concerns the hypothetical possibility that the Jesuits would be asked to change the name of the institute – Society of Jesus. Juan de Polanco reports from a conversation he had with Ignatius:

> If someone would write to him and say that it [the name Society of Jesus] should be changed, because some said that we are elevating ourselves to Jesus Christ, and others said other things, I remember him saying to me: he alone would never come to do it, even if all those in the Society of Jesus together, and everyone else whom one is not obliged to believe under pain of sin, would judge that this name ought to be changed. During his days he would never change this name, since the Constitutions say that if there is one dissenter one should not do anything.[50]

A fourth explanation is that Ignatius was convinced that the Holy Spirit was present in the process of searching for a way. This would actually correspond to the second interpretation of the rule in *SpEx* 365, *i.e.* the principle of joint exploration of truth. The prime example of this is the so-called 'deliberation of the first fathers', that is to say the discernment process in 1539 of the first companions, about whether to form a stable society, and whether to appoint a superior. Schwager acknowledges that this procedure did not occur

[49] *FN* I:19, § 5. Forma de la Compañía y oblación.
[50] *FN* I:204, § 86. Formación y confirmación de la Compañía de Jesús. In the 1541 version of the *Constitutions* changes can only be made in unanimous concord, "but not if one is disagreeing" (*mas no uno discrepando*). *MI Const*. I, p. 47.

in relation to Church authority. The establishments of the Gregorian University and Germanicum (the German/Hungarian seminary) in Rome, however, could be regarded as a result of common spiritual discernment between the Jesuits and the Vatican.

However, we still do not seem quite to have reconciled Ignatius's account of the work of the Spirit in *SpEx* 365 and his actual conduct. There is unfinished business, and in his conclusion Schwager asserts that Ignatius's written accounts of the work of the Holy Spirit are often limited and even misleading. The real substance of Ignatius's understanding is that the Spirit works in manifold ways. The formula 'it is the same Spirit' etc, only when read carefully, allows for an interpretation of the Holy Spirit working in unpredictable and diverse ways. Correspondingly, there is not only *one* possible attitude towards the Church:

> This short overview ought to have shown us sufficiently that the statement "it is the same spirit, which leads the church and the individual," in connection with the concern for service, is able to cover the whole spectrum of Ignatian conduct. Precisely because of this spectrum, the result is that none of the different ways of conduct can be classified as *the* attitude of the Ignatius to the Church. For him the hierarchical Church could be a source of direct, specific inspiration, or merely provide a negative limit not to be crossed, or a great deal in between. What mattered for him, therefore, was not any *one* of these ways of relating, nor any *one* of these possible functions of the Church, but rather the recognition that it is the one divine Spirit that works in such diverse ways. – It remains, nevertheless, true that Ignatius in his texts articulated these manifold possibilities in which the Spirit operated, insufficiently – and here and there even misleadingly. [51]

Let us dwell on the two final sentences in the quotation above. There is an interesting shift of focus from the human perspective to the divine in the second but last sentence. Schwager asserts that from a pneumatological point of view there is "the one divine Spirit that works in such diverse ways". Human understanding may fail to grasp how contrasting views and different lines of action can be reconciled, but from the spirit's

[51] Schwager (1970), p. 152.

perspective other opportunities arise. The very last sentence on Ignatius's insufficient and occasionally misleading account of the Holy Spirit is also interesting. Schwager argues that Ignatius *did indeed have* a preliminary account of a variety of different operations of the Spirit, and that this account opened up a whole landscape of ways of interaction, not simply that of blind obedience. *But*, the Swiss theologian qualifies this observation by maintaining that the account is complex and incomplete. To Schwager's assessment I would add that it is unrealistic even to expect consistency and crystal clear frameworks in this field, especially given the long time span that the events cover. The rule in *SpEx* 365 was written in Paris sometime between 1528 and 1535, the letter to Teresa Rejadell in 1536, and the letter to Francis Borja in 1552. Over this period of some twenty years, we can hardly demand from Ignatius that he should have had identical things in mind every time he refers to 'the Spirit.'

Towards the end of his dissertation Schwager outlines the contemporary (1970) meaning of Ignatius's experience. One section has the heading: "The action of the divine Spirit in the people of God and the 'dramatic' relationship between the individual and the Church". These reflections further develop what Schwager said on *SpEx* 365 and the historical evidence of Ignatius's conduct (section 4.2 and 4.2.1). There are several aspects of the concept 'dramatic' in Schwager's understanding. He borrows the notion from the French linguist Roland Barthes, and Schwager finds the language in the *Spiritual Exercises* dramatic in the sense that the discourse is "not merely rational, but also integrates affective and volitional (*willensmäßige*) elements".[52] Schwager then explains further his own notion

[52] Schwager (1970), p. 186, footnote 18. Roland Barthes said: "It is now four centuries since Ignatius Loyola, the founder of the order which has done the most for rhetoric, left in his *Spiritual Exercises* the model of a dramatized discourse which has been subject to an influence other than that of syllogism or abstraction." Roland Barthes, *Criticism and Truth* (2004 [1966]), p. 24.

of ‘dramatic’ as a process of “development, conflict, tension, crisis, catastrophe, and final reconciliation and denouement” (full quotation, p. 130 above).

Some eight years after the completion of his dissertation, he published an article in the German journal *Geist und Leben*, which summarizes his project. Something had prompted him to clarify that even if Ignatius did not shun conflicts, and that in those he would seek reconciliation through the Holy Spirit. That reconciliation occurs in human interaction, in which the Spirit informs ecclesiastical authority as well as Ignatius.

> To that extent his [Ignatius’s] life corresponded fully with his rule that every decision must remain within the already given Church. This, however, does not mean that the Church could mediate all of the work of the Spirit from the outset. When conflicts are carried out in the Spirit, they become a call to multi-party conversion and reconciliation.[53]

[53] Schwager (1978), 459–460.

4.3 Church in the text of the *Spiritual Exercises*

Schwager holds that the *Spiritual Exercises* are primarily interested in the experiences of the reflecting subject (*reflex-subjektive Erfahrungen*). By 'reflective' and 'subjective' is meant that the person making spiritual exercises withdraws from society and pays attention to his or her thoughts and feelings. A certain inwardness is required.[54] Ignatian Exercises centre on the reflective subject who is in relation to a Church that is not immediately present, Schwager thinks. As a consequence of this he searches for interfaces between the reflective subject and the Church in the *Spiritual Exercises*. On the whole Schwager's view of the *Spiritual Exercises* gives priority to the individual (section 2.3 above). The Church is certainly there, but in the background. The Church's presence is seen as providing 'objectivity'; it makes sure that the person stays away from 'uncontrolled subjectivism', mainly through the biblical message and the guidance of the spiritual director. The Church provides a structure or frame of reference for the individual experience.

Schwager here reads the text of the *Spiritual Exercises* in the light of his interpretation of the *Autobiography* of Ignatius, and the *Autobiography* provides a criterion for the interpretation of the *Spiritual Exercises*. The pattern of the Exercises thus reflects Ignatius's experience with Church authority in the *Autobiography*.[55]

In Schwager's understanding, the Church is present in the *Spiritual Exercises*, but it is a low-key presence. The Swiss Jesuit goes through potentially ecclesial elements that thinkers such as Gaston Fessard, Hugo Rahner and Burkhart Schneider had claimed to be ecclesial, and undertakes this project in dialogue with them. The argument may seem

[54] *SpEx*, n. 20, *PW*, p. 288. Quoted above in section 2.3.
[55] It is noteworthy that in an article eight years later, the Swiss Jesuit reverses the order of dependence as he endorses Leo Bakker's view that the *Autobiography* was written with a didactic purpose, namely to clarify the meaning of the *Spiritual Exercises* in general and spiritual discernment in particular. Schwager (1978), 446–447.

subtle and it is therefore worth underlining that Schwager *does* see a presence of the Church in the *Spiritual Exercises*, but that it is *not as much* present as the thinkers mentioned had asserted.

> The reflective-subjective experiences (*die reflex-subjektiven Erfahrungen*) of Ignatius are to a high degree integrated into and with great consistency elaborated in the programme of the Exercises (*Exerzitienweg*). Precisely the non-ecclesial elements (*die „nicht-kirchlichen" Elemente*) appear thereby, however, to form the substance of the Exercises. This should hardly be surprising. It was much more difficult for Ignatius to incorporate this side of his experience into his method, since he himself was not led to Rome due to his religious starting-point, but through the particular engagements (*konkreten Auseinandersetzungen*) with the surrounding world, other human beings and the representatives of the Church.[56]

In order to understand the Swiss theologian better, it is helpful to imagine him having an independent person in front of him who from a neutral position has some points of contact with the visible Church. Despite this affective, engaging and personal notion of Church, Schwager does not think that Ignatius associated anything emotional with the images 'Bride' and 'Mother', that appear as titles for the Church in the *Spiritual Exercises*, in some of the letters in the correspondence as well as in the *Constitutions*. These were merely stereotypes without any particular meaning.[57] The potentially ecclesial aspects that instantiates such points of contact to be discussed are: liturgy, spiritual discernment, the method of prayer, and the spiritual director. Of these the spiritual director is the key point of contact, while other aspects have minimal ecclesial weight in Schwager's mind. Against those who had claimed that a corporate element in the *Spiritual Exercises* is expressed in the annotation which encourages the person who makes Ignatian Exercises to participate in the celebration of Mass and Vespers (*SpEx* 20), Schwager asserts that Mass was essentially a private and individual matter in early modern Catholicism. There is no inner connection between the Mass and the *Spiritual Exercises*, Schwager contends, explaining that the Mass

[56] Schwager (1970), pp. 58–59.
[57] *ibid*., pp. 128–129.

in the sixteenth century was not a community experience.[58] Schwager's point or assessment presupposes a community-based understanding of Mass and Church, a model that characterized the Second Vatican Council (1962–65). At any rate, even if the sacraments are not experienced collectively, we are told that they are to be regarded as "objective means of grace of the Church", hence in some way balancing the inward reflecting subject.[59]

The second aspect is spiritual discernment. As we saw in section 2.2 above, the Church appears in the 'election' and is explicitly mentioned in the so-called 'third time' (*SpEx* 177). Schwager thinks that the Church is clearly involved in the 'election', albeit that its involvement remains limited as it is a negative role. The choice must not contradict the values of the hierarchical Church (*SpEx* 170).[60] Schwager argues that this principle (*SpEx* 170) should be interpreted in the light of Ignatius's experience with Church authority as seen in the *Autobiography*, that is to say with the Franciscan provincial in Jerusalem and with the Spanish Inquisition.[61] From that perspective the Church marks out restrictions as a fence, while at the same time leaving a space for implicit disagreement in the individual with inner reservations. The point Schwager makes is that the principle in *SpEx* 170 cannot sufficiently articulate or cover the rich reality of an election, in the way the Jerusalem event as a model can. He excludes an interpretation of the rule in *SpEx* 170, which would say that you always need to follow those well-worn paths that the Church has approved and no other.[62]

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[58] Schwager (1970), p. 59. It is worth observing that Eamon Duffy has the exact opposite view of liturgy in early modern Christianity: "For most people receiving communion was an annual event, and it was emphatically a communal rather than an individualistic action." Eamon Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars* (1992), p. 93.
[59] Schwager (1970), p. 65.
[60] *SpEx*, n. 170, *PW*, p. 316. Quoted in section 2.2 above. Schwager (1970), p. 61.
[61] See section 4.1 above.
[62] Schwager (1970), p. 61.

The third aspect is the method of contemplation (*Betrachtungsmethode*) in the *Spiritual Exercises* in general and the use of Scripture in particular. Since the method of contemplation uses Scripture, there is, in Schwager's language, an 'objective' element, which also points towards the Church. He holds: "Therefore, we cannot unreservedly designate the Exercises as a process of reflecting subjectivity, in which there is only an inner-subjective dialogue. Scripture as an objective element clearly has its place therein."[63] But this method of prayer limits and restricts the role of the Church, as it centres on Jesus in Palestine and the feelings the contemplation of his life evoke, rather than on the "action of God in the history of salvation" and on "the Lord who is working in the Church".[64] Hence, the relationship focuses on Jesus and the person praying without involving the bigger picture of redemption through the Church.

A more definitive and distinct presence of the Church than in the elements discussed above, for Schwager, is in the role of the spiritual director, whom he understands to be a representative of the Church.[65] This view, thus, in some ways converges with that of Madrigal. Papal approval gives the method undisputed credibility and even makes the Exercises 'radically ecclesial'.[66] The spiritual director provides an indirect openness to the Church in the sense that he or she diligently follows the instructions in the *Spiritual Exercises*, as approved by the Pope. This given frame of reference constructs a space for individual freedom. This space of freedom needs, however, to be monitored, and Schwager acknowledges that the German Jesuit Joseph Sudbrack had already pointed this out:

> In the encounter between the human person and God he [the spiritual director] represents the word of the Church, which points the way and corrects, which makes relevant (*das aktualisierende*) and which at the same time places in a

[63] *ibid*., p. 72.
[64] *ibid*., p. 77.
[65] For sake of simplicity, the reproduction of Schwager's argument will not follow the sequence he is using, but certainly follow the ideas.
[66] Schwager (1970), p. 82.

> greater context, the word of the Church which does not stand between God and humanity but rather is the place in which each can meet the other.[67]

Sudbrack does not define more narrowly how directive and instructive the role of the spiritual director should be. When commenting on Sudbrack, Schwager wonders whether the spiritual director is meant to generate a constant engagement (*Auseinandersetzung*) between the human person and Church authority (the word of the Church in Sudbrack's language). He does this through what seems to be a rhetorical question: "Is the retreatant during his whole journey to stand by means of him [the spiritual director] in a continuing engagement (*Auseinandersetzung*) with the Church?"[68]

At any rate, in Schwager's view, the spiritual director guarantees or at least facilitates that the one making Ignatian Exercises distances him- or herself from his or her subjective standpoint. The subjective standpoint is not in itself bad, but rather what Schwager calls 'uncontrolled subjectivism' is inadequate. The spiritual director has an important role representing objectivity and in safeguarding against 'uncontrolled subjectivism', which incidentally the Swiss theologian does not strictly define.[69] 'Uncontrolled subjectivism' comes across as something negative and seems to differ from sound personal judgment. 'Objectivity', however, is defined as "that structure, which is at the same time a requirement, within the whole of human reality, which marks off being a subject from being subjective."[70] Reference is made to passages in the *Spiritual Exercises* in which the spiritual director has this role of providing objectivity.[71] Schwager refers to the

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[67] Sudbrack, Joseph, 'Die Rolle des Exerzitiengebers' (1966), 297. Schwager (1970), p. 78.
[68] Schwager (1970), p. 78.
[69] *ibid*., p. 79.
[70] *ibid*., p. 79. n. 100.
[71] The spiritual director helps the person to take distance, for instance, by being neutral as a pointer of a balance (*SpEx*, n. 15); by seeing to it that the election is made out of love of God (*SpEx*, n. 184). Schwager (1970), p. 79.

spiritual director's task of judgment: assessment is part of his or her job-description.[72] Schwager does not pronounce on what grounds the spiritual director should assess, that is to say according to what criterion. Church values, for instance, could have been one. Yet, the Swiss Jesuit does not simply identify Church values as a criterion. Instead the spiritual director reflects something that Schwager calls the 'ego' of Ignatius (German: *das Ich des Ignatius*). This presumably means to reflect the spirit of Ignatius, the manner or way of proceeding he would have.

> However, this objective distance, which the spiritual director is meant to represent, is never directly identified with the Church, in the text of the little book of the Exercises. It seems rather that it coincides primarily with the objective, sharp eyed and discerning gaze of the author of the *Spiritual Exercises*.[73]

Hence, Schwager does not claim that the detached position in itself will automatically coincide with ecclesiastical teaching. He seems, rather, to suggest that a certain distance makes it easier to stay in touch with reality and might sharpen the subjective standpoint so that the individual has a leg to stand on in a possible argument with Church authority.

We may conclude that Schwager appears to have an almost minimalist view regarding explicit involvement of the visible Church in the *Spiritual Exercises*. He primarily locates the role of the Church in the encounter between the spiritual director and the person making Ignatian Exercises. It is true that this constitutes a space for personal growth that is a simultaneous growth in the Church. Can it then be explained why Schwager, who pays a fair amount of interest in Ignatius's ecclesiology, still opts for a limited range ecclesiastical presence? I would say that he oscillates between two extremes. On the one hand, he seeks to

[72] *OG*, Doc. 1 Autograph Directory of St. Ignatius, n. 19, p. 9. Schwager (1970), p. 79.
[73] Schwager (1970), pp. 79–80.

portray an Ignatius who was not as conformist with ecclesiastical authority as Hugo Rahner portrayed him. The emphasis on the subjective-reflective element is in that context a stance that underlines personal judgment. On the other hand, Schwager cautiously denies that Ignatian ecclesiology should be understood as individualistic, thus repudiating impressions of Ignatian Exercises that were around in the 1960s and partly led the Swiss theologian to embark on his study. In my view, the end-result is that the visible Church is not emphasised enough. In my own ecclesiological position presented in Chapter 5 and particularly Chapter 6, I will outline in what way the visible Church could come more to the fore.

4.4 Response

For those situations in which a person is disinclined to follow Church authority because of conscience, Schwager's reading of Ignatius's life and of the *Spiritual Exercises* is informative. Of how much help it is will of course depend very much on the circumstances and the kind of issue at stake. Several forms of interaction between the individual and ecclesiastical authority emerge from Schwager's interpretation. Ignatius's conviction that the Holy Spirit could guide both Ignatius himself and Church authority is illuminating. One form of legitimate interaction is that of argument. Ignatius here used the concern for 'service', as (admittedly vague) criterion.[74] Furthermore, diplomatic lobbying might be appropriately used when approaching ecclesiastical authority in the attempt to promote unconventional projects. Thirdly, the individual and ecclesiastical authority might enter a process of common spiritual discernment, searching together. On the whole, Schwager creatively opens up a reflection on the Holy Spirit, couched in 'same spirit' language. He thereby provides scaffolding for a theological framework.

Notwithstanding these achievements, Schwager's account contains some weaknesses. Since the outcome of nearly all cases presented is favourable to Ignatius, Schwager's approach does not provide help for the situation in which the individual does not prevail, while remaining convinced that they are right. There is no mechanism to take care of those who lose the argument and are left behind. The case involving the Franciscan

[74] Even if I find this criterion vague, I disagree with Manuel Ruiz Jurado who, in his review of Schwager's book, ruled out that Ignatius would ever have used 'greater fruit' (which is equivalent to 'service') as an argument. Ruiz Jurado (1972), 309. Schwager's discourse may, of course, generate the idea that 'service' and Church as such were in some sort of competition. A reading of Juan de Polanco's report in his chronicle of the Society of Jesus in 1552 proves that there was no juxtaposition: "Taking the opposite view was Father Ignatius, who declared that our Society should at that time be a *servant of God and the Church* and that with the grace of God it would make some useful contributions if it was allowed to maintain its humble status. If a gate were opened to accepting this kind of dignities, the Society's ruin would be imminent. Thus, [is such a proposal were implemented, the Society] would not *be useful to God's Church* either as it had originally been structured or in any other way." My italics. (*Chron.* II:425, *YY*, p. 196).

Provincial in Jerusalem, in Schwager's interpretation at least, can only lead to the conclusion that Ignatius had erred. It could be added that that interpretation may be dependent on the assumption that it was God's will that the Society of Jesus was to be founded in 1540. Had Ignatius stayed in the Holy Land (as from 1522), the foundation of the order would not have taken place. Hence, Ignatius's idea must have been a delusion.

Another possible criticism is that Schwager's account could be challenged for giving too much weight and priority to the individual. Schwager is by no means solely individualistic, since he, by contrast, leads us to think that spiritual discernment occurs in the encounter. The way forward is not set in stone from the beginning, but rather evolves in encounters, be it between ecclesiastical hierarchy (the Pope) and Ignatius or between the spiritual director and the person making Ignatian Exercises. Nevertheless, Schwager's account could receive more credibility, and be strengthened by recognizing the sacred and mystical reality of Church community and its representatives, a notion that Hugo Rahner's and Santiago Madrigal's research promotes. In that regard Schwager's pragmatic stance is questionable, as it does not consider Church authority as being special in any sense and that the relationship with it can never be quite on equal terms.

Experience of the sixteenth-century Church may not have been as juridical and hierarchical (in the bureaucratic sense) as Schwager imagined. Ignatius's view of the Church was certainly more mystical and more relational than the pragmatic model Schwager assumed. I consequently coincide with Gottfried Maron who asserts that the titles 'Bride' and 'Mother' must have been much more significant and intimate than Schwager holds. Yet, I disagree with Maron when he maintains that this Mother may not be

contradicted, not even challenged.[75] The notion of "the Vicar of Christ" is another evidence for the sacred, mystical and relational model. The Vicar of Christ is one of the more strikingly mystical notions, mentioned in the *Formula of the Institute*: "we firmly profess that all the faithful in Christ are subject to the Roman Pontiff as to their head and the vicar of Jesus Christ."[76] This notion does not only appear in internal Jesuit documents, but also in a letter from Ignatius to his nephew Beltrán de Loyola relating the news that the Society of Jesus had been "approved and confirmed by the Vicar of Christ our Lord."[77] The relevance of the notion of the Vicar of Christ, for our purposes, is that those who are not spontaneously inclined to obey Church teaching might be able to accept the situation, thanks to the assumption that a papal statement is, at least in principle, related to the will of Jesus Christ.

There are also certain limits in Schwager's philosophical, hermeneutical and psychological framework for the relationship between the individual and the Church. I suggest that Schwager's Enlightenment framework needs to be replaced with a more corporate, relational and holistic one. This will be presented as one overall argument from three perspectives: philosophical, biographical and social. First, the philosophical. We can argue that the human person and Church authority are more closely related at a level over and above the one identified by Schwager, once we acknowledge that they are both dependent on a common tradition with a common language. As we have said, Schwager is not entirely individualistic. His ecclesiology arises precisely out of an analysis of the encounter between the individual and the spiritual director, and between Ignatius and Church representatives. But the two elements of that encounter are by definition kept apart

[75] Gottfried Maron, *Ignatius von Loyola: Mystik, Theologie, Kirche* (2001), pp. 153–154.
[76] *Formula of the Institute*, 1540, in *Const.*, p. 7. See also *Const.*, n. 603, p. 276.
[77] *MI Epp*. I:149. Ignatius of Loyola, letter to Beltran of Loyola, Rome, 24 September 1539. See also *MI Epp*. VIII:470; 473. Letter from Ignatius to the Emperor of Ethiopia, Rome, 16 February 1555. *LI*, pp. 545; 547.

or distant, due to a philosophical structure in which the reflecting subject is set against the Church as limit. These philosophical considerations will be further developed in the following chapter, as it has implications for the problem at large.

Secondly, biographical aspects implied in Schwager's account may also be challenged in that Ignatius's allegedly non-ecclesial (*nicht kirchlich*) background has been questioned in recent scholarly work, continuing the labour of Pedro de Leturia and Hugo Rahner. More rigorous research (unavailable to both Schwager and Rahner) that began in the 1980s has thrown some, albeit fragmentary, light on Ignatius's early years. These findings have some value, even if limited sources lead scholars here to project their own vision on to Ignatius. The Spanish historian Luis Fernández Martín has shown that Church and religion were very much present in Ignatius's education as teenager.[78] Ignatius grew up in a religious environment and was not religiously unmusical, even if not particularly committed. The Spanish Jesuit Rogelio García-Mateo has endorsed the view that Fernández Martín advocated, by highlighting various religious categories, values and practices, which surrounded Ignatius in the early years of his life.[79]

Thirdly, the social aspect of the framework. Schwager overlooks the close relationship between the individual and the community in which people influence one another for good of all. In his directory on the *Spiritual Exercises* Juan de Polanco asserts: "And once God's action has wrought such a change in their hearts, what wonder if the change shows in their entire outward life as well?"[80] Several scholars have stated that there

[78] Luis Fernández Martín, *Los años juveniles de Iñigo de Loyola* (1981), especially pp. 71–84; 125–170. Fernández Martín & García-Mateo, *Ignacio de Loyola en Castilla* (1989).
[79] Rogelio García-Mateo, 'La formación castellana de Ignacio y su espiritualidad' (1986), 375–383. 'Formación administrativa de Ignacio de Loyola en Castilla y su personalidad' (1987), 279–288. 'Ignatius von Loyola vor seiner Bekehrung: Die Bedeutung der Jugendzeit für seine Spiritualität' (1988), 246–247.
[80] *MI Dir*., p. 279. *OG*, Doc. 20 Directory of Juan de Polanco, n. 8, p. 119.

is a connection between personal reform and Church reform. Diego Molina is one of them.[81] Burkhart Schneider is another, who contended: "The reform of the individuals' inner attitudes was a necessary condition in order that the institutional and organizational measures of reform came about. Precisely these were generated not the least through the Exercises."[82]

To John W. O'Malley's knowledge the Jesuits rarely spoke of 'reform of the Church' as such, but used the term *reformatio* to talk about "the change of heart effected in individuals through the Spiritual Exercises and the other ministries", that is to say individual conversion influencing the common good of all.[83] Citing a letter by Juan de Polanco to Antonio Araoz, the provincial of Spain, O'Malley also draws attention to a conviction the early Jesuits espoused, namely that studies will bear fruits in the future:

> From among those who are at present only students, various persons will in time emerge–some for preaching and the care of souls, others for the government of the land and the administration of justice, and others for other responsibilities. In short, since young people turn into adults, their good formation in life will benefit many others, with the fruit expanding more widely every day.[84]

In a statement like this, people's influences on each other are emphasized in a way that Schwager does not take sufficiently seriously. We shall now turn to two thinkers who, in quite different ways, have developed Schwager's approach and taken his concerns forward. The English Jesuit Philip Endean will be presented first and then the Spanish Jesuit Jon Sobrino who resides in El Salvador. Both provide further resources for dealing with situations of perceived disharmony and both attempt to supply a theological framework that

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[81] Diego M. Molina, 'San Ignacio y la reforma de la Iglesia' (2001), 49–63, especially 61–63.
[82] Schneider (1961), p. 288.
[83] John W. O'Malley, 'Was Ignatius a Church Reformer?', in *Religious Culture in the Sixteenth Century* (1993), pp. 182–183.
[84] *ibid*., p. 183. *MI Epp*. IV:9. Letter from Juan de Polanco on commission to Antonio Araoz, Rome, 1 December 1551. I have cited the translation made in *LI.*, p. 363, since it is closer to the original than O'Malley's version.

can cope with diversity. Schwager deserves credit for having paved the way for creative thinking on these problems with his dramatic approach, summarized in ‘same spirit’-language. His approach, developed in the late 1960s, bears however signs of too sharp a contrast between individual and institution.

4.5 Charismatic Diversity

Philip Endean (b. 1954) is an English Jesuit, a tutor at Campion Hall, and a member of the faculty of theology at Oxford University. Between 1994 and 1996 and between 2001 and 2008, he was editor of the Ignatian journal *The Way*. He has written numerous articles on Ignatian studies, covering a variety of themes. Ignatian spirituality is at the heart of Endean's work, a field that he studies from various disciplines, notably modern doctrine. He is currently involved in a critical edition of the writings of the poet Gerard Manley Hopkins, particularly his notes from spiritual retreats. Endean's scholarship is decidedly concerned with the primary sources, as is seen in his collaboration in an English translation of key Ignatian texts.[85] His essays always remain close to these primary sources and are set in their sixteenth-century historical context, and show sensitivity for ecclesial language as historically situated.[86] Endean's understanding of this period is partly indebted to the revisionist views of the church historian John W. O'Malley, at whose feet he sat in the mid-1980s. Endean is thereby able to refine Schwager, who showed less linguistic awareness and who seems to have grasped the early Jesuits through the conventional Counter-Reformation lens.

Endean also uses what the English historian Herbert Butterfield classifies as 'imaginative sympathy', through which the historian "makes the past intelligible to the present."[87] With a certain historical imagination the records from the past are brought to life. It is at the same time important for Endean to declare that our contemporary world is considerably different from the sixteenth century, and that this gap needs to be clearly

[85] Ignatius of Loyola, *Personal Writings*, ed. by Munitiz and Endean (1996). See also the *From the Ignatian Tradition* feature in *The Way*.
[86] The essay on attitudes towards prayer in Everard Mercurian, the fourth Superior General of the Society of Jesus, may serve as one example. Endean, '"The Strange Style of Prayer": Mercurian, Cordeses, and Álvarez', in *The Mercurian Project*, ed. by McCoog (2004), pp. 351–397.
[87] Herbert Butterfield, *The Whig Interpretation of History* (1931), p. 92.

pointed out when receiving the Ignatian tradition. One major difference is, in Endean's view, that our era of globalization is characterized by greater diversity and pluralism. Catholicism and Protestantism, for instance, can now be compared in ways that were not possible before. We see a connection between historical and systematic theological aspects in the light of current norms and values in his doctoral dissertation, *Karl Rahner and Ignatian Spirituality*.[88] In his constructive interpretation of Karl Rahner, Endean finds inspiration both from Wittgenstein's philosophy of language and from the writings of the US Jesuit, Jules Toner, who narrowed down the scope of discernment to awareness of one's desires. It is particularly in his dissertation that Endean to some extent goes beyond the dramatic approach and arrives at a position close to the one I want to put forward in Chapters 5 and 6.

Endean has convincingly demonstrated that, in order to understand what Ignatius and the early Jesuits said about the Church, as well as their ecclesial operations, we need to identify the Society of Jesus as a 'charismatic' movement. Against this background and with a wider range of examples and a deeper analysis than Schwager's, Endean enriches the dramatic approach and its 'same spirit' language. But he also clarifies that spiritual discernment has epistemological and other limits. Ecclesiology remains 'unfinished' as Endean classifies it, that is to say final solutions and clear-cut answers are not always found. Therefore, tolerance and patience is called for. Such a generous attitude keeps away, though, from relativism and from a non-cognitive standpoint. I will make some critical points too, but these will come at the end of the Sobrino section, since my responses to Endean and Sobrino overlap on several points.

[88] Endean, *Karl Rahner and Ignatian Spirituality* (2001).

4.5.1 Charismatic links with the institutional Church

In his article 'Ignatius and Church Authority' from 1991, Endean introduces Schwager's research into the English speaking world. In so doing he presents the Swiss theologian's arguments and also uses Ignatius's letter to Francis Borja, on his possible future as cardinal, as a chief source. At the outset of the article Endean asks: "What is the relationship between the divine guidance embodied in hierarchical directives and the direct action of God in our prayer-experience?" He crafts this, perhaps more sharply than Schwager did, in the question: "What if God puts into my soul something of which an ecclesiastical superior disapproves?"[89] Ignatius seems to offer a seemingly uncomplicated answer to these questions: "To maintain a right mind in all things we must always maintain that the white I see, I shall believe to be black, if the hierarchical Church so stipulates."[90] Endean, nevertheless, suggests that this and similar statements need to be interpreted carefully and do not represent, in their plain sense anyway, what the early Jesuits were all about.

Endean queries what 'determines' (an alternative translation to 'stipulates' from the Spanish *determina*) in the above quoted sentence means. "What is meant by something which the hierarchical Church 'determines'? Are there some acts or 'determinations' of hierarchical authority guaranteed as being uncorrupted by sin or error?"[91] This rhetorical question seems to be answered with 'no'; such a guarantee is not implied. Papal affiliation and the hard discourse in the 'rules for thinking with the church' have to be explained at another level. One explanation is that the early Jesuits simply may not even have considered other alternative routes than a strong association with the institutional Church: "Ignatius and the early Jesuits acted on an unreflected, perhaps barely conscious conviction that their innovativeness had its place only within institutional Roman Catholicism. Thus they

[89] Endean, 'Ignatius and Church Authority' (1991), 78 and 77. *SpEx*, n. 180, *PW*, p. 358.
[90] *SpEx*, n. 365, *PW*, p. 358.
[91] Endean (1991), 78.

worked to build up the human links while leaving the theoretical issues largely to one side."[92] Endean makes the case that Ignatius appreciated the Church without really exploring why. In a list of several 'most holy gifts' (*santísimos dones*), given in a letter from Ignatius to Francis Borja in 1548, we read that Jesuits ought to have: "humility and reverence towards our holy mother the Church and her rulers (*gobernadores*) and teachers (*doctores*)."[93] Ignatius spontaneously saw allegiance with the Church and its representatives as one such gift.

