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Lee T. Holden
Wofford College

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Iñigo to Ignatius:

The Spiritual Foundation of the Society of Jesus

By Lee Holden

Introduction and Historiographical Note

When one thinks of the accomplishments of Ignatius of Loyola, it is hard to imagine that he is, to most moderns, little more than a name. Most people know at least something about the Society of Jesus, often called the Jesuits, but what about its founder? Though he is a canonized saint, he did not apply his own name to his order, as did Benedict, Francis, and Dominic. This, perhaps, tells us more about Ignatius than many scholars could. Following his ‘conversion’ he was a man who relentlessly deflected credit for his doings away from himself. Though he was the *de facto* leader of his group of companions, he often spoke of their doings as a body, and rarely as individual parts. When he was unanimously elected Superior General by his companions in 1540, he rejected their decision twice before his confessor gave him a signed note of approval.¹

Despite his own lack of belief in his personal merit, Ignatius was perhaps, in his era, Catholic faith’s most singular champion of humankind’s importance in religious faith. Though he actively asserted that the only real path to God was through total submission to His will, he nevertheless believed that the individual always has the choice to become the Christian that God wants him to be. This message is at the heart of his *Spiritual Exercises*, which he personally gave to his companions and which has become an integral part of the Society of Jesus. Olin says it best: “Ignatius above all wanted to *do* something for the glory of God out of love for God. Inspired by the deeds of the saints, he now wished to live and work in the service of Christ the King. His resolve was clarified and purified as he progressed along his pilgrim’s way, but from beginning to end it was a determination to accomplish notable deeds, to lead a life of active service...Ignatius

¹ See Caraman, 126.

himself saw God directing and enlightening him, and Jesuit tradition has always accepted the reality of divine inspiration in his case, of God's 'mystical invasion' of his soul..."²

Who was Ignatius of Loyola? The facts are clear: he was a minor noble from the Basque country, brought into the service of the Duke of Nájera, injured during the Siege of Pamplona in 1521 around the age of 30. He healed at his family home in Loyola, reading the religious books of his sister-in-law and experiencing powerful visions and imaginings. His resulting 'conversion' to the religious life led him to visit the Abbey at Montserrat, where he continued to read, and the Caves at Manresa, where he experienced his first major visions. He became a pilgrim to Jerusalem and then a non-traditional student in Barcelona and Paris. There he met several companions who dedicated themselves to service to the Pope, and upon his arrival in Rome, he quickly went about setting a charitable example for others to follow. He led the Society of Jesus from its inception to a powerful force in European and world history.

But beyond mere quantitative facts about his life, Loyola represents a touchstone for the Catholic Church, one on par with figures like Augustine and even St. Paul.³ As the founder of the Jesuits, he led the most vigorous conversion campaign around the world, and help establish a tradition of educated churchmen everywhere the Catholic Church had a presence. His take on Christian spirituality, distilled in the *Spiritual Exercises*, the only book he ever wrote, served as the ultimate antithesis to the doctrine of Martin Luther and the ever-evolving, and rapidly multiplying Reformation churches. His personal drive toward mission work and charity resulted in the creation of a vast network of convents and lay organizations devoted to promoting Catholic Christendom in a decidedly modern way. Indeed, his life, personality, and spiritual thought left a

² John C. Olin, introduction to *Autobiography of St. Ignatius of Loyola*, 11; for "mystical invasion," see Rahner, *Spirituality of St. Ignatius Loyola*, 47; quoted in *ibid.*

³ Evenett goes so far as to call him, "the St. Paul of the Counter-Reformation." See Evenett, *Spirit*, 53.

mark on Catholicism that shaped it throughout the 16th and 17th century, and still remain to this day. The goal of this paper is to show how Ignatius's religious beliefs and spiritual character were molded by his contemplative experiences during his convalescence in Loyola that were brought upon by his reading about the Lives of the Saints and the Life of Christ. Furthermore, I will show this experience directly influenced the early Jesuits through their educational focus, their conversion work, and their charitable missions.

In order to explore the ways in which Ignatius shaped Catholic reform, we will first look at his life, from that of a Basque noble and *hidalgo* to a converted man, to his time as a pilgrim and then a non-traditional student, and finally as a preacher and Superior General of the Society of Jesus. In the middle of the paper, coinciding with the time that Ignatius is believed to have written it, we will survey the *Spiritual Exercises*, their purpose, and origins in medieval devotional literature. Finally, we will review the Ignatian impact on the Catholic reform and the Jesuits' actions in the 16th and early 17th centuries. But first, there are some historiographical clarifications to be made.

Historiographical Note

The most ready-to-hand primary sources for Loyola's spirituality are the *Spiritual Exercises*, his *Autobiography*, and his Spiritual Journal, which survives in two copybooks chronicling the period 2 February to 12 March, 1544 and 13 March, 1544 to 27 February 1545. It is clear the Spiritual Journals were meant only for Loyola himself, as he refused to allow his autobiographer, the Portuguese Goncalves da Câmara, access to them, and destroyed most of them before his death.⁴ The only extant ones we have are those that were found in his desk drawer

⁴ At one point, he did show Câmara his stack of notebooks and hint at their contents, but without actually giving him access to them. See Caraman, 157.

following his passing. The *Spiritual Exercises* were widely circulated before Ignatius died, and were a *de facto* part of the initiation rites for the Jesuits essentially from their beginning. His *Autobiography* will be discussed below.

There are many images of Ignatius that scholars draw upon when writing about him. Many regard the facts about his life as deeply informative of his faith and psychology. This is particularly the approach of W.W. Meissner and his sizable *Ignatius of Loyola: The Psychology of a Saint* (1992). Others utilize the well-worn images in order to evoke the saint in all his virtues and vices – David Lonsdale and his *Eyes to See, Ears to Hear: An Introduction to Ignatian Spirituality* (2000) utilizes this method to give a sketch of the man whose spirituality is at the heart of his book. The notion of using images and contemplation derives from Ignatius's own preference for them in the *Spiritual Exercises*, which has been required reading for Jesuits essentially since before the Society's official foundation. The book's medieval origins are of some concern as well.

In the medieval period, citation was haphazard. A writer might point out where a particular story or idea came from, but oftentimes passages of older books were lifted wholesale and grafted into works by more recent authors. Ambrose notably lifted whole sections of Plotinus into his sermons, without credit, as did Augustine.⁵ Ignatius, similarly, lifted major ideas from the books he read and the religious ideas that floated by him, often as part of the general cultural literacy of his day and age. The modern historian is stuck with the difficult task of determining where this material originated from. Ideas can be very ancient, and yet can originate independently from multiple different sources across time. For Ignatius in particular, it would seem that many of his ideas sprang to him in the form of mystical revelation. But we would be remiss to not notice the

⁵ Brown, 95.

similarities between many of his mystical ideas and the messages championed by the humanist thinkers of his day, especially with regard to education and man's primary place in Ignatian spirituality.

I should also note that the limitations of this study are many. I do not speak Latin nor Spanish, and so relied on translations into English for every piece of literature I read in preparation for this text. I am not a scholar of Ignatius, the Jesuits, the Reformation, Counter-Reformation, early modern period, or Church history. My work in this paper was based primarily on secondary literature on Ignatius, the Jesuits, and the period of the Reformation. Other sources, as mentioned above, include primary sources by Ignatius or those around him.

With regard to the primary sources, Ignatius made things difficult by burning much of the collection of his spiritual journals. Much of what we have to work with are records from the places he visited and recollections pieced together by his contemporaries. Loyola, in his later years, dictated a portrait of his life to the Portuguese Jesuit Luis Gonçaves da Câmara, who began writing an autobiography in Spanish in 1553 and finished the work in Italian in 1555.⁶ The text starts abruptly at the Battle of Pamplona in 1521 and moves through the next seventeen years until 1548, ending just as abruptly.⁷ Although Câmara claims to have been privy to the story of Ignatius's youth, this text is either now lost to us, or was simply never published in the first place.⁸ The writing of the Autobiography was considered by many in the Society, particularly Father Nadal, to be of the utmost importance to their organization.⁹ While useful for us, we also ought to consider it analytically. Two things about Ignatius are clear in this work: his language is unadorned and he

⁶ See John C. Olin, Introduction to *The Autobiography of St. Ignatius Loyola*, trans. Joseph F. O'Callaghan (New York: Fordham University Press, 1974), 2.

⁷ See *Auto. Ignatius*, 3-4.

⁸ See *The Autobiography of St. Ignatius Loyola*, footnote 2, p. 16.

⁹ See *The Autobiography of St. Ignatius Loyola*, 17.

was deeply displeased with his past-self. These two facts are important – the first shows us that he often forgot, glossed over, or omitted details from his life; the second that, though he was willing to discuss his conversion and journey to become the Superior General, he was frequently ambiguous when discussing the sins of his youth. It could be argued that Câmara simply omitted this himself, but he regularly notes the occasions that Loyola would choose not to speak about a particular topic (his seven years in Paris are noted in one short chapter!), and the fantastic tradition of Jesuit record keeping would speak against his having lost portions of his transcript. Thusly, I am of the opinion that what was omitted, for the most part, was omitted on purpose by Ignatius. The biographical portion of this paper, then, is constructed from Loyola's *Autobiography*, as well as two biographies from the 1990s, *Ignatius Loyola: A Biography of the Founder of the Jesuits* by Philip Caraman (1990), and *Ignatius of Loyola: The Psychology of a Saint* by W.W. Meissner (1992). It should be noted that most, if not all of the prominent scholars of Ignatius and the Jesuits in general are Jesuits themselves. While the more recent material has tended less toward hagiography, there is a long tradition of aggrandizement with regard to the early Jesuits, akin, perhaps, to the deification of America's founding fathers. I have attempted to avoid too friendly a presentation, in favor of a more even-handed display of the facts.

I. Early Life

Ignatius was born in an Iberian Peninsula just finishing the Reconquista under its unifying monarchs Ferdinand II of Aragon and Isabella of Castille. The following year, in 1492, they would conquer Granada, the last Muslim fortress in Iberia, exile the Jews, and send the forty-year old Genoese explorer Christopher Columbus on his first of four voyages across the Atlantic Ocean. He would grow up in a deeply religious society, one that had been recently reformed under figures such as Cardinal Francisco Jiménez de Cisneros, but that still possessed the sort of folk religiosity that Ignatius's order, the Jesuits, would one day attempt to displace with proper orthodoxy. Simultaneously, a sense of adventure pervaded the Spanish minor nobility, making them a locus of the less savory aspects of medieval life, such as gambling, sexual licentiousness, alcoholism, and violence. Ignatius grew up with this contradictory mix of warrior spirit and devoted Catholicism, a contradiction that would eat away at him when his life suddenly changed at the age of thirty.