But the objection could be raised, that this lack of reflection does not sufficiently justify Ignatius's seemingly authoritarian ecclesial statements. In an earlier article, Endean addresses this problem by asserting that an awareness of the background, against which propositions need to be read, is necessary: "We should always interpret spiritual rhetoric in the light of the social, economic, and political context."[94] Ignatius's conduct and the context in which he operated are essential when attempting to make sense of the sources. Endean maintains that we need to conceive of the nascent Society of Jesus as a 'charismatic' movement, a term that is not defined but seems to mean a movement lead by the spirit and not matching the prevailing ecclesial structures. Its orthodoxy was disputed and the first companions struggled to receive recognition from ecclesiastical authorities. The group was even accused of Lutheran sympathies. Thus, it could be added, this charismatic movement sought to establish relationships in order to gain credibility. Endean consequently suggests the following motivation behind a set of guidelines such as the Rules for thinking with the Church:

> The early Jesuits claimed a charismatic call for their ministry, a ministry distinguished by its pecuniary disinterestedness, its professionalism, and its primary focus on pastoral care. This must have sat uneasily with a hierarchy

[92] Endean (1991), 80.
[93] *MI Epp*. II:236. Letter from Ignatius to Francis Borja, Rome, 20 September 1548, *LI*, pp. 161–162.
[94] Endean, 'Who Do You Say Ignatius Is? – Jesuit Fundamentalism and Beyond' (1987), 30.

> structured in terms of feudal benefice system, and a paranoid, heresy-hunting Inquisition. Through its special relationship with the pope, the Society receives juridical legitimation, a *missio canonica*; moreover, it effectively escapes from the control of any hierarch other than the pope. The authoritarian picture of the hierarchical Church given in the Rules for Thinking with the Church and similar documents should perhaps be interpreted as the rhetorical cement of a difficult and tense relationship.[95]

Using what he calls 'historical imagination' in an article from 2004, Endean compares the early Jesuits with contemporary charismatic prayer groups in our time. It could be stipulated that for its survival such a group needs to be incorporated into a wider community and keep the relationship alive.

> Suppose, then, that a prophetic group, without losing its integrity, nevertheless chooses to maintain its links with the wider Church. It will need to develop a rhetoric of reassurance. More generally, the successful resolution of the situation will depend primarily on the desires, the human relations skills, and the good sense of both sides. When Ignatius had a serious problem in Rome, he resolved it by visiting the Pope – his spirituality of poverty did not lead him to forget his courtly training, and he could gain personal access to Paul III.[96]

The story is not only about what has been 'determined', but also about the convictions of a charismatic group. Endean illustrates with several examples that the 'Rules for thinking with the Church' is not predominantly about uniformity and discipline. In Endean's interpretation one of the rules is not merely expressing tolerance but actually praising difference: "We should praise frequent attendance at mass; also hymns, psalms and long prayers, whether in or out of church; and likewise, appointed hours at the appropriate times for all the divine services prayers and the canonical Hours."[97] It may be recalled that the early Jesuits were exempt from common prayer in choir and from prayers at fixed times. Endean comments on this rule by saying: "Ignatius is here modelling something important: a recognition that styles of observance and spirituality that are not part of our particular

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[95] Endean (1987), 34.
[96] Endean, '"The Same Spirit is in Everything"' in *Encounters with the Word: Essays to honour Aloysius Pieris*, ed. by Crusz, Fernando and Tilakaratne (2004), p. 514.
[97] *SpEx*, n. 355, *PW*, p. 356.

vocation are nevertheless worthy of praise. Our own style of discipleship is legitimate, but never an absolute."[98]

Endean applies a similar kind of approach to modern-day variations in philosophy. In an article from 2000, Endean stated that Catholic faith could be compatible with various philosophical schools, including analytical philosophy.[99] It is through this lens of various philosophical traditions, as one example, that Endean analyses and broadens the notion of the 'same spirit', as he builds on the scholarship of Schwager. It may be recalled that this was a flexible concept that could encompass diverging views, explain exceptions to rules, and serve as a code for spiritual discernment. From the latter's research Endean concludes: "Ignatius's behaviour implies a vision of the Holy Spirit as working *both* through the directives of authority, *and* through his own desires."[100] This vision of a Holy Spirit who guides both parties opens up a spectrum of possibilities for them to interrelate.

4.5.2 Diversity and pluralism and unfinished character of ecclesiology

Endean's ecclesial presuppositions remind us of Schwager's 'dramatic' notion of church, which is to say an unpredictable, process-oriented emotional reality. While similarly focussing on a dynamic (and possibly even chaotic) reality, one slight difference is that Endean describes more clearly in what sense there is a process in this rather elusive setting. Endean explicitly claims that theology should be incomplete and goes beyond Schwager in that he radically abandons any tidy-mindedness.

> A certain unfinishedness is essential to ecclesiology, however legitimately we strive for an ever greater understanding. To talk about the Church is to talk about how believers relate to each other under God. As such, ecclesiological language must inevitably be pluralist, ambivalent, changeable and open-ended. Pluralist, because each human being and each local community is called into a

[98] Endean, ''The Same Spirit is in Everything' (2004), p. 517.
[99] Endean, 'Philosophy and the Magisterium: A Contribution from 'Oxford'' (2000), 39–54.
[100] Endean (1991), 79.

> unique form of relationship with God; ambivalent, because the language we use will reflect our chequered histories of grace and sin and the conflicts inherent in all deep relationships; changeable, because we change over time and consequently so does our sense of God and of others; open-ended, because it is of faith that we can never stop growing in grace, never exhaust the mysteries of God and of each other.[101]

Endean, thus, assumes that ecclesiology needs to take human relationships as its point of departure, relationships that escape strict categorization and tidy theories. At the centre of attention is the concrete situation, which requires a mechanism through which this unique and relational reality can be expressed. Endean finds such a mechanism through a constructive interpretation of two norms in the primary sources. For him the central ecclesial attitude comes from a point Ignatius makes for the more narrow setting of the communication between the spiritual director and the person making the Exercises. The assumption is in *SpEx* 22 that Christians make benevolent interpretations of the other's statement.[102] Endean suggests that *SpEx* 22 conveys: "a sense of diversity of the ways in which people express their faith, a conviction that they are normally talking sense–or at least that there is some good subjective reason for their error–and a belief that mutual growth comes through interaction."[103] In conclusion: "Ecclesiological language–indeed perhaps all language about God–has to be understood in terms of the relational reality it articulates, and must not be pressed too far."[104]

Such a norm of mutual listening is also central to other Ignatian scholars who work on ecclesial matters. Gill Goulding of Regis College in the University of Toronto treats the delicate issue of sexual abuse and conflicts related to doctrinal teaching; and for

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[101] Endean (1991), 80–81.
[102] *SpEx*, n. 22, *PW*, p. 289. Full quotation in section 2.4 above.
[103] Endean (1991), 81–82.
[104] *ibid*., 82.

Goulding, just as for Endean, the idea of listening in the sense of *SpEx* 22 is a crucial ecclesial principle:

> Central to relating with one another in the area of ministry, whether in the church, the academy, or on the shop floor, is a hermeneutical principle that benignly interprets the words or actions of another. This is a valid hermeneutical stance, drawing its authority from the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius Loyola.[105]

Another way in which Endean's enriches the discussion and brings out the merits of the 'same spirit' language is by clarifying its meaning and restricted range. A central meaning, for Endean, is that Ignatius uses the term as a way of saying that he trusts in the coherent workings of the Holy Spirit, even if disorder seems to prevail. Through a close and diligent examination of a letter Ignatius wrote in June 1536 to the Benedictine sister Teresa Rejadell (her first name is conventional), Endean brings further evidence for the notion of the 'same spirit'.

Ignatius probably did not personally know this Benedictine sister who lived in a community in Barcelona. This female community requested incorporation into the Society of Jesus, according to a series of letters Rejadell and her abbess wrote to Ignatius and to his secretary Juan de Polanco in 1549. They wished: "to serve the Lord under obedience in the Society of Jesus" ("*de servir al Señor debajo de la obediencia de la Compañía*").[106] Unfortunately the information Rejadell passed on to Ignatius in 1536 has not survived. Endean shows, in a footnote, that he is aware of the correspondence in the late 1540s, but he does not speculate as to what may have prompted Rejadell to turn to Ignatius already in

[105] Gill Goulding, *Creative Perseverance* (2003), p. 16.
[106] *Epist. Mix.* II:48. Letter from Teresa Rejadell to Ignatius, Barcelona, 14 January 1549. The request is frequently repeated: *Epp. Mix.* II:60–62 (February 1549); *Epp. Mix.* II:101 (6 March 1549); *Epp. Mix.* II:163–165 (3 April 1549); *Epp. Mix.* II:304–307 (3 November 1549); *Epp. Mix.* II:308 (5 November 1549). The reasons behind the request are not explicitly revealed but the letters contain expressions such as: "get away from all this chaos and confusion" (*Epp. Mix.* II:308, 5 Nov 1549).

1536. It could, however, be useful to conjecture, in order to make sense of the rather complex language and sophisticated thought process in the letter. As the Jesuit order was not even established in 1536 (it was in 1540), Rejadell cannot have asked to join the Jesuits as a religious order in a formal sense. Yet she may have sought another kind of affiliation with the early companions. It seems, at any rate, highly probable that she was proposing an arrangement that was difficult to put into practice–something which may or may not have been consistent with ecclesiastical authority. The letter is a treatise in spiritual discernment and it can be divided into two sections. The first part delineates how the 'evil spirit' operates through 'false humility' and 'extreme fear of God'. The second part explains spiritual 'consolation' and a key passage in it goes:

> It happens that often our Lord moves and forces our soul to one action or another by opening our soul; I mean, speaking inside it without any noise of voices (*voces*), raising it entirely to his divine love; with us not being able, even if we wanted, to resist his purpose. And the purpose of his that we take on – of necessity we conform (*necesario es conformarnos*) with the commandments, precepts of the church and obedience to our superiors – and full of complete humility, because the same divine spirit is in everything (*el mismo espíritu divino es en todo*).[107]

Endean probes what character the 'necessity' in question has, and of possible readings he suggests that when "our true consolations direct us towards specific options, they are inevitably in keeping with our ecclesiastical obligations, conformed to them by God."[108] Endean grounds this interpretation by saying: "The phrase which opens the following sentence, 'where quite often we can deceive ourselves', implies a contrast with what has gone previously. If this is so, then the point about conformity with church authority is not a cautionary injunction against self-deception, but simply an assertion of the ultimate coherence of all workings of the Spirit."[109] When Ignatius speaks of 'our Lord' being the subject of the spiritual movements, it is clear that we are no longer dealing with

[107] Endean, 'Discerning Behind the Rules' (1989), 42–43. Translation by Endean.
[108] *ibid*., 43.
[109] *ibid*., 50, footnote 19.

just revealing the evil spirit. On this basis Endean conjectures that, for Ignatius, Sister Rejadell was indeed led by the good spirit. There is a sense of trust that this was the case. Having made this interpretation, Endean still finds the instruction limited or even "unhelpful" as it "amounts simply to the assertion that there can be no ultimate inconsistency in the manifold workings of the Holy Spirit." In this article Endean grapples with this, offers some ideas, but at this stage sees few satisfactory solutions. In conclusion, the restricted range is that 'same spirit' language does not theoretically sort out conflicts and errors of judgement. Unlike Ruiz Jurado and others (compare section 4.2.1 above) Endean assumes that the Spirit can be behind contrasting views, but the 'same spirit'-framework does not explain how.

4.5.3 Discernment of desires is neither relativistic nor anarchic

A quick glance through Endean's essays could give the impression that he advocates an anarchic, entirely subjective or relativist position in terms of spiritual discernment. This is, however, not the case, especially not in his later writings. Already in the early material, a truth claim is definitely to be recognized: "There certainly are rights and wrongs, but what counts as such varies according to situations."[110] Likewise, ecclesiology needs to take its bearings in doctrinal teaching: "Sheer common sense tells us that there simply is such a thing as sound doctrine and indeed sound ecclesiology, however hard it is to specify the point further. Thoroughgoing relativism is not an option."[111] This conviction is intensified in his book, *Karl Rahner and Ignatian Spirituality*, and here I want merely to distil two points from a technical and subtle argument that runs through three chapters.

[110] Endean (1991), 81.
[111] *ibid*., 86.

The first point about language and tradition arises as Endean discusses Karl Rahner's apparent view that religious experience could be made without concepts and words (*unbegrifflich*).[112] Endean insists that all human experience involves language and that Ignatius does use linguistic resources, if only by means of approximation, to express *something* when conveying his experience.[113] The point here is that the articulation of an experience is not detached from the experience itself, indeed Endean doubts that there is a neutral experience as such separate from the expression. These linguistic resources are in their turn connected with history and Christian tradition: "Historical events, mediated by memory, shape our self-experience. One cannot, therefore, have what one claims to be an experience of God's grace, or identify such an experience in a non-believer, without implicitly affirming the axiomatic status of Christian tradition."[114] This leads Endean to continue and, maybe surprisingly, point out: "When individual Christians find themselves clashing with officeholders, even their dissent is rooted in a fundamental acceptance of shared assumptions, a fundamental shared contact with the reality of grace–a reality which the inherited tradition and its official bearers symbolize, but do not exhaust."[115] With this argument from language and tradition, protection is put up against any allegedly complete independence, and indeed against a standpoint that 'anything goes'.

The second point concerns the scope of discernment, about its limits. By narrowing down the responsibility of the individual (who discerns) to a matter of becoming aware of and articulating his or her own desires, Endean seeks to overcome the kind of difficulties that Schwager ran into. Endean here builds on Jules Toner who claimed that

[112] Endean shows that Karl Rahner was led to believe that he found support for non-conceptual experience in the above quoted passage from the letter to Teresa Rejadell, as Hugo Rahner had translated 'voces' with 'words' instead of 'voices'. Endean (2001), pp. 164–168.
[113] Endean (2001), pp. 167–169.
[114] *ibid*., p. 203.
[115] *ibid*., p. 203.

there is a significant difference between intention and consequences, in the sense that discernment "is limited to finding God's will regarding the discerner's *own* free and responsible choice" whereas what "God wills to happen as consequences of the discerner's decision and free choice is beyond the limits of discernment."[116] One of the examples Endean brings to illustrate this view is that of a person who through Ignatian Exercises perceives a vocation to become a pianist, only to lose their hands in an accident.[117] Now, the accident does not disqualify the prior accuracy of the spiritual discernment. Endean then applies this perspective to Ignatius's discernment. The example is Ignatius's deliberation, recorded in his *Spiritual Diary*, whether the sacristies of the churches belonging to the Society of Jesus should receive a stable income or not. Endean observes that Ignatius, after having perceived confirmation in his discernment that the sacristies should not receive, adds remarks of reservation such as: "for my part", "doing what in me lay."[118] In the end, however, the early Jesuits did decide to accept steady income. Endean then concludes: "Ignatian discernment yields a purified desire. If one avoids any temptation to look for more than that, and if Ignatius's process is followed competently and conscientiously, there is no reason why it should not be regarded as reliable."[119] Confidence in the validity of spiritual discernment of one's own desires may render the need for further confirmation by someone else superfluous. This position builds on Jules Toner's dismantling of the need of confirmation of a judgment made through discernment.[120]

Such a standpoint is worth comparing, for instance, with the seventh-century Mount Sinai mystic John Climacus who had a much bolder claim: "To put the matter generally, discernment is–and is recognized to be–a solid understanding of the will of God

[116] Toner, *Discerning God's Will* (1991), pp. 50, 62.
[117] Endean (2001), pp. 215–217.
[118] *ibid*., p. 217.
[119] *ibid*., p. 219.
[120] Toner (1991), pp. 216–229.

in all times, in all places, in all things."[121] The position taken by Toner and Endean is more cautious as it qualifies the notion of "solid understanding" and of "all times". One consequence of spiritual discernment in this more restricted sense is that a person, who claims to be led in prayer towards a position at variance with official teaching, cannot be easily dismissed as erroneous even though the desire may never be materialized. Good spiritual discernment is not dependent on a successful outcome. Endean thereby questions the idea of obedience of judgment, *i.e.* to judge contrary to your own impression and to accept the voice of external authority and repress one's conscience. By restricting spiritual discernment to the individual's own desire, Endean influenced by Toner, has relativized ecclesiastical authority in terms of right and wrong, while preserving a level of subordination in the practical order.

By way of summary, Endean has taken the discussion forward by specifying more carefully what Schwager left vague: Ignatian primary sources do mean what they say, but the references to the institutional Church make more sense once we see that a 'charismatic' group needs the institutional Church for its credibility. Second, Endean highlights spiritual direction as a healthy mechanism by which diversity in terms of understanding the Holy Spirit can be expressed. Can diversity, then, be distinguished from chaos? In a seminar on Pope John Paul II, Endean quoted Rahner who in contrast with Balthasar holds that the human ear cannot hear diversity in the way God can.

> If we were to behave as if our being Christian gave us a 'world-view' in which everything fits together harmonically, we would, in the end, be setting ourselves up to be God. This is because the whole of reality is a symphony only for him. To make pluralism into a symphony – as good old Balthasar does – a symphony which we can hear as such – this is fundamentally impossible.[122]

[121] John Climacus, *The Ladder of Divine Ascent* (1982), p. 229.
[122] Karl Rahner, *Sämtliche Werke*, 25, pp. 612–613. Cited and translated by Endean in: 'Peter and Mary: Some Rhanerian Reflections', in *The Legacy of John Paul II*, ed. by Hayes and O'Collins (2008), p. 75. Endean (2001), p. 259. Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Truth is Symphonic* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1987).

From this quotation we may conclude that Endean's position seems to be that that which sounds like cacophony is actually symphony, even if only God can perceive it as such. Ecclesiastical authority is involved in this insofar as the interpretation of the Holy Spirit is articulated in a language taken from the Christian tradition. In that way there is some sort of guarantee that it really is symphony, although the human ear cannot hear it. Grace and the will of God may push the established ecclesial norms, but the search for it presupposes a common narrative and common values.

4.6 The prophetic Voice of the Poor

Jon Sobrino is Professor of Theology at Universidad Centroamericana José Simeón Cañas (UCA), San Salvador, El Salvador. Of Basque origin, he was born in Barcelona in 1938 and came to El Salvador in 1958, where he has lived ever since, with the exception of some years of education in the United States and in Germany. He received a Doctorate in Theology from Philosophisch-Theologische Hochschule Sankt Georgen, Frankfurt, in 1975. Alongside the Peruvian, now a Dominican priest, Gustavo Gutiérrez (b. 1928), and the Uruguayan Jesuit, Juan Luis Segundo (1925–1996), Jon Sobrino is one of the key figures in the movement known as 'liberation theology'. His writings are markedly shaped by the reality of El Salvador over the last decades, which has been one of poverty, injustice, civil war and martyrdom. In 1980 Archbishop Oscar Romero was murdered, and in 1989 six Jesuits and two of their collaborators were killed, to name but two significant events. Sobrino belonged to the same community as the murdered Jesuits, but was abroad at the time and thus barely escaped the attack. An introduction to his world, context, and way of thinking is provided in his book, *Witnesses to the Kingdom*.[123]

Sobrino has written four pieces in Ignatian studies that also relate to ecclesial matters. One of them is 'The Christ of the Ignatian Exercises', which appears in an appendix to the book *Christology at the Crossroads*, translated into English in 1978 (Spanish 1976).[124] There are, furthermore, two Ignatian-related chapters in the book *The True Church and the Poor*, translated into English in 1984 (Spanish 1981).[125] He also gave a paper in 1991 at a conference in Loyola, Spain, under the title 'Following the poor and humble Jesus:

[123] Jon Sobrino, *Witnesses to the Kingdom* (2003).
[124] Jon Sobrino, 'The Christ of the Ignatian Exercises', in *Christology at the Crossroads: A Latin American Approach*, trans. by Drury (1978), pp. 396–424. *Cristología desde América latina* (1976).
[125] Sobrino, ch. 3 'The Service of Faith and the Promotion of Justice' and ch. 10 'Religious Life in the Third World', in *The True Church and the Poor* (1984), pp. 64–83; 302–337. *Resurrección de la verdadera Iglesia* (1981).

How to take down the crucified people from the Cross'.[126] Also worth mentioning is an article, which Sobrino draws on, written by his fellow Jesuit, Ignacio Ellacuría (1930–1989), on a Latin-American interpretation of Ignatian Exercises.[127] Sobrino has also written a number of other pieces, mainly in the 1980s, that are relevant, albeit only indirectly Ignatian. Among them are three different works on the theme of divergence and conflict. These are: "Unity and Conflict in the Church" (English 1984);[128] "Conflict in the Church" (English 1985);[129] "The 'Doctrinal Authority' of the People of God in Latin America" (1985);[130] "Communion, Conflict, and Ecclesial Solidarity" from 1993 (Spanish 1990).[131]

Sobrino's approach centres on the Church's integration of that which seems to be cacophony, namely the prophetic voices. Prophecy is crucial for progress in the Church on its way towards 'the Kingdom of God', according to Sobrino. I will present and examine Sobrino's view in two sections, beginning with his concept of discipleship as potentially conflictive. The various attitudes one can take towards the poor prompts a controversial choice, as the *Spiritual Exercises* on the 'Call of the King' and 'A Meditation on Two Standards' lays bare. The second section will go through Sobrino's understanding of the 'Kingdom of God'.

I will argue that he has helped us to take prophecy seriously and that his criteria of the Kingdom of God animates renewal and enables and legitimizes criticism of Church

[126] Sobrino, 'El seguimiento de Jesús pobre y humilde', in *Ejercicios espirituales y mundo de hoy*, ed. by García-Lomas (1991), pp. 77–94. My translation into English of the title above.
[127] Ignacio Ellacuría, 'Lectura latinoamericana de los Ejercicios Espirituales de San Ignacio' (1991 [1974]), 111–147.
[128] Ch. 7 in *The True Church and the Poor* (1984), pp. 194–227. *Resurrección de la verdadera Iglesia*, pp. 204–236. A section of this chapter was originally published in *Christus* (Mexico City), 41 (1976), 19–29.
[129] Sobrino, 'Conflict in the Church' in: *Spirituality of Liberation: Toward Political Holiness* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1985), pp. 141–149. Another translation in 'Conflict Within the Church', *The Way*, 26 (1986), 33–43. Originally published in *Diakonía* (Nicaragua), 27 (September 1983) and in *Christus* (Mexico City) 1983.
[130] Sobrino, 'The 'Doctrinal Authority' of the People of God in Latin America', (1985), 54–62.
[131] Sobrino, 'Communion, Conflict, and Ecclesial Solidarity', trans. by Wilde, in *Mysterium Liberationis: Fundamental Concepts of Liberation Theology*, ed. by. Ellacuría and Sobrino (1993), pp. 615–636.

for the sake of its development. His account is also important for our purposes because he suggests an explanation for the sources of tensions and conflicts. Moreover, he provides criteria for discernment in those conflicts, as well as some solutions. His approach, however, is sometimes hampered by generalisations and stereotypes. It may also be harder than he seems to recognise to determine on whose side Jesus Christ stands and how to tell the difference between true and false prophecy.

Sobrino's approach is similar to Schwager's (even if he shows no trace of having read the Swiss Jesuit) in that both address perceived disharmony head-on. Sobrino stands out as different from the Swiss theologian and the other thinkers examined here in his concern for a whole group, namely the poor, rather than a single person who faces ecclesiastical authority with a particular difficulty. Sobrino's work is committed to the poor around whom his ecclesiology centres. On the whole, he has a decidedly collective understanding of religion: "Even though it is individuals who have faith, they cannot have it except within the group called the Church."[132] Individual progress is made in a corporate setting: "From the outset (and this is not specific to the Christian Church but is a sociological characteristic of many institutions), the conversion or renewal of the individual takes place in a group."[133] Identity is established through self-transcendence: "Only by going out of oneself (in either an individual or a communal sense) and to others does one gain a properly Christian identity."[134] It has to be said that Sobrino's own case illustrates a shining example of conflict between a theologian and ecclesiastical authority as seen in a 'notification' issued by the Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith in 2006.[135] Various

[132] Jon Sobrino, *The True Church and the Poor* (1984), p. 309.
[133] *ibid*., p. 309.
[134] *ibid*., p. 311.
[135] Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith, prefect William Cardinal Levada, 'Notification of the works of Father Jon Sobrino', Rome, 26 November 2006. See also: 'Explanatory Note on the Notification of the works of Father Jon Sobrino'. Both available on www.vatican.va.

European theologians have responded critically to this 'notification'.[136] More broadly, theology of liberation has been a source of contention and a subject of two documents issued in the 1980s by the Congregation for Doctrine of Faith.[137] I will not, however, pay much attention to that history here, but rather focus on Sobrino's Ignatian writings.

4.6.1 Commitment to the poor and the conflictive potential of discipleship

Jon Sobrino centres his analysis of the *Spiritual Exercises* on two of the meditations in the so-called 'Second week'. One of them is 'The Call of the Earthly King', the other 'A Meditation on Two Standards'.[138] Sobrino asserts: "It is quite apparent that the most original and typical features of Ignatius's thinking and his *Spiritual Exercises* are to be found in the Second Week. It is dedicated wholly to a consideration of the historical Jesus, but under a very specific aspect. It is concerned with a personal election or decision to render service to the kingdom."[139] Sobrino explains that the person who makes these exercises is to be inspired by Jesus Christ, not simply as a figure of emotional attraction, but as one who opens up a path of liberative discipleship, and follow him. The 'Call of the King' has, in his view, a didactic purpose as it is: "spelling out the basic structural norm of discipleship: i.e., living as Jesus did. While God's will for different individuals may be different, nothing can be God's will if it does not correspond with acting as Jesus did."[140]

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[136] *Commentary on the "Notification" regarding Jon Sobrino* (Barcelona: Cristianisme i Justícia, September 2007). *Die Freiheit der Theologie: Die Debatte um die Notifikation gegen Jon Sobrino*, ed. by Knut Wenzel (Ostfildern: Grünewald, 2008). For an introduction to Sobrino's Christology see: Bernard Sesboüe, 'Jesus Christus aus der Sicht der Opfer: Zur Christologie von Jon Sobrino' (2007), 240–254.

[137] Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith, prefect Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, 'Instruction on Certain Aspects of the "Theology of Liberation"', Rome, 6 August 1984; 'Instruction on Christian Freedom and Liberation', Rome, 22 March 1986. Both available on www.vatican.va.

[138] *SpEx*, nn. 91–100, *PW*, pp. 303–304; n. 136–148, pp. 310–312. Throughout his writings Sobrino sustains the focus on these two meditations, see for instance: *The Eye of the Needle* (2008), p. 53.

[139] Sobrino, 'The Christ of the Ignatian Exercises', in *Christology at the Crossroads* (1978), p. 404.

[140] *ibid*., p. 406.

Following Jesus, that is to say being his disciple, inevitably introduces the potential for conflict, Sobrino maintains. The starting-point of that claim is the life and teaching of Jesus himself. "The historical Jesus acted in an unredeemed world, a world of sinfulness. It therefore could not help but be riddled with conflict. Jesus did not proclaim the Kingdom of God as something that was in continuity with the world's possibilities, but rather as a new creation, which in the first place implies a denunciation of the world of sin."[141] Sobrino finds that Ignatius, too, evokes the idea of resistance, of contradiction. Even if the modern-day theological context is different, as far as Sobrino is concerned, the pattern or the structure remains the same.

> Loyola does not analyze the element of conflict in discipleship from the standpoint of present-day political theology or liberation theology. Nor does he analyze it from the standpoint of modern biblical theology as I have done in this book. At the same time, however, Ignatius is well aware of the structural element of opposition and contradiction to be found in discipleship. He brings it out somewhat even in his meditation on the call to the retreatant, though there he deals with it more in psychological terms. He makes it very clear that the person who would respond to God's call must "act against" (n. 97).[142]

The tension and the necessity of choice is brought out even more clearly in the 'Meditation on the Two Standards', in which the person praying meditates on "Christ versus Lucifer; Jerusalem versus Babylon; concrete knowledge of life versus deception and deceit; apostles versus demons; and the desire to help versus the laying of traps and snares (nn. 136–47)."[143] In another text Sobrino specifies: "The conflict becomes most intense when it is a matter of defending the rights of a specific group of people, who in our continent happen to be the majority. I mean the rights of the oppressed, who are for the most part Christian and even Catholics."[144] To sum up, the roots of the conflict comes from the different attitudes that people have toward poverty and the poor. Conflicts, incidentally, are

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[141] My translation from *Cristología desde América latina* (1976), p. 331. *Christology at the Crossroads*, p. 407.
[142] *ibid*., pp. 407–408.
[143] *ibid*., p. 408.
[144] Sobrino, *The True Church and the Poor* (1984), p. 206.

understood of as something good in Sobrino's mind, since it can be "an expression of the sincerity with which they dialogue and one of the historically determined ways in which the Church makes progress."[145]

While still maintaining that there are controversial characteristics in this material, Sobrino (in the paper delivered in 1991 in Loyola, Spain) explores why the radical nature of Ignatian Exercises does not fully come to the fore. His point of departure is various forms of inhuman conditions and injustice.[146] The concern for the poor thus governs how Sobrino addresses Ignatian Exercises, or more precisely, how he conceives of the ministerial practice, the way in which Ignatian Exercises are given. He laments that the practice of giving spiritual exercises has not, in his view, lead to a more intense spreading of the good news to the poor and oppressed. There must either be some limitations in the text of the *Spiritual Exercises* itself or something wrong with the ministerial practice, or both.[147] Sobrino states that spiritual exercises should help the person to follow Jesus through a life of actual poverty. Such an austere life implied a prophetic criticism against the 'corrupt' Church for Ignatius, and it would have a similar significance now:

> The Exercises address the issue of poverty in order to help the retreatant to make a good election, and does so, more specifically, in relation to the poor and humble Jesus whom one is to follow. In line with the best Christian tradition, Saint Ignatius analyses poverty: as a way of following Jesus; as the best safeguard against the temptation of power–a temptation to which he, in a very evangelical way, is especially sensitive; and as a form of prophetic denunciation, even if implied, against the corruption of the Church of his time, for which he demands of himself and his followers to 'preach in poverty'.[148]

But, in Sobrino's view, the text of the *Spiritual Exercises* makes no obvious connection between the choices of an individual and the whole of humanity. Indeed, he

[145] Sobrino, 'Conflict Within the Church' (1986), 39.
[146] Sobrino, 'El seguimiento de Jesús pobre y humilde' (1991), p. 77.
[147] *ibid*., pp. 79–80.
[148] *ibid*., p. 80.

claims that one of the key exercises, the 'Call of the King', is problematic, it focuses on the transformation of the individual but lacks the idea of transformation of society. Moreover, it lacks the notion of the 'Kingdom of God', and there are two aspects of this problem for Sobrino. The first is space for criticism, a topic that will be addressed in the next section.[149] The second concerns the commitment to the poor that is inherent in the beatitudes ("Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God." Luke 6:20). The person who makes Ignatian Exercises needs to make a decision whether to defend, support and feel compassion for the poor, or to neglect them. Sobrino has spotted a temptation in every individual, the Society of Jesus and the Church to evade this reality:

> This mercy-principle (*principio-misericordia*) is difficult but necessary. It is difficult because the tendency to place oneself–and also the Church and the Society of Jesus–ahead of the distant suffering of others is always active. There is no abundance of those, like Monsignor Romero, who place the mercy shown towards victims before concern for not only their own personal lives, but also the ecclesial institution (*institución eclesial*). But this principle is, of course, necessary for remaining true to the faith, and because of historical necessity: the victims urgently need defence and support. To this end ought the Exercises contribute today.[150]

4.6.2 Reinterpretation of the 'Call of the King' and the 'Kingdom of God'

In the previous section we saw that, in Sobrino's opinion, the notion of the 'Kingdom of God' properly understood fosters a commitment to the poor. We shall now focus on his argument that the same notion enables and legitimizes criticism of the Church. The Church should listen to prophetic voices, he claims, since it is incomplete and will be fulfilled first in the eschatological future. For the Ignatian context, this move presupposes an expansion and a reinterpretation of the text of the *Spiritual Exercises*. A talk Sobrino gave at the 'General Assembly of the Conference of Religious Men and Women of El Salvador' in 1977 demonstrates that he thinks that it is appropriate to reinterpret. Core values from the

[149] *ibid*., p. 82.
[150] Sobrino, 'El seguimiento de Jesús pobre y humilde' (1991), p. 90.