He was born Iñigo López de Loyola in 1491 in Loyola Castle, in the town of Azpeitia within the province of Guipúzcoa.¹⁰ He was born to a wealthy noble family in the Basque country, the youngest of six sons, with three sisters. His father, Beltrán Loyola, had secured a high standing among Basque nobles while fighting under the banner of Ferdinand and Isabella during the War of the Castilian Succession (1475-1479). The elder Loyola was a character of his era, a warrior-noble who took a deep interest in religion, visiting the shrine of St. James of Compostela with his children. Much like his son, his faith was unshakable, despite lapses of morality, such as fathering

¹⁰ Loyola did not actually know when he was born, as the records were destroyed in a fire. His wet nurse, María de Garín, gave 1491 as his year of birth on a legal document signed on October 23, 1505. Ignatius was a legal witness to the signing of this document, and, by Castilian law, must have been at least fourteen years old to witness, making his date of birth sometime before 23 October, 1491. See footnote in Caraman, *Ignatius Loyola*, 4.

two illegitimate children. Iñigo's mother, Maria Sánchez de Licona, passed soon after his birth, and he was nursed by María de Garín, a local blacksmith's wife. Loyola was born a full twenty-five years after his parents' marriage, and so when he was a child many of his elder siblings were already adults. They were mostly adventurers, thriving in the violent wake of the Reconquista and the discovery of the New World. Juan Pérez, the eldest, escorted Christopher Columbus's second voyage in 1493, and died fighting under the Spanish banner three years later during the Italian Wars.¹¹ Hernando Loyola traveled to the New World in 1510 and died in Darien, possibly taking part in Balboa's expedition to the Pacific.¹² The other brothers all served the crown in some way, excepting only Pero López, who became the Rector of Azpeitia, two miles away from his ancestral manor.¹³ Young Iñigo was also trained from his youth to be a cleric, but the calling of adventure seems to have gotten the better of his family's desires, at least in his early life.¹⁴ Despite possibly having received the tonsure, he rejected the life of the clergy, and became a member of Spain's burgeoning class of adventurous young noblemen.¹⁵

As a young man, Loyola was taught the manners of courtly life, the dances, protocol, and language of the court. He learned Castilian, but his grasp on it was never particularly strong and his written language was noted for its prosaic bluntness. In 1507 he was called to the home of the Royal Treasurer, Juan Velásquez de Cuéllar, who lived in Arévalo, between Ávila and Valladolid, to the northwest of Madrid. Iñigo was of short stature but stocky build, with the healthy and tanned

¹¹ W.W. Meissner, *Ignatius of Loyola: The Psychology of a Saint* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1992), 13.

¹² Philip Caraman, *Ignatius Loyola: A Biography of the Founder of the Jesuits*, (London: Harper & Row, 1990), 7.

¹³ Caraman, *Ignatius*, 6.

¹⁴ In fact, the only tangible thing Loyola gained from his time with the parish clerks was his excellent handwriting, which was often remarked upon. See Caraman, 7.

¹⁵ Loyola was intended for a clerical position from early in his life, only to be sent away to the court as a young man. It is unknown how initiated into the clergy he was, but there is some belief that he had some legal distinction regarding the clergy, due to his ability to appeal to the Bishop of Pamplona, as will be discussed below. This, however, may have been simply due to his family's influence.

features of an ideal Basque youth. Even as a beggar later in life, he would retain the noble features of his youth.¹⁶ He followed Juan Velásquez around as the court moved throughout the newly-united Spain, and it is likely that he met much of the high nobility of the realm, including the king and his second wife, Germaine de Foix. During this time Loyola became familiar with the romantic tale of Amadis of Gaul and took up the lute. At court, he was “attached to the faith,” but, “his life was in no way conformed to it...Rather, he was particularly reckless in gambling, in his dealings with women, in quarreling, and with the sword.¹⁷ There is an episode related in the records of the correctional court of Guipúzcoa that suggests Iñigo, returning home briefly in 1515, was involved in the death of the parish rector’s nephew, on carnival day. Though his crimes were considered “heinous (*enormes*),” the young man used his status as a cleric to refer the judgement to the Bishop of Pamplona, allowing him to avoid civil charges.¹⁸

In 1516, the sixteen-year-old Charles, son of Philip the Handsome and Joana the Mad, grandson of Ferdinand and Isabella, succeeded Ferdinand II as ruler of all the realms of the Spanish crown, including Castile, Aragon, and Navarre, as well as the Two Sicilies, Burgundy, the Netherlands, and the Spanish possessions in the Americas. Three years later he succeeded his paternal grandfather, Maximilian I, as the Holy Roman Emperor. As if at once, much of Europe now found itself under the power of a young noble raised as a Fleming. The young Charles was regarded as a foreigner in his first court in Spain, and he did nothing to help himself by cleaning house in the court, including the firing of Velásquez from the office of Treasurer.¹⁹ Deprived of

¹⁶ Caraman, 10-11.

¹⁷ MHSJ, *Fontes Narrativi de S. Ignatio de Lyola et de Societatis Iesu Initiis*, I 154; quoted in Caraman, 13.

¹⁸ This story is related in Caraman, 15 and Meissner, 23-4.

¹⁹ Caraman, 16. Velásquez would retire to Madrid, where he would die soon after in 1517.

his royal patron, Loyola faced a decision: to continue his life in the noble courts of Spain or to seek adventure as a soldier like his brothers.

Velásquez's widow soon found for Iñigo a post in the court of the Duke of Nájera as a gentleman-in-waiting, and he joined him in Pamplona late in 1516. The town of Pamplona was on the frontier of the Spanish realm, and was the likely point of invasion for any French armies entering Spain. Iñigo eagerly awaited his chance to show off his untested skill at-arms. Loyola, overzealous in his new position, quickly drew some negative attention by drawing his sword on some street toughs during a walkabout of the city, needing to be restrained by passers-by. On another occasion, he was wounded during an argument with another courtier, Francisco de Oya, and petitioned the young King Charles for a license to hire a bodyguard, which was granted and renewed a year later. Though he spent some time twiddling his thumb, the young hidalgo-to-be's chance to prove himself finally arose when Toledo burst open in revolt.

King Charles, in his youthful lack of care, had failed to be sensitive to the Spanish people in his distribution of gifts and titles, granting a significant portion of land to his Flemish courtiers, alongside making his former tutor, the future Pope Adrian VI (a Dutchman from Utrecht) the Governor of the Realm in his absence. By 1520, Charles was now attempting to manage his lands in Austria and Germany, particularly the roiling unrest in Saxony following the publication of Luther's *Ninety-Five Theses*. Believing that their lands were being siphoned of their wealth to feed the king's cronies and fuel his foreign ventures, the burghers and peasants of Castile began to riot openly against the foreign king. Town councils began seizing various cities throughout the realm, including Nájera. The Duke, Iñigo in tow, rushed to the city and demanded its surrender, storming

it after being rejected. The uprising throughout the country, known as the Revolt of the Comuneros, lasted over a year, but Loyola had proven in his brief action that he was a capable soldier.²⁰

Francis I, King of France, seeing his rival Charles's main kingdom in peril, made plans to invade Spain through Navarre, pressing the claim of the House d'Albret on the tiny Basque state. By March 1521, news of the invasion had reached Pamplona, and Loyola was tasked with defending the city while the Duke went to Segovia to beg for aid. On May 18, André de Foix, commander of the French invading army, camped outside of Pamplona, and on the 19th the magistrates of the city surrendered without a fight.²¹ Iñigo, however, retreated to the citadel, where he stood in defiance side-by-side with its commander Miguel de Herrera. As the representative of the Duke's household, the young Loyola agitated for defense of the citadel, rallying the remaining soldiers to defend the inner-city in the hope that a Spanish army would relieve them soon. For six hours the French and Spanish traded artillery shots, until finally the citadel was breached and Iñigo's right leg was shattered by a cannon-ball.²² He was treated well by the garrisoning force, his right leg was set and his wounds dressed, and the next month he was allowed to leave in a litter, accompanied by his own men from Guipúzcoa.

²⁰ Caraman, 19-20. *Comuneros* refers to a "leader of a community" in Spain.

²¹ André was the Lord of Lesparre and cousin of Germaine de Foix, future Queen of Aragon as wife to Ferdinand II.

²² His left leg was also grievously wounded, though it may have been by falling masonry, rather than gunshot. See footnote 2, Caraman, 23.

II. Conversion Moment

He arrived at his ancestral home in late June. The eldest Loyola, Martín García, now head of the house, was away attempting to drum up men for the war effort when Iñigo returned home. He was cared for by Martín García's wife, the devout Magdalena de Araoz. She stood by his bed while the bones in his legs were rebroken in order to heal properly, which they never fully did. The leg was operated on a second time later, at Loyola's insistence, due to his burning desire to return to the field. According to all accounts, he endured both surgeries without uttering a word.

Later, when he had recovered enough that he felt like reading, Iñigo requested he be brought the chivalrous romances he had grown fond of at court, like Amadis of Gaul, but was told that there were no such books at the castle.²³ Instead, his sister-in-law gave him Spanish translations of the thirteenth-century Dominican Jacopo da Vorigine's *Golden Legend* and the German Carthusian Ludolph of Saxony's *Life of Christ*. Reading these texts, Loyola began to tackle his vain and worldly ambitions that he found to conflict with the images of dutiful piety that recurred throughout the books.²⁴ Though at first he was filled only with desire to carry on with his glory-mongering and adventure, he slowly began to imagine what his life would be like if he imitated the saints, or even Christ himself.

Loyola's time in convalescence and the travels that immediately followed compose the most important period of his life that should be understood when analyzing the formulation of his spiritual thought. It was during this time that Loyola began to write the *Exercises*. In fact, most

²³ Caraman points out that the Loyolas were not particularly fond of books, as Martín García's will mentioned not a single book among his possessions. See footnote, Caraman, 27.

²⁴ Particularly, it seems the young Loyola was infatuated with an unnamed noblewoman who was higher than that of even a duchess. Some suggest this may be Princess Catherine, the sister of King Charles of Spain. See *The Autobiography*, footnote 3, p. 23. For other possibilities, see Caraman, *Ignatius Loyola*, 29, footnote.

accounts claim that he was essentially finished with the core of the book by the time he left Manresa in February 1523. This means that, less than two years after his injury in Pamplona, Ignatius, a poorly-read warrior turned pilgrim from the Basque country, had crafted the essentials of one of the most influential books in Christendom. What about Loyola's reading inspired him? What elements of the handful of books he read during this period made their way into the *Exercises*? How did his experience directly affect the method on display in the *Exercises*? These are the central questions I will address in the following section, before moving on to finish the biographical section.

Loyola's conversion experience alone gives us a piercing view into his formation of religious thought. As mentioned above, Iñigo was limited to two books during his convalescence at Loyola castle: The *Golden Legend* or *Flos Sanctorum* by Jacopo da Vorigine, a volume depicting the lives of the saints that had been in common circulation in the Iberian Peninsula since the 1480s, and the *Life of Christ* by Ludolph the Carthusian. Almost immediately, Loyola was struck by the imagery in the preface to the *Golden Legend* (written by the translator, Cistercian Fray Gauberto de Vagad), which presented the saints as "knights of God," who followed the flag of Christ as their chief.²⁵ De Guibert argues that Loyola was deeply impressed by these first readings, as they depicted a nobility of an order higher than the earthly sort he had been used to.²⁶

Câmara remarks that Loyola was taken to periods of deep thought during his reading sessions, pausing from the book to mull over the ideas swirling around his head. Often, he would contemplate a particular saintly act or a moment in Christ's life. Other times, he turned his mind to memories of court life – the songs and dances, games, friends and ladies. He found himself

²⁵ De Guibert, *The Jesuits: Their Spiritual Doctrine and Practice*, 1964, 26.

²⁶ See De Guibert, 25.

pulled in two directions. On one hand, he sincerely missed the soldier's path he had walked, though it had almost cost him a leg. On the other hand, though, he found something strangely appealing about the religious life. A question that recurred to him was "Suppose that I should do what St. Francis did, what St. Dominic did?"²⁷ He soon found that the thoughts of his old life, though full of pleasure and charming in their remembrance, were not very satisfying anymore. Indeed, now the still-bedridden Loyola could only find peace in the words of his books, and in the thought that he, too, could fulfill the saintly calling. It is no wonder that in writing the *Spiritual Exercises* Ignatius would place so much emphasis on private contemplation. His conversion to the religious life was a result of countless hours of just that.

But more than just this contemplation, Loyola's conversion was brought about by sudden, mystical experience with the Divine. At some point following his encounter with the *Golden Legend* and *Vita Christi*, Ignatius experienced a vision of the Madonna with the Holy Child, causing him to suddenly revile his past life in a way that he had never done to that point. As Câmara notes, from this day on Loyola never slept with another woman. Indeed, following this first vision, his family noticed his personality was permanently changed. Despite this, he found himself challenged for many years with lust, regularly calling it the most dangerous sinful thought for him personally.

De Guibert notes that, by the end of his convalescence, the traits that defined Loyola's spiritual thought throughout his life (distilled mainly in *The Spiritual Exercises*) were already apparent: the dominant idea of "outstanding service" to Christ, the Chief of the "knights of God"; a large place given to imaginative contemplation, to self-analysis, to the attentive control of what

²⁷ Autobiography, 47.

goes on within himself...All these were features which, from different points of view, were to remain characteristic in his spirituality.²⁸

²⁸ De Guibert, 26-7.

III. The Pilgrim

His time as a pilgrim was equally important for Ignatius's spiritual development. His time at Montserrat and Manresa saw him continue reading religious literature, particularly the *Imitation of Christ*, which would become his favorite book. As well, in Manresa, he began to be regularly visited by visions which, according to his own words and those of his followers, deeply increased his understanding of the mystical nature of the Trinity and of Christ's human-nature. His travel to Jerusalem only increased his religious fervor, as more and more he saw his mission as doing as much as possible for the poor of the world and converting the non-Christian world, a mission which would, of course, be taken up by his Company.

Following his return to health, Iñigo re-entered the world deeply invigorated by a zeal for Christ, inspired by the example of the saints, particularly Francis and Dominic. This desire to do "great things for Christ" included a devotion to poverty, penance, fasting, and prayer.²⁹ Iñigo first visited the Duke at Navarrete, where he collected a sum of money and redistributed it to some people he felt indebted to before heading out to Montserrat.³⁰ Just at this time, Adrian of Utrecht, Emperor Charles's chief advisor, was on his way down the same path, just a few days behind Loyola, making his way toward Rome to be made the new Pope. Iñigo stopped in a town outside Montserrat where he had himself fashioned a garment of sackcloth and bought a traveling stick. Now thoroughly resembling a saintly pilgrim, he continued on to Montserrat, a small Catalanian monastery.

Inigo arrived some twelve years following the death of Garcias de Cisneros, the abbey's most famous leader. Jean Chanon (also called Dom Juan Chanones), a French pilgrim turned monk

²⁹ De Guibert, 27.

³⁰ Caraman, 33.

at the monastery, oversaw Loyola's confession. Chanones also provided Loyola a book that possibly proved influential over his early spiritual evolution, the primary text of Cisneros, called the *Ejercitatorio de la Vida Espiritual*, or *Exercises for the Spiritual Life*. Staying for three days, Loyola participated in a modified version of a local confessional ritual in which he spent three days writing down all his sins before making his own confession.³¹ After being somewhat satisfied by his confession, he spent the night in prayer in front of the black Madonna of Montserrat, before hurriedly leaving the next morning, his sword and dagger left hanging at the shrine.³²

Inigo then made his way to Manresa, where Chanones had suggested he could find quiet in preparation of his pilgrimage.³³ In Manresa, he cultivated the spiritual insight that he had started to experience in Loyola. For about four months he devoted himself primarily to extended periods of prayer and penance, including fasting, deliberate self-neglect (such as letting his hair and fingernails grow long), and likely self-flagellation. After this period, he experienced many great doubts and disturbances that made him question his faith (we are not privy to the details of these scruples). He contemplated suicide, but a series of visions stayed his hand.³⁴ At this point, Ignatius likened God to a schoolmaster, sternly teaching the pilgrim the mystical knowledge that would inform his writing.

He stayed about a year in Manresa in a hospice. He experienced visions and acted penitently, attending mass regularly and confessing the sins he believed himself to have missed in his prior three-day writing session. Soon he came to live with the Dominicans, with whom he often

³¹ John W. O'Malley, *The First Jesuits* (Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard University Press, 1993), 24.

³² Ignatius, during his early years as a pilgrim, was worried that he would be recognized by nobles in Spain, who would then attempt to aid him in some way. Ignatius was insistent that he do his pilgrimage with as little help as possible. Chanones excused Inigo from leaving his name on the guest list, since the pilgrim was worried he would be recognized by members of the retinue of Adrian VI as it made its way south.

³³ Caraman, 36. It is possible that plague had closed the port of Barcelona, leaving Inigo with no way to leave Spain for the time being.

³⁴ Autobiography, 35.

spent seven hours a day in prayer. After some time, he determined that none of his penance for past grievances were worth his time, and began to plot his next moves. He continued praying regularly and reading during his off-time. It was in Manresa that Ignatius of Loyola discovered *The Imitation of Christ*, “a book to which he remained devoted all his life.”³⁵ This book would heavily influence his *Exercises*.

The stay at Manresa was important to Loyola’s spiritual maturation, as he spent a considerable amount of time in contemplation of the mysteries of Christianity through his almost constant praying. His contemplation now dealt less with the saints and more with the Trinity. Câmara notes that he began to understand the Trinity not as three separate individuals, but rather as keys (in this sense, three keys of a musical instrument – as three notes comprise a harmonious chord, so do the three elements of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit comprise God).³⁶ He experienced further visions that helped him in this understanding, particularly with regard to his recognition of the humanity of Christ. Additionally, an ‘illumination’ while seated near the river Cardoner sharpened his focus and broadened his understanding of his faith and mission.

Indeed, Loyola now seemed to have a sharper understanding of the essentials of Catholic Christianity: the Trinity, the Eucharist, the humanity of Christ and his suffering, and the Creation.³⁷ Though he felt he could not put these revelations into words, it was as if a great weight had been lifted off his chest. It is following this vision that the Ignatius who founded the Jesuits was truly born. No longer did becoming a Carthusian monk, an idea he had been milling around in his head, interest him. Now he desired to share with the world his insights. Where before he sought to emulate the saints and their ascetic penances, he now wished to dedicate himself to service.

³⁵ O’Malley, *The First Jesuits*, 25.

³⁶ *Autobiography*, footnote 2, p.38.

³⁷ Caraman, 39-40.

Jerusalem was no longer just a holy city to be visited, but a center of his future work. He aimed now to convert the Muslims.

Gone, too, were the wild mood swings and sinful thoughts that had plagued him. Though he was still woefully unread in the Scriptures and other religious literature, he felt a calling from God stronger than any book could offer. That being said, however, the germ of his great book had formed, and by the time he left Manresa, it was, for the most part, completely outlined. He had weathered a storm caused by, as he believed it, the devil's working in his heart. The life the devil wanted for him, Loyola believed, was to be abandoned, but only through total submission before God. Where before he had believed abnegation to be the key to his relief, Iñigo now saw that only a positive love for God, not a negative hatred of self, could lead to his salvation. Now sure that he had recognized the devil's illusions in his heart, Loyola was thoroughly prepared to continue on his pilgrimage to Jerusalem.

Early in 1523 Ignatius set out for Barcelona. He stayed there a little while, now encouraged to beg for his sustenance by his confessor, and he met with wise men and the 'spiritually minded' as often as he could. Taking a ship to Italy, he soon arrived in Rome, where he was blessed by Pope Adrian VI (1522-1523) to take the pilgrim's path to Jerusalem. He traveled to Venice, witnessing a vision of Christ in the meantime, and took a ship to Cyprus. He quickly found a new ship to Jaffa, and from there traveled to Jerusalem, arriving on the 4th of September.