Ignatian tradition can be updated, instead of simply repeating a certain vocabulary or referring to certain customs from the past. "My interest here is to show how to analyze the structure of the charism of a founder so that an appeal to it may be possible and even required", Sobrino declares.[151] One such core value is the 'Kingdom of God'. In his reflection "The Christ of the Ignatian Exercises", Sobrino had observed a limitation in this language. He makes a critical observation as regards Ignatius's understanding of the Kingdom:

> Second, Ignatius shared the "monarchical" view that prevailed in his own culture and time. This is reflected in some of the expressions he uses (Jesus as the "eternal king"), and in his conception of the hierarchical Church (n. 353) when he tries to lay down rules for thinking in line with the mind of the church (nn. 353–70). In his eyes the church was the kingdom of God. Hence working for the kingdom was equivalent to working for the church.[152]

How, then, does Sobrino delineate the difference between 'the Church' and 'the Kingdom of God'? In his book *The True Church and the Poor*, he develops his understanding of the 'Kingdom of God'. It is an eschatological category, which is to say that it can be made real in the here and now, but essentially points towards the future. The Church is thus not fulfilled, not perfect, but rather relative in some sense.

> The Church is not the kingdom of God. […] The discovery in ecclesiology, taken for granted today, was made around the turn of the century. It was realized that the message of Jesus was an eschatological message. In analyzing this eschatological or ultimate reality in the service of which Jesus was acting, it was discovered that the properly eschatological reality is not the Church but the kingdom of God. Jesus did not preach or establish (in the conventional sense of the term) any Church; he simply proclaimed a kingdom of God that was at hand. The ultimate, definitive reality in the eyes of Jesus was the kingdom, not the Church.[153]

The distinction that Sobrino draws between the Kingdom of God and the Church forms a basis for both renewal in and criticism of the Church. In articulating the

[151] Sobrino, *The True Church and the Poor*, p. 314.
[152] Sobrino, *Christology at the Crossroads*, p. 398.
[153] Sobrino, *The True Church and the Poor*, pp. 200–201.

dynamic nature of prophecy, Sobrino uses the metaphorical language of 'frontiers': "By 'living on the frontier' I mean that the religious exists where there is greater scope for Christian imagination and creativity to experiment; where the risks may be greater; where there is need of prophetic activity in order to shake off the inertia that is continually immobilizing the Church as a whole or in order to denounce sin more energetically."[154] It also means criticism: "If the Church as a whole is not identifiable with the kingdom of God, then it is open to criticism; moreover, inasmuch as the kingdom subjects every created reality to judgment, then the Church must be criticized."[155] Sobrino, thus, relativizes ecclesiastical authority as he goes beyond the church and speaks about the kingdom. Ecclesiastical authority needs to listen to the prophetic voices and accommodate them. There is, then, a solution to the conflictive situation of discipleship.

> A history of prophetism in the Church shows that the ecclesial body does not progress unless there has first been a rejection of something within the Church. Prophetism does not turn into heresy because the Church is able to absorb (*pueda integrar*) the step forward. If the Church does not succeed in accepting (*si no integra*) prophecy it will stiffen into immobility."[156]

Sobrino also maintains that the poor are not a peripheral group. On the contrary, he holds that: "the Church of the poor is not a Church for the poor but a Church that must be formed on the basis of the poor and that must find in them the principle of its structure, organization, and mission."[157] Sobrino even goes so far as to assert that there is "no salvation outside the poor", in an allusion to, and dramatic reworking of, the Church father Cyprian's expression.[158]

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[154] *ibid*., p. 323.
[155] *ibid*., p. 201.
[156] *ibid*., p. 213.
[157] *ibid*., p. 93.
[158] Sobrino, *The Eye of the Needle* (2008), p. 41.

4.6.3 Responses to the dramatic approaches of Endean and Sobrino

In what follows, I will respond to Endean and Sobrino together. Although there are differences between Endean's and Sobrino's writings in terms of contents and style, they have been joined together in this chapter, because both face tensions and perceived disharmony and both offer theological orientation for dealing with unresolved situations in ways that are similar to Schwager's.

Philip Endean has made an important contribution to Schwager's approach by enriching his idea of the 'dramatic' in a number of ways. Endean has convincingly argued that the search for truth, for divine guidance, is necessarily dynamic, and that ecclesiology needs to be rooted in relationships, which are by definition inexact and unpredictable. He bases this claim on the example of the early Jesuits, which represented a 'charismatic' movement. Endean has also developed Schwager's concerns by explaining theologically why mutual listening is important and has identified the prerequisites for such communication. Careful listening is vital for progress and for making use of the dynamic element in the Church. I endorse Endean's concept of mutual listening, because it accommodates diversity and provides a way of dealing with possible abuses of, and conflicts with, dysfunctional authority.

Sobrino has, in his turn, introduced principles and categories for overruling or at least relativizing ecclesiastical authority. In a broad sense, prophecy will be a helpful device for our three pastoral situations in Chapter 7. Different church denominations may, for instance, mutually express prophetic views to one another. The role of prophecy is, moreover, in line with Scripture (particularly the Old Testament), and it is fitting in our context for two reasons. First, the *Spiritual Exercises* indeed centre on Scripture. Second,

the biblical base ought to gain an ecumenical hearing. Sobrino follows Schwager in that the commitment to the poor is similar to Schwager's category of 'service', which transcends other considerations. The focussing of ultimate authority in the Kingdom of God opens up conceptual space for saying that the institutions mediating that promise are fallible. This is not, incidentally, a particular Latin-American or liberation theology view. Compare, for example, Schillebeeckx on the 'Kingdom of God', in his book *Church*.[159]

Four points can be made here. First, neither Endean nor Sobrino speaks explicitly of the current Church as sacramental (although Endean comes close as he refers to the Church of Christ), that it is a sign or foretaste of the 'Kingdom of God'. In my own ecclesiological position in Chapter 6, I will promote the idea of the Church as sacrament. Moreover, appeals to renewal as well as criticism are more credible, the more it can acknowledge a concrete, visible and holy church. It could be worth mentioning in this connection that Ignatius's own understanding of the Church was not as institutional as Sobrino assumes. Santiago Madrigal's research has helped us to see that the "hierarchical church" was a mystical notion.[160] Second, it is difficult to find criteria in Endean or Sobrino with which to distinguish true from false prophecy (apart from 'acting as Jesus did'), and Sobrino is surely vulnerable to the objection that not all prophecy is true.

Third, there is a tendency both in Endean's and Sobrino's accounts to follow Schwager in giving undue priority to the individual or to certain groups within the Church.

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[159] Edward Schillebeeckx, *Church: The Human Story of God* (1996), pp. 111–197. For Schillebeeckx, in his biblical theology, the kingdom of God is a universal reality that includes all men and women and the whole of creation. The church relates to the 'kingdom' in that the former points to the latter and that the church "witnesses to Jesus' way towards the kingdom of God."

[160] I would not, however, go so far as to say that Sobrino is generally uncritical in his treatment of the *Spiritual Exercises*, a criticism that Segundo has expressed. Juan Luis Segundo, *The Christ of the Ignatian Exercises* (1987), p. 8; p. 126, note 13. Segundo thinks that Sobrino overlooks what he perceives to be a contrast between the Christology of Ignatius and that of the Second Vatican Council.

In Sobrino's case the privileged claim to the prophetic voice given to 'people from below' is justified due to the injustice inflicted on them. But the prophetic voice cannot be exclusively theirs. We may speak of a preferential, but not exclusive, option for the prophetic voice of the poor. Established Church teaching and ecclesiastical authority, namely, may also be understood as prophetic. Endean's and Sobrino's approaches do not sufficiently consider that an engagement with ecclesiastical authority could be a positive struggle, in the sense that the person could be educated by the wisdom of tradition, which can act as a challenge to the prevailing values of contemporary culture. In short, the idea of the Church being counter-cultural is largely absent in their approaches. In the end, though they are aware that some special status has to be given to ecclesiastical authority, they do not succeed in formulating this principle adequately and therefore fall into the trap of seemingly giving preference to the individual. It will, of course, be difficult to define criteria that can distinguish between exercises of authority that are coercive and those that are counter-cultural in a positive sense.

Fourth, we need more resources in order to articulate the possible public nature of the result from discernment. Through Sobrino we have learnt that prophecy should be integrated in the Church and through Endean, inspired by Toner, we have learnt that discernment may very well be accurate even if it will never be materialized. But what if the discernment leads to deliberating a course of action in the public space? Endean and Sobrino do not really articulate a procedure for such cases. Basically Endean deals with the problem by marginalizing the public. What is an adequate response to someone who experiences a calling for which there aren't any ecclesiastical structures? Is it possible to go public? We lack general guidelines of when to speak and when not to, as well as how and how not. We shall address this kind of pastoral issue in Chapter 7. More generally, we need

an understanding of the will of God that is both fundamentally interpersonal and historically conditioned. The following two chapters will search for that.

5. The Space between Pilgrims

It is reported that Albert Einstein once said: "Problems can never be solved with the same kind of thinking as the one through which they have arisen."[1] In this chapter and the next I will introduce an alternative way of thinking about the setting for Ignatian Exercises, in contrast with the view of contemporary popular authors and with the main thrust in the writings of scholars presented in this dissertation. This alternative paradigm recasts the problem through two basic perspectives: it replaces an individualistic understanding of the human person and of Ignatian Exercises with a relational anthropology, and it draws ecclesiology from timeless values and unchangeable principles to a historical and time-bound reality. My ecclesiological position also gives priority to the Roman Catholic Church, while recognizing that holiness and grace is present and at work outside its boundaries.

The key subject matter at stake in Ignatian Exercises is the specific plan or will of God for a particular person or a group. The standard setting in which this subject matter is explored is the cooperation between the spiritual director and the individual who makes Ignatian Exercises in a retreat, of which there are various models.[2] Using a simple structure, we may then say that there is a goal, which consists in finding God's will, and that there are ways of reaching this goal, by way of searching through spiritual exercises. Three fundamental sets of questions arise (some of which I will subvert by showing that they are misguided or imply false alternatives). First, where metaphorically speaking, is the goal located? Is the will of God in external authority or within the individual? Does either of the two possess knowledge of God's will? Second, how does spiritual discernment in a Church

[1] One version in German of this saying attributed to Einstein is: "Probleme kann man niemals mit derselben Denkweise lösen, durch die sie entstanden sind."

[2] The pilgrim and the spiritual director meet in the thirty-day, or the eight-day retreat setting, or in retreat in everyday life (nineteenth annotation). I speak here of an individual, but spiritual exercises are sometimes also used for a group of people, for instance when a religious congregation discerns what steps to take.

community relate to the temporal dimension? Is the pattern and structure unaltered over time and unaffected by a historical process? Third, is the search for the will of God bound to a particular tradition?[3] If various traditions are involved, how do they meet? Do they merge or stand over against one another? These questions call for a philosophical and theological perspective on the conditions and the context for spiritual direction. Such perspectives will be provided in this chapter and the next. The first step (in this chapter) is to lay a philosophical foundation for my ecclesiological position that is fundamentally relational in a deep and basic sense. The chief idea is that the human person needs to be understood in a relational way and this anthropology has consequences for how the relationship between individual Christians and the Church community is understood. I will explain what difference the contrasted accounts (the relational person as opposed to the detached individual) make, and draw conclusions that lead to specific assumptions as to where God's will is to be found.

Let us imagine using a camera lens. When reading contemporary Ignatian literature (section 1.2 above) and also Raymund Schwager for that matter, one gets the impression that the retreat setting is, in principle, disconnected from a wider world and is detached from the past as well as the future. The camera lens focuses on what happens 'within' the person and takes a snapshot of it in the here and now. With this view, a connection to a Church is not automatically given, but needs to be established as if the Church were a separate entity.[4] Since it is not assumed, it has to be explained why the Church community is relevant to the spiritual process. It may even, in the first place, be a task of demonstrating that a network of relationships, a community of any sort, is connected

[3] I understand 'tradition' in a broad sense; it can be taken as customs, values, religious culture, and also as the collective experience of past generations.

[4] Even someone like Hugo Rahner who held that Ignatius was a 'man of the Church' seems to disengage the 'interior' Spirit that interacts with the individual from the 'exterior' Church. Hugo Rahner, Ignatius the Theologian, pp. 215–217.

to the spiritual process. As an alternative to this view, we need, particularly at ecclesial frontiers, to go beyond this individualistic, non-historical and instrumental viewpoint. Prayer is not solely 'within' or exclusively 'deeply personal'. A communal framework provides a background for learning how to make sense of prayer. Moreover, a community of some sort is relevant when a person is about to make a decision and when it is carried out. This interpersonal position focuses on the space 'between' and moves away both from the space 'within' the person and the one 'outside' (although not abandoning the interior and exterior). This alternative way of thinking also looks differently at the dimension of time, as it pays attention both to the past and the future (Chapter 6) of Christians as pilgrims in a pilgrim Church. The hope is that this position will recast, provide orientation for and address the pastoral cases with a different mind-set than the one through which these issues have surfaced. The camera lens will zoom in on the space 'between', while leaving both the internal and external space dimmed.

In this chapter, I will offer a definition of 'person' understood in a relational way and focus on the corporate conditions of religious experience. Such anthropology suggests that the specific will of God is found in a process which in some ways is essentially interpersonal. The Canadian philosopher Charles Taylor is of particular use here, as well as in the historical description of the emergence of the autonomous self. The relational person will be contrasted with the autonomous self of the Enlightenment (as seen in the writings of Descartes and John Locke for example), which I suggest shapes the contemporary standpoints (section 1.2 above). We no longer need to presuppose that either ecclesiastical authority or the individual possess truth, once the autonomous self of the Enlightenment and the equally inward looking Romantic concept (as seen in the writings of Rousseau for example) have been replaced. Rather, the search for the will of God takes place *between* people, a case which I argue on philosophical as well as theological grounds.

5.1 Religious experience only makes sense in language and context

As indicated in the introduction in Chapter 1, biblical passages from the Acts of the Apostles will illustrate my ecclesiological position. A collective, corporate and relational characteristic is, for instance, expressed in Paul's speech to the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers on the Areopagus in Athens, as he says: "In him *we* live and move and have *our* being" (Acts 17:28, my italics). Moreover, there are several scenes in the Acts of the Apostles in which the Christian community does things together. After the Ascension of the Lord, the eleven disciples "devoted themselves to prayer, together with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren." (Acts 1:14) In Luke's probably idealized presentation of the early Church, the community had everything in common: "They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers." (Acts 2:42) They were "of one heart and soul." (Acts 4:32)[5] There are also several scenes in the Acts of the Apostles in which religious experience is interpreted in language and context. The Apostle Peter's Pentecost speech (Acts 2:14–36) is a good example as it interprets the indeed bewildering event of Pentecost.

It is because Christians are related that they can make sense of religious experience. This claim contrasts with the dominant Western construction of genuine religious experience. In his seminal work *The Varieties of Religious Experience* from 1902, the US pragmatist philosopher, William James, assumed that individuality is a prerequisite for authentic spirituality. On the opening pages James declares that he does not look at the ordinary religious believer who, in his view, merely follows a given and pre-fixed pattern.

[5] These references to Acts predominantly function as decoration for the argument, without high demands on solid exegesis.

> His religion has been made for him by others, communicated to him by tradition, and retained by habit. It would profit us little to study this second-hand religious life. We must make search rather for the original experiences which were the pattern-setters to all this mass of suggested feeling and imitated conduct. These experiences we can only find in individuals for whom religion exists not as a dull habit, but as an acute fever rather.[6]

Organised or institutional religion is, for James, merely something that disturbs and distorts a pure experience:

> The spirit of politics and the lust of dogmatic rule are then apt to enter and contaminate the originally innocent thing: so that when we hear the word 'religion' nowadays, we think inevitably of some 'church' or other; and to some persons the word 'church' suggests so much hypocrisy and tyranny and meanness and tenacity of superstition that in a wholesale undiscerning way they glory in saying that they are 'down' on religion altogether.[7]

Charles Taylor responded to this paradigm in a series of lectures that were published as *Varieties of Religion Today*. He challenges James's paradigm with several arguments that boil down to two: one linguistic concerning the conditions for experience, the second regarding the meaning of experience. Taylor argues that a common language is indispensable in order to express and make sense of experience: "But the devotional, practical, and (if any) sacramental way of life needs some minimum of articulation of what it is all about: some propositional formulations are unavoidable–about God, creation, Christ, and the like."[8] Taylor goes a step further as he claims that a non-linguistic experience is not possible:

> But one might make the more radical conceptual or transcendental point, that the very idea of an experience that is in no way formulated is impossible. The familiar arguments of Hegel (say, in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, chapter 1), or of Wittgenstein (say, in the *Philosophical Investigations*, I @261), come to mind. The experience can have no content at all if you can't say *anything* about it.[9]

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[6] William James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience* (1985 [1902]), p. 6.
[7] *ibid*., p. 335.
[8] Charles Taylor, *Varieties of Religion Today: William James Revisited* (2002), p. 26.
[9] Taylor (2002), pp. 26–27.

Taylor here endorses Wittgenstein's so-called 'private language argument', which is an argument designed to show that there cannot be a language that only one person can speak – a language that is essentially private, that no one else can in principle understand.[10] Taylor's second argument brings out that experience is never without context. An experience gets another flavour, once we realize that it is shared. A simple example of watching television illustrates this.

> But twentieth-century communications have produced metatopical variants, when, for instance, we watch the Olympics or Princess Di's funeral on television, aware that millions of others are with us in this activity. The meaning of our participation in the event is shaped by the whole vast dispersed audience we share it with.[11]

Taylor's framework is indeed relevant to our discussion, because he is critical of the idea that religious experience is essentially disconnected from a community. In his book *The Ethics of Authenticity* from 1991, Taylor also addresses the question of identity and maintains that there has to be a minimal connection between a person and the wider population:

> The agent seeking significance in life, trying to define him- or herself meaningfully, has to exist in a horizon of important questions. That is what is self-defeating in modes of contemporary culture that concentrate on self-fulfilment *in opposition* to the demands of society, or nature, which *shut out* history and the bonds of solidarity.[12]

The quest for identity, the question of 'who we are', is also associated with others. Taylor states that we discover ourselves through others, and discover more the richer the ways of articulating at our disposal. "The general feature of human life that I want to evoke is its fundamentally *dialogical* character. We become full human agents, capable of understanding ourselves, and hence of defining an identity, through our

[10] Recently published work Wittgenstein and theology: Tim Labron, *Wittgenstein and Theology* (2009).
[11] Taylor (2002), p. 87.
[12] Charles Taylor, *The Ethics of Authenticity* (1991), p. 31.

acquisition of rich human languages of expression."[13] Philosophers before Descartes and several others over the last two hundred years have argued in a similar direction. The Jewish philosopher Martin Buber, who asserted that 'I' only become 'I' if there is a 'Thou', is one example.[14] We may conclude that, at least according to this model, the human person is never isolated but always dependent on a community. Maybe in the Anglophone West, this way of thinking, according to which personal identity is established thanks to the community, seems implausible, but a good argument can be made for it. Outside that world such views are more common. One such culture is the Orthodox.[15] Similarly, in native-American cultures, such as the Mexican Maya ethnic group *tseltal*, the group does not prevent the person's individuality, instead builds it up.[16] Finally, a reference may be made to the Zulu saying '*Umuntu ungumuntu ngabuntu*', 'A person becomes a person because of other people'.[17]

It is in this connection worth digressing briefly and pointing out that such anthropology may effect the way in which we understand an image such as 'communion' (*communio*), used by the Second Vatican Council in its document *Lumen gentium*, the dogmatic constitution on the Church. The document does not say what it means by human person, and this aspect is often overlooked also in historical overviews.[18] Given a certain kind of anthropology, *communio* could be understood as the connection of fundamentally independent people. A mindset influenced by James might associate 'mystical communion' with a group of sovereign individuals. However, if *Lumen gentium* is read together with the

[13] *ibid*., pp. 32–33.
[14] Martin Buber, *I and Thou* (1958 [German, 1937]).
[15] John D. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion* (1985).
[16] Eugenio Maurer, *Los tseltales: ¿Paganos o cristianos? Su religión, ¿Sincretismo o síntesis?* (1983). Pedro Pitarch Ramón, *Ch'ulel: Una etnografía de las almas tzeltales* (1996). Felipe Jaled Ali Modad Aguilar, *Engrandecer el corazón de la comunidad* (1999).
[17] Timothy Radcliffe, *What is the Point of Being a Christian?* (2005), p. 135.
[18] Dennis M. Doyle, 'Henri de Lubac and the Roots of Communion Ecclesiology' (1999), 209–227.

second chapter of *Gaudium et spes* (the pastoral constitution on the Church in the modern world), another document from the Second Vatican Council, an individualistic anthropology does not come to the fore. A social image of the human person is depicted there.[19] That is important, as I want to conceive of the Church as communion from a radically relational perspective.

Why is it then that we intuitively think that we are detached and disengaged? Taylor's account of the history of ideas of the human person offers us an explanation, one which also helps us both to understand Ignatius better and to solve our problem of dual authority. In order to bring out the contrast, a brief historical presentation of the emergence of the Enlightenment and Romantic view of the human person will follow. Later on I will then outline the difference it makes whether we think relationally or in an atomistic way. All this is relevant for the question whether truth is in the subject, in the tradition or in something beyond both.

[19] *Gaudium et spes*, ch. II, n. 23–32 (Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*), pp. 1083–1089.

5.2 The characteristics of the autonomous or 'punctual' self

The human person understood in a relational way is not the dominant viewpoint in our time. Instead it is another more atomistic and individualistic model that prevails. In his book *The Ethics of Authenticity*, Charles Taylor describes modern culture in the following way.

> The ethic of authenticity is something relatively new and peculiar to modern culture. Born at the end of the eighteenth century, it builds on earlier forms of individualism, such as the individualism of disengaged rationality, pioneered by Descartes, where the demand is that each person think self-responsibly for him- or herself, or the political individualism of Locke, which sought to make the person and his or her will prior to social obligation. But authenticity also has been in some respects in conflict with these earlier forms. It is a child of the Romantic period, which was critical of disengaged rationality and of an atomism that didn't recognize the ties of community.[20]

In that same book, Taylor still (despite saying that there are some signs of increased awareness and care for the community) laments the growth of what he identifies as individualism and fragmentation, that is to say lack of interest in the common good. How did the individualistic understanding of the human person emerge, and what are its basic characteristics? Charles Taylor gives an excellent account of this in his book *Sources of the Self: The Making of Modern Identity*, from 1989 (written at All Souls College, Oxford). Taylor argues that a significant shift in the understanding of the human person occurred from the seventeenth century onwards, especially through the philosophy of René Descartes and John Locke. This is of particular interest for our purposes, because the shift took place a century after the period when Ignatius of Loyola lived. It is true that thinkers long before Ignatius's time, such as Augustine of Hippo, went inward, but a significant shift occurred after the sixteenth century, that is to say after Ignatius's time.

[20] Taylor (1991), p. 25.

> It is hardly an exaggeration to say that it was Augustine who introduced the inwardness of radical reflexivity and bequeathed it to the Western tradition of thought. The step was a fateful one, because we have certainly made a big thing of the first-person standpoint. The modern epistemological tradition from Descartes, and all that has flowed from it in modern culture has made this standpoint fundamental–to the point of aberration one might think.[21]

Taylor clarifies his argument by saying how Descartes differs from Augustine in that the former presupposed that human beings had the origin of morality within themselves, leaving influence from the outside seemingly superfluous. "But Descartes gives Augustinian inwardness a radical twist and takes it in a quite new direction, which has also been epoch-making. The change might be described by saying that Descartes situates the moral sources within us."[22] After Descartes, according to Taylor, the universe was understood to consist of objects separate from the perceiving self. The perception of the universe also became more mechanistic, as it no longer was thought to have purpose (teleological mode). There was no longer any intention behind it.[23] The human person was identified with the mind (*cogito*) that was conceived of as a reality separate from the body. From such a disembodied anthropology it was only one step to considering things (*res*) in the world as disconnected from the mind.

> Coming to a full realization of one's being as immaterial involves perceiving distinctly the ontological cleft between the two, and this involves grasping the material world as mere extension. The material world here includes the body, and coming to see the real distinction requires that we disengage from our usual embodied perspective, within which the ordinary person tends to see the objects around him as really qualified by colour or sweetness or heat, tends to think of the pain or tickle as in his tooth or foot. We have to objectify the world, including our own bodies, and that means to come to see them mechanistically and functionally, in the same way that an uninvolved external observer would.[24]

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[21] Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self* (1989), p. 131. I agree with Taylor's view that an emphasis on introspection, 'inwardness of radical reflexivity', took place since Augustine of Hippo. It has to be pointed out, though, that the 'first-person standpoint' as Taylor calls it, has some sort of precedent already in the pre-Socratic Greek philosopher Protagoras (ca. 490–420 BC). In Plato's dialogue *Theaetetus*, Socrates and Theaetetus wrestle with Protagoras's statement 'Man is the measure of all things'. *The Theaetetus of Plato*, trans. by Levett, rev. by Burnyeat (1990), pp. 272–308 (n. 152a–179d).
[22] Taylor (1989), p. 143. See also p. 157.
[23] *ibid*., p. 144.
[24] *ibid*., p. 145.

In Taylor's view, Descartes introduced a new, more dualistic, world-view. I think that Taylor's overall argument works, but a minor critique should be expressed at this point. Plato and philosophers of Neoplatonism (third century AD) are normally regarded to have philosophical standpoints of a dualistic nature, separating body and soul for instance. If Platonic dualism is taken into consideration, the shift with Descartes may be nuanced in the sense that Descartes's dualism is more drastic and thoroughgoing. The withdrawal of the human identity to its cognitive dimension and its distance from everything else was further developed by the English philosopher John Locke, tutor in Greek and Philosophy at Christ Church College, Oxford, 1660 to 1667. In Taylor's view, Locke's philosophy still has an impact on modern thought.

> The subject of disengagement and rational control has become a familiar modern figure. One might say it has become one way of construing ourselves, which we find it hard to shake off. It is one aspect of our inescapable contemporary sense of inwardness. As it develops to its full form through Locke and the Enlightenment thinkers he influenced, it becomes what I want to call the 'punctual' self.[25]

This 'punctual' self was understood to be so independent of both contemporary and past generations that it would not be shaped by any innate ideas. Instead, the mind was like a *tabula rasa* without any inborn categories.[26] This is to be contrasted with thinking related to Wittgenstein's private language argument. Taylor then summarizes the effects that Locke's philosophy had.

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[25] Taylor (1989), p. 160.

[26] *ibid*., pp. 164–165. It needs to be pointed out here that it does not come to the fore in Taylor's treatment of Locke that already Aristotle entertained the view of the mind as a *tabula rasa* (in a similar way as Locke): "What it [thought/the mind] thinks must be in it just as characters may be said to be on a writing-table on which as yet nothing actually stands written: this is exactly what happens with thought." Aristotle, *On the Soul*, Book III, Ch. 4, nr. 430a, trans. by Smith (1984), p. 683. An important difference between Locke and Aristotle, however, is that the latter understood the human person in social and political terms. Aristotle is therefore closer to Wittgenstein than Locke is.

> Previously that people were members of a community went without saying. It didn't need to be justified relative to a more basic situation. But now the theory starts from the individual on his own. Membership of a community with common power of decision is now something which needs to be explained by the individual's prior consent. Of course, each may be seen as a social being in another sense. Locke's picture of the state of nature seems to involve a lot of interchange between people. But what cannot now be taken for granted anymore is a community with decisional powers over its members. People start off as political atoms.[27]

Taylor describes the Romantic period, with thinkers such as Jean-Jacques Rousseau, as a reaction to the Enlightenment. The important aspect for our topic is that the Romantic perspective was equally inward. The nature of Romanticism was: "Against the classical stress on rationalism, tradition, and formal harmony, the Romantics affirmed the rights of the individual, of the imagination, and of feeling."[28] It centred on the feelings and the interior vibrations: "This notion of an inner voice or impulse, the idea that we find the truth within us, and in particular in our feelings–these were the crucial justifying concepts of the Romantic rebellion in its various forms."[29] In contrast with Locke, the Romantic period assumed that there was a divine plan and that the universe had divine origin.[30] There was a purpose. For all the differences between the philosophy of the Enlightenment and that of Rousseau and others in the Romantic period, both converge in a movement inward: "They also have important affinities. Both are internalizations. Both try to place the sources within. Both therefore show their Rousseauian heritage and make freedom a central good."[31]

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[27] Taylor (1989), p. 193.
[28] *ibid*., p. 368.
[29] *ibid*., pp. 368–369.
[30] *ibid*., p. 369.
[31] *ibid*., p. 385. See also p. 90.

In his conclusion of *Sources of the Self*, Taylor claims that modern identity is both influenced by the past and wishes to break away from it.

> I have examined modernism in the concept of the conflict in our culture over the disengaged and instrumental modes of thought and action which have steadily increased their hold on modern life. Modernism succeeds Romantic expressivism both in protest against these and in the search for sources which can restore depth, richness, and meaning of life.[32]

[32] *ibid*., p. 495.

5.3 Practice of Ignatian Exercises beyond individualism

The main conclusion I want to draw from Taylor's philosophy is that the will of God – found through Ignatian Exercises – might helpfully be imagined as involving some kind of interaction *between* people, and is not to be located exclusively either in the individual or in external authority. With Taylor's philosophy, categories like 'inner' and 'outer', 'subjective' and 'objective' now seem unhelpful.

Firstly, these concepts make the gap between individual and community look wider than it is: 'inner' is indeed remote from the 'fence' (Schwager's language). There is no gap between the individual and the Church community, even if it can be perceived that way. This is also true for Church in the sense of teaching authority (which is only one aspect of 'the Church' and should not be identified with it). Given a relational anthropology, the potential gulf between the individual and the teaching Magisterium is bridged through the fact that all involved are members of the Church (the Body of Christ). It is noteworthy that the Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams, from an Anglican perspective, (albeit not using the term Magisterium) has a similar standpoint as he discusses moral decision-making and its relation to 'the body of Christ'.[33]

Secondly, the aforementioned categories create confusion about the quality of truth claims. 'Subjective' seems to imply provisional and prone to error, whereas 'objective' seems to imply established and correct. Undue privilege is then given to ecclesiastical authority as this is often described as 'objective'. The way in which Schwager, and similar authors, sets up his framework around the encounters between the Pope and Ignatius, and the spiritual director and the person making Ignatian Exercises,

[33] Rowan Williams, 'Making moral decisions' (2001), pp. 3–15.

leads to the need to choose between someone else's law (*heteronomy*) or one's own (*autonomy*). These encounters could, by contrast, be perceived of as interpersonal spiritual discernment. This apparent choice between *heteronomy* and one's own *autonomy* is a construction that did not prevail in Ignatius's own ecclesiology and is unlikely to be a helpful concept for Ignatian ecclesiology today. While protecting the notion of freedom of conscience and personal judgment, it would seem compelling to abandon a hard distinction between 'self' and community. Interestingly a similar approach has recently been adopted in interpretations of Carmelite mystics of sixteenth-century Spain.[34]

Taylor's philosophy enables us to avoid two extremes; it keeps away both from conservative traditionalism and from anarchy, suggesting that 'anything goes.' The relational perspective clarifies for us why the ecclesiastical authority needs to pay attention to each person (therefore objects to conservative traditionalism). Anarchy, in its turn, is not interested in integrating other standpoints. Admittedly, it is easier to understand how dependency on tradition and language serves a conservative position, *i.e.* maintaining what has been passed on over the centuries. Taylor's framework could then be used against those with a different opinion, charging them with being disloyal separatists. But Taylor's philosophy actually unmasks the distinction between dissent and anarchy. It suggests that disagreement itself implies a relationship to tradition and language. The person in that situation is not necessarily outside, disloyal, or proposing a rupture with tradition. The distinction between commitment and unreflective obedience is crucial here. From a

[34] Edward Howells has pointed out that the philosophical presuppositions inherent in the self of the dominant strand of modernity hamper a comprehension of the Carmelite mystics. "Part of the difficulty in understanding the soul of 'self' according to Teresa and John is that it is so different from the self of modernity. […] First, the self is 'dynamic' in their view even before mystical transformation begins, in that it exists in a dynamic relation with God as its creator. […] This idea of selfhood has been usefully contrasted with post-Cartesian ideas of the self by Jacques Maritain, in his *Degrees of Knowledge*. He calls it the 'transobjective self,' in that the soul requires relationships with others, and ultimately with God, in order to be a self. There is no autonomous entity of selfhood, as in the Cartesian view, but only the relational ability or intentionality, rooted in the soul-God relation, by which our selfhood is continuously being constituted 'on the move.' Edward Howells, *John of the Cross and Teresa of Avila* (2002), p. 5. See also pp. 9; 42–43; 120–121.

standpoint of commitment, there may be various legitimate ways of interpreting the common tradition and the common language. Language is then a resource from which members of its speech-community take the life of the community forward, in a way that undercuts the sharp dichotomy between obedience and creativity. Hence, those with a different view may indeed have a leg to stand on. Communal is not identical with uniform.