Upon entering the holy city, he attempted to find a house with the Dominicans (likely at the monastery at Mount Sion). They made the rounds of the holy sites, staying a night in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, where Loyola spent the night praying at the different altars. He encountered a variety of peoples, including "Syrians, Nubians, Cafirs or Chaldeans and Abyssinians," as well

as Indians.³⁸ The Turkish authorities profited from the Christian pilgrims, while the westerners were confounded by the strange customs of the other peoples in the city, even the Christians. Loyola did not venture into Galilee, but saw Bethlehem, Jericho, and the River Jordan. Sometime after his arrival a large troop of Ottoman soldiers made their way into Jerusalem. Though he intended to stay, even if in captivity, Iñigo was informed by the Dominicans in the city that it would be extremely dangerous to stay. He pleaded his case, but was threatened by the Provincial in Bethlehem with excommunication if he did not follow orders. Loyola, with one day left in the city, went alone, against regulations, to the Mount of Olives where he saw the footprints of Christ at the site of the Ascension. He made his way to Bethphage before being found by a pursuant Syrian Christian, who sent him on his way back into the city. On 23 September 1523, Loyola left Jerusalem.

Interestingly, Loyola did not seem to apply great importance to his time in the Holy Land. Though Jerusalem was used in the *Exercises* as the figurative seat of Christ, it did not seem to affect his thinking greatly. While the imagery was of obvious value to his Exercises, which call upon the reader to envision the sites of Christ's Passion, it is nevertheless evident that Loyola had reached a wall in his spiritual growth, only to be filled, he hoped, with education at a later point. He experienced a vision which offered him consolation during his return to the monastery on the final day, possibly explaining his comfort upon losing what had been up to that point, his primary purpose in religious life. Though he would later take up the cause of converting the Muslims in the Holy Land, he would never again make his way there. Indeed, this direct mission was abandoned by the Jesuits in their early period in favor of the wider conversion of heathens that resulted in their widespread efforts throughout the world. Though his initial goal was set back, we

³⁸ Caraman, 49.

already see in this journey Loyola's dedication to an international approach to faith. At no point does he seem to complain about a particular ethnic or religious group. Indeed, he actively plays into the local Turks' game of offering money or quality goods in exchange for access to various religious sites. So sure was Iñigo in his faith that he welcomed being captured by the Ottomans, for hope that he could convert his captors through dialogue.³⁹ This is the sort of man that his pilgrimage had made the future Ignatius.

³⁹ Of course, he never actually had to put this faith to the test, since he left the Holy Land completely unscathed.

IV. *Spiritual Exercises*

By the time he had left Manresa, the core of the *Spiritual Exercises* was complete. Though there were revisions and additions over the course of his life, most notably the Rules for Thinking with the Church section, most of the work was already settled in Loyola's notes before he reached Jerusalem. Written as a handbook for retreat directors, the text was meant to serve as part of a program of contemplation that forced the initiate to fully comprehend the sacrifice of Christ, before becoming, in a way, united with him in his cause to convert mankind. The book is meant, as Dulles states, to "enable exercitants to overcome their disordered inclinations, to be inflamed with the love of God, and to make firm and concrete resolutions about how to follow Christ more closely."⁴⁰ It is obvious from this description how his life had inspired Loyola's writing. In the *Autobiography*, Ignatius depicts himself as deeply troubled and disordered before his injury, only to be swept away by the orderliness and purpose of God's mission. To understand the *Spiritual Exercises* is to understand Ignatius's personal battle with his own demons, and the nature of his striving to do more for God. The thing to keep in mind about the *Spiritual Exercises* is that they represent years of Christian thought distilled into the writings of a single man, mystically inspired and with essentially three religious books on his belt, whose doctrinal understanding was weak, but whose love of God and for the Church was unshakeable. But most importantly, the book represents Loyola's brand of religion perfectly. It is all about action – contemplation and choosing Christ, and all that Christ represents. Doing more for the love of God. There are no religious arguments or doctrinal screeds. There is only man and his choice for God.

What Are the *Spiritual Exercises*?

⁴⁰ Avery Dulles, Preface to Ignatius, *Spiritual Exercises*, xvii.

The *Spiritual Exercises* is a book of ‘exercises’ meant to engage the reader in mental contemplation of images from Christ’s life, and reflection on their own life. The book is designed specifically for use at retreats led by directors. Ignatius intended the book this way, because he himself had come into the habit of initiating his companions into his spiritual understanding by way of having them perform, in a way, the same sorts of mental actions that he had gone through while in convalescence in Loyola. The point is to realize how errant one’s earthly behavior has been, reflect on God and Christ’s glory, and determine to improve one’s own Christian attitude by learning to do more for the Glory of God. This notion is reflected in the Jesuit’s motto: *Ad maiorem Dei gloriam*, or “to the greater glory of God.”

Although it is meant for individuals in isolation, the *Exercises* were commonly, even in Loyola’s day, administered to groups. These groups could consist of anyone willing to undergo the *Exercises*—laymen and women, clergy and monks. It is divided into four “weeks,” with each week having a different objective. The ideal is for the retreat to take about a month, with the retreatant spending about four to five hours a day in prayer. Upon emerging from the four weeks of retreat and contemplation, theoretically the exerciser will have a newfound understanding of their relationship with God, and a reinvigorated Christian life. To reiterate, the book is meant as instructions and directions for retreat directors, not for individual devotional reading. This has not stopped many Jesuits and non-Jesuits nevertheless from reading from it to gain consolation. However, in the book itself, Ignatius specifically suggests reading Scripture and the *Imitation of Christ* for personal devotion. In the back of the book are a series of Rules, which were added to the *Exercises* as a way of outlining Loyola’s own positive reform within the Church. We will discuss this below.

Conception and Literary Origins

Much of the *Spiritual Exercises* was derived from Loyola's personal experience. Sitting alone in contemplation of his books, Ignatius had plenty of time to imagine Christ's suffering on the Cross as he read the *Vita Christi*, or to picture the penance of Francis or Benedict in the *Lives of the Saints*. Once he had left Loyola and gone to Manresa, his visions clearly drove him to begin writing out the *Exercises*. A recurring theme following his time in Manresa was his ever-present desire to share with others his spiritual findings. This likely resulted in the writing down of the Exercises, for personal reminders and for use when sharing his thoughts. By the time he was in Paris, he was actively instructing people in the Exercises, and many scholars consider the prelude to the founding of the Jesuits to be in his guidance of his six initial companions in them.

However, though there are clear elements of personal inspiration and the fact that Ignatius was, at the time of conception, for the most part poorly read on spiritual matters, it is nevertheless valuable to analyze the books that Loyola is known to have read in his early religious years. We have to keep in mind that the core of the material for the *Spiritual Exercises* was written before Ignatius travelled to Jerusalem. That means that, in about a year and a half, Ignatius had composed one of the most important distillations of religious material in Christian history. It is clear, then, that he was inspired by the books that he read early on.

It is undoubted that Loyola was influenced by three primary texts, as we have stated above. For clarity's sake, these are: The *Golden Legend (Flos Sanctorum)* by Jacopo da Vorigine, *Life of Christ (Vita Christi)* by Ludolph of Saxony, and the *Imitation of Christ* by Thomas à Kempis. Less accepted is a fourth book, *Exercises for the Spiritual Life (Ejercitatorio de la Vida Espiritual)* by Abbot Garcias de Cisneros. Ignatius himself suggested the first two were the only ones he read during his convalescence in his pilgrimage journal, and the third was given to him during his time

in Manresa, and reread throughout the rest of his life.⁴¹ The fourth, however, is never mentioned by Loyola himself. The question, of course, is how much Ignatius drew upon these works to formulate the *Spiritual Exercises*. As for the direct borrowing of phrases, the Spanish Jesuits who edited the *Exercises* in the 1919 edition of the *Monumenta* determined that little had been borrowed directly, but it was clear that Loyola took much from the copious notes he kept on these books.⁴² Though other sources for the *Exercises* have been suggested, at the time of conceiving and writing the book, Ignatius simply could not have read the sorts of texts he is accused of lifting from.⁴³ Therefore, this section will focus on the three confirmed texts that influenced Ignatius, along with a discussion of the influence of the *Ejercitatorio* of Cisneros. There will be a brief note on other influences at the end.

Ignatius claimed to have read a “book on the lives of the saints in Spanish” in his *Autobiography*, which has been deduced to likely have been a translation of the *Golden Legend* by Jacopo da Vorigine (1230-1298), a ‘lives of the saints’. This edition, translated by Fray Gauberto Vagad, a former officer under King Ferdinand, was entitled the *Flos Sanctorum*, and appeared between 1490 and 1510, with a reprint being made in Toledo in 1511.⁴⁴ It is likely Loyola would have known of Vagad, and perhaps even have met him, considering he had served at one time as Ferdinand’s official chronicler. The book described the saints, particularly the founders of the

⁴¹ Rahner, *The Spirituality of Loyola*, 24. The assertion by Rahner that Ignatius read only three books before his University studies has been contested in more recent scholarship.

⁴² See Evenett, *The Spirit of the Counter-Reformation*, 53-4.

⁴³ See Evenett, *The Spirit of the Counter-Reformation*, 54. We are in need of a contemporary analysis of Ignatius’s literary sources. His declared booklist was surprisingly small, and even at University, it would appear that he was not particularly moved by any of the scholastic books he was required to read. However, it is easy to see that there was some sort of literary body beyond the three or four books he read on his pilgrimage that Ignatius was pulling from, especially with regard to certain passages in the *Spiritual Exercises*, as we have noted. The problem, of course, is determining a specific source for a passage, phrase, or idea. While the 1919 *Monumenta* project may have done a thorough analysis of the sources of the Superior General’s texts, we ought to consider that these researchers were Spanish Jesuits. I would recommend a new project involving non-Jesuit, and ideally wholly secular, researchers.

⁴⁴ De Guibert, 153.

religious Orders, as “*caballeros de Dios*” – knights of God in the service of Jesus Christ.⁴⁵ This romantic imagery, common in Spain at the time, undoubtedly spoke to Ignatius and inspired him in his efforts. Though at first bored by the book, little by little, the works of the saints began to appeal to him.

While this book did little to influence the *Spiritual Exercises*, it certainly left its mark on Ignatius, who would actively attempt to emulate the saints for the first part of his journey after his convalescence. There is some mention of the saints, however, in the *Exercises*, particularly in the final note at the end of the Kingdom of Christ section, where Ignatius specifically points to the *Imitation of Christ*, the Gospels, and the lives of the saints as beneficial reading for the director to suggest. As Ignatius aged and his spirituality matured, he became less interested in the ascetic penance represented by the saints. His own body was racked by chronic illness and disability due to the trials he had submitted it to during his pilgrim years. As the Superior general, he took a great interest in the physical health of his subordinates. Thus, while the idea of the saints was emphasized, he shied away from direct emulation for his followers. In the end, the other books he read would be far more influential on his life.

Ludolph of Saxony’s *The Life of Christ (Vita Christi)* was likely the first source for the *Exercises*, because in its pages we see not a mere retelling or summation of the Gospels, but rather, a set of contemplations on the life of Jesus. Specifically, it “taught the reader to project him- or herself into the biblical story [of Christ] and live out the details.”⁴⁶ It is not hard to see that Loyola must have been deeply moved by this particular work, and “there is little doubt that [*The Life of Christ*] stimulated his thinking on the relation of the believer, God and the world.”⁴⁷ Essentially,

⁴⁵ Caraman, 27.

⁴⁶ Eire, *Reformations*, 443.

⁴⁷ Alister E. McGrath, *Christian Spirituality: An Introduction* (Oxford and Malden, MA: Blackwell, 1999), 160.

reading the pages of the *Vita Christi*, we see the clear inspiration for Ignatius's contemplative method.

Contemplation in Christianity has been present since the beginning of the faith. Most likely inspired by the writings of Plotinus, the early Christians, such as Gregory of Nyssa, found the mystical contemplation of Christ to be a valuable tool in the quest for union with God. However, as mysticism within the Church ebbed and flowed in popularity, this mixture of contemplation with mysticism was frowned upon. Later works would offer a more neutral form of meditation.

Meditations on the Life of Christ, a book traditionally ascribed to Bonaventure, but later re-ascribed to Pseudo-Bonaventure, who may have been a Franciscan monk, was a work of the late 13th century that actively taught readers to meditate on scenes from Christ's life. It was a popular book in the late medieval period, and was translated into Middle English by Nicholas Love, a Carthusian, as *The Mirror of the Blessed Life of Christ* in the early 1400s. Including a polemic against John Wycliffe, the book was approved and propagated by Archbishop of Canterbury Thomas Arundel. Ludolph, also a Carthusian, almost certainly read the *Meditations*, and perhaps was familiar with *The Mirror* as well. His contemplative method owes itself greatly to the author of the *Meditations*, and for this reason we can trace the method at least as far back as the late 1200s.

The *Meditations* and early sections of the *Vita Christi* offer a simple contemplative method for reliving the life of Christ, which was emulated by Ignatius.⁴⁸ Unlike many other contemplative schemes, which involved heavy self-reflection, these methods required the reader to merely imagine the scene and rest on it for extended periods of time. Loyola's *Exercises* ask similar things

⁴⁸ De Guibert, 154.

of the exerciser, who is required to picture scenes that are described by the retreat director, including more imaginative scenes, most notably the Two Standards section, which asks the exerciser to imagine the forces of Satan and Christ amassing on the plains of Babylon and Jerusalem, respectively, and imagine the speeches of both figures to their followers.⁴⁹

It would be valuable to briefly discuss the notion of Contemplative Meditation in Ignatian spirituality. As mentioned above, images are extremely important to Loyola and for this reason, he effectively structured the *Exercises* around the activity of conjuring up images of various scenes from the life of Christ. The rich images of God and Christ that Ignatius encountered during his convalescence, particularly in the *Vita Christi*, was entirely new, even though he had been a practicing Catholic his entire life. This fact resulted in Loyola's continued insistence on image as the best way to hone one's understanding of the relationship between man, Christ, and God. Indeed, it would seem the entire point of his early pilgrimage was so that he could personally see and touch the places that his Lord had encountered in the Gospels. In the Ignatian view, Jesus is the mediator, but as a man, his existence and story is entirely relatable.

The method of contemplation expounded by Loyola in the *Exercises* is somewhat antithetical to the meditative practices of earlier and later mystics, and is perhaps most readily contrasted with the Quietist movement of the 17th century.⁵⁰ I would, however, argue that Ignatius's point of contention may have been with the *alumbrados* (the "illuminated") sect that was active in Spain during his lifetime. Thinkers influenced by the *alumbrados*, including Teresa of Avila and John of the Cross, were saved from accusations of heresy mainly due to their public support for the authority of the Church, much like Ignatius himself.⁵¹ Ignatius was regularly

⁴⁹ *Spiritual Exercises*, 136-148, pp. 65-7.

⁵⁰ Dickens, *The Counter Reformation*, 78-9.

⁵¹ Although, they certainly did not make it easy on themselves.

accused in his early years as a pilgrim of being an *alumbrado*, especially for his open talk of mystical experience. The *alumbrados* believed deeply in their personal union with God, and also disparaged of earthly laws due to this connection they felt with the divine. Ignatius nipped this connection to himself in the bud by consistently supporting the earthly Church and being an active force in the carrying out of its orders.

Another worry though, was that the *alumbrados* believed meditation led to this sort of mystical union. Ignatius did not believe in this. He believed that meditation led one to succumb to God's will and submit oneself to his power; not to become one with God. This has a precedent in medieval Christian history. Gerard Zerbolt, a member of the *Devotio Moderna* movement, summarized the medieval view of meditation: "By meditation is meant the process in which you diligently turn over in your heart whatever you have read or heard, earnestly reflecting upon it and thus enkindling your affections in some particular manner, or enlightening your understanding."⁵² Furthermore, Zerbolt actively encouraged the reading of Scripture to prompt meditation, feeling that the sort of meditation and contemplation that existed without Scriptural basis was useless. For this reason, Ignatius promoted both loyalty to the Church and active reading of Scripture. Indeed, the meditation he encouraged was almost entirely contemplative. He suggested imagining scenes from Scripture and the lives of the saints. Rarely did he ever humor inner meditation. Even in his personal life, where he would often be found in deep meditation over something he had seen or imagined, it was rarely the sort of meditation that was devoid of image.

Besides the *Vita Christi*, Ignatius found his contemplative tendencies rewarded by the vivid images in the *Imitation of Christ*, commonly attributed to Thomas á Kempis. The book is often

⁵² Hans Zerbolt quoted in McGrath, *Christian Spirituality*, 85.

considered the most fully realized distillation of the thought of the *Devotio Moderna* movement. The *Devotio* was ‘founded’ in the late 14th century by the Dutch deacon Gerard Groote. Educated in the scholastic system, Groote received a Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Paris and lived some time as a secretary before becoming an ascetic. He began preaching in the 1380s, and started to formulate revolutionary ideas that derived from his own spiritual struggles. The most important aspects of these sermons included deriding the opulence of local clergymen and monastic orders. His open-air sermons and meetings held in the homes of his closest followers are considered by Hyma to be the foundation for the *Devotio Moderna* movement and its central manifestation, the Brotherhood of the Common Life.⁵³ Eventually shut out from preaching by local clergy, Groote continued to train his followers by educating them in Christian religious thought, mixed with his own teachings. On top of this, he began to raise funds by having his pupils copy texts and disseminate them throughout the region. This book-copying industry would continue to be the Brethren’s main source of income, and lead to their enormous literary influence throughout the Low Countries and Germany.⁵⁴ The Brothers of the Common Life would continue to have influence throughout the region, being a part of the education of major figures such as Erasmus and Martin Luther, but would nevertheless be essentially forgotten once the Protestant Reformation began in full force.

Groote has much in common with Ignatius Loyola (and to Martin Luther, but this is beyond our scope), particularly in his devotion to the healing of the soul. More than anything, Groote was focused on correcting the individual life rather than the structures of the Church. As Hyma puts it,

⁵³ Albert Hyma, *The Christian Renaissance: A History of the “Devotio Moderna”*, 2nd Ed. (Hamden, Connecticut: Archon Books, 1965), 14-5. Hyma is a troubling source due to his near hero-worship of Groote’s character, peaking in his syrupy comparisons of Groote to Jesus Christ.

⁵⁴ Many of the students of the *Devotio Moderna*, who chose not to become Brothers, would be highly sought after for their secretarial skills. See Hyma, 60-1.

before the Western Schism could be healed, Grootte suggested “we must first heal the schism in our hearts.”⁵⁵ True doctrine, he reasoned, would follow from the personal religion of true Christians. This is strikingly similar to Ignatius, who cared little for Church doctrine or scholarly debates. He was far more interested in the personal spiritual development of human beings. Although his conclusions were different than Grootte’s, and he had very little to say about the Church’s excesses, Ignatius nevertheless would have found much in common with Grootte and his successors’ beliefs.

One of those successors was the Thomas á Kempis, who was trained in Grootte’s school in Deventer from 1392 to 1399.⁵⁶ After school, he joined his brother Johann in the Monastery of Mount St. Agnes, which was part of the Congregation of Windesheim, established by the followers of Grootte. There he became a prolific book writer and copyist. During this time, he copied the Bible at least four times, and wrote several handbooks on the Christian faith, four of which were compiled by Thomas into his *Imitation of Christ*. The book, which was written anonymously, became the most copied text outside the Bible in Western Europe in the next fifty years. It was widely praised and circulated among the religious, inspiring various other works similar to it.

The *Imitation* is often called a summation of medieval piety. The elements of the book that summarize medieval piety include: the insistence on abnegation and contempt of the world, on docility to the movement of grace, on the value of familiarity with God who can be found in all things, and on the necessity of self-conquest and the reformation of disordered inclinations to arrive at it. All these elements greatly inspired Ignatius’s own spirituality, as is clear from the fact that he seemed so attached to the book. Indeed, the book most certainly inspired Loyola’s belief

⁵⁵ Hyma, *Christian Renaissance*, 512.

⁵⁶ Kempis, *On the Passion of Christ According to the Four Evangelists*, trans. Joseph N. Tylenda, S.J. (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2004), 9-12.

in the sanctification of the self through faith in God, which also validated his own experience at his conversion moment. The *Imitation's* assertion of Free Will spoke deeply to Ignatius, who latched on to the notion as sacrosanct.