Knowledge of God's will is available even if it is only of a kind that we can locate in the *space between*. Equally, a completely independent set of values, or wholehearted anarchy (Greek: without ruler), to put it more strongly, seems philosophically unrealistic. Taylor avoids anarchy, as he calls the ideal of 'liberalism of neutrality' into question.

> In adopting the ideal, people in the culture of authenticity, as I want to call it, give support to a certain kind of liberalism, which has been espoused by many others as well. This is the liberalism of neutrality. One of its basic tenets is that a liberal society must be neutral on questions of what constitutes a good life. The good life is what each individual seeks, in his or her own way, and government would be lacking in impartiality, and thus in equal respect for all citizens, if it took sides on this question.[35]

We may illustrate this 'liberalism of neutrality' with attitudes surrounding Christian upbringing, education and initiation into the sacraments. The secular or atheist idea assumes that the adult should 'decide for him- or herself' on an allegedly neutral basis. While I do not intend to take away any decision power, I want to deny the existence of such a *tabula rasa* in the Lockean sense, neutral space independent of the community. William James had such a paradigm of a neutral space, from which Schwager's framework is not very different. Conscience however is not isolated and independent. Compare a new document on the computer screen. Nothing can be written on it, without the hard-disk and programmes invented and arranged by others. It can be concluded that the autonomous or

[35] Taylor (1991), pp. 17–18.

'punctual' self is hardly compatible with Ignatian Exercises, and this not only because of philosophical anthropology. From a practical point of view it is not helpful either. It does not help, because the individual who is not spontaneously inclined to obey ecclesiastical authority, is unable to draw others to his or her own opinions, if he or she is not related in the first place. If religion is resolutely confined to the private sphere, there is no point of contact that could make dialogue (with different views) meaningful.

The concept of the person is not only significant for understanding Ignatius of Loyola, but also relevant in the ministerial practice of Ignatian Exercises today, whose subject matter is the specific will of God for a particular person. A Taylorian model, we now see, has consequences for the location of God's will. Taylor argues that religious experience is impossible without that which we have in common. We share a set of important questions; we are doing things in awareness of the company of others (watching television); we need to express ourselves in a language we have not invented ourselves. All this amounts to an abandonment of a hard distinction between the individual and the community.

It would seem that the difficulties in interpreting Ignatius's ecclesiological claims are reduced if we interpret him in the light of something more relational. Ignatius of Loyola had an understanding of the human person that is closer to the relational view than it is to the Enlightenment and Romantic one. It may be recalled that Ignatius used personal and intimate images such as 'mother' and 'spouse,' *i.e.* someone (something) he was closely related to, when speaking of the Church. Some further indications that Ignatius had a different conception of the human person than the likes of Descartes and Locke are in order. Emerio de Bonis, a Jesuit student, struggled with the vow of chastity and how to

relate to people because of it, and asked Ignatius for advice. Ignatius replied in a letter he commissioned Juan de Polanco to write: "In general, when you deal with the neighbour, let your eyes be lowered and try not to think of this person or that as being good-looking or ugly, but rather as the image of the Most Holy Trinity, as a member of Christ and bathed in his blood."[36] Thus, the mentality expressed in this passage is far from any instrumental reason, it does not conceive of other human beings as commodities. Rather it illustrates a concern for the neighbour. It also rests on a conviction that the human person is not isolated, but already related to something, to the Trinity (given a theology in which 'image' means an expression of, rather than a copy disconnected from, the original).

The 'principle and foundation', a ground rule of the *Spiritual Exercises*, provides further evidence that Ignatius had a relational concept of the human person, a concept that I maintain still to be valid and true. The person is fundamentally related to God: "The human person is created to praise, reverence and serve God Our Lord, and by so doing to save his or her soul. […] we should desire and choose only what helps us more towards the end for which we are created."[37] The human person is, thus, inescapably reliant on God, in that without God he or she would not come to existence nor have an aim to strive for (a view that is not unique to Ignatius but mainstream in Christian theology of creation). For Ignatius, God is definitely the source of everything, including the person's freedom. There are in Ignatius's account indeed choices to be made in all liberty, but this is all thanks to a gift the person has received from God. In a well-known prayer in the *Spiritual Exercises* the person returns these gifts, in a way that highlights a relationship.

[36] *MI Epp*. XI:439. Letter from Ignatius, by commission, to Emerio de Bonis, Rome, 23 May 1556. *LI*, p. 671.
[37] *SpEx*, n. 23, *PW*, p. 289.

> Take, Lord, and receive all my liberty, my memory, my understanding, and my entire will, all that I have and possess. You gave it all to me; to you Lord I give it all back. All is yours, dispose of it entirely according to your will. Give me the grace to love you, for that is enough for me.[38]

While the prayer above illustrates relatedness with regard to God, Ignatius elsewhere in the *Spiritual Exercises* transmits an idea of the human person as related to other people and to other creatures. We see this in the 'Meditation of sins':

> This is the record of my sins […] to see the place and house where I lived, the relations I have had with others, the occupation in which I have spent my life.[39]
>
> Exclamations of wonder, with intense feeling, as I reflect on the whole range of created beings, how ever have they let me live and kept me alive![40]

It is important to depict a more relational model because it helps both to understand Ignatius better, and to build a foundation for contemporary Ignatian ecclesiology. Problems that are insoluble within the standard way of framing them become easier to manage if we make this move. Admittedly, the relevance of this kind of philosophical and hermeneutical reflection is only latent if no particular issues surface in the spiritual direction. Understanding of the human person, tradition and church community may then remain in the background. In those cases all this reflection contributes to is raised awareness of a corporate, ecclesial, dimension which is present but mostly unspoken. On the other hand, I endorse Jon Sobrino's concern that Christianity ought to be seen in its collective nature and that social awareness for the poor is crucial. The philosophical reflections based on Taylor support this claim, as indeed also the paradigmatic example of the early Church in Acts. The very fact that the early Christian community gathered, at the meeting in Jerusalem, to take important decisions is a sign that they understood themselves as a corporate entity. They took joint decisions inspired collectively by the Holy Spirit:

[38] *SpEx*, n. 234, *PW*, p. 329.
[39] *SpEx*, n. 56, *PW*, p. 296.
[40] *SpEx*, n. 60, *PW*, p. 297.

"For it has seemed good to *the Holy Spirit* and *to us* to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things." (Acts 15:28) [my italics]

But, someone may object, how to go from the fact that human beings are related to one another in the human family in general to the Church? That step may not be obvious. (The Church defined as the whole of the human race will be referred to in section 6.5 below.) Christians in the pilgrim Church are related to one another in a basic and fundamental sense. They are dependent on one another not only in terms of sheer existence but also in interpreting religious experience and forming their identity. A relational anthropology throws a light on the Sacrament of Baptism. All human beings are somehow united, but this is especially true for all Christians who are united through the Sacrament of Baptism.[41] The Sacrament of Baptism is a sign that Christians, regardless of denomination, are related. There are three aspects here. First, the relational characteristic of Baptism is due to the connection with the triune God (Baptism in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit). Second, as baptized members of the Body of Christ, Christians are related to one another. Third, Baptism is mutually recognized among several Christian denominations. This is a helpful starting point for the ecumenical context of Ignatian Exercises.

Christians are related not only to their contemporaries, but also to ancestors in the past and to Christians in the future. Some hermeneutical and theological evidence for this will now be provided. We need an ecclesiology for the frontiers, to identify more precisely the role of the Church at borders. This ecclesiology shall build on the same kind of thought-patterns as in this chapter and give them a theological edge. Following on the

[41] I hereby side with John W. O'Malley's observation: "Vatican II highlighted the importance of baptism as the foundation of the Christian life and as the entrance into the body of the church. It thereby validated a less restrictive understanding of membership in the Catholic Church, for the church to some degree includes all the baptized. At the same time the council took pains not to exclude from salvation even the unbaptized." O'Malley, *What Happened at Vatican II* (2008), p. 295.

reflections on the individual and community, we will now discuss the significance of the Church of Christ in general and the Roman Catholic Church in particular. The relevance of a hermeneutical and theological account becomes evident when the people involved in Ignatian Exercises are unfamiliar with, or unaccustomed to, different traditions and religious cultures; when questions of Ignatius's intention and mindset arise; if doctrinal teaching becomes an issue; if questions of the status and understanding and ways of interpreting Holy Scripture come up. In short, the relevance becomes evident at ecclesial frontiers, exemplified by the pastoral cases we will look at later on in Chapter 7.

The dimension of time, mainly concerning interpretation and context, is an essential character of a pilgrim Church as a sign and will be expounded in Chapter 6. That chapter will be informed by the writings of Hans-Georg Gadamer and Karl Rahner. The intention behind insisting on the communal reality is to point out a basic connectedness. A corporate dimension, both in space and time, is inescapable at a fundamental and social level. But, the intention is not – it has to be added as a qualifying remark – to pull all into one fold of uniform attitudes and complete agreement, particularly not when several traditions and communities are involved. This account will predominantly explain in what way the Roman Catholic Church provides an important and positive dimension for Ignatian Exercises. Now, this key question needs to be crafted carefully and from the relational philosophical framework that this dissertation favours. We therefore do not ask whether the Roman Catholic Church is 'necessary', at least not in a functional meaning. To craft the question in that or any similar way, for instance: "do we really 'need' the Roman Catholic Church?", would mean to concede to instrumental and pragmatic thinking. From this point of view even words such as 'medium' and 'instrument' seem inappropriate. Charles Taylor has highlighted the limitations of this instrumental, utilitarian mentality, as we saw in

section 1.2.3 above. The whole idea of being interested in something only if it is likely to be useful is problematic. Instead, the existence of the Roman Catholic Church and other churches is taken as a given. The question is what significance the existence of such ecclesial communities has or could have in the Ignatian context. With various cultures and traditions involved a degree of openness seems appropriate.

6. Pilgrims in the Past, Present and Future

Thanks to the relational foundation laid down in the previous chapter we do already have some resources to make sense of situations at ecclesial frontiers. The will of God may be found in a common search in the *space between* pilgrims. As we have seen, every individual is already in a network of relationships at present. Employing a temporal dimension in this chapter, I will now highlight the individual's connection with past as well as future generations. The will of God is, thus, also related to *time*. My basic intuition here is that Ignatian spirituality needs to be viewed from a historical perspective, both looking back and looking ahead. We may speak of truth-in-process (rather than eternal truths) and reality-in-becoming as regards finding God's will both for each individual and the Church at large. There is a movement, instead of everything being set in stone from the outset, as illustrated biblically in the Acts of the Apostles. The whole book of Acts is an account of the development, expansion and transformation of the early Church – and this pattern continues. The temporal dimension of Christianity is evident in, for instance, the Apostle Peter's speech in Solomon's portico (Acts 3:11–26) and in the Apostle Stephen's speech (Acts 7:1–53). Reference to the history of the people of Israel is made in those speeches in order to make sense of what happens now and will happen in the Christian community. There is also a view towards the future in Acts as it concludes with the Apostle Paul testifying and preaching the kingdom of God (Acts 28:23–31) – a kingdom which is near but not fully established and explained through Moses and the Prophets.

At the Second Vatican Council the Roman Catholic Church uttered the rather bold conviction that in it there is, in comparison with other Christian persuasions, means of

salvation to the full degree.[1] Even though it makes that claim it does not deny means outside its boundaries. This position could be defended and spelt out in spatial categories, that is to say the international (not nationalistic), global, universal identity of the Catholic Church. The purported fullness, as regards the means, may also be motivated from a historical perspective of unbroken tradition (apostolic succession) since Jesus and the early Church, even if the historical connections are admittedly somewhat uncertain and different conclusions may be drawn in terms of ecclesiastical offices and structure.[2] Precisely since the indispensable element in the Church is a matter of the 'fullness of the *means* of salvation' [my italics], the Church exists as a reality-in-becoming. The implication of this is that it needs to develop, possessing the means but not yet having arrived at the final destination, and that what lies outside at least can have, arguably must have, a positive significance. I wish therefore to emphasize the 'pilgrim' nature of this Church.

The notion of the pilgrim Church appears in the third Eucharistic prayer of the Roman Catholic rite (from 1966): "Strengthen in faith and love your pilgrim Church on earth." (*Ecclesiam tuam, peregrinantem in terra, in fide et caritate firmare*). It draws on expressions from *Lumen gentium* (the dogmatic constitution on the Church from the Second Vatican Council): "While, however, here on earth the church is on pilgrimage from the Lord (see 2 Cor. 5,6), it is like an exile who seeks and savours the things that are above" (*in terris Ecclesia peregrinatur a Domino* [cf. 2 Cor 5,6]*, tamquam exsulem se habet*). With reference to Augustine, the Church is also described as one that "proceeds on its pilgrim way amidst the persecutions of the world and the consolations of God," (*Inter persecutiones*

[1] *Unitatis redintegratio*, n. 3 (Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, II), p. 910. "For it is through Christ's Catholic Church alone, which is the universal help towards salvation, that the fullness of the means of salvation can be obtained." Karl Rahner posits this in a similar way: "It necessarily understands itself as the one and complete historical presence of the one God-human [*Gottmenschen*] in his truth and grace fundamental [*grundsätzlich*] for all human beings." Karl Rahner, 'Kirche, Kirchen und Religionen' (1966), *SW* 22/2, p. 299.
[2] Diarmaid MacCulloch, *A History of Christianity* (2009), pp. 127–137, 172–176, 289–296, 371–381.

mundi et consolationes Dei peregrinando procurrit).[3] The notion of 'pilgrim Church' sums up several qualities that I wish to highlight. It connotes that the community is changing; it is on a journey. It also implies that it has a past, it has been travelling. Moreover, it enables unconditionality to be projected into the future, moving towards a destination. The 'pilgrim Church' is imperfect; it needs to learn. Finally, it opens up ecumenical possibilities. This image of the Church seems to resonate in various Christian denominations, as Avery Dulles points out:

> The eschatological aspect of the Church, since it is so heavily stressed in the New Testament, has naturally been affirmed not only in Roman Catholicism but also in other communions. […] The Second Assembly of the World Council of Churches, meeting in Evanston in 1954, seemed to identify the pilgrim Church with the multitude of humanly constituted, denominational churches."[4]

The term 'Church' refers in *Lumen gentium* to the Church of Christ, which encompasses various Christian denominations. I will argue that the Roman Catholic Church – within the larger community of the pilgrim Church – is indispensable for the practice of Ignatian Exercises at ecclesial frontiers (compare main hypothesis, Chapter 1, pp. 4–5). The chief reason is that the Roman Catholic Church has the 'fullness of the means of salvation'. I will also take this line of the significance of the Roman Catholic Church for two other reasons. First, Ignatian spirituality has its origins and continues to be vital in the Roman Catholic Church. An understanding of and a familiarity with this history seem indispensable, particularly for the spiritual director. Secondly and related, knowledge of the doctrinal teaching and life of the Roman Catholic Church is helpful when it comes to understanding elements in the Ignatian tradition such as its particular biblical interpretation, the theological view of the human person, concepts such as 'indifference', Catholic sacramental theology and theology of grace. These two related arguments seem undeniable already from a historical and hermeneutical point of view. As stated in the introduction

[3] *Lumen gentium*, n. 6 & 8 (Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, II), pp. 852, 855. The latter quotation is from Augustine, *De Civitate Dei* XVIII, 51,2.
[4] Avery Dulles, *The Catholicity of the Church* (1985), p. 91.

(Chapter 1, p. 6), the minor hypothesis in this dissertation is that the individual who makes Ignatian Exercises needs to be open towards and prepared to learn from the Roman Catholic Church, in order to understand and to be moved by these exercises.

Seven basic theses will be defended in this chapter. First, tradition should neither be ignored nor blindly followed. By contrast, creativity is always faithful to tradition and fidelity to tradition is always creative (section 6.1). Second, the Church is a sacrament of Christ and in mission for the sake of the Kingdom (section 6.2). Third, the Church is healed through the wound of Christ (section 6.3). Fourth, frontiers are the home territory of the pilgrim Church – not a foreign land (section 6.4). Fifth, the manifestation of the Sacrament of Christ is public (section 6.5). Sixth, development and change are normal and there are grounds for it (section 6.6). Seventh, it matters *how* alternative views are communicated (6.7).

I claim that my ecclesiological position, with its particular interpretation of a pilgrim Church in *space* and *time*, is original thanks to its basic intuition (relational and historical) but even more clearly thanks to the combination and synthesis of ideas (see conclusions in section 6.8). Charles Taylor, Hans-Georg Gadamer and Karl Rahner began to develop some of these ideas. The originality also lies in the application of this synthesis to some pastoral cases that arise at ecclesial frontiers (Chapter 7).

6.1 Creative fidelity to tradition – neither ignoring nor blindly following it

So far we have considered only the goal of Ignatian Exercises, where the will of God is to be found (in the space *between* pilgrims, see Chapter 5). We now focus on the ways of searching for it. This search is preconditioned by the way in which past generations have gone about finding God's will. These ways of searching could be called perspectives or traditions or even cultures. The search for the will of God is conditioned by foreknowledge, anticipations, personal biography, traditions, prejudices, expectations, a world-view, and sociological circumstances and so on. With a concept of the human person understood in a relational way, there is a standpoint that is informed by what the person has learnt. There is a mentality, a language and a mind-set that has been shaped. We can contrast the autonomous self ('punctual self' in Taylor's language), for whom there is simply reason that reads a text and simply prays, and just contemplates Jesus straightforwardly. The punctual self is blind to the philosophical problems of its conditions. As an alternative, we shall, with the help of the German philosopher Hans-Georg Gadamer, examine the hermeneutical conditions for giving and making spiritual exercises. I will argue that both the person who makes Ignatian Exercises and the spiritual director need to be open to various traditions. Since Ignatian Exercises have their origin in the Roman Catholic Church, this tradition will be privileged but not considered to be absolute or exclusive. The Church of Christ, which is a pilgrim Church, requires openness to diversity and a willingness to change one's mind.

In this section 6.1, I will state that those involved in the exercises in our time are dependent on a tradition (or traditions) and religious cultures, and that there has to be a mechanism for how they can meet and listen to one another. This reflection will be informed by the hermeneutical theories of Hans-Georg Gadamer. It will limit itself to

applying and interpreting his ideas on tradition and culture. Thus, I do not intend to present Gadamer's entire philosophy and its criticisms, but rather learn from it and adapt it to the ministerial practice of Ignatian Exercises. Among various possible philosophers, it seems to me that Gadamer strikes a balance particularly well between the past and what we now make of it. In section 6.1.5, I will draw conclusions; the principal one being that openness among the Christians involved, to expand their horizons is required. Another conclusion is that my interpretation of Gadamer's hermeneutics implies a critique of the 'toolbox' model presented in section 1.2.1 above, a critique that becomes even stronger once we realise that the meaning of experience presupposes a context within which to make sense of it.

We can begin by noting that Gadamer shares some of Charles Taylor's views about identity:

> I am trying to call attention here to a common experience. We say, for instance, that understanding and misunderstanding take place between I and thou. But the formulation "I and thou" already betrays enormous alienation. There is nothing like an "I and thou" at all – there is neither the I nor the thou as isolated, substantial realities. I may say "thou" and I may refer to myself over against a thou, but a common understanding [*Verständigung*] always precedes these situations.[5]

People are, thus, fundamentally related, and this influences the conditions for understanding and learning. An interest in philosophy of language thus arises. "Since the seventeenth century, the real task of philosophy has been to mediate this new employment of man's cognitive and constructive capacities with the totality of our experience of life. This task has found expression in a variety of ways, including our own generation's attempt to bring the topic of language to the center of philosophical concern."[6] It is true that hermeneutical reflection mostly addresses the art of interpreting a text. In our case this is

[5] Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Philosophical Hermeneutics* (2004 [1977]), p. 7.
[6] *ibid*., p. 3.

only partly helpful, as praying is rather different from understanding a text. But Gadamer's reflections can be translated to our situation. There are analogies. We can learn from Gadamer, particularly as he himself in fact thinks that the original setting for hermeneutics is the interpretation of oracles. "Formerly it was considered obvious that the task of hermeneutics was to adapt the text's meaning to the concrete situation to which the text is speaking. The interpreter of the divine will who can interpret the oracle's language is the original model for this."[7]

The *Spiritual Exercises* is certainly a special kind of text, close to that of oracles. The text of the book of the *Spiritual Exercises* was originally intended for spiritual directors. In a way then, the place that a text normally occupies in hermeneutics has its equivalence in the material the spiritual director gives and what happens to the person who makes a retreat. The French linguist Roland Barthes teased out these layers and held that there are multiple texts in the case of Ignatian Exercises. The fourth and concluding text is God's reply to the person praying. Before that, Barthes identifies three other texts.

> The first text is the one Ignatius addresses to the director of the retreat. […] The second text is the one the director addresses to the exercitant […] the exercitant is going to be both receiver and sender; having received the second text, he writes with it a third, which is an acted text made up of the meditation, gestures, and practices given by his director.[8]

6.1.1 Application as opposed to simply a common sense reading of the text

For Gadamer, interpretation is more complex than clear-cut reading, one reason for this being that the reader meets the text with certain anticipation. Gadamer claims:

> Here we find the well-known problem that Heidegger analyzed under the title of the hermeneutical circle. The problem concerns the astounding naïveté of the subjective consciousness that, in trying to understand a text, says "But that is what is written here!" Heidegger showed that this reaction is quite natural, and

[7] Gadamer, *Truth and Method* (*TM*, 2004 [1960]), p. 307.
[8] Roland Barthes, *Sade, Fourier, Loyola* (1976 [1971]), pp. 41–42.

> often enough a reaction of the highest self-critical value. But in truth there is nothing that is simply "there." Everything that is said and is there in the text stands under anticipation.[9]

For Gadamer there is always foreknowledge, never just a neutral standpoint: "A person who is trying to understand a text is always projecting. He projects a meaning for the text as a whole as soon as some initial meaning emerges in the text."[10] The initial meaning develops through an ongoing activity of understanding (*Verstehen*): "This constant process of new projection constitutes the movement of understanding and interpretation."[11] The reader, thus, brings foreknowledge and anticipation. Horizon is defined as:

> the range of vision that includes everything that can be seen from a particular vantage point. Applying this to the thinking mind, we speak of narrowness of horizon, of the possible expansion of horizon, of the opening up of new horizons, and so forth.[12]

There is no such thing as an isolated, neutral reader. Moreover, there is no such thing as the isolated text as such. For Gadamer, reading always entails 'application.'

> Of course the reader before whose eyes the great book of world history simply lies open does not exist. But neither does the reader exist who, when he has his text before him, simply reads what is there. Rather, all reading involves application, so that a person reading a text is himself part of the meaning he apprehends. He belongs to the text that he is reading.[13]

Gadamer does not define exactly what he means by 'application', but in what follows, I will outline some hints as to what it might signify.

6.1.2 The horizon of the reader

What then does an alternative to 'simply reading' the text (giving a homily, giving and making Ignatian Exercises) look like? Gadamer holds, to give one example, that preaching

[9] Gadamer, *Philosophical Hermeneutics*, p. 121.
[10] Gadamer, *TM*, p. 269.
[11] *ibid*., p. 269.
[12] *ibid*., p. 301.
[13] *ibid*., p. 335.

on Scripture "involves something like applying the text to be understood to the interpreter's present situation."[14] But what does 'application' mean? In the context of preaching it would be something like adapting to the situation of the hearer. A lot of Gadamer's hermeneutics centres on the figure of the parts and the whole, and I assume that this is a key to understanding what 'application' means. This in fact is, as he claims, a principle that goes back to antiquity.

> We recall the hermeneutical rule that we must understand the whole in terms of the detail and the detail in terms of the whole. This principle stems from ancient rhetoric, and modern hermeneutics has transferred it to the art of understanding. It is a circular relationship in both cases. The anticipation of meaning in which the whole is envisaged becomes actual understanding when the parts that are determined by the whole themselves also determine this whole.[15]

For the spiritual director and the person who makes Ignatian Exercises there is an analogous relevance of the hermeneutical circle, because any spiritual activity presupposes and strives for something beyond the immediate context. In order to interpret an experience, you need a 'whole' of some kind. It proves, however, to be hard or even impossible to fix what the 'whole' consists in, to define it precisely. It depends to a significant degree on what mode of Ignatian Exercises is practised; full 30 days, 8 days or other, especially to what extent a spiritual process is aimed at and how deep it can be. The individuality of the person praying makes this definition even harder to determine. Nevertheless, some very general points can be offered. One way of defining this 'whole' is the totality of a person's life. It may be recalled that Charles Taylor asserted that experience makes sense in the bigger picture, when the whole spectrum is taken into consideration. Gadamer has a similar view. "If something is called or considered an Erlebnis, that means it is rounded into the unity of a significant whole."[16] And then he says: "As determined through autobiographical or biographical reflection, its meaning remains fused with the

[14] *ibid.*, p. 307.
[15] *ibid.*, p. 291.
[16] *ibid.*, pp. 57–58. Roman type of 'Erlebnis' (experience) original.

whole movement of life and constantly accompanies it."[17] And again: "There is an element of this, in fact, in every Erlebnis. Every experience is taken out of the continuity of life and at the same time related to the whole of one's life."[18] There are, thus, temporal aspects beyond the here and now. "Every experience has implicit horizons of before and after, and finally fuses with the continuum of the experiences present in the before and after to form a unified flow of experience."[19] The totality of life remains undefined and unlimited, as both the past and the future are infinite.[20] In conclusion, however imprecise, the total life situation can be regarded as a 'whole', which is necessary for interpretation. The relevance for Ignatian Exercises is that application is made on the basis of what the person has experienced throughout his or her life. At the very least there is not the autonomous self (in Taylor's language), but rather a person with biography and future. I argue that the biographical application is, nevertheless, incomplete and insufficient resource at ecclesial frontiers, because the pastoral cases cannot be addressed and solved simply by referring to one's own life. We therefore need to explore other possible definitions of 'the whole' through which the parts make sense.

6.1.3 Application in the sense of connecting the parts and the whole

Gadamer develops the understanding of parts and whole through the model of the hermeneutical circle, which he owes to Friedrich Schleiermacher and Martin Heidegger. The hermeneutical circle focuses on the text.

> Schleiermacher elaborated this hermeneutic circle of part and whole in both its objective and its subjective aspects. As the single word belongs in the total context of the sentence, so the single text belongs in the total context of a writer's work, and the latter in the whole of the literary genre of literature. At the same time, however, the same text, as a manifestation of a creative moment,

[17] *ibid.*, p. 58.
[18] *ibid.*, p. 60.
[19] *ibid.*, p. 237.
[20] *ibid.*, p. 239.

> belongs to the whole of its author's inner life. Full understanding can take place only within this objective and subjective whole.[21]

One way to define the 'whole' is to see the particular passage of a text in relation to a greater body of text, for example a biblical passage in relation to the whole Canon of Scripture.[22] There must here, though, be a reasonable limit somewhere, so that the *entire* corpus of New Testament letters or *all* books of the Old Testament need not be invoked. Does this logic work for Ignatian Exercises? Not strictly, but it has some relevance as a reference point, particularly if it is a 30-day retreat. The overall pedagogy and structure of the 30-day retreat, including key ideas, such as the 'graces' the person prays for, may be crucial and these make up a unity. What speaks against this is not only that few people make the 30-day retreat, but also the genre of the text. The book of the *Spiritual Exercises* is not meant to be read from cover to cover. But it can certainly be argued that the meaning of images, such as the 'Calling of the King' can be properly understood only in its historical and traditional context.

A second way to define the 'whole' is the author's horizon. Gadamer holds that this is important, even if interpretation needs to go beyond the author's intention and context. "The norm for understanding a book is not the author's meaning."[23] Yet in order to understand an author the reader needs to have an idea of the author's corpus as a whole. "Thus beside grammatical interpretation he places psychological (technical) interpretation. […] They contain remarks on the role that the pre-given totality of language plays for the writer–and hence also for his interpreter–as well as remarks on the significance of the whole of literature for an individual work."[24] Gadamer maintains that the same principle

[21] *ibid.*, pp. 291–292.
[22] *ibid.*, p. 176.
[23] *ibid.*, p. 184.
[24] *ibid.*, p. 186.

applies to contemporary literature. "Even in the case of a contemporary text with whose language or content we are unfamiliar the meaning is revealed only in the manner described, in the oscillating movement between whole and part."[25] I do hold that in order to make sense of a particular sentence or passage in the *Spiritual Exercises*, or some other early Jesuit source, an awareness of a wider range of text than this single passage is necessary. I do not, however, demand that interpretation requires knowledge of the complete works of an author. Furthermore, I would argue, the author's context in terms of time and place could be added here. Understanding of a single text presupposes an understanding of the wider context, but does not necessarily presuppose a comprehension of the complete and full picture.

A third concept of the 'whole', that Gadamer mentions, is tradition.[26] Tradition, in Gadamer's view, is dynamic and not of a static nature, and he therefore calls it 'the movement of tradition'.

> The circle, then, is not formal in nature. It is neither subjective nor objective, but describes understanding as the interplay of the movement (*Bewegung*) of tradition and the movement of the interpreter. The anticipation of meaning that governs our understanding of a text is not an act of subjectivity, but proceeds from the commonality that binds us to the tradition (*Überlieferung*). But this commonality is constantly being formed in our relationship to tradition. Tradition is not simply a permanent precondition; rather, we produce it ourselves inasmuch as we understand, participate in the evolution of tradition, and hence further determine it ourselves.[27]

It is important at this stage to highlight that Gadamer holds that tradition is not predetermining; it is not like a prison.[28] Every person is indeed free to affirm, develop and

[25] *ibid.*, p. 190.
[26] *ibid.*, pp. 175–176.
[27] *ibid.*, p. 293.
[28] Jürgen Habermas finds Gadamer's philosophy too traditionalist and uncritical in the sense of advocating reliance and subordination to tradition. French philosophers, on the other hand, such as Jacques Derrida, think that he was not radical enough in emphasising the reader's horizon. Robert J. Dostal, 'Introduction', in *The*

even reject it. Gadamer holds that "the thing which hermeneutics teaches us is to see through the dogmatism of asserting an opposition and separation between the ongoing, natural 'tradition' and the reflective appropriation of it."[29]

A fourth way of conceiving the relationship between the parts and the whole is the nexus of dogma, in other words to connect one idea (mystery, dogmatic statement, doctrinal teaching) with a whole network. Such a view of a nexus of ideas is clearer in John Henry Newman than in Gadamer:

> If Christianity is a fact, and impresses an idea of itself on our minds and is a subject-matter of exercises of the reason, that idea will in course of time expand into a multitude of ideas, and aspects of ideas, connected and harmonious with one another, and in themselves determinate and immutable, as is the objective fact itself which is thus represented. It is a characteristic of our minds, that they cannot take an object in, which is submitted to them simply and integrally. We conceive by means of definition or description; whole objects do not create in the intellect whole ideas, but are, to use a mathematical phrase, thrown into series, into a number of statements, strengthening, interpreting, correcting each other, and with more or less exactness approximating, as they accumulate, to a perfect image.[30]

If Newman's notion of network of ideas is translated into Ignatian spirituality, we may say that the concepts of creation, salvation, grace, reconciliation, incarnation, the Trinity, Our Lady, discipleship, indifference, election and so on are connected. An awareness of the network of ideas not only helps to form a comprehensive Ignatian vision, but also helps to make sense of experience, since the 'whole' is as important as the parts.