Ignatius came upon the *Imitation* during his stay in Manresa, thinking it was the work of the 14th and 15th century scholar Jean Gerson.⁵⁷ The book was precious to Ignatius, who carried it with him wherever he went afterward. Indeed, Gonçalves de Câmara, the scribe of the *Autobiography*, noted that Ignatius's life was essentially built around the principles of the *Exercises* and the *Constitutions*, but adds that his life was the *Imitation of Christ* made manifest.⁵⁸ We are unsure of all the books that Ignatius read for his own spiritual understanding, but it is widely accepted that the *Imitation* was, even from the days of his spiritual infancy, his preferred choice of reading. Any other book is only worth mentioning due to the possibility that it affected Loyola's thought. Only the first three are directly mentioned by Ignatius himself.

However, at first glance, it seems almost striking that Loyola never mentioned the work of Abbot Cisneros. After all, the title *Exercises for the Spiritual Life* (henceforth the *Ejercitatorio*) is so similar to the *Spiritual Exercises* as to be of immediate interest. In 1607, the Jesuit hagiologist Pedro de Ribadeneira wrote a letter to Francisco Girón explaining his view that Ignatius likely read from the *Ejercitatorio*. It is probable that his confessor at Montserrat, Dom Juan Chanones, gave some instructions from the book and allowed Ignatius to use it for his personal meditation and prayer. But, he adds, the two books are starkly different.⁵⁹ As Evenett summarizes, the

⁵⁷ The book was called *Gerzonçito* in Spanish, due to being misattributed to Chancellor Gerson. See De Guibert, 155.

⁵⁸ Da Câmara, *Memoriale*, 97, in *Scripta de Sancto Ignatio*, I, 200; *Fontes narrativi de S. Ignatio de Loyola de Societatis Iesu initiis*. Edd. D. Fernández Zapico, C. de Dalmases, P. Leturia, 3 vols, (Rome: 1943-1960); cited in De Guibert, 155.

⁵⁹ *Ribadeneira*, ed. J. Vilar D. Restrep, 2 vols., (Madrid, 1920, 1923). Cited in De Guibert, 157.

Ejercitatorio seeks a “general deepening of the spiritual life of monks.”⁶⁰ Loyola’s *Exercises*, on the other hand, have in mind a very specific occasion in which they are employed, being meant for retreats. They are not intended to be read regularly, and for all intents and purposes were never meant to be read by anyone aside from a Jesuit director at all. Though there is plenty of crossover with regard to content, the format and presentation of the material is far from the same. The backbone of the *Spiritual Exercises*, the Foundation, the Kingdom, the Humility, and the Election, make no appearance in the *Ejercitatorio*. The Exercises in the book, too, are focused on preparation for the union with God, not the imitation of Christ in order to fulfill God’s will, as in the *Exercises*. To cast more doubt on the *Ejercitatorio*’s influence, Ignatius spent a mere three days in at Montserrat, and had barely any time to digest the book, especially considering his novice status with regard to spiritual literature. Furthermore, even if he took a copy with him on his travels, it is evident that it did not make a serious impact on his personal spirituality, despite the likelihood that it inspired the title of his masterpiece.⁶¹ But something we cannot ignore is that, much like *Imitation*, the *Ejercitatorio* was an influential distilling of New Devotion thought into Ignatian spirituality.⁶² This is particularly seen in the book’s emphasis on an ordered approach to spiritual development, as well as its presentation of fixed Exercises for the mind and soul.

Other sources have been suggested for Ignatius’s writing, as we noted above, and there is still much debate over whether or not Ignatius lifted text from other sources directly in writing his book. Before our brief look at these possible sources, we should note that Ignatius, though totally

⁶⁰ Evenett, *The Spirit of the Counter-Reformation*, 54.

⁶¹ This is not without controversy. De Guibert suggests the *Ejercitatorio* may have inspired the *Exercises* title, but he also notes that *Exercises* had become a common expression used in religious literature by that point. “See the note of L. Hartling, “De usu nominis Exercitiorum Spiritualium ante S. P. Ignatium,” *AHSJ* II (1923), 316-318.” In De Guibert, footnote 22, 159.

⁶² Cheslyn Jones, Geoffrey Wainwright, and Edward Yarnold, *The Study of Spirituality* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), 377.

literate, was not a trained writer of books, and had no experience beyond writing his diaries. Therefore, it is likely that he lifted passages or phrases that inspired him during his reading. However, identifying specific texts as the source of one of his phrases is difficult because, as De Guibert puts it, “in most instances there is question, in fact, of ideas or comparisons which were pretty much the common property of all spiritual circles at that time.”⁶³ As for oral sources, it is impossible to state with certainty that any one man or group held a significant influence over Loyola’s spiritual development. He confessed to the Benedictine Dom Chanones, he stayed with the Dominicans at Manresa, and he held a notable soft-spot for Carthusians. He claimed to have sought out religious conversation often during his travels, but scarcely found anyone with ideas worth contemplating. He was also aware of the writings of Erasmus and Juan Luis Vives, as well as other notables such as Savonarola. However, he ordered all books by Catholics who were not in good graces with the Church or who had questioned its authority removed from the Jesuit headquarters in 1553.⁶⁴

Nevertheless, we should mention Erasmus in particular as an interesting literary figure in Loyola’s life. The famed Meditation on the Kingdom of Christ is found almost exactly in Erasmus’s *Handbook of a Christian Knight (Enchiridion militis Christiani)*.⁶⁵ There is conflicting evidence over whether Ignatius ever read the book. De Câmara suggests that Ignatius was recommended this book by humanist friends at the University of Alcalá, but he simply refused to read it; Ribadeneira claimed that this event came at Barcelona, and Ignatius read but never

⁶³ De Guibert, 160. He notes that, you can take both the preface to the *Flos Sanctorum* and the *Rule of St. Benedict* and find similar passages to Ignatius’s Kingdom exercise. This shows that while Ignatius probably didn’t read the latter work during the gestation of the *Exercises*, the ideas being expressed were often very similar throughout Christian literature.

⁶⁴ See De Guibert, footnote 28, p.162.

⁶⁵ This paragraph follows a line of thought found in Evenett, *The Spirit of the Counter-Reformation*, 55-6.

completed the book, because it “interrupted his devotions.”⁶⁶ As mentioned above, it would seem Ignatius had little tolerance for controversial books, and preferred to read entirely from books that did not stray from orthodoxy. While Ignatius certainly agreed with many elements of Christian humanism, he nevertheless refused to read their works for fear that it would lead him astray, as he believed had happened to Luther. Ignatius, though acutely aware of the needs of his contemporary society and revolutionary in his outlook for solving the spiritual crisis of the late medieval Catholic Church, nevertheless remained entirely rooted intellectually in the Middle Ages.⁶⁷ Essentially, any element of Ignatian spirituality that can be found in humanism, would have been traced by him to his own mystical revelations.

On the Rules for Thinking within the Church

Loyola never explicitly discusses the Protestants in the *Spiritual Exercises*. However, he makes very clear reference to them in the Rules for Thinking within the Church, which is found at the very end of the book. Loyola would have been keenly aware of the dangers that threatened the Church in the early 1520s. He had been accused on multiple occasions of consorting with the *alumbrados*, and he was wary to be labeled a Lutheran by the Spanish inquisition, who saw little difference between the two. In Paris, he likely encountered Protestants in the open for the first time, as we will see. In his final year there, the Affair of the Placards, which forced John Calvin out of France, would have been major news. The damage that Ignatius saw being inflicted on the Church likely inspired him to write the Rules, because he saw that questioning the tenets of the Church was leading to widespread chaos and abandonment of traditional religious principles. However, it is commonly held that the Rules were written at some point in 1539-1541, likely as a

⁶⁶ De Guibert, footnote 36, pp. 165-6. “But Ignatius, ‘upon hearing it said that there were doubts and discussions about the author, never wished to read him, saying that he had enough books on which no doubts rested.’”

⁶⁷ De Guibert, 166.

brief declaration to make it clear to the clergy that the Jesuits had no Protestant leanings. Indeed, for the most part, Loyola was never interested in battling Protestants doctrinally, he simply didn't want to make the Society's job even more difficult than it already was by having no defense against accusations by more inquisitorial elements within the Church.

In the Rules, Ignatius explicitly states that the Jesuit should “put aside all judgment of our own, and...obey in all things the true Spouse of Christ our Lord, our holy Mother, the hierarchical Church,” and “praise all the commandments of the Church, and be on the alert to find reasons to defend them, and by no means in order to criticize them.”⁶⁸ Nothing short of intellectual submission is demanded for the Jesuit: “What seems to me white, I will believe black if the hierarchical Church so defines...For it is by the same Spirit and Lord who gave the Ten Commandments that our Holy Mother Church is ruled and governed.”⁶⁹ Though he never explicitly states his opposition to the humanist developments in Biblical exegesis and subsequent doctrinal disputes from learned men, it is quite clear that Loyola viewed those lines of thought as dangerous at best, and heretical at worst. To modern readers, his deep commitment to Free Will combined with his active suppression of free expression and thought seem ironically contradictory. Yet, as we have seen and will continue to see, Ignatius, through his mystical revelation, was in many ways a humanist at heart. He simply valued stability and unity of the Christian faith over the search for literary truth.⁷⁰

In the Rules, he orders the Jesuits to avoid theological debate as well: “Hence, as far as is possible with the help of God, one may speak of faith and grace that the Divine Majesty may be

⁶⁸ *Exercises*, 353, 361; pp.133-4.

⁶⁹ *Exercises*, 365; pp. 135.

⁷⁰ Loyola, though valuing the Scriptures, clearly believed one could do without them and still be a good Christian. See footnote 114, p. 61.

praised. But let it not be done in such a way, above all not in times which are as dangerous as ours, that works and free will suffer harm, or that they are considered of no value.”⁷¹ Though he concedes that all who are saved are predestined to be so, he suggests that without a full belief in free will, “they [the common people] become indolent and neglect the works that are conducive to the salvation of spiritual progress of their souls.”⁷² Ignatius, so deeply affected by his own hard journey to Christ and so convinced in the efficacy of such a journey, clearly saw in the Protestant doctrine (especially that of Luther and John Calvin), a complete denial of the individual man’s potential spiritual evolution.

But, as we can tell, refutation was not the goal of Ignatius’s writing. Without actually resorting to doctrinal explanation and argument, the *Exercises* serve as a “thorough repudiation” of Protestant theology, not through polemical arguments, but through “training one’s will...strengthening one’s relationship with the divine.”⁷³ This repudiation comes through the recognition of the *Exercises* of the initiative and capacity of the human soul to overcome its own weakness. As Eire puts it, “God is part of the process, yes, but the *Exercises* are not as much about what God does for humans as about what every Christian can do to reach out and grow ever closer to God.”⁷⁴ God has a plan, Ignatius suggests, but every person must come to discover this plan through their faith, and must choose to follow it. Though Loyola seems to present an authoritarian view of the Church’s intellectual power in the Rules, Burns suggests that to consider Loyola’s commandments in this section to advocate “blind obedience” would be to misinterpret Loyola, and this has led to the rules being “badly understood.”⁷⁵ Loyola actively worked against problematic

⁷¹ *Exercises*, 369, p. 136.

⁷² *Exercises*, 367, p. 136.

⁷³ Eire, *Reformations*, 445-6.

⁷⁴ Eire, *Reformations*, 446.

⁷⁵ Harry R. Burns, S.J., “St. Ignatius and the Mystical Body,” in *Woodstock Letters* 87 (1958): 107-114, p.107, footnote 1.

clergymen, especially those who abused their office for political or financial gain. However, he maintained full doctrinal support of the Church, believing that centuries of tradition and doctrinal development did not deserve to be overturned by one irate German monk. Inner reform was the name of Loyola's mission, inner reform of the heart, particularly, which would lead to outer reform in the Church.

V. The Student

Education was obviously very important to Ignatius, who determined to attend to his education despite having little knack for it. Before we turn to Loyola's personal education, it should be noted that, though there is no indication in the "First Sketch" of education's importance to the Jesuits, by the time Ignatius died, he had founded thirty-nine colleges, and by 1575, the Jesuits operated "130 colleges, seminaries, and universities."⁷⁶ While his personal education seemed to derive from a feeling of inadequacy in his own understanding and necessity at acquiring a license to preach, he nevertheless came to value the humanist curriculum, as we will discuss, and would use the scholastic elements of his education in his later life to form powerful arguments in favor of the Jesuit mission.

When he returned to Barcelona from his long pilgrimage, Iñigo found himself eager to initiate his studies. While he was there, in early 1525, Francis I, King of France, was brought into the city to be held prisoner after having been captured by Charles's forces at Pavia that February. Loyola, mostly uncaring for the political affairs between Spain and France, determined to study grammar in Barcelona. He was instructed in the humanist style, studying figures such as Virgil and Seneca, the Córdoba native. His teacher, Jeronimo Ardèvol, was a harsh master, but Inigo, now thirty-four years old, found him to be greatly inspiring. Beginning in Barcelona was a theme that would recur throughout Loyola's schooling – he was always being distracted by new insights and spiritual revelations, so that he would become easily distracted from his studies. Realizing the problem, however, Ignatius confided in his teacher and promised to keep himself focused and clear-headed.⁷⁷

⁷⁶ Martin, *Plague?*, 21.

⁷⁷ Caraman, 55.

Inigo, driven by his desire to help others and spread the message of Christ, began to share his Exercises with his friends. Though not yet in book form, the *Spiritual Exercises* by this time were in a series of notes and journal entries that Loyola was slowly structuring into a proper program. It is clear from his letters that he had moved past his ascetic phase. He had done away with his travel cloak and donned simple clerical garb. He made a point to show in letters a newfound happiness in good friends and proper eating. He also worked closely with the Convent of Santa Clara, which had been founded for Poor Clares, but now followed the Benedictine Rule. Some Catalan noble daughters in the convent took lightly to the rules, and regularly engaged in prostituting themselves to local men. Iñigo openly defied the women and attempted to carry out a reform alongside the nun Teresa Rejadella. Many of the male patrons found this so objectionable that they beat Loyola to within an inch of death. He was out of commission for several months, but by the time he had recovered, he was approved by Ardèvol for University studies. Nervous that this judgment was premature, Iñigo took an examination under a doctor of theology, who confirmed Ardèvol's opinion. In Spring, 1526, Loyola started, on foot, the four hundred mile journey to the University of Alcalá.⁷⁸

Alcalá, now Alcalá de Henares, is a city 22 miles northeast of Madrid, was founded by the Romans and eventually conquered by the Visigoths and Moors in turn. In 1118, it was conquered by the Archbishop of Toledo and incorporated into the bishopric. In 1293, the school was founded to teach the Scholastic curriculum, though it was changed during Cardinal Cisneros's humanist reforms. The Cardinal had studied at Alcalá, and he raised it to a university in 1510. Though he actively destroyed books of Muslim wisdom (medical and scientific books excluded), he eagerly

⁷⁸ Caraman, 57-8. Alcalá was the site of a University established by none other than Cardinal Jimenez de Cisneros, whose influence on Ignatius we shall examine below. See *Autobiography*, footnote 2, p.60.

embraced the humanistic studies being pursued in Italy. A Polyglot Bible, in Latin, Greek, Hebrew and Chaldaric, was produced at Alcalá in 1522.

During the period that Iñigo found himself in the city, it was roiling with suspicion of activity by the Alumbrados (a Spanish translation of ‘illuminists’).⁷⁹ The Alumbrados advocated for a more perfect union with God, in line with some of the medieval mystics such as Meister Eckhart. The hallmarks of outward worship, including the taking of the sacraments, was considered null by the Alumbrados. Moreover, they took the particularly antinomian stance that, because of their mystical union with God, they were above the secular law, which of course did not go over well with local authorities. Iñigo was an easy target of accusations due to his open talk of his mystical experiences, preaching, and active direction of the still nascent Exercises. However, after being tried and imprisoned, he was freed on the condition that he not preach without at least four more years of theological training. Later on, Loyola would remark that he never associated with schismatics, Lutherans, or Alumbrados.⁸⁰ After the judgment was passed, Iñigo tried to plead his case with the Archbishop of Toledo, Alonso de Fonseca, who ordered him to continue his studies in Salamanca, at the College of St. James. Here, Loyola was once again scrutinized by authority for his strange dress and propensity for delivering his Exercises to other young men. Knowing his mystical leaning could get him executed, Loyola determined maintain for some time that all his prior preaching had derived from his studies and from conversations with religious scholars.⁸¹

⁷⁹ Caraman, 60-1.

⁸⁰ *Fontes Narrativi de S. Ignatio de Loyola et de Societatus Iesu Initiis*, I, 53; in *Monumenta Historica Societatis Jesu*; cited in Caraman, note 5, p. 62.

⁸¹ At a point, Iñigo’s teachings were compared with that of Erasmus, but Loyola refused to bite, consistently denying that he had read anything by the Dutch scholar. See Caraman, 69.

At Alcalá and Salamanca he studied, unsystematically, the “logic of Soto, the physics of Albert, and the Master of the Sentences [Peter Lombard].”⁸² ‘Soto’ refers to Domingo de Soto (1494-1560), a Dominican who had been a recent reviser of scholastic philosophy in Spain. His *Summulae*, a manual of logic, would have been read by Inigo. ‘Albert’, or Albertus Magnus (1200-1280), was a German scholastic who had commented on nearly all of Aristotle’s extant works, providing an outline for the application especially of the Greek’s physics and natural history. This was later expanded by his student Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274). Peter Lombard (1096-1160), was most known for his *Four Books of Sentences*, which compiled the opinions of major theologians on biblical passages, becoming the primary theological textbook of Scholastic education.⁸³ These three form an unsurprising curriculum for the relatively conservative scholasticism present at Salamanca.

During his time in Salamanca, Ignatius was notably associated with Diego and Miguel de Eguía. Diego often assisted Inigo with his studies, which he often neglected in favor of discussing Christian doctrine and spiritual matters, as well as on gathering food for himself and other poor people. The other brother, Miguel owned a printing shop, which in 1526 published a Spanish translation of Erasmus’s *Enchiridion*. This possibly served as Loyola’s first encounter with the Northern Humanist.⁸⁴ Regardless, it is known that Loyola publically denied reading Erasmus, for sake of not becoming embroiled in any religious debates. Despite this, the authorities noted similarities between Loyola’s thought and the material they had been told to look out for, which generally included a mashup of Erasmian, illuminist, and Lutheran ideas. Because of the regular difficulties with the Inquisition, Loyola eventually decided to leave for Paris.

⁸² See *Autobiography*, footnote 4, p.61. This is the only description of his studies in Alcalá Loyola ever gave.

⁸³ Caraman, 65.

⁸⁴ See *Autobiography*, footnote 5, p.61.

There is nothing of this journey in his autobiography, but he arrived in Paris on February 2, 1528. Knowing barely any French, Iñigo was sure that he would not be distracted by the spiritual conversation that had thwarted him in Spain. He enrolled at the College of Montaigu at the University of Paris, a popular destination for Spaniards and Portuguese which specialized in teaching teenagers the rudiments of Latin grammar. Though it was known as a house for the more wayward students at the University, Montaigu is also remembered for fostering Rabelais, Erasmus and John Calvin, who left the college at the behest of his father two or three years prior to Inigo's enrollment (the former two had very little to say in Montaigu's favor, and much to say about its horrors).⁸⁵ The school had recently become a Catholic reformist center in Paris under the direction of the Fleming Jean Standonck, who was greatly influenced by the *Devotio Moderna* and the Brotherhood of the Common Life.⁸⁶ Though the reform had broken down after Standonck's death in 1504, it nevertheless affected Inigo, who took to heart both Standonck's devotion to personal sanctification, as well as his failure to institute lasting rules. Now, at thirty-seven, Loyola began his education anew alongside the teenagers, inaugurating ten years of educational effort.

Having little money, Loyola was forced once again to beg for bread. This greatly challenged him, as classes at Montaigu lasted from 5 a.m. to 7 p.m., with little time in between for begging. At times, he would visit Flanders to beg for money from Spanish merchants, and he also received help from his friends in Barcelona. Loyola gave what is often considered to be the complete Exercises to three Spaniard friends at the college, all of whom began making drastic changes in their lifestyles. The ruckus that followed once again caused the eye of authority to come to rest on Inigo, who quickly sought out the Dominican head inquisitor, Matthieu Ory. The old

⁸⁵ For comments on Montaigu, see Caraman, 75, 76-7.