Cambridge Companion (2004), pp. 1–12. Others charge Gadamer with relativism, a critique that Charles Taylor rejects, 'Gadamer on the Human Sciences', in *The Cambridge Companion* (2004), pp. 126–142.

[29] Gadamer, *Philosophical Hermeneutics*, p. 28; *TM*, pp. 282–283.

[30] John Henry Newman, *An Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine* (1989 [1878]), p. 55.

6.1.4 Relocation of horizons

The search for the will of God presupposes that the spiritual director and the person who makes Ignatian Exercises have a common ground. They also need a mechanism through which they can overcome misunderstandings and learn from one another, that is to say when they move into territory that is not common to both. But this is not only about the spiritual director and the one who makes Ignatian Exercises understanding one another. They also relate to Ignatius (author's horizon), by using phrases beginning with 'Ignatius says', or 'Nadal says' for that matter. Moreover, they relate in some way to the early Jesuit context, and to how Ignatian spirituality has been lived since. Furthermore, we need to consider the individual's views on Scripture, tradition and discipleship. The spiritual director may have one view on Ignatius, the context and Scripture and so on. The person who prays may have another. Can they meet? What may assist them meeting? In my view, Gadamer has helpful suggestions of how to bridge the gap, in terms of seeking to overcome misunderstandings, and arrive at what he calls a 'fusion of horizons.'[31]

Notwithstanding, I would not be quite as optimistic about the actual possibility of fully understanding a text or another person. The metaphor 'fusion' may, therefore, not be as realistic as Gadamer envisages. It is true that he also sees the challenge and problem involved as he comments on the art of translation: "Translating is like an especially laborious process of understanding, in which one views the distance between one's own opinion and its contrary as ultimately unbridgeable."[32] In one passage in his argument he even goes so far as to say that there is an 'insuperable difference', as he holds that understanding "denotes an insuperable difference between the interpreter and the author

[31] Gadamer, *TM*, p. 305. "Rather, understanding is always the fusion of these horizons supposedly existing by themselves."
[32] *ibid.*, pp. 299–300.

that is created by historical distance."[33] Yet, Gadamer may not have sufficiently taken into account that other people and texts, maybe particularly those from a distant past, are indeed very different from horizon(s) of today. Hence, the metaphor of 'fusion' may convey an unrealistic hope, but the ambition to get towards a fusion is certainly commendable. I therefore think that Richard J. Bernstein has a good point when he compares Gadamer's philosophy with the deconstruction approach of the French philosopher Jacques Derrida: "In the fusion of horizons, there is a tendency to gloss over the heterogeneities and abysses that confront us. But there is also a danger of becoming so fascinated with impossibilities and undecidables that we lose any sense of coherence and unity in our lives."[34] My own conclusion, therefore, is that openness to other horizons is a realistic demand, rather than a complete amalgamation. Moreover, since a pilgrim Church must allow for diversity in its historical becoming, openness to different profiles and points of view seems more fitting than a fusion. From an ecumenical point of view, feminist critique of Gadamer's hermeneutics is worth noticing.[35]

A movement toward a relocation of horizons needs, in my view informed by Gadamer, above all, three related characteristics. Firstly, willingness to revise and, if need be, change one's mind. Understanding is, for Gadamer, never a finished project, since one's standpoint is never fixed: "A horizon is not a rigid boundary but something that moves with one and invites one to advance further."[36] The possibility to learn more is always there.

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[33] *ibid.*, p. 296.
[34] Richard J. Bernstein, 'The Constellation of Hermeneutics, Critical Theory and Deconstruction', in *The Cambridge Companion to Gadamer*, ed. by Dostal (2004), p. 281.
[35] Marie Fleming has argued that while Gadamer thinks of one horizon, there are in fact various and multiple horizons. "Gadamer's homogenizing use of the 'we' is partly a function of the key role he gives hermeneutical experience." "This forced inclusion into the 'we' is a major concern for feminists because it aggressively discourages us from critically examining what 'belonging' to tradition means." Marie Fleming, 'Gadamer's Conversation: Does the Other Have a Say?', in *Feminist Interpretations of Hans-Georg Gadamer*, ed. by Code (2003), p. 119.
[36] Gadamer, *TM*, p. 238.

> Fundamentally, understanding is always a movement in this kind of circle, which is why the repeated return from the whole to the parts, and vice versa, is essential. Moreover, this circle is constantly expanding, since the concept of the whole is relative, and being integrated in ever larger contexts always affects the understanding of the individual part.[37]

The second criterion that makes 'fusion' easier is an openness towards something that may be different and unfamiliar. "All that is asked is that we remain open to the meaning of the other person or text. But this openness always includes our situating ourselves in relation to it."[38] Gadamer takes for granted that the text is different: "A hermeneutically trained consciousness must be, from the start, sensitive to the text's alterity."[39] When a text appears different or even strange, Gadamer thinks that the text and the reader meet half way, *in-between*: "It is in the play between the traditionary text's strangeness and familiarity to us, between being a historically intended, distanced object and belonging to a tradition. *The true locus of hermeneutics is this in-between*."[40]

Thirdly, distinct from the meaning that a text had in its original setting (*Spiritual Exercises* in mid sixteenth century) there is the meaning it would have for us now. In order to understand an ancient text beyond its original context, or more precisely the conditions for interpretation now, historical awareness in a general sense of the term is needed. Gadamer does not express this in particularly precise terms, but refers to the 'course of history': "The real meaning of a text, as it speaks to the interpreter now, does not depend on the contingencies of the author and his original audience. It certainly is not identical with them, for it is always co-determined also by the historical situation of the

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[37] *ibid.*, p. 189. Rowan Williams takes a similar line when reflecting on interpretation of Scripture, a difference being that he has a temporal perspective in what he calls 'diachronic reading' which is interested in 'whole blocks of material', 'the narrative context', 'the text's intentionality', 'questions about history'. Rowan Williams, *On Christian Theology* (2000), Chapter 4 'The Discipline of Scripture', especially pp. 45–46.
[38] Gadamer, *TM*, p. 271.
[39] *ibid.*, p. 271.
[40] *ibid.*, p. 295.

interpreter and hence by the totality of the objective course of history (*das Ganze des objektiven Geschichtsganges*)."[41] On other occasions he encourages an 'awareness of history of effects' (*wirkungsgeschichtliches Bewusstsein*), or refers sometimes only to 'history of effects' (*Wirkungsgeschichte*). Interestingly, with this concept he does not mean an "inquiry into the history of a particular work's effect–as it were the trace a work leaves behind."[42] I argue, however, that this is also important in the context of giving Ignatian Exercises, namely how the text has been interpreted throughout the centuries and what shape the ministerial practice has taken. Nonetheless, Gadamer seems to refer rather to the phenomenon that our listening to Bach's symphonies is influenced by the awareness of Mozart, who composed a generation later. To give two other examples: that reading of Scripture is different after the Second World War ('theology after Auschwitz'), or that the emergence of Internet and other means of communication changes our understanding of geography and human interaction.

> Historical consciousness (*das historische Bewusstsein*) must become conscious that in the apparent immediacy with which it approaches a work of art or a traditionary text, there is also another kind of inquiry in play, albeit unrecognized and unregulated. If we are trying to understand a historical phenomenon from the historical distance that is characteristic of our hermeneutical situation, we are always already affected by history (*Wirkungen der Wirkungsgeschichte*). It determines in advance both what seems to us worth inquiring about and what will appear as an object of investigation.[43]

[41] *ibid.*, p. 296.
[42] *ibid.*, pp. 336; 299–300.
[43] Gadamer, *TM*, pp. 299–300.

6.1.5 Practice of Ignatian Exercises presupposes openness to other horizons

Ignatius set out some ground rules that are meant to make relocation of horizons easier. Ignatius presupposes that conversations are held in a spirit of benevolent listening (*SpEx* 22, quoted in section 2.4 above). Moreover, the person who makes Ignatian Exercises is asked to be open: "It is very profitable for the exercitant to begin the Exercises in a magnanimous spirit and with great liberality towards one's Creator and Lord, offering Him all one's power of desiring and one's liberty, so that the Divine Majesty may make use of one's person and of all that one has according to His most holy will."[44] This openness may be extended to the spiritual process as such and to the traditions involved. In order to fuse with other horizons, one needs to be open. The spiritual director, in his or her turn, is meant to give material to pray on and in that connection "provide a faithful account of the events to be meditated or contemplated, simply running over the salient points with brief or summary explanations."[45] This must be narrated from some sort of background and standpoint. I wish to suggest that the conditions for providing such a 'faithful account' are different now in comparison to the ones that prevailed when the instruction was written. There are various accounts and what counts as 'faithful' depends on the bigger picture, the context.

We have learnt from Taylor and Gadamer that in the pastoral cases to be reflected upon in Chapter 7, all involved share a problem, a challenge. It is not the case that the devout Catholic woman, who senses a vocation to ordained ministry, should be left with the issue as if it were her own dilemma to sort out. When you move away from the language of 'within' and 'inside', you claim that all share a problem. It is a question to us all. For this and maybe other reasons the spiritual director does not have to feel the burden of conveying the tradition on his or her own. The tradition is between them. They share it.

[44] *SpEx*, n. 5, *PW*, p. 284.
[45] *SpEx*, n. 2, *PW*, p. 283. Spanish: "narrar fielmente la historia de la tal contemplación o meditación, discurriendo solamente por los puntos, con breve o sumaria declaración."

They may have different levels of knowledge of it and be shaped in various degrees. Both can have both positive and negative views about the tradition. The spiritual director can invite, rather than persuade or convey. Another conclusion from my interpretation of Gadamer's hermeneutics is that truth in the sense of doctrine and God's will is not fixed and uniform over time (this may be called the 'classical understanding' of eternal truths). On that assumption, Augustine of Hippo, Thomas Aquinas, Erasmus of Rotterdam and Karl Rahner and Christians today do not think and believe in identical ways. Instead, Gadamer's insistence on temporality influences spiritual discernment in the Church in such a way that we may speak of a truth-in-becoming or a truth-in-process ('movement of tradition' in Gadamer's language).

6.2 Church as the Sacrament of Christ for the sake of the Kingdom of God

In the beginning of this chapter we highlighted the pilgrim characteristic of the Church. The notion of 'pilgrimage' signifies that seeking and finding God's will is a matter of process; it takes time to discover truth. Drawing on Gadamer's hermeneutics we found that renewal builds on creative fidelity to tradition, to the past, that is to say to the journey the pilgrim Church has walked so far. 'Creative fidelity' denotes a critical engagement while taking the tradition seriously.[46] We need now also to explore how Jesus Christ relates to the Church and particularly how he might be present on both sides of the ecclesial frontier; ecclesiastical authority on one side and the individual Christian on the other. We will continue with the temporal and historical perspective by looking at the ongoing presence of Jesus Christ, which, it could be argued, manifests itself in the Church. The overall thesis is that Jesus Christ is intrinsically related to (not separated from) the Church, in that the Church is a sign of Christ. The Church, in its turn, exists for the sake of the kingdom of God. A biblical illustration that the Church exists in view of the kingdom of God is found at the end of the Acts of the Apostles as it concludes with Paul "preaching the kingdom of God and teaching about the Lord Jesus Christ quite openly and unhindered" (Acts 28:31).

On developing this account the writings of the German theologian Karl Rahner (1904–1984) will provide orientation, but I will also occasionally make a constructive interpretation of his theology.[47] In so doing I will combine various strands of thought from different Rahnerian ecclesial and Ignatian writings. Particularly those aspects that are largely missing in contemporary standpoints will be emphasised, such as the Church as a sacrament (sign, symbol) of salvation. This selection may seem to generate a patchwork of

[46] The phrase comes from: Peter-Hans Kolvenbach, 'Creative Fidelity in Mission', *Review of Ignatian Spirituality*, vol. 95 (2000), 25–40.
[47] The term 'constructive interpretation' is inspired from Endean's method (2001), pp. 134, 152, 221.

fragments, but is justifiable particularly since Karl Rahner himself never wrote a systematic work in ecclesiology. *The Church: Basis of Pastoral Action* (*Ekklesiologische Grundlegung*) comes close to such, but as the title suggests its contents are a response to the surrounding environment rather than an a priori systematic reflection.[48] His Ignatian writings are, in a way, equally fragmentary. The purpose of the following reflections is to continue to depict my own ecclesiological position which is informed by Karl Rahner, rather than merely presenting his ideas. I coincide with him on many points. The chief difference, however, is that I would give more weight to the visible Catholic Church, both locally and universally. His theology would also have benefited from the kind of relational and hermeneutical model that I put forward in this dissertation.

Most scholars pay attention to Karl Rahner's theological method, ontology and theology of grace, while his ecclesiology is mostly left behind. The German theologian and bishop, Karl Lehmann, made the observation in 1994 that few of the many dissertations on Rahner treat his ecclesiology.[49] Richard Lennan, similarly, finds this odd since he estimates that Karl Rahner's ecclesiology is "the subject-area to which more than half of his writings are devoted."[50] The reasons why I find Rahner's ecclesial reflections so attractive and interesting is that they are flexible, visionary, dynamic and at the same time to the point. His fundamental conviction that human beings, as creatures, are able to experience grace implies that it is constitutive for grace itself to adapt to the conditions of space and time and specific circumstances.[51] In several cases in the quotations below, I have made my own translation on the grounds that existing English translations are occasionally unsatisfactory, or that some texts have not yet been translated into English. Existing English translations are listed in the bibliography.

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[48] Karl Rahner, *Ekklesiologische Grundlegung* (1964), *SW* [*Sämtliche Werke*]19, pp. 47–80. See also Richard Lennan, *The Ecclesiology of Karl Rahner* (1995), pp. 226–229.
[49] Karl Lehmann, 'Karl Rahner und die Kirche', in *Karl Rahner in Erinnerung*, ed. by Raffelt (1994), 119.
[50] Lennan (1995), p. 10.
[51] See for instance: Karl Rahner, *Grundkurs des Glaubens* (1976), *SW* 26, pp. 48–64.

6.3 Healing sign of a wounded community

Our starting-point in the contemporary pastoral context at ecclesial frontiers is that of perceived rupture that needs to be healed. It seems, then, to me that the wound of Jesus Christ is an appropriate image for an ecclesiology that addresses perceived disharmony, experiences distance, tensions and even conflicts. The focus here is on the Church as a sign of Christ as regards a particular aspect, namely a sign that points towards his wound. Based on John 19:34 ('One of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once there came out blood and water') and Patristic interpretation of this verse in Scripture, Karl Rahner defended a doctoral dissertation in 1936 called *E latere Christi* (From the side of Christ). Walter Schmolly quite rightly evaluates this as a significant piece in its own right, but above all in terms of understanding the development of Rahner's thought.[52] The key idea, which early church theologians such as Origen developed, is that the Church is born, or springs forth from the wound of Christ (John 19:34). There are here parallels between Christ and Adam on the one hand, and the Church and Eve on the other. Just as Eve receives life from Adam's rib, so the Church originates from the water and blood of the wound of Christ. Karl Rahner interprets this in terms of the origin of the Church being deeply connected with the crucified Christ.[53] This passion of Christ gives life to the Church as the Holy Spirit is at work: "Thus, while thinking about water from the wound of the side of Jesus we do not need to think about Baptism exclusively, but about the 'Holy Spirit', about grace in general. It remains true, though, that Baptism is the first and most important pouring out of the Spirit. And as far as that is concerned the Fathers see properly, who saw Baptism in the water from the wound of the side of Jesus."[54]

[52] Walter Schmolly, *Eschatologische Hoffnung in Geschichte* (2001), pp. 33–34.
[53] Karl Rahner, *E latere Christi* (1936), *SW* 3, pp. 7–84.
[54] My translation from: Karl Rahner, *E latere Christi* (1936), *SW* 3, p. 35.

Employing constructive interpretation on this text, I want to highlight some consequences and implications that this vision of the Church has for our pastoral problem. This image of a wound is particularly helpful for those who have difficulties with Church practice or ecclesiastical authority because it conveys that the Church was broken, imperfect, from the outset. It ought furthermore to be appealing ecumenically; there is a wound in the community that needs to be healed.[55] All Christians are, nonetheless, united in the sacrament of Baptism, and the image of the side of Christ is also conveying the Spirit to all. It is important to state that this is not 'just a metaphor', in a way that images are sometimes trivialized. Andreas Batlogg has, by contrast, convincingly argued that already in *E latere Christi* there are elements of what Rahner in the late 1950s would develop in his theology of symbol.[56] According to this teaching, the metaphor conveys something that is indeed real, in this case the Church being poured out of the wound of Christ. We may at this stage make some ecumenical observations as regards healing of the ecclesial wound. There are some indications that Christian denominations have grown in respect for one another and come closer theologically, as is seen for instance in the *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification*, promulgated by the Catholic Church and the Lutheran World Federation.[57] Moreover, Cardinal Walter Kasper, former President of The Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, is of the view that progress has been made.[58] There are also grass root movements as seen in the Bose monastery north of Turin in Italy, Taize in France, and retreats offered in many places with participants from various Christian

[55] Ladislas Örsy, 'Authentic learning and Receiving–A Search for Criteria', in Murray (ed.), *Receptive Ecumenism and the Call to Catholic Learning* (2008), pp. 39–51.
[56] Andreas R. Batlogg, *Die Mysterien des Lebens Jesu bei Karl Rahner* (2nd edn 2003 [2001]), pp. 298–305.
[57] Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification, 1999 (www.vatican.va).
[58] Cardinal Walter Kasper, *A Handbook of Spiritual Ecumenism* (2007); *Harvesting the Fruits: Basic Aspects of Christian Faith in Ecumenical Dialogue* (2009).

denominations. Noteworthy is also a conference that took place in Durham with the aim of searching for what the Catholic Church could learn from other traditions.[59]

The event of the Cross, in which the Church emanates through the water and blood of the side of Christ, can be seen as its birth, its emergence in space and time. Since then there is a continuous process of expressing Christ. In Karl Rahner's view, the Church is an expression of Jesus Christ. Karl Rahner uses the notion of sacrament (sign, symbol) when expounding this. This notion of sign is present already in his early writings. For Karl Rahner spirituality is not independent of the Church. On the contrary, the Church is present in *Encounters with Silence*, from 1938, which takes the form of a prayer and dialogue with God. As he speaks to God, Karl Rahner acknowledges that God's grace is mediated through visible signs; God's Holy Spirit is to be found in the Church: "Your Holy Spirit blows where He will–where *He* will, not where I will. He is not simply always there, whenever and wherever a man wants Him to be. We must go to Him, there where He chooses to give His grace. And that's why your salvation is bound up with Your visible Church. That's why Your grace comes to us in visible signs."[60] Presumably he has the individual sacraments, such as Baptism and Eucharist, in mind.

Some two decades later, in 1959/1960, that is to say immediately before the Second Vatican Council, Karl Rahner develops his thinking around sacrament and conceives of the Church itself as a sacrament, an account of which Richard Lennan gives a helpful overview.[61] The idea is that the Church as such is a sacrament in the sense of being a sign, an expression of Jesus Christ. Karl Rahner explains in different ways how and why

[59] Murray (ed.), *Receptive Ecumenism and the Call to Catholic Learning* (2008).
[60] Karl Rahner, Encounters with Silence, trans. by Demske (2001 [1960]), pp. 69–70. See also p. 40. *Worte ins Schweigen* (Innsbruck: Rauch, 1938) [*SW* 7, forthcoming].
[61] Lennan (1995), pp. 15–40.

this is the case. One way is that the Church expresses God's affirmation of humanity, which is an ongoing process. Rahner, thus, conceives of the Church, as a sacrament, because it maintains God's affirmation of humanity:

> As a result of this, and of much else, the Church is Christ's way of being present through all ages since his resurrection; thus it is the abidingness of God's word of promise, through which He promises the world salvation, irrevocably. To this extent, the Church can and must be called the foundational sacrament (*Grundsakrament*) of the world's salvation.[62]

A similar way in which Karl Rahner identifies the Church as a sign of Christ is by means of its reception and acceptance of Christ. Here we also see the typical Rahnerian language of God giving himself.

> God in person gives God's own self to human beings. God – just God and nothing other. And this self-gift […] has definitively taken place in Jesus Christ; its acceptance continues in a way that cannot be revoked; it has an abiding historical, identifiable, and social presence; it can be made known. And just this is what Church is: the abidingness of the accepted Christ in his significance as the definitive self-gift and self-promise of God to humanity.[63]

It is noteworthy that Karl Rahner does not think so much in terms of each individual receiving and accepting Jesus Christ, but rather the whole community doing so. We also see that this is a historical process, God's self-gift has been received and continues to be received, and that this reception is the Church. Karl Rahner searches for a concept to capture this reality, which claims to be the presence of God's self-communication while at the same time being incomplete, that is to say not identical with the fullness of Jesus Christ. To be more precise, he states elsewhere that the Church is holy and explains why 'Grundsakrament' is a suitable word for the Church's keeping Jesus Christ present:

> If we seek a current theological concept to characterize the way in which God's self-communication is present to the Church and through the Church, and to distinguish this from the way in which God is present in the final fulfilment, the concept 'sacrament' immediately suggests itself; especially since it has been

[62] My translation from: Karl Rahner, 'Kirche ist Verheissung' (1964), *SW* 30, p. 596. See also *Grundkurs des Glaubens* (1976), *SW* 26, pp. 306–308, 313–315, 324–325.
[63] *Spiritual Writings*, ed. by Endean, p. 135. Karl Rahner, *Ekklesiologische Grundlegung* (1964), *SW* 19, p. 52.

> carefully worked out in theology already (even though then with reference to the individual sacraments). God is so present in the Church that the Church can be called the sacrament of God's self-communication; or also (to distinguish how this statement is understood from the doctrine of the seven sacraments) we can say that the Church is the (foundational) primal sacrament (*[Grund]Ursakrament*).[64]

We are thus dealing with a reserved affirmation; the Church is an expression of Christ, yes, but not a perfect one, and the word 'sacrament' lends itself for this reality. The technical term for this is 'real-symbol', as the sign (Church) is not detached from that which it points to (Christ), in the way that the road sign 'Oxford' is separate from the city. The idea of sacrament as symbol goes back to the Council of Trent, then used in relation to the Eucharist.[65] Richard Lennan explains further: "Accordingly, he [Karl Rahner] defined a symbol as that through which a being expressed itself in a way necessary for its own self-realization."[66] We will return to the aspect of self-realization in section 6.5.

We may distil several important points that can be brought to the ecclesial frontiers from the theology of Church as sacrament. One is that the Church, even when it visibly fails, expresses God's gift to humanity and remains 'Grundsakrament'. The logic may be compared with the dignity of the human person, who has this dignity regardless of performance. Moreover, the notion of the Church as sacrament (sign, symbol, expression) of God's grace allows for the possibility that this grace is at work also outside the boundaries of the Catholic Church. In Karl Rahner's view the teaching of the Church as sacrament is precisely holding the dialectic position, which comes across in *Lumen gentium*, that the saving act of God in Christ reaches all who act faithfully according to

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[64] My translation from: Karl Rahner, *Ekklesiologische Grundlegung* (1964), *SW* 19, p. 63.
[65] For Trent session 13, chapter 3, the Eucharist "is a sign of sacred reality and the visible form of invisible grace (*symbolum esse rei sacrae et invisibilis gratiae formam visibilem*)." (Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, I), p. 694.
[66] Lennan (1995), p. 19.

their conscience regardless of their religious affiliation.[67] There are certainly boundaries both among Christians and between Christian denominations and those of other faith or none, but these boundaries are porous and fluid. In the following section I will therefore argue that Christians are distinct from others, while being similar. Identity is here understood in a positive sense, not in a contrasting over against someone else.

[67] Karl Rahner, 'Kirchengliedschaft (Kirchengehörigkeit)' (1968), *SW* 17/2, pp. 1136–1141.

6.4 Frontiers: home territory of the pilgrim Church – not a foreign land

Let us return to our Canadian philosopher; Charles Taylor's philosophy treats humanity as such. Taylor's philosophy discusses the individual in relation to the community of humanity as such, which is not necessarily the same as the community of the Church. How do we go from the community of humanity as such to the community of the Church? It is possible to identify the Church with the whole human family, particularly at the end of time. At the same time, Christians have been perceived as different, as seen in the Acts of the Apostles: "in Antioch the disciples were for the first time called Christians" (Acts 11:26). The Syrian Metropolis Antioch had a large Jewish population as well as a Greek Gentile minority, and Christians were different in relation to both.

With a temporal understanding of the Church, we discover that throughout its history, the Church has always existed in a 'messy' place somewhere. The notion of a pure, ideal, abstract and detached Church is an illusion. It has developed through interaction in and between cultures (Jewish, Greek, Pagan, Coptic, Roman, Irish) over time. My thesis is therefore: to be on the margins is no exceptional state for the pilgrim Church. The ecclesial frontier is the norm, the place to be, not an inadequate and unfortunate exception. It is characteristic of Ignatian spirituality to be at frontiers, as seen in the documents of the last General Congregation of the Society of Jesus.[68] The effort to reach out is envisaged in the 'Meditation on Two Standards' in the *Spiritual Exercises*: "To consider how the Lord of all the world selects so many persons, as apostles, disciples, etc., and sends them out over the whole world spreading His sacred doctrine among all people of every state and condition."[69] Worth noticing here is both that the message is for all, for 'the whole world',

[68] *The Decrees and Documents of the Thirty-fifth General Congregation of the Society of Jesus* (2008). Decree 3 'Challenges to Our Mission: Sent to the Frontiers', pp. 53–69, especially n. 15, p. 58.
[69] *SpEx,* n. 145, *PW*, p. 311.

and that there is talk of a 'sacred doctrine'. It could be added that this sacred doctrine is a distinct and specific one, uttered with a particular voice.

Borders have in fact been the home territory of the Church since its origin and early stages, a point that can be illustrated through biblical examples. The boundaries are in some cases manifested in a hostile and violent fashion. The origin of the Church has been identified as the blood and water pouring out of Jesus's side (Jn 19:34), an event that we visited in section 6.3 above. It was a non-Christian Roman soldier who pierced Jesus with his lance. The early Christian community was, moreover, hiding from the Jews. One frontier, thus, is the one between nationalities or societies. There are also non-violent examples. The early Church of Pentecost consisted of many nations and cultures (Acts 2). Moreover, the Apostle Peter's encounter with Cornelius, the centurion of the Italian Cohort in the coastal city of Caesarea in Samaria, is a representative case. As with the majority of the population in Caesarea, he was a gentile who with his family was baptized. This gentile family interacts with the Jewish-Christian Peter (Acts 10:1–48). Yet another example is that the early Church had to deal with intercultural questions (circumcision and observance of purity laws for all) at the meeting in Jerusalem (Acts 15). At a philosophical level there were also encounters with those who had different convictions, as seen in the Apostle Paul's encounter with philosophers at the Areopagus in Athens (Acts 17).

On the whole Christianity is a mixture of Greek and Jewish culture, a reality that shapes the way the historian Diarmaid MacCulloch tells the history of Christianity.[70] Mission activities throughout the centuries, not the least manifested in Jesuit missions, further illustrate this point. To sum up, Christianity has never existed in a pure, abstract

[70] MacCulloch, *A History of Christianity*, particularly the first chapter, pp. 19–46.

form that then rather regrettably interacts with the world. It has always existed in cultures and in interaction with cultures. While being spread out in a certain environment, the boundaries are porous and fluid. But the Church is at the same time sufficiently distinct to be identified as something different – the disciples were called Christians (Acts 11:26). Some Church Fathers claim not only that there is a difference, but also that Christianity is of a higher quality. In his book *Contra Celsum*, Origen (185–254) holds that Church proper is, although immersed in a place, clearly distinct from society at large:

> And the Churches [*Greek*: ἐκκλησία] of God which have been taught by Christ, when compared with the assemblies [*Greek*: ἐκκλησία] of the people where they live, are 'as lights in the world'. Who would not admit that even the less satisfactory members of the Church and those who are far inferior when compared with the better members are far superior to the assemblies of the people?
> The Church of God, say, at Athens is meek and quiet, since it desires to please God. But the assembly of the Athenians is riotous and in no way comparable to the Church of God there. You may say the same of the Church of God at Corinth and the assembly of the people of the Corinthians, and of the Church of God, say, at Alexandria and the assembly of the people of Alexandria."[71]

The Catholic Church was in a minority both in Athens and Alexandria, at least initially. Christianity used philosophical language of Greek civilisation. It is noteworthy that Origen holds that the Church in the narrow sense of 'assembly' partially co-existed with the wider 'assembly' beyond its own boundaries. But he is also confident enough to assert that the Church has something to offer and is not entirely assimilated in society. Indeed, in a polemical tone he sees the Church as 'far superior' and 'in no way comparable' with the assemblies in a wider sense of the word.

The conditions of the dispersion today can learn from the conditions of the Church in Alexandria. The situation today is in many ways comparable to third century

[71] Origen, *Contra Celsum*, III:29–30, trans. by Chadwick (1986 [1953]) p. 147. The Greek ἐκκλησία has been inserted in order to illustrate that Origen, by using the same word for different communities, states that they have some resemblance but remain distinct.

Athens and Alexandria. The diaspora Christianity of our time may even be closer to the third century Alexandria than to medieval or baroque Christianity that shaped Ignatius's mindset. I agree with Origen as far as the distinctiveness of Christianity is concerned, but I would not draw the line so sharply as he does and avoid comparative language in the sense of assessing in terms of good and better, inferior and superior. Nonetheless, I – maybe somewhat paradoxically – coincide with the conviction that the Roman Catholic Church possesses the fullness of the means of salvation. The Catholic Church is not an end in itself, but points towards the Kingdom. Unlike Origen, I do not want to assess, evaluate, judge, not even to compare. When Christianity expresses itself, it is not a matter of competition – of contrasting identitities. It is rather a manifestation of identity, of one voice among many. On that basis representatives of the Catholic Church can adopt a healthy confidence in the messages they convey and that "it is only through Christ's catholic church, which is the all-embracing means of salvation, that the fullness of the means of salvation can be attained."[72]

In conclusion, intercultural encounter and accommodation of various traditions has been the hallmark of Christianity throughout the ages, at least in its non-violent and constructive endeavours. A biblical illustration that we have centred on and returned to is found in Acts: "in Antioch the disciples were for the first time called Christians" (Acts 11:26). Why then insist on distinctiveness and difference? In order that others may come to faith and deepen the relationships with God, there needs to be public witness. The public expression has a purpose, namely also to realize and create the community. Public expression is a sign of commitment to concrete church. In the end it is a way of imitating God, as he made a public statement in becoming a human being. How do various traditions (broadly defined) meet in the context of Ignatian Exercises? Do they merge or stand over

[72] *Unitatis redintegratio*, n. 3 (Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, II), p. 910.

against one another? Suffice at this stage to point out that through Baptism Christians are already related, before any difference becomes relevant. Since the Sacrament of Baptism is mutually recognized in several Christian denominations, it can also be taken as point of departure for stating that the boundaries between Christians generally is not sharp. Similarly, the distinction between baptized Christians and non-baptized is soft. Notwithstanding, Christianity as well as each particular version of it is by nature confident in its own voice that manifests itself openly on the public square.

6.5 The manifestation of the Sacrament of Christ is public

In the last two sections I showed that the Church is a sign of Christ, actually even when it fails. Already in its very existence, the Church expresses and is a symbol of Jesus Christ. In this section I will argue that the Church also needs to make, so to speak, a human effort to convey its commitment to Jesus Christ publicly. It needs to allow the communitarian sign of Christ to be revealed continuously and repeatedly. With 'public expression' I mean manifestation of worship particularly in the sacrament of the Eucharist and other sacraments, conversations, and participation in media. Through such manifestations ('symbols' in Karl Rahner's language), the Church simultaneously realizes, creates and builds up itself – it comes into being. This self-realization is not an end in itself, but a means through which people are attracted to believe in Jesus Christ and in the Kingdom of God. The deepest motivation behind this urge to give witness is that through public expression, the Church imitates God himself. The Church not only points to Jesus Christ, but also imitates God in that God's decision to become human was in its turn a public act, particularly through Jesus's public ministry. This position of insisting on public witnessing obviously calls the idea of private religiosity into question.

One argument for the Church as community to give public witness to Jesus Christ is that this action supports people's coming to faith. Someone – an individual or a community – needs to proclaim, to tell the story and pass it on, to hand down the values and the customs. It may be recalled that 'tradition' comes from the Latin *tradere* (to hand down, to hand over, to give). There is, thus, a human involvement in enabling others to believe, and this is a historical movement in a concrete reality. Karl Rahner phrases this concreteness in terms of the Church being a tangible manifestation of God in space and time and thereby that through the existence of this community "Catholic faith is fundamentally possible."

> The Church is thus (like Christ) both God's eternal mercy and a body in space and time, both (again like Christ) without confusion and without separation. This graced—which as such implies that it is historically graspable—space is the dimension in which alone something like Catholic faith is fundamentally possible.[73]

Arguing from conviction, I hold that the Church needs to be preserved and sustained, because spirituality finds life in and receives from it. We have established that the Church has been a sign of Christ in the past and is it in the present; it is born through his wound and constitutes a permanent affirmation of God. It is also one that has a future, pointing towards the Kingdom of God (Acts 28:31). The role of enabling faith is also to be employed in the future. Karl Rahner gave a talk at the Catholic Chaplaincy in Münster, Germany, in the year 1977, in an era when institutions were not particularly highly regarded. In the talk which has something of the character of prophetic speech, he offers a vision for a prospective spirituality, as he predicts that "The spirituality of the future will also always be one living in the Church, receiving from it, giving itself to the Church, founded in it and sustaining it, even though it is as yet perhaps very uncertain what this implies exactly and concretely in the future."[74] Spirituality is, thus, connected with the Church in Karl Rahner's vision. His prediction may also be understood in an eschatological sense; at the end of time the pilgrims will reach fulfilment. This prophecy keeps clear of any sort of arrogance: "The ecclesial aspect of the spirituality of the future will be less triumphalist than formerly. But attachment to the Church (*Kirchlichkeit*) will also in the future be an absolutely necessary criterion for genuine spirituality."[75]

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[73] My translation from: Karl Rahner, 'Ich glaube die Kirche' (1954), *SW* 10, p. 243. The translation made by David Bourke in '"I Believe In The Church"', *TI* VII, p. 108, deviates from the German original. For *Leib* I prefer 'a body' to 'his Body'; for *Erbarmen* I prefer 'mercy' instead of 'compassion'. Bourke also adds words that are absent in the German text.

[74] Karl Rahner, 'The Spirituality of the Church of the Future', *TI* XX, p. 145; 'Elemente der Spiritualität in der Kirche der Zukunft' (1977), *SW* 29, p. 309.

[75] *ibid*., *TI* XX, p. 153; *SW* 29, p. 316.

In Karl Rahner's ecclesiology, as we have seen, public expression of Christianity that enables faith is formulated through the language of sign (symbol, sacrament). The Church itself is a sacrament, a sign of Christ. Moreover, each individual sacrament can be seen as a mechanism by which people discover and deepen their relationship with Jesus Christ. It seems to me that for the Church as a sign of Christ to continue to be vital it needs to be expressed regularly and manifestly. In his commentary on the *Spiritual Exercises* of Ignatius, Karl Rahner holds that the individual sacraments have an important function in that regard. It is clear for Karl Rahner that the sacraments of Baptism and Eucharist cannot be secondary in the context of Ignatian Exercises.

> In narrower, historically more accessible terms, we were then through baptism made members of the community that is his body, and thus drawn even deeper into his life through this sacramental mark on the historical reality of our lives. Something similar can be said of all the sacraments: they are at once a sign and a strengthening of the attraction toward the life of Jesus, toward the beating with the rhythm of his existence that has unwaveringly taken hold of the whole creation (given that its most central characteristic is its being the surroundings for Christ).[76]

Karl Rahner, thus, understands the sacraments in terms of helping people to grow and to intensify their relationship with Jesus Christ. It is important to see the concrete and unique setting: a particular person is baptized and celebrates Eucharist in a particular place. Also noteworthy (in the quotation above) is, the comparative language of being drawn deeper, of strengthening and being more attracted. Is there then any further motivation behind the need to be public? The deepest motivation is, that through public witnessing the Church imitates Jesus Christ; it follows him. The human effort to be official and public is, thus, a mirror image of the divine initiative. God's decision to become human was a public act. While reflecting on the Incarnation and on being a disciple and follower of Jesus, Karl Rahner states that faith needs to be expressed publicly so as to correspond to the

[76] Translation by Endean, in Karl Rahner, *Spiritual Writings*, p. 113. *Betrachtungen zum Ignatianischen Exerzitienbuch* (1965), *SW* 13, p. 117. For problems concerning various versions of this text, see comment in the bibliography. On Karl Rahner on sacraments see also: Batlogg, (2nd edn 2003), pp. 370–380.

will of God to reveal himself overtly and this throughout the ages without interruption. This leads to the conviction that commitment to Jesus is inseparable from commitment to the Church.

> If the Word of God wanted to reveal Himself in such a way that He entered into the world as the tangible and public epiphany of grace, and not just as an anonymous historical force, and if He remains in the world in this way until the end of time, then our life-with (*Mit-Leben*) with the Word that has so revealed Himself must attain the same level of designated publicity; it must relate itself explicitly (with the help of Scripture and tradition) to the "historical" Jesus; it must understand itself as part of His "fullness"; in a word, it must be "ecclesial".[77]

Life with Jesus (the Word of God) must be public and official, just as Jesus himself was public. The explicit reference to the historical Jesus is made through Scripture and tradition. It could be added that the importance of commitment uttered in official witnessing becomes evident in the experience of the dispersion-situation. In many countries, particularly in Europe, the circumstances of Christians can be described as *diaspora* (dispersion). Christianity is in a minority position, if not always numerically, at least in terms of impact. The Roman Catholic Church, particularly in Northern Europe, is often a minority within this Christian minority. Continued presence seems under these conditions to be dependent on public testimony. It is a matter of survival. This conviction of the necessity of public witness obviously challenges the kind of Christianity that understands itself in the form of individual and private religiosity. But, in my view, Christianity in its very essence and nature is not a private religion (compare Matthew 28:16–20). As a qualifying remark, it needs to be said that the Church transcends itself as it reaches out to the Kingdom of God, rather that giving public witness for the sake of self-glorification. The Church indeed realizes itself through public expression, but it is done with the view of the Kingdom. That too is a way of imitating Jesus who pointed not to

[77] My translation from: Karl Rahner, *Betrachtungen* (1965), *SW* 13, p. 118.

himself but to the Kingdom (Mark 4:1–33; 10:13–16). This remark is important for encounters at the ecclesial frontiers because it generates a certain freedom, relaxed attitude towards the church community. At the end of time the pilgrim Church will reach perfection, as Jesus Christ draws all of humanity to the Kingdom of God. There is something preliminary about the Church until it reaches completion in the coming Kingdom of God.[78] Udo Bentz summarizes Rahner's thought succinctly: "To understand the Church in its eschatological nature is to apply the eschatological difference of 'already' and 'not yet', of realized and future eschatology, to the Church."[79]

It ought to have been made clear that Karl Rahner's view of spirituality is ecclesial. The popular reception of Karl Rahner, however, centres on aspects of that which is known as 'everyday mysticism' and normally highlights the 'immediate experience of God'. It is true that this was at the heart of his teaching.[80] In the beginning of his essay 'Logik der existentiellen Erkenntnis' he opens with a question:

> For Ignatius, of course, it goes without saying that the field in which this will of God can be discovered is delimited by the faith of the Holy Roman Catholic Church, and therefore comprised within her binding doctrine and the moral principles she prescribes for her children and lives out. Admittedly, there is already a question here too: how this *a priori* delimitation of the possible field of God's will is compatible with the immediate utterance of this will directly by God himself, when God works directly with his creature. And why, if this latter exists, the external norm here is not already basically obsolete, or reduced to the level of an instrumental means that just happens, entirely secondarily, to be made use of by God?[81]

Karl Rahner never fully answers this question, but as I argued in the response to Santiago Madrigal (section 3.9), discernment will always be related to the Church community regardless of whether God's will is communicated directly or mediated in some

[78] Karl Rahner, 'Kirche und Parusie Christi' (1963), *SW* 10, p. 628.
[79] Udo Bentz, *Jetzt ist noch Kirche* (2008), especially pp. 322.
[80] Karl Rahner, 'Alltägliche Dinge' (1964), *SW* 23, pp. 475–487.
[81] My translation from: Karl Rahner, 'Logik der existentiellen Erkenntnis' (1956), *SW* 10, p. 372.

way. My concern here is that I want to challenge the widespread view that Karl Rahner brackets the ecclesial community through concepts such as 'anonymous Christianity' and 'immediate experience of God'. Udo Bentz argues in a recently published doctoral dissertation that 'immediate experience of God' by no means implies a hotline to God, independent of other human beings and all social reality.[82]

In one way, the 'church' is defined as God's self-gift to all of humanity as we saw in the quotation above.[83] This universal invitation is also present in Karl Rahner's concept of 'anonymous Christians', that is that grace and the presence of Christ is there regardless of people being conscious of it or not. This should not, however, lead to the misunderstanding that Karl Rahner would assert that mission and ecclesial commitment is redundant. In fact, to make this qualifying point clear, he underscores the visible, concrete nature of the Church as he reflects on 'anonymous Christianity'.

> We can give a positive sense to mission on this basis; in what has been said so far, it has in fact already been given. The grace of God, which is seeking really to save everyone, has an incarnational character; it is seeking to work itself out and show itself in every dimension of human existence, and therefore also in the historical and social element of humanity; of its own nature, it is seeking to be Church-forming (*von ihrem eigenen Wesen her kirchenbildend sein*).[84]

There is no doubt that Karl Rahner's Christianity is ecclesial. The follow-up question is *how* concretely it is manifested, that is to say how far commitment to a particular parish and bishop, etcetera goes. How specific is the term 'church' understood?

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[82] Bentz (2008), especially pp. 15–156.

[83] Incidentally, the idea of church as encompassing all of humanity did not emerge through Karl Rahner. Eusebius of Caesarea, for example, claimed that the people of Israel of the Old Testament "might be described as Christians in fact if not in name." *The History of the Church* (1989) book I, ch. 4, p. 15. Similarly, the French theologian Henri de Lubac: "the Church is, in an objective sense, *congregatio generis humani*, the assembly which results from the reuniting of all peoples: *Ecclesia ex circumcisione, ecclesia ex gentibus*." *Catholicism* (1988 [1938]), p. 68. See also pp. 48–55. Elsewhere he states: "Following in the footsteps of St. Thomas, we can give the name 'Church' to that gigantic organism which includes all the host of the angels as well as men, and even extends to the whole of the cosmos as well." (*The Splendour of the Church*, 1986 [1953]), pp. 51–52).

[84] My translation from: Karl Rahner, 'Anonymes Christentum und Missionsauftrag der Kirche' (1970), *SW* 22/2, p. 324.

The German bishop and theologian Karl Lehmann was impressed by Karl Rahner's frankness and loyalty to the concrete Church.[85] The German Jesuit Medard Kehl, by contrast, criticized Karl Rahner for not having a tangible enough account of the Church; the concrete Church remains at most as a side-effect.[86] Karen Kilby has also convincingly argued, as she comments on Karl Rahner's ecclesiology, that any immediate experience of God requires the broader context of Christianity: "because there is no longer a general socializing into Christianity going on through the broader culture, it becomes *all the more* important that this socializing goes on within the Church through the telling of narrative and the use of ritual, through scripture and liturgy, through maintenance of clear boundaries and definite teachings, and so on."[87] In conclusion, commitment to Christianity involves some sort of public statement and expression in concrete ways. In contrast with the majority of contemporary standpoints presented in section 1.2 above, I assert that denial of Catholicism by way of silencing when giving Ignatian Exercises is misguided.

[85] Lehmann, 'Karl Rahner und die Kirche' (1994), p. 131.
[86] "The incarnational 'structure' of Christ and the Church is the decisive factor in the definitive imparting of salvation. Of course there is an implication here that, with both of these, there is also a specific form and history of this categorical manifestation–but this is nevertheless something that is said only secondarily (nur '*mit*'-gesagt). It does not come within the focus of the systematic reflection." Medard Kehl, *Kirche als Institution*, p. 220. For comments on Kehl's critique of Karl Rahner see: Lennan (1995), pp. 39–43; 76–79; 107–109. Bentz (2008), pp. 103–117.
[87] Karen Kilby, 'Karl Rahner's Ecclesiology' (2009), p. 194.

6.6 Development and change are normal and there are grounds for it

Can something be chosen which is not (yet) in keeping with the teaching of the Church? Can the Church allow certain alternatives that were not eligible before? On what grounds, then, may the Church's practice and teaching be developed and changed? One criterion is Jesus's life, whose youth is meditated in the *Spiritual Exercises*. The choice (election) may go against established norms, as seen in Karl Rahner's reflection on the meditation on the 12 year old Jesus in Jerusalem. The Church, therefore, needs to be open to the 'charismatic' and to new forms; a position which resembles the dramatic approach (Chapter 4).

> The history of twelve-year old Jesus visiting the temple also contains an example of what we might call the charismatic element in the life of individuals and in the life of the Church. Vocations to a life that is contrary to what went on before, to the already regimented, to that which is already established by law and custom, can occur again and again in the lives of individuals.[88]

So the life of Jesus is a 'ground' for development and change. Karl Rahner asserts, moreover, that Jesus's disobedience is not to be understood as autonomy: "We have already said that in that conflict of his and his disobedience Jesus did not appeal to a right of autonomous liberty or independence but to obedience to be shown to the Father, and that he knew that by this disobedience he was obeying the intimate destiny of the Synagogue of the chosen people manifested and foretold in Scripture."[89] On that basis Karl Rahner gives guidelines for disobedience of a cleric, even refusal to obey an order:

> If after severe self-critical deliberation he [the cleric] cannot respond affirmatively, he should realize that the appeal to his conscience which invincibly judges the command of an ecclesiastical superior to be objectively immoral, can scarcely be justified before God. If he sincerely thinks he cannot respond affirmatively, let him be disobedient in humble imitation of the example of Jesus, like Paul (Gal. 2:11–21); let him acknowledge authority, refuse to carry out the order which he considers he could not do except against his conscience. For in this way he is obedient and an imitator of Christ.[90]

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[88] My translation from: Karl Rahner, *Betrachtungen* (1965), *SW* 13, p. 156.
[89] Karl Rahner, 'Christ as the exemplar of clerical obedience', in *Obedience and the Church* (Washington: Corpus books, 1968), p. 15. 'Christus als Beispiel des priesterlichen Gehorsams' (1967), *SW* 20, pp. 108–109.
[90] *ibid*., p. 16.

Karl Rahner developed these ideas some ten years earlier in a set of writings called 'The Dynamic Element in the Church', in which one key thought is that the charismatic and the institutional do not necessarily stand in perpetual opposition.[91] Not opposition, but distinction: "The Church's life is sustained not only by the initiative, orders or instructions of ecclesiastical authority, but also though still under the direction of the Hierarchy, by the charisma of the Holy Spirit, who can breathe upon whomsoever he will in the Church."[92] Diversity, pluralism and variety are certainly helpful aspects in this equation. That is to say, the new development might be standing out in relation to that which is established, in which case it needs to be integrated. In his commentary on the *Spiritual Exercises* Karl Rahner asserts that the members of the Church need to be mutually open to different charisms (1 Cor 12). Guided by the 'Spirit of God', the Church should, in Rahner's view that I share, embrace pluralism of many different people: "Each one of these members proves that it really is a member of this Body by recognizing those which are differently formed (*die anders gearteten gelten lässt*)."[93]

Another ground or criterion for development and change is that if imperfection and even sinfulness underlies ecclesial practice and teaching, then alteration is justified. Let us listen to Karl Rahner's experience. For him personally the Church was indeed essential. It is interesting to note that he, nevertheless, feels more or less at home in the Church depending on the circumstances:

> I'm meant to pray for the Church, my God. Indeed I do so, every day, at the celebration of the Lord's Supper. After all, my faith can live only in the community of those who together form the holy Church of Jesus. And therefore

[91] Karl Rahner, *The Dynamic Element in the Church*, trans. by O'Hara (1964), pp. 13–83. 'Das Dynamische in der Kirche' (1956/1957), *SW* 10, pp. 322–368.
[92] Karl Rahner, *Free Speech in the Church*, trans. by Lamb (1959), p. 8. '*Das freie Wort*' (1951/1952), *SW* 10, p. 147.
[93] My translation from: Karl Rahner, *Betrachtungen* (1965), *SW* 13, p. 227.

> it is (along with much else) indispensable for my salvation that the Church really can be the home and foundation of my faith. Of course I know that the Church is always this for me and can always be so, through the power of your irrevocable grace. But because it is also the Church of wretched sinners, it can vary in how far it is the foundation and home of my faith. It can make it both easier and more difficult for me to believe in you and your victorious love for me.[94]

Karl Rahner develops this ambiguous experience, of feeling more or less at home, theologically through the idea of a 'Church of Sinners'. Sinfulness may even characterize those in leadership positions. To my knowledge, this piece from 1947 was the first theological reflection of this kind, suggesting that sinful and *all too* human aspects play a part in ecclesiastical governance.

> When the Church acts, gives a lead, makes decisions (or fails to make decisions when they ought to be made), when she proclaims her message, and when she is obliged to proclaim it in accordance with the times and historical situations, then this activity of the Church is not carried out by some abstract principle and not by the Holy Spirit alone, but rather this whole activity of the Church is at the same time the activity of concrete men (German: *Menschen*).[95]
>
> There exists no dogma according to which the assistance of the Holy Spirit which always remains with the Church would limit the effect of the sinfulness of the men (German: *Männer*) who administer the Church to their purely private lives and not permit it to have any influence on those events which must be characterised as unmistakably acts of the Church, if the concept of the Church is not to evaporate into the abstract ideal of an invisible Church.[96]

Sinfulness does not erase the sacred nature of the Church in Karl Rahner's view. The Church remains God's self-communication:

> The real effectiveness of the magisterium's authority must consist rather in the fact that by God's gracious self-communication to the world, and the absolute historical manifestation of this in Jesus Christ—a manifestation which makes this self-communication irreversibly victorious, there is also constituted Church: *the* faith-experience of this divine self-communication, which can no longer descend into error.[97]

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[94] Karl Rahner, *Spiritual Writings*, ed. by Endean, p. 148; *Prayers of a Lifetime*, pp. 114–117.
[95] Karl Rahner, 'The Church of Sinners', *TI* VI, p. 260. 'Kirche der Sünder' (1947), *SW* 10, p. 88.
[96] *ibid*., *TI* VI, p. 261. *SW* 10, p. 88.
[97] My translation from: Karl Rahner, 'The Teaching Office of the Church in the Present-day Crisis of Authority'; *TI* XII, p. 9. 'Das kirchliche Lehramt in der heutigen Autoritätskrise' (1969), *SW* 22/2, pp. 439–440.

This assertion may sound absurd in the ears of those who merely see malice and corruption in the Catholic Church, such as the English novelist Philip Pullman.[98] The conviction will, nonetheless, be maintained in full awareness of shortcomings. With a certain reserved affirmation, I will argue that the Catholic Church is an expression of Jesus Christ, yes, but not a perfect one. It never has been. An account that combines holiness and sinfulness is exactly what is called for at the ecclesial frontiers.

6.6.1 Status of different ecclesiastical statements and propositions

Karl Rahner's basic position is that the teaching office (*Lehramt*) is in principle true and adequate, the reason being that it is sufficiently united with Jesus Christ.[99] Not all ecclesiastical statements and propositions, nevertheless, have the same status and degree of obligation. Moreover, not all are infallible. The purpose of this section is to outline the different status of statements. The principal distinction suggested is the one between dogmatic teaching on the one hand and all other propositions on the other. Dogma could be defined as those beliefs that are identity-defining for the Christian, and more strictly those teachings that the Church has declared of such nature that whoever does not hold them is to be condemned (*anathema sit*). The teaching that is expressed as dogma may not be disputed, but critical theological reflection, even as regards dogma, with the view of seeking greater understanding is not only possible but also part of carrying the tradition forward. Karl Rahner wrote extensively on this.[100] For instance, reflecting on the Christology of the Council of Chalcedon he ascertains: "It follows from the nature of human knowledge of truth and from the nature of divine truth itself, that any individual

[98] In an interview in *The Guardian*, 19 April 2010, Pullman uttered: "I hope that the wretched Catholic church will vanish entirely."
[99] Karl Rahner, *Ekklesiologische Grundlegung* (1964), *SW* 19, p. 89.
[100] Karl Rahner, 'The Development of Dogma', *TI* I, pp. 39–77; 'Considerations on the Development of Dogma', *TI* IV, pp. 3–35; 'What is a Dogmatic Statement?', *TI* V, pp. 42–66.

truth, above all one of God's truths, is beginning and emergence, not conclusion and end."[101] A dogmatic statement, thus, is not the final word and does not suppress further thought. In an interview, Karl Rahner asserts that while dogmatic teaching should never be "distorted or denied", "it is also self-evident that through new theological effort, every dogma can always be thought through anew, made new, and considered in other connections, and so to that extent every dogma is open to the future."[102]

But there are other questions such as liturgical customs, pastoral care and politics, which have gone through changes, Karl Rahner points out. Hence, dogmatic statements need to be distinguished from such that are in fact negotiable. We must remember that the Society of Jesus was founded and approved in 1540 despite a prohibition against new religious orders, of the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215.[103] It can, moreover, be pointed out that ecclesiastical authority has changed its mind with regard to slavery, usury, war and peace, and married clergy.[104] Worth noticing is also that Karl Rahner reflected rather freely on women's ordination to the Priesthood.[105] Moreover, according to Richard Lennan: "In urging that the teaching authority make clear how binding on the believer was each of its teachings, Rahner was in fact appealing to the Magisterium to state publicly that not all of its decrees were as binding as an infallible statement."[106]

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[101] Karl Rahner, 'Current Problems in Christology', *TI* 1, p. 149. 'Probleme der Christologie von heute' (1954), *SW* 12, p. 261.
[102] Karl Rahner, I Remember: An Autobiographical Interview (1985), p. 67. '*Erinnerungen im Gespräch mit Meinold Krauss*'(1984), *SW* 25, p. 118.
[103] "Lest too great a variety of religious orders leads to grave confusion in God's church, we strictly forbid anyone henceforth to found a new religious order." Fourth Lateran Council, 1215, (Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, I), § 13 'On the prohibition against new religious orders', p. 242.
[104] Maureen Fiedler and Linda Rabben (eds), *Rome has Spoken: A Guide to Forgotten Papal Statements, and How They Have Changed Through the Centuries* (1998).
[105] Karl Rahner, 'Women and the Priesthood', *TI* XX, pp. 35–47. 'Priestertum der Frau?' (1976), *SW* 30, pp. 511–522.
[106] Lennan (1995), p. 200.

Theologians in the twentieth century have attempted to distinguish different categories in what is known as 'theological notes' (*notae theologiae*).[107] The highest degree is dogma or 'divine and Catholic faith'. Another category is 'Catholic doctrine', within which 'definitive doctrine' belongs.[108] Main ideas in papal letters, encyclicals, belong to this category. There is then, thirdly, 'probable' or 'common' statements. Related to the classification in theological notes is the idea of 'hierarchy of truths' in the decree on ecumenism *Unitatis redintegratio* from the Second Vatican Council.[109] Karl Rahner has given his interpretation of what is meant by 'hierarchy of truths', asserting that the distinction between the 'foundation of faith' and other propositions can be understood intuitively rather than by strict definition.[110] It may be concluded that a distinction can be made between the negotiable and the non-negotiable, with a high expectation of obedience with regard to the latter and a low one with regard to the former. Another kind of theological note emerges in the ecumenical context, namely what does and what does not count as issues that are preventing unity, in the sense of full communion. The criteria for distinguishing are not obvious, as Rowan Williams, Archbishop of the Anglican Communion has pointed out.[111]

[107] 'Theological Notes', *New Catholic Encyclopedia* (2003), pp. 453–455.
[108] Cardinal Josef Ratzinger and the Canon lawyer Ladislas Örsy were engaged in a debate about this in 1999 in the journal *Stimmen der Zeit*. This debate has been translated into English. Ladislas Örsy, *Receiving the Council: Theological and Canonical Insights and Debates* (2009), pp. 115–142.
[109] *Unitatis redintegratio*, n. 11 (Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*), p. 915.
[110] Karl Rahner, 'A Hierarchy of Truths', *TI* XXI, pp. 162–167. 'Hierarchie der Wahrheiten' (1982), *SW* 30, pp. 148–153.
[111] Rowan Williams, 'Archbishop's address at a Willebrands Symposium in Rome', 19 November 2009 (www.archbishopofcanterbury.org; speeches archive).

6.7 Disposition: A question of 'how' not only of 'what'

In the context of possible development and change, of finding new ways, there is never only a question of *what*? It is about *how*, how to communicate not only what to say. We find this in Ignatius's wisdom, in something that we may summarize as 'disposition'. The remaining, contemporary value of the 'Rules for Thinking with the Church' may be that they have as their prime value not so much specific teaching, but the general attitude, the disposition of respect and praise.[112] A disposition of being prepared to listen is at the heart of this.[113] Karl Rahner holds, quite rightly, that office-holders must listen in order to fulfil their leadership role. They must be aware of and consider public opinion because it is part of the situation in which they need to show care. Attention to public opinion is needed in order to become adequate leaders: "'Public opinion' is thus for the Church's official leadership one of the means by which this leadership—which also needs human means—can build up for itself a knowledge of the real situation and state of affairs, within which and with regard to which it has to lead and direct."[114]

In another work, 'Ignatius of Loyola Speaks to a Modern Jesuit', Karl Rahner puts himself in the role of Ignatius, what Ignatius would say to a modern Jesuit. One interesting statement is that criticism can also be ecclesial, insofar as the Holy Spirit is behind the critique. Following this logic the idea of 'church-critical' (*Kirchen-kritisch*) becomes absurd, since criticism does not necessarily imply that a) you stand outside and b) that you are attacking the entire community. In case the views are from the Holy Spirit, the Church as institution needs to be open:

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[112] The sense of disposition and attitude comes to the fore more clearly in the full translation of the Spanish text: "Rules to follow in view of the true attitude of mind [*sentido verdadero*] that we ought to maintain [as members] within the Church militant." *SpEx*, n. 352, *PW*, p. 356.
[113] Gill Goulding, *Creative Perseverance* (2003a); 'Truth and Silence: Learning from Abuse' (2003b), 44–55.
[114] My translation from: Karl Rahner, '*Das freie Wort*', (1951/1952), *SW* 10, p. 148. See also Lennan (1995), pp. 189–203.

> Seen from the Church's side too, this kind of critical relationship to the Church does not cease to be ecclesial. For the Church, even as an institution, remains ultimately open to God's Spirit, subject to the Spirit, on account of God's inclining action to the Church—this Spirit which is always more than institution, law, the letter of the tradition, and so on.[115]

Karl Rahner points out that solidarity and criticism are not mutually exclusive attitudes: "But fundamentally it remains the case here that the combination of unconditional loyalty to the institutional Church and a critical distance from her in one's spiritual make-up (*spirituellen Verfassung*) can genuinely happen in me [Ignatius] and my disciples, and can be justified in terms of what the Church really is."[116] Loyalty and criticism *can* go hand in hand.

This right, and even duty is, furthermore, foreseen in the Roman Catholic *Code of Canon Law*: "Christ's faithful are at liberty to make known their needs, especially their spiritual needs, and their wishes to the Pastors of the Church." (Can. 212 §2) Moreover, "They have the right, indeed at times the duty, in keeping with their knowledge, competence and position, to manifest to the sacred Pastors their views on matters which concern the good of the Church." (Can. 212 §3).[117] The German Jesuit Norbert Brieskorn has recently drawn attention to the canonical right to express criticism.[118] It may be added that Karl Rahner also envisaged civil law measures in order to resolve conflicts.[119]

In terms of adhering to Catholic teaching, Karl Rahner maintains in an interview that each Catholic is called to make an effort to live according to the teaching:

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[115] Karl Rahner, *Rede des Ignatius von Loyola an einen Jesuiten von heute* (1978), *SW* 25, p. 317. Translation by Endean in *Spiritual Writings*, ed. by Endean, p. 167. There is a similar line of thought in Karl Rahner, 'Opposition in the Church'; *TI* 17, pp. 129–131. 'Opposition in der Kirche' (1974), *SW* 24, pp. 687–696.
[116] My translation from: Karl Rahner, *Rede des Ignatius von Loyola an einen Jesuiten von heute* (1978), *SW* 25, p. 319.
[117] *The Code of Canon Law* (1996), Book II The People of God, II Christ's faithful, Canon 212 §2–3, p. 45.
[118] Norbert Brieskorn, 'Recht auf Kirchenkritik' (2009), pp. 433–434.
[119] Lennan (1995), p. 225.

"Every subjective conscience is obliged to do everything in its power to conform to objective norms, according to the objective facts of a moral situation. Consequently, a subjective conscience is clearly required in principle to conform to the Church's moral teaching. But there are obviously cases in which an individual conscience can imagine it could legitimately depart from the official norm in this or that particular case, cases that are theoretically not quite so predictable."[120] Situations may, thus, turn up in which the person is obliged not to follow ecclesiastical authority. "Cases may perfectly well arise in which a Catholic Christian has a right and, under certain circumstances, a moral duty, to depart from some official doctrine of this kind."[121] Karl Rahner is very clear on this: "Now according to Catholic doctrine there is in fact no authority in this world constituting an absolute norm for the individual without the personal decision of his own conscience."[122] We are here mainly discussing this from the point of view of one individual making his or her views known. Karl Rahner, nevertheless, also observed that individuals unite in groups, either in the form of formalized opposition or with a view of reform through positive goals.[123]

Let us now turn to attitudes and dispositions when dissent is uttered, or to put it more gently: *how* to express criticism and alternative views. Karl Rahner has seven points that I have collected from various places in his writings. They offer helpful guidelines for those who are in an unsettled relationship with ecclesiastical authority and wish to externalize this. Firstly, love for the Church is required. Karl Rahner sees its relation to the Church as a characteristic of Ignatian spirituality. He gave a talk in Innsbruck in 1955, in which he identified three key characteristics of Ignatian spirituality: indifference, existential

[120] Karl Rahner, I Remember, p. 70.
[121] Karl Rahner, 'The Dispute Concerning the Church's Teaching Office'; *TI* 14, p. 91. 'Disput um das kirchliche Lehramt' (1967), *SW* 22/2, p. 460.
[122] *ibid*., p. 95. *SW* 22/2, p. 463. See also: 'Der Appell an das Gewissen' (1949), *SW* 10, pp. 118–14.
[123] Karl Rahner, 'Opposition in the Church'; *TI* 17, pp. 135–138. 'Opposition in der Kirche' (1974), *SW* 24, pp. 687–696.

character (*existentialistisch*) and ecclesial aspect (*kirchlich*). Church is here understood in a concrete sense: "This Church is the *ecclesia militans*, the Papal Church, and thus the Church in its most unambiguous visibility (*eindeutigste Greifbarkeit*). No one will dispute that this is an essential characteristic of Ignatian spirituality."[124] The fundamental attitude is one of love: "Then from this comes the unconditionality of love for Christ's humanity, for his earthly life in all its conditionedness, for the Church, for the ecclesiastical hierarchy, for the Pope, for the Rules for Thinking with the Church."[125]

Respect and even affection for the office-holders is desired: "a genuine enthusiastic love for the Church and a genuine attachment and devotion also towards the concrete official representatives of this Church."[126] Secondly, adopt a humble attitude and do not take yourself too seriously!

> His [Ignatius's] Church-devotion (*Kirchlichkeit*) is the humility of the creature that does not make an idol of itself, nor of its own mysticism and immediate relationship with God; and is *therefore* ready to accept the finite reality, which God has willed as what represents, within the finitude of creation, Himself. It is the silent love of humility, of service, of lack of self-importance, from which this Church-devotion grows—a Church-devotion, which is thus at once existentialist indifference's fruit and antidote.[127]

Thirdly, criticism may be legitimate, but it must not be characterised as "giving carte blanche to an unrestrained desire for criticism and an unbridled wanting-to-know-everything-better" (*Freibrief für eine wilde Kritisiersucht und ein zügelloses Alles-besser-wissen-wollen ist*).[128] Fourthly, theological knowledge is a prerequisite:

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[124] Karl Rahner, 'Ignatian Spirituality and Devotion to the heart of Jesus' (1966), p. 186. 'Ignatianische Geist und Herz-Jesu-Verehrung' (1955), *SW* 13, pp. 451–466), here p. 455.
[125] My translation from: Karl Rahner, 'Herz-Jesu-Verehrung' (1966), *SW* 13, pp. 455–456.
[126] My translation from: Karl Rahner, 'Das freie Wort' (1951/1952), *SW* 10, p. 154.
[127] My translation from: Karl Rahner, 'Herz-Jesu-Verehrung' (1966), *SW* 13, p. 456.
[128] My translation from: Karl Rahner, 'Das freie Wort' (1951/1952), *SW* 10, p. 154.

> Anyone who believes they can allow themselves to hold their own private opinion and that they already possess the better insight which the Church will have at some future time, must ask themselves, with a sober self-critical assessment before God and their conscience, whether they have the necessary breadth and depth of specialist theological knowledge (*theologische Fachkenntnis*) which is required to allow their private theory and practice to deviate from the present official teaching of the Church. Such a case is in principle conceivable.[129]

Fifthly, one is obliged to make a strong case for the statements from ecclesiastical authority: "Serious effort to positively appreciate even a preliminary teaching statement of the Church and assimilate it, belongs to a correct faith-disposition of a Catholic."[130] It is important to be aware of the reasons the other position has.

> Critique of a theological kind must, of course, be derived from the expertise in the subject (*fachliches Wissen*) which one simply must have if one wants to contribute to the discussion of theological issues. Any genuine critique must be aware of the grounds that are considered valid by those who maintain the theological opinion that is being criticized. Otherwise one fails to engage with one's opponent. A genuine critique must not tacitly assume that the person or the issue must be deserving of censure just because one has no sympathy with it oneself. A genuine critique of the Church must always take into account that through it the critic will him- or herself be criticized.[131]

Sixthly, a cheerful attitude and goodwill is helpful. "That is why such a critique should only be uttered orally or written when the critic is in a good mood; when he or she is able to laugh and is after all attached to the criticised men of the Church in loving benevolence; when he or she knows that even though they are not genius nor Saints, but at a closer look they turn out just as lovable, well-disposed and sensible as one believes oneself to be."[132] Seventhly and finally, one should not express criticism in such a way that it sounds as if the person is standing outside the church community.[133]

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[129] My translation from: Karl Rahner, 'Disput um das Kirchliche Lehramt', (1967), *SW* 22/2, p. 456.
[130] *ibid*., p. 456.
[131] My translation from: Karl Rahner, 'Kritik der Kritik an der Kirche' (1982), *SW* 28, p. 175.
[132] *ibid*., p. 176.
[133] *ibid*., pp. 176–178.

In conclusion, once it has been established that different ecclesiastical statements have different degrees of obligation it is easier to outline the scope for possible development and change. That the faithful Christian has a right and even a duty to proclaim his or her views is evident. If we follow Karl Rahner's advice there are, nevertheless, a series of attitudes that it seems wise to adopt when conveying one's views. But, is not the list of seven dispositions presented above a tall order? Why demand so much? The weight of a long tradition in relation to the current standpoint is one reason. The size and diversity of the global community is another. The effect is a slow organization. Christians must engage with other people and other views. Generally, the question of disposition is relevant because (most of) the three cases in Chapter 7 have an unsettled relationship to the Roman Catholic Church. In one sense the question of disposition is not relevant for the spiritual director. That is, it is not really the task of the spiritual director to criticize church teaching. It may not be the primary ambition or project of for the retreatant either. But it is relevant in so far as spiritual discernment is required when expressing alternative views. More important, if discernment goes towards something in the external forum then communication needs to be subtle.

6.8 Conclusions

As indicated in the introduction in Chapter 1, the major contribution to Ignatian studies that this dissertation (particularly my ecclesiological position in Chapters 5 and 6) seeks to make is to combine systematic reflections from various scholars and to apply these resources to the practice of giving Ignatian Exercises. This points up the individualist and a-historical presuppositions of much of the writing in this area, and attempts to resituate the problems in a better philosophical framework. We need now to step back for a moment and acquire an overview of how the different strands of systematic thought are connected. It is from a remote standpoint that a pattern emerges, when the particular ideas are seen together. My ecclesiological position claims to be original as regards some particular lines of thought (such as the frontiers being the norm not the exception; that spiritual discernment is fundamentally a shared enterprise). But it is more the synthesis that counts here, even if each aspect of the spectrum is also valuable on its own. The synthesis, the overarching framework comes to the fore when ideas are combined. The main thrust in the ecclesiological position centres on the Church as sacrament. This Church develops and has not reached perfection and lets a plurality of voices co-exist (this draws chiefly on Karl Rahner's theology). My contribution lies in the attempt to provide a solid historical, philosophical and hermeneutical foundation for the kind of sacramental ecclesiology that Karl Rahner began to build up, and in applying this to the practice of giving Ignatian Exercises.

We may conclude that there is, for the challenges at ecclesial frontiers, already much to learn from Karl Rahner's theological reflections that I have drawn on in the form of a constructive interpretation. By way of summary, this interpretation has centred round Karl Rahner's idea of the Church as God's ongoing presence in *space* and *time* and has

combined fragments in his ecclesial writings (I have made consistent use of the terms *space* and *time*, that Rahner himself employs as we saw in section 6.5 above, but he does not use them repeatedly in his own writings).

The spatial and temporal dimensions stimulate an understanding of the Church as a tangible and visible reality. With those metaphors I mean real people, structures, organization, and customs. In that regard I underline the visibility of the Catholic Church more than Karl Rahner does. It is also concrete in the sense that it is not an ideal and impeccable construction but a broken Church that is in need of healing and is healed through the wound of Christ. The Church in the sense of sacrament generates hope, as it is a sign of Christ, an expression of the Kingdom of God. The strength of this view is that the Church is conceived of as holy, yet not necessarily perfect and spotless. The theology of the Church being a (not *the*) sign of Christ also permits the idea that there is grace and holiness outside the boundaries of the visible Church. Particularly the eschatological view gives hope for the future, in that it carries a promise for the whole of creation (including the visible Church). The pilgrim Church is on its way and it takes time to reach fullness. It seems, therefore, to offer an ecumenical platform without having to deny Roman Catholicism. The theological reflection informed by Karl Rahner also helps us to address divergence and tensions during the journey to the Kingdom of God. We have looked specifically at grounds or reasons for development and change and the spiritual director is therefore better equipped to handle potentially difficult cases. To sum up, there has been an attempt behind my ecclesiological position to offer a rich and nuanced account for relating to ecclesiastical teaching.

It is now time to conclude by explaining and illustrating with some examples in what way my ecclesiological position informed by Karl Rahner's theology can be supported and strengthened by the other reflections made and accounts presented in this dissertation. In order to be able to apply my interpretation of Karl Rahner's thinking to the practice of giving Ignatian Exercises properly, we need a more solid historical, philosophical and hermeneutical foundation. A historical foundation was developed with the return to the primary sources and to the strongest and most convincing elements in the writings of the twentieth-century and recent scholars presented in Chapters 3 and 4. This move makes Karl Rahner's Ignatian ecclesiology historically rooted in Ignatius's sixteenth-century ecclesiology. For instance, the observations in section 6.6, on grounds for development and change, are strengthened once we read it in the light of the reflections in the dramatic approach (Chapter 4) that is in closer contact with historical data. There is a basis for saying that Rahner's views on development and change are parallel to and in keeping with the actions of Ignatius and other early Jesuits. Another example is that the criteria for a healthy disposition in search for development and change outlined in section 6.7 find their historical Ignatian roots when compared with the main thrust of the "Rules to follow in view of the true attitude of mind that we ought to maintain within the Church militant." The comparison is not dependent on a literal interpretation of each of these rules; instead it considers the overall attitude. Furthermore, it may be recalled that for the early Jesuits the link with the institutional Church was important precisely for an ambition of generating transformation (see Philip Endean's views, which I share, in section 4.5.1).

In my view, Karl Rahner's notion of the Church in space and time needs a more distinct model of a way of relating to the past. By that I mean that it needs to be supplemented with an elaborate way of relating to the traditions that have been handed

down, a framework for reception of doctrine and norms (I, thus, coincide with Karen Kilby who highlighted the importance of socialization into Christianity). My interpretation of some aspects in Gadamer's hermeneutics does that job. With his help I have spoken of the horizon of the individual who makes Ignatian Exercises. This horizon is preconditioned by foreknowledge, anticipations, and prejudices and so on, which all need to interact with the horizon of Ignatian Exercises of which the Roman Catholic Church plays a vital part. A distinction needs to be made here. Karl Rahner has indeed hermeneutical thinking. He does hold that that the Church should be understood as something in development. Moreover, his eschatological view of reality interprets matter as something in space and time and that it will reach perfection.[134] So, there is no general absence of hermeneutical awareness. Yet in the field of interpreting texts of the past and their interaction with the individual praying as well as common discernment, Karl Rahner needs to be supplemented.

Both the individual who makes Ignatian Exercises and the spiritual director, thus, need to be open to various traditions. Since Ignatian Exercises have their origin in the Roman Catholic Church, this tradition will be privileged but not considered to be absolute or exclusive. The Church of Christ, which is a pilgrim Church, requires openness to diversity. It seems to me that the kind of hermeneutical reflection that Gadamer offers, offers a framework that helps us to see that an encounter between horizons is inevitable. There has to be a meeting of some sort, I have called it 'relocation', if a fusion may seem unrealistic. The synthesis I then make between the theories of these scholars is that Gadamer tells us *what* has been handed down and *how* it is understood depending on the conditions of the interpreter, whereas Karl Rahner (also addresses *what* has been passed on

[134] See for instance: Philip Geister, *Aufhebung zur Eigentlichkeit* (1996), pp. 36–38; 59–85.

but) chiefly tells us *why* and also *how* it might be developed and changed.[135] A deepening of Christian faith and a possible desire to develop it presupposes knowledge of *what* it is that needs to be transformed. They also supplement one another in that (my interpretation of) Gadamer provides a vocabulary for speaking about the context, while Karl Rahner contributes with groundbreaking theological perspectives with which the context itself becomes a moving and dynamic reality.

Section 6.1 on the hermeneutical reflection with the help of Hans-Georg Gadamer criticizes both the attitude of denial of Roman Catholicism and blind obedience simultaneously. The avoidance and even denial of Roman Catholicism in contemporary Ignatian literature has lost touch with the historical context, and the context is essential since texts are not isolated entities. On the other hand, since tradition is not entirely fixed, blind obedience can be refuted. Drawing on Gadamer, I spoke of the 'movement of tradition', which implies a dynamic process which permits or even encourages critical thinking and creativity. The search for the will of God with Gadamer's hermeneutics in mind may in fact enable the individual and the spiritual director to see the will of God more clearly, because certain possibilities are not excluded from the outset. Similarly, the relational anthropology expanded with the help of Charles Taylor in Chapter 5 challenges contemporary popular literature that avoids and denies corporate aspects of Roman Catholicism and emphasises the internal sphere. The conviction that spiritual discernment takes place in the *space between* pilgrims likewise rejects the view that only external authority counts (blind obedience). To sum up, a relational anthropology resists the choice between either focussing on the individual or on ecclesiastical authority.

[135] Karl Rahner has of course paid attention to *what* has been handed down. His first dissertation *Geist in Welt* looked at the epistemology of Thomas Aquinas. As we saw in section 6.2.1 above, Rahner's second dissertation *E latere Christi* studied patristic sources. He also wrote numerous articles on Church fathers and mystics (*SW* 3).

How, then, does the relational anthropology informed by Charles Taylor fortify Karl Rahner's ecclesiology? It underscores that disharmony in terms of practice or opinion does not imply a separation in principle. For instance, the non-practising Catholic is a good enough and satisfactory part of the Church before any possible deepening through praying Ignatian Exercises and before commitment in the sense of indeed desirable public witnessing (section 6.5). Divergence and difference of opinion does not affect the fact that people are indeed related. The fact that human beings, particularly baptized Christians, are related in a deep and fundamental sense is reassuring for the conviction that holiness can be found on both sides of the ecclesial frontiers – be they frontiers within Roman Catholicism or beyond. Charles Taylor's relational anthropology nevertheless strengthens the case for understanding the Church as a visible and concrete reality and the need to express this commitment publicly. In my view, leaning on Medard Kehl's critique of Karl Rahner, this is a weak point in Rahnerian ecclesiology. With a more social understanding of the human person, the institutional Church becomes simultaneously more essential and more appropriate to challenge. The closer the relationship, the greater is the legitimacy to challenge.

The synthesis I make here may still seem complex somehow or too sophisticated. But we need a language to articulate the context, and one single straightforward norm, such as 'adapt to the individual' or 'assimilate and do whatever the Church tells you to' will not suffice for the spiritual director at ecclesial frontiers. The ecclesial position that I have developed here in Chapter 6 and in the previous Chapter 5 ought to have made it clear that the extreme positions depicted above in section 1.2 (avoidance and denial of Catholicism in contemporary popular literature) and in 1.3 (blind obedience of the late nineteenth and early twentieth-century Jesuits) must be ruled out as

untenable. This middle position is paradoxical as it is highly relational while at the same time allows for each individual to contribute with something radically different; and paradoxical because it takes Catholic tradition seriously, and at the same time critically, and is therefore open to development. The impression of paradox is intensified if categories such as conservative and liberal are used and imposed on these reflections, but this dissertation attempts precisely to evade either of those folds.

7. Towards a Directory for Ecclesial Frontiers

We will now support the spiritual director and parish priest portrayed in Chapter 1 of this dissertation by providing guidelines and recommendations when faced with pastoral challenges at ecclesial frontiers. An 'ecclesial frontier' is, as stated in the introduction, defined as a situation which does not fit easily with the doctrinal teaching and community life of the Roman Catholic Church. These guidelines will be based predominantly on my own ecclesiological position developed in Chapters 5 and 6, summarized in the notion of a pilgrim Church that gathers Christians who are related to one another in the overarching categories of *space* and *time*. Thanks to the systematic reflections in Chapters 5 and 6 we have now reached a stage in which we may face some of the pastoral cases not only with historical awareness, but also philosophically and theologically equipped for our contemporary reality. Sacramental ecclesiology characterized by a focus on relationships and process will be applied to the pastoral cases.

It needs to be underlined that this chapter has a limited and modest ambition in aiming merely to provide material towards a directory. Accordingly, reflection on three cases of ecclesial frontiers will offer some ground rules for action. This set of guidelines will be modelled on that genre of text that in the Ignatian tradition is known as a 'directory'. A directory in the Ignatian sense of the word is a set of practical norms and recommendations, for instance for the concrete way of giving Ignatian Exercises.[1] Directory-texts have been typical for Jesuits ever since the beginning; Ignatius himself used the term.[2] Moreover, the question of directories for various ministries came up already at

[1] Miguel Lop, 'Directorio', in *Dicc. EI*, pp. 603–607.
[2] Luis Gonçalves da Câmara, *Memoriale*, ed. by Alexander Eaglestone and Joseph Munitiz, *Remembering Iñigo* (2004), n. 313, p. 183.

the first General Congregation of the Society of Jesus in 1558.[3] Directories for the *Spiritual Exercises* were then composed during the second half of the sixteenth century, some of which have been quoted throughout this dissertation (in the English translation made by Martin E. Palmer). But those sixteenth-century directories need to be updated and freshly re-written for new contemporary situations not envisaged in the canonical Ignatian texts, and our intention is to suggest a set of rules of thumb for dealing with those situations. The genre of directory is advantageous in that its chiefly practical and pastoral style is underpinned with what could be called 'theory' (in our case Chapters 5–6 with some support from Chapters 3–4). It offers a concrete way of delineating in which direction to go, by giving a theoretical orientation for the practice. A directory can outline *how* the (Roman Catholic and ecumenical) context of Ignatian Exercises might be explored.

This directory which has the purpose to aid the director in that task will be structured, approximately and loosely, in each section of this chapter as follows: A fictitious case-scenario with several different examples in each type of case; statements of guidelines; reasons or grounds for these suggested guidelines taken from Chapters 5–6 (and occasionally from Chapters 2–4). Finally, some comments on the implications and possible difference for each case when a non-Catholic Christian spiritual director guides a Catholic (as well as non-Catholics in section 7.4).

[3] *For Matters of Greater Moment: The First Thirty Jesuit General Congregations*, ed. by Padberg, O'Keefe, McCarthy (1994), First General Congregation in 1558, Decree 107, p. 97.

7.1 In support of personal growth (*magis*)

Some clarifications are in order before we begin. The first clarification regards demands or expectations on the individual. We may couch the concept of personal growth in the Ignatian term *magis*, which is the Latin word for 'more' and 'greater'.[4] There is a comparative language here of choosing ways that *more* lead to the goal of human existence, of *greater* love for Jesus Christ and to follow and imitate him more. The *greater* glory of God is sought. This does not stand in opposition to norms and values, but the logic of *magis* is another than following rules.[5] Instead, *magis* fits with a sacramental theology that evolves in a relational and historical process. The notion of *magis* may be liberating, as it does not strive for an elevated ideal of *maxime* (to the highest degree). The chief function of spiritual direction proper is to support personal growth and to deepen the relationship with the triune God. Instead of discussing Christian discipleship in terms of all or nothing, spiritual life is a matter of 'good enough' with the possibility of process and growth. The centurion Cornelius and his family, is a representative case (Acts 10:1–48). Luke recognized that he was "an upright and God-fearing man" (Acts 10:22). The woman in Bethany who anoints Jesus's body is another suitable example. Jesus says to the chief priests and the scribes (who assume that they represent *maxime* as opposed to 'nothing') that: "She has done what she could; she has anointed my body beforehand for burying" (Mark 14:8). In a way the idea of personal growth of an individual corresponds to the need for the whole Church to develop and change (section 6.6 above). Both the individual and the Church as such are in a spiritual process, a work-in-progress. It may be added that Jesus himself "increased in wisdom and in stature, and in favour with God and man" (Luke 2:52).

[4] *SpEx*, nn. 23, 104, 152, 167, 189, 240 and 339.
[5] Luis de Diego and Nurya Martínez-Gayol, 'Magis (más)', in *Dicc. EI*, pp. 1155–1168.

The second clarification regards the role or job description of the spiritual director of an Ignatian retreat. Over the last couple of years there has been a discussion about the nature of the spiritual direction, particularly in terms of how active the accompaniment should be. Depending on the level of engagement the different approaches are labelled 'spiritual direction', 'guidance', 'accompaniment' and 'soul-friendship'. There is a tendency today to opt for wholesale adaptation to the individual and resort to a passive role on behalf of the spiritual director.[6] I am of the view that the spiritual director should adapt to the particular situation of the individual and his or her needs. But one of the spiritual director's functions is also to communicate his or her own interpretation of Ignatian spirituality and of Catholic teaching generally, as both deserve serious but also critical consideration. This sometimes explicitly requested interpretation is conveyed on occasion and remains in the background. The style here is important. The spiritual director mentions topics peculiar to Catholicism and invites the individual to consider them in prayer. Discussion and persuasion do not, by contrast, fit in. The primary function is to provide a relational context in which the individual can grow more (Latin: *magis*), which theological reflection is meant to support.

Conveying Catholic teaching does not interfere with one of the annotations in the book *Spiritual Exercises* which states that the spiritual director should "remain in the middle like the pointer of a balance".[7] It is about conveying the values, not enforcing them. It is crucial that the atmosphere is one in which the person feels free to utter exactly what is moving him or her. As another qualifying remark it can be added that the tradition and teaching of the Roman Catholic Church is somehow *between* the spiritual director and the individual. Both relate to it, regardless of whether the attitude is affirmative or sceptical.

[6] José Domingo Cuesta, 'Acompañamiento', in *Dicc. EI*, pp. 79–84.
[7] *SpEx*, n. 15, *PW*, p. 286.

The spiritual director has indeed a particular role in being a representative and church office-holder. Yet, in principle the spiritual director also relates to the tradition and the teaching. This becomes particularly obvious when a non-Catholic spiritual director guides a Catholic, which we will see in due course. In other words we do not always need to keep a binary pole of the spiritual director on one side and the individual who makes a retreat on the other. Both, rather, relate to tradition.

The third clarification and distinction regards knowledge. In terms of knowledge of God and of learning from another Christian denomination, we may distinguish between knowledge by experience, and knowledge by acquaintance and knowledge by theory (I am here adopting Bertrand Russell's epistemological distinctions). These three forms of knowledge are emphasised differently depending on what stage the individual is in: before, during or after an Ignatian retreat. During the retreat knowledge of God by experience dominates. In prayer and in the conversations with the spiritual director a lot centres on the very unique personal encounter with God, which the individual becomes increasingly aware of. Conversation in spiritual direction provides a relational atmosphere, which facilitates the personal encounter with Jesus Christ and enables personal growth.

These spiritual conversations do not take place in splendid isolation but presuppose a context; they belong in a bigger picture. Spiritual direction proper (the standard today is roughly 45 minutes in each daily session) is one arena of communication alongside others and some things are dealt with elsewhere. Through the ecclesial representation of the spiritual director there is some knowledge by acquaintance of another church community (in the ecumenical setting). Knowledge by theory appears in spiritual direction but is mostly low key. Norms and customs, philosophy and theology are left in the

background. By contrast, outside spiritual direction proper and beyond the retreat there are opportunities to study and to meet with other Christians in a Christian community, also with Christians of various denominations.

People, who wish to do a retreat, particularly a longer one of more than three days, for instance 6-day retreats or retreat in daily life over a period of several months, ideally participate in a preparatory introduction course of some sort. Such a course could, for instance, be both theoretical and practical, and cover some history and theology as well as practising the art of meditation. The duration could be over a few days or a series of evening sessions. Introductory courses do not start from scratch but supplement the knowledge of Christianity that the individual brings. Teaching in a group collectively, with standard contents, has the advantage of conveying a sense of sharing things together, but it of course neglects the different levels people might be at. Each and everyone do not need the same kind of information. An introductory course does not have the purpose or ambition to out rightly replace the Christian teaching that the individual has received so far. The course does not start from scratch. It is rather a question of supplementing and highlighting notions and customs that are peculiar to Ignatian spirituality and Roman Catholic teaching. The spiritual director in turn, whether Catholic or not, needs to have some knowledge of the other Christian denomination that the individual belongs to. Moreover, there are not only differences between Anglicans, Baptists, Pentecostals, Lutherans and Orthodox Christians, but their respective relationship with Catholicism may vary.

The general, ‘theoretical’ information in introductory courses should be brief and concise and serve the personal encounter with God in spiritual exercises. The norm of

brevity in introductory courses is modelled on Ignatius's statements in some of the annotations in the *Spiritual Exercises*. It is presupposed *that* the spiritual director explains the material for contemplation and meditation (*SpEx* 2) and ecclesiastical teaching (*SpEx* 18), but the extent of the instructions remains limited. The brevity is a sign that the norms are a basis, an infrastructure, and that the actual focal point is the personal encounter, of growth and increased intensity in discipleship. Recommendations of adequate Ignatian literature belong to such introductory courses. It is not the task of this directory to present a suitable bibliography, but it has to be pointed out that contemporary popular literature, in my view, is often seriously misleading (section 1.2 above) and prudent choices have to be made. There are obviously also opportunities to study and acquire knowledge by theory after the spiritual retreat.

There are several reasons for having such introductory courses. One is that it takes time to get familiar with and understand the Catholic tradition and the Catholic context of Ignatian Exercises. This would be in line with the argument presented with the help of Hans-Georg Gadamer of becoming more familiar with the 'movement of tradition' (section 6.1.3 above) and Jerónimo Nadal's insistence on teaching and instruction (section 2.5 above). Moreover, when giving spiritual exercises in Alcalá de Henares in 1526–1527, Ignatius did give instructions (in the sense of catechism) in connection with spiritual direction proper, probably in short spells. He explained the articles of faith, mortal sins, the five senses and the three powers of the soul and aspects of the gospels.[8] Another reason is that comprehensive catechism and other forms of thorough instruction do not belong in spiritual direction proper. It is not the right sort of setting for teaching and intellectual discourse. Yet some instruction and guidance during the retreat itself is often helpful. It

[8] *MI FD*, 'Mon. 71 Processus Complutenses (1526–1527)', p. 332.

seems, therefore, appropriate that the spiritual director discerns what he or she wishes to convey during the actual sessions during the retreat. In this pastoral setting the time and atmosphere for historical and theological instruction is restricted. But some instruction is needed. After the retreat, then, the individual may take initiatives and measures with or without sustained contact with the spiritual director.

7.2 The non-practising Catholic

As a young boy Michael got a good grounding in Catholic norms and life and he associates positive things with the Catholic Church. Various circumstances led him, however, to keep organized religion at a distance for several years. He has only recently begun to take his spiritual development seriously. He now does some Bible sharing with Christian friends, prays regularly, but seldom goes to Mass. The fact that he is divorced and remarried contributes to his reluctance to become more active in a parish. Another example is Charles who has a bad perception of Catholicism. Going to a Catholic school has marked him with a negative experience of the Catholic Church. He is reluctant to participate in institutional expressions of faith. Jane, a woman in her fifties, was baptized Catholic as a child but was not brought up with Catholic values and customs, and she has not had much contact with religion during her adult life either. Her background is characterized by a neutral or positive attitude to religion. It has not been particularly important for her, although she has never had any aversion to it. She has only recently returned to the Church and become a practising Catholic. Since a year ago she has gone regularly to Sunday Mass. Finally, Stephen instantiates what is probably an exceptional case as he declares: "Christ and Ignatius 'yes', Church 'no'!"

How does one guide these non-practising Catholics who have a desire for 'spirituality', but are alienated from the Church (Michael and Jane having only recently taken up their practice)? The main direction of the following guidelines will head towards the theme of reconciliation. By this I mean that the individual and the Church community need to be brought together somehow which does not exclude that the Church community needs to listen carefully to the individual (compare section 4.6 above on Jon Sobrino and the prophetic voices of the poor). Reconciliation may take different manifestations, either in

the sacramental sense or in another, as will be explained. An essential ground rule for the spiritual director in the Ignatian setting is first of all to acknowledge that the ecclesiastically alienated person has in fact come for support in spiritual direction from someone who represents the Roman Catholic Church.

It is worth asking Michael, Charles, Jane and Stephen what they are seeking and what has prompted them to knock on the door. Some motives behind their interest in Ignatian spirituality and their expectations of it may emerge from such a conversation. An active spiritual director will affirm the motives but also, if need be, clarify possible misconceptions. As I argued with the help of Hans-Georg Gadamer in section 6.1.1 above, foreknowledge and expectations shape the understanding of a text (in our case the practice of praying Ignatian Exercises) and awareness of one's prejudgments is vital. The interpretations of what is meant by 'Ignatian spirituality' may consequently vary considerably and communication may help to clarify matters. Differences may surface and the spiritual director and the individual will hopefully reach mutual understanding of what is meant by 'Ignatian spirituality'. Should differences remain, the conversation is ideally held with a benevolent attitude in the spirit of *SpEx* 22 (quoted in section 2.4 above). The conversation may also touch upon the bigger picture of the 'whole', that is to say the context of the spiritual journey which is not only a matter of the individual's total life situation (section 6.1.2 above) but also the full process of Ignatian Exercises, the Catholic tradition and the network of dogmatic statements (section 6.1.3 above). Do the desire and motives the individual brings square with this bigger picture and with the basic Catholic commitments following from it?

The way in which the spiritual director acts in and reacts to the situation depends on whether the individual has little (Jane), negative (Charles) or positive (Michael) experience of the Catholic Church. It is, of course, also possible that the individual has not had much personal experience at all of real ecclesial community and mostly remains on the level of impressions (Stephen). Regardless of the individual's background, the spiritual director needs to be gentle and explore why the individual is distant from the Church. The Ignatian spiritual director should be interested not only in the fact of the matter, but also in the reasons for the alienation. When the moment in the process seems appropriate, the director may invite the individual to look back on his or her personal biography, to explore the history behind the current non-practising way of being Catholic. This project of remembering may be accomplished in the form of an Ignatian meditation over suitable Scripture passages. With this move I indicate that the individual's current disposition as regards church can be confirmed, formed, altered or in some other way helped by doing spiritual exercises.

The Ignatian spiritual director cannot know beforehand whether it is God's will for the person to remain non-practising or to become more active (even if public expression of Christian faith seems desirable, compare section 6.5 above). Either way, it seems appropriate to return to the beginning, to the individual's own baptism (not necessarily in order to remember the event itself, but to reconnect with it). The Gospel of Luke is particularly fitting as it offers a possibility of viewing one's own baptism in conjunction with Jesus's baptism (Luke 3:21–22). Luke also conveys a collective dimension as the narrative states: "*all the people* were baptized" (Luke 3:21, my italics). The gathering of 'all the people' stimulates an association with an ecclesial community. The individual is asked to be attentive to that which surfaces in such an Ignatian meditation. How did my life with

Christ in the Church begin? What happened afterwards; how did my spiritual life develop? In what way has the baptism shaped my life? What created a distance between the Church community and myself? An answer to those questions will be helped by not judging the current habit as disordered or sinful or driven by selfish motives.

With a framework of a pilgrim Church that gathers people on its way to the Kingdom of God, there is also another perspective, that of looking to the future, the journey ahead. How does the individual plan to relate to the pilgrim Church, concretely to a parish maybe? The principal question is what they think that Jesus Christ calls them to live and do in the future. It is a question of if and how to join the life of the Church in a more active manner. The idea of a whole parish might for Charles and Stephen be daunting or for some reason unattractive. Do they still have contact with their sponsor from baptism and confirmation? Would it be possible to join a smaller group within a parish? It may be recalled that Ignatius, Pierre Favre and Francis Xavier formed a group as they were studying in the University of Paris. Scripture passages that are suitable for meditation on this topic are, for example: Jesus's calling of the twelve disciples (Luke 6:12–19) among a great multitude of people (Luke 6:17), and Jesus and the wider circle of disciples, for instance the one consisting of Mary, Joanna and Susanna (Luke 8:1–3).

A neutral or positive attitude on behalf of the spiritual director towards the individual's non-practising background would focus on the steps ahead in terms of the circumstances and the individual's readiness to become more active in an organized sense. The basic position is to welcome active commitment. Yet, one could imagine a vocation in a highly secularized environment far away from institutionalized religion, in the visible sense, that makes the organized form less pressing. An ecclesiology that assumes that

goodness and holiness may also be found outside the institutional boundaries of the Catholic Church, gives theological freedom for allowing and even justifying non-practice at least during a period. In the examples with Charles and Stephen, however, there might be sustained resistance. The real difficulty begins when the individual shows sustained reluctance and resistance from a consistently negative position, even if this is probably uncommon. Then little reconciliation seems feasible. The spiritual director may then explore gently why there is still resistance and how it might be overcome.

The issue about practising one's faith in the public setting is, of course, not the only question to meditate on in Ignatian Exercises. At the same time it is not secondary. As I argued with the help of Karl Rahner in section 6.5 above, the sacrament of the Eucharist is essential to Christian life amongst other things because it is a public manifestation. The Church as a sign of Christ is expressed as the congregation gathers for Eucharist. It seems reasonable to state that the parish life of the faithful, gathering for Mass on Sundays, belongs to Ignatian ecclesiology. If that is true, it may then be appropriate for the spiritual director to ground this position in the relational anthropology outlined in Chapter 5. To gather for Eucharist is a way of expressing this fundamental relatedness. There are also primary Ignatian sources that highlight the relevance of the Eucharist. As we saw in the beginning of section 2.2 above, Ignatius states rather dryly that the 'precepts of the Church' can be 'explained' (*SpEx* 18, Spanish: *declarar*). Some of these precepts are until this day included in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (CCC). In one section, the *Catechism* updates and interprets the Ten Commandments (CCC 2052–2557), an example of which is the obligation to attend Mass on Sundays and feast days (CCC 2177–2183). The central idea is that the parish "gathers them [the Christian people] together in this celebration; it teaches Christ's saving doctrine; it practices the charity of the Lord in good works and

brotherly love." (CCC 2179) Suitable Scripture passages are, for example, the Last Supper in Luke 22:7–23 and the early church in Acts 2:41–47.

The process of a possible gradual return to parish life could be understood in terms of reconciliation in the wider sense of the word. The point I want to make here is that the individual's alienation from the Church community need not have been caused by any sinful action or disordered habits. Reconciliation is therefore not understood strictly in the sense of a confession followed by absolution of sins committed, but in a comparable sense. It is not necessarily a matter of a moral fault. Various circumstances may have led to the current non-practice of Jane, Charles, and Stephen. The individual may, nonetheless, be of the view that there has been clear and volitional omission of basic Catholic commitments. If that is so, the spiritual director may suggest the possibility of preparing for the Sacrament of Confession. This could also be associated with a General Confession, which is foreseen in the First Week of the *Spiritual Exercises*. In the future the individual may observe another precept of the Church, namely that the Catholic Christian is expected to go to the Sacrament of Confession at least once a year in the case of grave sins (CCC 1457). One of the theological aspects of Confession is that it generates reconciliation not only with God, but also with the Church (CCC 980, 1484).

While being in the process of returning to practising the faith, the individual may indeed carry valuable ideas of how things might be done differently. The focus of attention for the spiritual director should therefore here be on the positive concerns, that has led the person to see ecclesial Catholicism as somehow negative. Among such positive concerns underneath the possible discontent, visible on the surface, issues such as gender equality, option for the poor, sexual morality and coping with the signs of the modern times

are imaginable. A conversation about those positive concerns could lead to a reflection on change, reform and development. This sort of attitude is certainly in the spirit of Ignatius and the early Jesuits who took initiative concerning a significant development of the Church (see Chapter 4 and the dramatic approach). Reconciliation may therefore entail a prospect of attempts to transform the Catholic Church. Such a vision is in line with Karl Rahner's idea of the charismatic in the Church (see section 6.6).

This approach is not unrealistic, provided that immediate effects are not demanded. Development and change do occur in the Catholic Church, but the process is often slow because the large and universal community needs to digest and accommodate new initiatives. Parallel to the slow pace of the Catholic Church is that the previously unchurched individual should not take hasty decisions. Decisions in the sense of Ignatian 'election' need careful preparation. There is therefore reason to maintain Ignatius's norm that there is a threshold between the First and the Second Week of Ignatian Exercises as some sort of (albeit no longer rigid) landmark.[9] Steps towards new and creative ways of designing the First Week in our contemporary setting may find inspiration in a historical and close reading of the text in the *Spiritual Exercises* and of relevant directories on the subject.[10]

What would it mean if the spiritual director belonged to another tradition? Would it make any difference? The ground rules for a non-Catholic spiritual director may indeed be similar or even the same as regards his or her response to the individual, the overall plan of the retreat and the exercises given. For this to work and for them to understand one another, the non-Catholic spiritual director needs knowledge of Roman

[9] *MI Const*. II, p. 449. *Const.*, n. 409, p. 170.
[10] Johannes Maria Steinke, 'The Single Day of the First Week Exercises' (2010 [2009]), 23–44.

Catholicism, in terms of teaching, life and people. The cooperation also benefits from the non-Catholic spiritual director being sufficiently flexible and having distance to his or her own Christian tradition, that is to say an acceptance that one's own version of Christianity is not the undisputable norm. (Relying on a sacramental ecclesiology the Catholic can be similarly flexible.) A spirit of openness is required. One difference for the spiritual direction setting is that, with a non-Catholic spiritual director, it becomes evidently clearer that Catholic tradition and ecclesiastical teaching stands between the individual and the director. In the case of an Ignatian spiritual director who belongs to another Christian tradition he or she also embodies an ecclesiastical representation and, in my view presented in this thesis, transmits some level of affirmation of Roman Catholicism. Yet, the non-Catholic spiritual director is not identified with Catholicism in the same way a Roman Catholic director is. This circumstance might actually make it easier for the Catholic to be honest and outspoken. That trust may, by all means, also be there with a Catholic spiritual director.

7.3 The devout Catholic at variance with Church teaching

In the previous section we touched on possible lack of concord between the views of the individual and the teaching of the Roman Catholic Church, but we did not expand much on that subject. We now turn to a devout practising Catholic who considers making an election. The Second Week leads to the 'election', which in my view presupposes an active participation in Catholic life. The turn from the First to the Second Week of Ignatian Exercises was seen as a milestone. An election has its challenges already when everything is "on the side of our holy mother, the hierarchical Church, and are not bad or opposed to the Church."[11] It involves a balanced, mature, well-discerned decision and often a courageous step. The situation becomes more complex when an alternative is at variance with the teaching of "our holy mother, the hierarchical Church".

Magdalene grew up in a pious family and was active in Catholic youth groups early on. As a student she organized seminars at the university on matters of faith, and she participated in a group that cared for the homeless. As a young adult it became increasingly clear to her that she had a vocation to ordained ministry of some sort, the diaconate or the priesthood. In fact, this intuition was present already in her teenage years, but at that time she was not able to interpret the calling as such. Magdalene has prayed and reflected on this for some time and also spoken to her friends about her perception of God's will, and she has now come to a point in which she wishes to come to some sort of settlement. The case of Magdalene is constructed, but real Catholic women who perceive vocation to Holy Orders are not unheard of.[12]

[11] *Exx*, n. 170, *PW*, p. 316.
[12] Sandra M. Schneiders, 'The Effects of Women's Experience on Their Spirituality' (1983), 100–116. José María Arana and María Salas, *Mujeres Sacerdotes ¿Por qué no?* (1994).

The Roman Catholic teaching on ordination to the diaconate and the priesthood is unambiguous. Only men can be ordained to Holy Orders, that is to say deacons, priests and bishops (CCC 1577). Grounds for this position are laid down in the document *Inter insigniores* from 1976.[13] In an apostolic letter in 1994 Pope John Paul II confirmed the validity of the arguments in *Inter insigniores* and firmly declared: "In order that all doubt may be removed regarding a matter of great importance, a matter which pertains to the Church's divine constitution itself, in virtue of my ministry of confirming the brethren (cf. Lk 22:32) I declare that the Church has no authority whatsoever to confer priestly ordination on women and that this judgment is to be definitively held by all the Church's faithful."[14] Thanks to the reflections in section 6.6.1 above, we have seen that all ecclesiastical statements and propositions do not have the same status and degree of obligation. This section explores a case that does not enter the field of dogma (highest degree of obligation) but whose norms are based on doctrinal teaching and a long tradition: ordained ministry. One could qualify that by observing that there were women deacons in the early Church. This is only one example of various possible issues in which there might be lack of concord between the individual and Church magisterial teaching, and the reflections below are therefore relevant also in other cases.

What is the appropriate reaction on the part of the spiritual director when a devout practising Catholic woman believes that she has a vocation to the diaconate or the priesthood? To begin with, there is no reason why this kind of deliberation should not belong in an Ignatian retreat. Ignatius is clear that this kind of material may certainly be

[13] *Inter insigniores*, Declaration on the Admission of Women to the Ministerial Priesthood, Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith, 15 October 1976, pp. 331–345.
[14] *Ordinatio Sacerdotalis*, Apostolic Letter on Reserving Priestly Ordination to Men Alone, His Holiness Pope John Paul II, 22 May 1994, no 2.

uttered in spiritual direction, as one of the instructions indicates that the individual is meant to speak honestly, openly and faithfully:

> There is much to be gained if the giver of the Exercises, while not wanting to ask about or know the exercitant's self-chosen thoughts or sins, is given a faithful account of the different agitations and thoughts brought by the different spirits; because depending on the greater or lesser degree of progress, the director can give the exercitant some spiritual exercises that will be appropriate and suited to the needs of a soul agitated in a particular way.[15]

Ignatius presupposes forthright dialogue and the director should therefore not close any doors.

My second strand of thought is that the spiritual director should reassure Magdalene that the situation is not (exclusively) her personal concern. As I maintained with the help of Charles Taylor in Chapter 5, discernment does not only happen *within* the individual but is a shared enterprise occurring in the *space between* people. The topic of ordained ministry would not even surface and be treated in a dialogue if spirituality were confined to the sphere *within*. It is not the case that the perception of the devout Catholic woman can be explained away as her personal concern, located only in her emotional life. Once the discourse moves away from the language of 'within' and 'inside', the issue becomes a shared one. Such a philosophical standpoint of joint discernment may be spelt out on various levels. One level is that discernment is an interpersonal task for Magdalene and the spiritual director. But, the philosophical assumption of common discernment will, at some stage, also become a question both for the local Church and for the universal. Building on the reflections on the Holy Spirit in both Schwager's and Endean's writings presented in Chapter 4, one could imagine a scenario in which the Holy Spirit plants a desire in Magdalene that she should be a deacon or a priest, *and* that the Holy Spirit inspires

[15] *SpEx,* n. 17, *PW*, p. 286.

the wider body of the Church not (yet) to think that her calling should be fulfilled in that role. That paradox is plausible in the light of diaconate and priesthood themselves being relational realities.

The third strand of thought as a general guideline is that the spiritual director needs to assume that the good spirit leads Magdalene until proven otherwise. The spiritual director should avoid prejudiced views; Magdalene's desire and perception of God's will is not necessarily driven by disordered attachments, sinfulness, selfishness or ambition. It cannot even be presupposed that she is mistaken and in the wrong; she should not be pressed with any burden of proof. Such an attitude is obviously different from Hugo Rahner's standpoint that the good spirit is always in harmony with ecclesiastical teaching (section 3.4 above). The assumption that perceived disharmony may be generated by the good spirit (rather than the bad) is closer to the dramatic approach expounded in Chapter 4. This kind of presupposition that the good spirit may provoke an arrangement that is not yet in place (women's ordination as an example) could be seen in the light of the dynamic and charismatic element in the Church, a view I share with Karl Rahner (section 6.6 above).

The spiritual director could suggest scripture passages for Magdalene to meditate, for instance Luke 24:1–11 (the women at the empty tomb), in order for her to gain greater clarity about her vocation. What is actually subject to choice is obviously restricted in the first place. The restriction is at least there given the current Roman Catholic teaching and given Magdalene's remaining in the Roman Catholic community. Her desire to become a deacon or a priest may of course take her to other Christian denominations. Given an understanding of Church as a pilgrim Church, in particular that holiness can be found also outside the boundaries of Roman Catholicism, such a step is theologically plausible, that it

is say conversion to another Christian community. Careful discernment is called for as regards the consequences for Magdalene's relationships. Moreover, the spiritual director should explore together with Magdalene whether ordination is the only motive for conversion and if so reflect on the vulnerability of being committed to one question. Within the Roman Catholic boundaries, there are constraints as to what can be communicated in the public sphere. In the present circumstances, Roman Catholic theology and Canon Law does not provide a structure for female ordained ministry, and a shift will probably not occur in the near future. Therefore, Karl Rahner's eschatological perspective is crucial here, at the end of time things may be different and fulfilled in some way. But what is God's will for Magdalene in the mean time? What measures and actions are feasible? The central task is to assist the spiritual discernment, but not necessarily to give advice or participate in specific actions.

In order to facilitate the spiritual discernment, Magdalene and the spiritual director may go through various possible scenarios together. One scenario is that the desire to fulfil ordained ministry is integrated in the way in which Magdalene will live her life more generally. Throughout history there have been some examples of widening the perception of a vocation that initially appeared to be one of ordained ministry. Magdalene could be given material from historical figures to read and reflect on to see what reactions it provokes. In prayer there may be a message from God. This was the case for Catherine of Siena who in her youth had desired to become a Dominican and even planned to disguise herself as a man and enter the Order of Preachers (albeit she does not use the word 'priest' explicitly).[16] According to the biography written by Raymond of Capua, her confessor, she then heard the Lord's voice saying: "Therefore, be bravely obedient when in the future I

[16] Raymond of Capua, *The Life of St. Catherine of Siena* (2003 [1960]), part 1, ch. 3, pp. 33–35; part 2; ch. 1; pp. 108–111.

send you out amongst people. Wherever you may find yourself I shall not forsake you, or fail to visit you, as is my custom, and direct you in all that you are to do."[17] God calls her to a vocation of public testimony, but not to ordained ministry. The Carmelite sister Thérèse of Lisieux is another example of someone who was able to integrate a calling that initially appeared to be to the priesthood. In the *Story of a Soul* that is a collection of her diary-notes she wrote:

> I feel in me the vocation of *Priest*. With what love, Jesus, I would bear You in my hands when, at the sound of my voice, You would come down from heaven. …With what love I would give You to souls! But alas! While desiring to be a Priest, I admire and envy the humility of St. Francis of Assisi and I feel in myself the vocation of being like him in refusing the sublime dignity of the priesthood.[18]

Thérèse then finds a way to accommodate her priestly vocation: "Considering the mystical body of the Church, I had not recognized myself in any of the members described by St. Paul, or rather, I wanted to recognize myself in *all of them*."[19] It is beyond the scope of this dissertation to enter fully into researching her biography. Suffice to assert that she finds a solution by tempering her desire for ordained ministry. The key message here is that Thérèse integrates *all* vocations in her life, priesthood being one of them. She finds a way to assimilate all vocations. The purpose to give Magdalene the stories of Catherine and Thérèse to reflect on is to discover something through them, not necessarily attempt to copy their solutions and their conduct.

Another scenario for Magdalene, which may enter into the spiritual discernment, is to work structurally. The task for her in that case is to explore whether her vocation includes influencing structures of the Church. Does God move her in that

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[17] *ibid*., part 2; ch. 1; pp. 109.
[18] Thérèse of Lisieux, *The Story of a Soul*, in *The Complete Thérèse of Lisieux*, trans. by Edmonson (2009), p. 171.
[19] *ibid*., pp. 172–174.

direction? It cannot be excluded and there is a historical precedent. One condition for the establishment of the Society of Jesus was that the decision from the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215 not to found new religious orders had to be altered. The nature of their priesthood of being reformed priests, *preti riformati* was also new, including the requisite in the *Constitution* of deliberately not becoming bishops and cardinals. So in that sense the early Jesuits contributed to a development of the norms of the Church. Moreover, the foundation of the Society of Jesus was preceded by certain activities of what we would call lobbying (section 4.2 above). If the way indicated consists of some sort of lobbying, then one question regards the issue of: through what channels? With 'channels' I mean articles in journals, discussion groups, speeches, letters to the local bishop. Magdalene would also need to judge when to speak out and when to remain silent. If God seems to move her to speak, the spiritual director may convey the reflections on disposition and Karl Rahner's seven principles for communication (section 6.7 above). What is Magdalene's sense of those criteria?

7.4 Other Christians and Roman Catholic Teaching

Linda, a Baptist Christian, has found resonance in what she has heard about Ignatian spirituality and perceives that an Ignatian retreat would do her well. She has some experience of prayer and is keen on learning more about meditation. On the whole, she is positive towards Catholicism, but she is ignorant about it. The only impression she has is from the bad press it normally gets in the media. She is well informed about her own Christian tradition, but does not possess much knowledge about historical, theological or ecclesial aspects that are attached to Ignatian spirituality. Her upbringing was not easy and she carries a negative self-image and is in need of healing. Bernard, who is a Lutheran priest, enters the retreat from another angle. He would have converted to the Catholic Church had he been 20 years younger. However, personal, financial and structural reasons prevent him from joining.

Another example is George who is an evangelical Christian and works on a voluntary basis in his Church. He has several Roman Catholic friends. He sees Ignatian spirituality as a treasure partly because it seems to transmit a much more positive understanding of the human person in comparison with what he has been taught. Many of his values, however, clash with the teaching of the Catholic Church, and in fact he rather dislikes institutional Catholicism. George thinks that: “we Protestants do not pray to Mary.” He now wants to make a decision about an important matter. Gertrude, in her early forties, belongs to an Evangelical Free Church. She is open to Catholic doctrine partly because it seems to be so generous in its view of grace being everywhere. She also finds the devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary interesting but knows little about that devotion. Finally, Doris is a committed Anglican. She has a regular prayer life and knows her way in the mystical literature. She is rather indifferent to Roman Catholicism, seldom meets any Roman

Catholics and she has no Roman Catholic friends. She looks exclusively for conversations within the boundaries of spiritual direction, and is not particularly interested in any other contact with Roman Catholicism.

How should a spiritual director guide a non-Catholic Christian who approaches Ignatian spirituality in the ecumenical context? How should the spiritual director act and react to situations that are related to Roman Catholic doctrinal teaching? Does it matter if the Christian making Ignatian Exercises lacks a devotion to the Virgin Mary and has reservations about developing one? That topic could be replaced with similar issues in which approaches may differ such as theology of grace, the idea of a General Confession, the understanding of the human person, the understanding of Jesus Christ. Another level of consideration in this ecumenical context is that several Christian denominations were founded out of a rejection of Roman Catholicism. Historically there is here quite a tension, which may no longer be relevant, but still lurking there in the background. Conversely, the interest in Ignatian spirituality may provoke the question of a possible reception into and full communion with the Roman Catholic Church. It is true that the way in which the accompaniment is conducted will depend on whether the spiritual director is him- or herself a Roman Catholic or not. But since some level of affirmation of Catholicism is presupposed for any spiritual director of Ignatian Exercises, this is not the major distinction.

It has to be said that there is great potential for constructive ecumenical relations in the Ignatian retreat setting. There are biographies that indicate mutual learning and overcoming prejudiced views.[20] (Not much, however, has been published from the point of view of the spiritual director.) The very fact that there is an encounter across

[20] Anne Netherwood, *The Voice of this Calling* (1990).

denominational boundaries could be seen as a step forward in healing the wounded Church, which is ultimately healed in the wound of Christ (section 6.3 above). The overall orientation in the retreat goes from a wounded community in need of healing towards a hopeful future, even if this is only a side effect and not at the centre of attention. The perspective of a pilgrim Church is helpful here, both in terms of looking back to the past, but in particular of looking ahead and adopting Karl Rahner's eschatological view.

A difference, which the Catholic spiritual director and the other Christian (such as Linda, Bernard, Doris) need to be attentive to, is the notion of official teaching. One aspect of Catholicism, which is not present to the same degree in other Christian denominations, is the official teaching of a universal Church. The ecclesiastical authority of a Magisterium is unique to Catholicism. It could here be added that most Christian Churches have a much looser hierarchical structure than Roman Catholicism. This fact is an issue in itself, that is to say the difference of having or not an official teaching. For Gertrude and Bernard official teaching seems attractive and Bernard would also welcome some sort of structural arrangement for some level of affiliation with the Catholic Church. Doris, on the other hand, is less interested in institutional aspects. To sum up, one level is personal attitude; another is the mainstream custom in the particular church. How is this relevant for the spiritual director? A general theme could be about solidarity and commitment to whatever Christian denomination the individual belongs. This decision may entail reflections over alternatives that in their patterns are similar to Magdalene's in the previous section. God may be calling them to bring about change and development.

The ground rule that I want to centre on is that one of the roles and functions that the spiritual director has is to facilitate that the individual expands his or her horizon.

With ‘expansion of horizon’ I mean to get in touch with the reality of grace, which finds a privileged expression in Roman Catholicism. Some elements might here for the individual be new, different and perhaps even foreign. The motive behind promoting an expansion of horizons is that there is a value in enriching and broadening one’s worldview. Moreover, the other horizon does present itself as a matter of fact in the retreat. In the spiritual director being an interlocutor, there is already a potential expansion of horizon through knowledge by acquaintance. Questions such as Confession, Eucharist, understanding of the human person, grace, understanding of Jesus Christ and the Trinity, Our Lady, meaning of Church community in an Ignatian retreat surface. For many Christians, these are not completely new issues. It rather supplements, adds to what is already there in principle. It is a matter of expanding one’s horizon, not of creating an entirely new one. The spiritual director may sometimes take initiative to raise these topics during the retreat. The topics may also come up from the individual. In both cases the topics come up in relation to experience and the spiritual process. Some of this can be addressed and dealt with during the retreat, and this can be expanded bit by bit. In all of this, the spiritual director mentions the topic and invites mildly and helps the person in a Socratic fashion.

The expansion is benefited from knowledge by theory, by experience and by acquaintance. It has to be acknowledged that the spiritual director, left to him- or herself, is clearly overburdened by most of the scenarios depicted above (the starting-points of Linda, George, Bernard, Doris). If the spiritual director is the only Roman Catholic the individual encounters in the spiritual process, there are limitations at least given an ecclesiology that gives sufficient weight to the visible Church and Catholic tradition. Particularly in Linda’s and Doris’s case, it would be desirable for them to meet Catholics in the real world. Knowledge by theory should be supplemented with knowledge by acquaintance.

"Catholicism is essentially social," as Henri de Lubac would say; it builds on relationships (compare section 6.5 above).[21] The spiritual director alone cannot possibly convey the 'movement of tradition' (see section 6.1.3 above) of which the devotion to Our Lady is one element.

As the individual makes an Ignatian retreat, characteristics of various key persons may appear. Who am I? Who is Jesus Christ for me? Can I trust in other people and in God? Who is the Blessed Virgin Mary for me? Who is God and how does he bestow his grace on me? Let us single out the question of Our Lady who undoubtedly has a central role in the *Spiritual Exercises*. A distinction can be made here between the Mary of history and the Blessed Virgin Mary. The former raises the question what can be known of her historically, the latter tends towards faith in her. These guidelines are interested in the historical Mary, but are more concerned about the Mary of faith. Our Lady has a significant role not only in the *Spiritual Exercises*, but also in the life of Ignatius and of the early Jesuits.[22] In what follows I will give some examples of Our Lady in the *Spiritual Exercises*.

In the so-called 'third way of praying' the person is invited to pray mentally with each breath as words in prayers, such as the Our Father and Hail Mary, are uttered (*SpEx* 258–260). Records from Ignatius's practice of giving spiritual exercises reveal that he recommended this kind of prayer to retreatants in the beginning of their spiritual process.[23] Furthermore, in one of the exercises on sin and redemption the individual is asked to make a colloquy with Our Lady (*SpEx* 63). In the exercise on the 'Call of the King' the individual may express an offering, which Ignatius formulates as being done

[21] Henri de Lubac, *Catholicism*, trans. by Sheppard and Englund (1988 [1947]), p. 15.
[22] Fredrik Heiding, 'Our Lady, Lead Us to Christ!', *The Way*, 50/2 (April 2011), 25–35. 'Unsere liebe Frau, führe uns zu Christus!', *Korrespondenz zur Spiritualität der Exerzitien*, 92 (2008), 3–12.
[23] "E que quando dixese el AbeMaría, que diese un sospiro e contenplase en aquella palabra *AbeMaría*; e luego *graçia plena*, e contenplar en ella." *MI FD*, p. 335.

"before your glorious Mother and all the saintly men and women of the court of heaven!" (*SpEx* 98). Our Lady obviously plays an important part in the 'contemplation on the incarnation' (*SpEx* 101–109) and in the 'contemplation on the nativity' (*SpEx* 110–117). She is also present in the contemplations on Christ's Passion (*SpEx* 196, 199, 208, 297). Finally, in the Fourth Week of the *Spiritual Exercises*, in Ignatius's mind the risen Lord appears to the Virgin Mary (*SpEx* 218–225, 299).

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* supports the view that the relevance of Our Lady is that she intercedes for those who make Ignatian Exercises and that she assists (also as a role model) the search for the will of God. Three aspects of mainstream Catholic teaching about Mary are particularly relevant for an Ignatian retreat. First, she is, according to the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, regarded to be closely related to Jesus: "Mary's role in the Church is inseparable from her union with Christ and flows directly from it."[24] Second, a central theme is that Mary helps us to see the will of God.[25] Her response to God's will is seen as a role model.[26] Third, she intercedes for the Christian faithful.[27] Our Lady is also mentioned in the connection with the notion of the pilgrim Church, which is a central notion in the ecclesiological position developed in Chapters 5 and 6: "In her we contemplate what the Church already is in her mystery on her own 'pilgrimage of faith,' and what she will be in the homeland at the end of her journey."[28]

Now, the way forward for the spiritual director lays not so much in a theological discussion but in gently encouraging the individual to experiment, to make an

[24] *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, n. 964. For Mary and the Church see also CCC nn. 773, 775, 829, 965, 963–972.
[25] *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, n. 494.
[26] *ibid*., nn. 148, 273, 488, 2030.
[27] *ibid*., n. 969.
[28] *ibid*., n. 972.

attempt to include Mary in the meditations and contemplations. In other words, to approach Mary, so that one may more easily find the will of God, and invite her to become a friend. Unless the individual has already come across Ignatian literature through introductory courses or elsewhere, it is commendable to recommend some reading for the individual to facilitate the relocation of horizons (section 6.1.4 above). The main thrust of these guidelines move towards the idea of expanding one's horizon (section 6.1.4 above), of transcending oneself, in the sense of going beyond established thought-patterns, attitudes and convictions, current views and plans. Ignatian spiritual direction provides a space for personal conversation and mutual learning, and it may assist the process of transcendence. The step of transcendence is not restricted to the mostly challenging encounter with Jesus Christ, but also involves the customs and practices, the traditions and the language by which the experience of him is interpreted and articulated. The theology of Our Lady is one example of several imaginable themes. Expansion of horizons is precisely one sense of being Catholic as it goes beyond the local level and reaches out to the universal ('Catholic' means "over the whole inhabited world"), and is in touch with a pluralistic and multicultural reality. A conversion of mind and heart in the sense of being open to and prepared to learn from the global Roman Catholic Church is a possible consequence of my interpretation of Ignatian Exercises. Incidentally, Jesus's calling in the meditation on the Two Standards goes in this universal direction: "To consider how the Lord of all the world selects so many persons, as apostles, disciples, etc, and sends them out over the whole world spreading His sacred doctrine among all people of every state and condition."[29]

What is clearly needed is support beyond and outside spiritual direction proper. This could be done in the form of introductory courses of the kind I outlined in the

[29] *SpEx*, n. 145, *PW*, p. 311.

beginning of this chapter. Some guidelines formulated for the non-practising Catholic in section 7.2 above also apply to other Christians. One needs to clarify what is meant by 'Ignatian spirituality'. Misconceptions can be removed in the spirit of *SpEx* 22. Such courses do not seem to be a common practice, although preparatory conversations are held in the German ecumenical context.[30] Obviously, there are limits as to how much knowledge is necessary (see section 6.1.3 above). In terms of procedure, learning can be like throwing stones in a lake, which creates circles. Stones can be thrown in different directions and knowledge expands without having the ambition to encompass the whole lake.

Should the Catholic spiritual director ask for more, not only for expansion of horizon in the sense of attitude and theological knowledge, but also for formal conversion to the Catholic Church? It is important in this connection of 'expansion of horizon' for the spiritual director to become aware of his or her own bias as regards whether he or she expects and think it appropriate that the other Christians convert to Catholicism. The primary focus has to be on God's will for the person. The spiritual director should be open to the spiritual process and cannot know beforehand, whether or not it is God's will for the individual to become fully affiliated with the Roman Catholic Church. One of the annotations in the book *Spiritual Exercises* states that the spiritual director should "remain in the middle like the pointer of a balance".[31] But still there may be some expectation and vision in the back of the spiritual director's mind. The reasons in favour of conversion centre on the Roman Catholic Church being in unbroken tradition with Jesus Christ, as well as its universal nature. The structural, financial and personal (not to mention religious and theological) consequences of such a step may, nevertheless, be considerable and not recommendable. Above all, the position of trust and intimacy that is characteristic of

[30] Andreas Falkner, 'Ignatianische Exerzitien im Leben der evangelischen Kirche', in *Aufmerksame Wege*, Gerhard Münderlein (ed.) (1999), pp. 62–63; 77–78.
[31] *SpEx*, n. 15, *PW*, p. 286.

spiritual direction implies reasons against encouraging conversion in the formal, church juridical (Canon law) sense. The integrity of the spiritual director is at stake, he or she should avoid any sign of wanting to influence. In conclusion, the task for the spiritual director is to become aware of his or her own convictions and his or her own bias. Avoid uttering expectations of conversion, unless the individual brings up the topic.

7.5 Concluding remarks

This set of guidelines has presupposed that it is indeed possible to give and make Ignatian Exercises at ecclesial frontiers. They have been written in the spirit of the *Complementary Norms* to the *Constitutions* of the Society of Jesus, as they state: "The Spiritual Exercises, carefully adapted in different ways, should be presented to every type of person insofar as individuals are capable of them, not excluding simple folk, in order to form Christians who are enriched by a personal experience of God and are led to an intimate knowledge of the Lord, so as to love and follow him more."[32]

Nonetheless, the guidelines in this Chapter 7 and indeed the hypothesis in this dissertation have attempted to claim that Ignatian Exercises can be done to a lesser or greater extent (rather than the alternative choice: either to make them or not). Above all, I have attempted to argue that Ignatian Exercises invite the individual to expand his or her horizon, and thus the horizon can be expanded to a lesser or greater degree, depending on the individual's openness. More progress is also feasible in terms of reconciliation the more the individual is open to it. As regards material for the election, the individual can achieve greater clarity, even if external factors might prevent a fulfilment of greater service in the way God is perceived to be calling the person.

But in the background the question remains: what is meant by *the* Ignatian Exercises? Do we, in the end, still have to say that one has to hold specifically Roman Catholic beliefs, about Mariology or the Church, in order to make *the* Ignatian Exercises. Cannot an application pay less attention to those realities and omit whatever is not line with the individual's theological vision? In some version of *the* Ignatian Exercises this may be

[32] Complementary norms, n. 271 §1, in *Const.*, pp. 299–300.

possible. Nonetheless, Chapters 5 and 6 provide a basis for asking that question in a different way. How does the person, understood in a relational way, critically interpret the Catholic tradition in which Ignatian Exercises moves? In that framework, the question is not what can be adapted and omitted, but: what happens when the individual is confronted with a different way of seeing things? As indeed also: what happens to the Catholic Church when one of its members is led in prayer to a position that suggests development and change? Let me conclude with a quotation from T.S. Eliot that illustrates the interpersonal approach to spiritual discernment that this dissertation has favoured. To Thomas's question "Can I neither act nor suffer without perdition?" the tempter responds:

> You know and do not know, what it is to act or suffer.
> You know and do not know, that action is suffering,
> And suffering action. Neither does the agent suffer
> Nor the patient act. But both are fixed
> In an eternal action, an eternal patience
> To which all must consent that it may be willed
> And which all must suffer that they may will it,
> That the pattern may subsist, that the wheel may turn and
> still
> Be forever still.[33]

[33] T.S. Eliot, *Murder in the Cathedral* (London: Faber & Faber, 1968 [1935]), p. 45.

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