⁸⁶ See Caraman, 77.

Breton was quickly convinced of Loyola's innocence in any wrongdoing, and expedited his entry into the College of St Barbe.

On the 1st of October, 1529, Iñigo moved from Montaigu to Sainte Barbe, and his name was entered into the matriculation book of the college as Ignatius de Loyola. It is unknown if this was a clerical error (Enecus is the correct Latin form of Inigo) or a deliberate choice by Loyola to emulate the saint Ignatius of Antioch. Either way, the name would stick for the rest of his life.⁸⁷ Meanwhile, a movement at the College, led by Jacques Lefèvre d'Étaples (1455-1536), a seventy-year old Christian humanist, was advocating for a change in theological teaching. Lefèvre had spent much of his career editing the works of Aristotle, Scripture, and the Church Fathers, attempting to establish a rigorously research body of essential texts for study. Thoroughly Catholic, the scholar watched haplessly as many of his own students and followers fell into heresy. The influences of some of Lefèvre's more orthodox disciples, such as the Scottish John Mair (who would teach John Knox), would be felt by Loyola and his future companions, especially Xavier and Nadal, who wrote harshly of the failures of the other Masters at the University, who idly sat by and sometimes supported the heretical theological beliefs and contrarian political actions that challenged the Church across Europe.

In 1530, Ignatius briefly visited London, where he cavorted with local Carthusians. Many of the monks he held discussions with would die soon afterward during Henry VIII's suppression of the monastic orders. Returning to Paris, he found himself once again plagued by the visions that had distracted him early on his studies, but with the help of private tutoring sponsored by his teacher, Master Juan de Peña, he finished his degree by January 1532. The next year, in March

⁸⁷ Caraman, 80.

1533, Loyola received his Licentiate in philosophy. It was not too long afterward that he began to form the group of companions that would one day become the Society of Jesus.

Peter Faber, a Savoyard, and Francis Xavier, a Navarrese, were roommates when they met Ignatius, who hit it off instantly with the humble and brilliant Faber, but was met with near-hostility by the ambitious nobleman, Xavier, who possibly held ancestral distaste for the Loyolas. However, Ignatius found the man to be someone worth friendship, and devoted a significant amount of time to helping Xavier, who needed money to continue his studies, eventually winning him over to Loyola's friendship. The others were the impulsive Simon Rodrigues on a scholarship from the King of Portugal, the Spaniards Diego Laínez and Alonso Salmerón, who had met Loyola in Alcalá, and a third Spaniard, Nicolas Bobadilla del Camino, who famously told off Emperor Charles after his concessions to the Protestants at Augsburg in 1555. Acting in many ways as a proto-director, Ignatius studied all of his close friends to learn how best to approach them with the Exercises, which he administered in a more rigorous fashion than he would later recommend.⁸⁸ All except Rodrigues gave up studying for a month, fasted for several days in a row, and several, particularly Xavier, added extra penances to their Exercise.⁸⁹

All of them having become companions through the Exercises, they decided to officially coalesce their band. "On 15 August 1534," Dickens writes, "six companions climbed with [Ignatius] to the chapel of Saint-Denis on the heights of Montmartre. There they made vows of poverty and chastity, undertaking a missionary crusade in Palestine; and should the last prove impossible, they undertook a vow of absolute obedience to the pope's orders, wherever these might

⁸⁸ Caraman, 88.

⁸⁹ Xavier tied his own limbs together for extended periods of time during his period of Exercise, in penance for his excesses as an athlete at the University. See Caraman, 88.

lead.”⁹⁰ Faber led the Mass, as he was the only priest among them, and the seven marched away feeling changed. Ignatius looked excitedly on the prospect of returning to Jerusalem with his companions, to bring Christ to heathen lands.

But the Ottomans were at the zenith of their power. In 1526, Suleiman the Magnificent had defeated the Christian army at Mohacs, leaving Hungary to be swallowed up into his empire. Though halted at Vienna, the Ottomans now controlled the entire Eastern Mediterranean, and threatened the heart of Christian Europe once again. Jerusalem seemed out of reach. Meanwhile, the Protestants were growing stronger, even in France. In 1533, Nicolas Cop, the University of Paris’s rector, gave his inaugural speech on the need for reform within the Catholic Church. His words were denounced by the University staff, and he was forced to flee to Basel. His close friend, the future reformer John Calvin, went into hiding after being implicated along with Cop, and fled France altogether the next year following the Affair of the Placards. He joined Cop in 1535 in Basel, alongside reformer Johannes Oecolampadius.

After suffering from chronic illness that had plagued him since Manresa, Ignatius decided to return to Spain on the advice of his physicians and companions. Before he could leave, he once again caught the ire of the local Inquisition over his administering of the Spiritual Exercises. This time, he gave a copy of his book, handwritten, to the Dominican in charge of the case. The man praised the book and, with some push from Ignatius, officially dropped the charges. By Easter of 1536, he was headed home, agreeing with his companions to meet them for their pilgrimage in Venice in Spring of the next year.

⁹⁰ Dickens, *The Counter Reformation*, 76.

Ignatius was undoubtedly a mediocre student. His attention constantly wandered, his interested waxed and waned, and he regularly left school to perform his Exercises or to go begging. He cared little for the scholarly speculations of the Scholastics, and he found them, for the most part, useless in his everyday ministry later in life. Despite his distaste for and refusal to read the various humanists who had influenced the Protestant movement, Ignatius held an appreciation for the humanist curriculum. The Jesuit schools, though often staffed with scholastics, taught in a surprisingly humanistic manner (we will cover this more in the Evaluation section). However, Ignatius did not let his University education go to waste. Whenever his order was publically disdained by another clergyman, for example, by Melchior Cano, the Dominican theologian of the University of Salamanca, Loyola called upon a vast array of theological arguments and the wisdom of ancients like St. Augustine, to defend the Jesuits from attack.⁹¹

⁹¹ See Caraman, 145.

VI. Toward Rome

Back in Azpeitia, Loyola was greeted by servants of his brother, Martin García, who offered him a place at their ancestral castle. Ignatius refused, staying instead at the local hospice of Santa Magdalena, where he quickly gained an audience for his preaching. While in the town, he actively campaigned against prostitution, much as he had done in Rome, and actively worked for poor relief.⁹² He worked his usual magic on the city's feuding families, quelling various disputes, including one between the Loyolas and the local Franciscans over rights of the Church of Concepción. Nevertheless, he did not stay long, passing through Pamplona and then visiting, on foot, the homes of Xavier, Laínez, and Salmeron's families, as well as Madrid. He traveled to Valencia and took ship across the pirate-infested waters to Genoa, immediately made the perilous journey to Bologna in mid-winter, and then finally went to Venice. But upon arrival, it became known that Venice and the Ottomans were on the brink of war, and the usual pilgrim ships were postponed.

By 1538, the companions understood that they would have to resort to the second clause of their vows. The companions split, some traveling around Vicenza, preaching and living rough scrabble lives as hermits. Rodrigues became so enraptured with this lifestyle that Ignatius was forced to chastise him, lest he leave the nascent order.⁹³ The companions preached throughout the forty-day period of their 'retreat', which violated the local tradition of preaching only during the festival season. The group reconvened in August, agreed to wait another year, and split into pairs

⁹² He drew up a set of ordinances that were passed in the town on 23 May. These were possibly inspired by the report "On the Relief of the Poor" of Luis Vives. Loyola would never admit to reading Vives, but the similarities are striking. See Caraman, 94.

⁹³ This is the possible origin of Ignatius's insistence that Jesuits always travel in pairs when on missions.

to preach throughout northern Italy. At this time, they decided to refer to themselves as the Company of Jesus.⁹⁴

After dealing with another short round of inquisitorial reviews, Ignatius left Venice to set himself up in Rome. On his way to the city, he received a vision from God indicating fortuitous events in Rome. This was his first vision since he had formed the Companions, and it struck him that Christ had finally accepted him as his servant on earth. At this, Loyola was deeply heartened, and continued his journey with a renewed vigor. After this, he felt sure that it was his destiny to form a religious order. But on his arrival, Ignatius found Rome to be a wreck. It had yet to recover from its sacking by the mercenaries of Charles V after his victory at Pavia in 1527. Bandits roamed the countryside, and the old monuments were in disrepair.

Around this time he became associated with Cardinal Gasparo Contarini, a relative of Piero Contarini, who owned the pilgrim ships in Venice. Contarini was a major reformist figure in the Roman Curia, and allowed Ignatius to direct the Exercises with him. Following this, he became Loyola's staunch supporter, particularly when an appeal was made to Pope Paul III. Ignatius began inducting new members into the Company, all the while dealing with the accusations of the Piedmontese friar, Agostino Mainardi, who was appealing to Lutheran ideas in his sermons. Mainardi convinced Cardinal de Cupis, Dean of the Sacred College, to join in on the accusations against the Company. Loyola, in his usual fashion, requested an interview with the Cardinal, and promptly cleared up any misunderstandings.

He now insisted on a thorough Papal investigation of himself and his followers, conducted by Cardinal Carafa, the Pope's delegate in Rome while he was away in Nice. The idea, as Loyola

⁹⁴ Caraman, 110-11.

saw it, was to finally rid the world of all doubts about his group – if a papal court could find him not guilty of heresy, then no one would dare continue such accusations.⁹⁵ Although the legate was not interested in pursuing a judicial inquiry, Loyola managed to gain a private audience with Pope Paul III at his summer residence in Frascati, winning his approval and allowing the inquiry to proceed. Loyola received glowing testimony from several figures from his past who happened to be in Rome at the time: the Vicar General de Figueroa, who had cleared him at Alcalá, Dr. Ory the Paris Inquisitor, and the Vicar General Gasparo de Dotti of Venice, among others.⁹⁶ The verdict read Not Guilty, and the companions were allowed to preach freely in the city once again.

Following the trial, they moved into a new house owned by Antonio Frangipani, a friend of Loyola's, and began to work in Italy at the Pope's request.⁹⁷ An extreme winter in 1539 tore down the barriers between the companions and the people of Rome, as Loyola and his men gathered bread throughout the blighted city, and invited the hungry into their spacious new home, where they fed, washed, and housed them. While the city governor, Carafa, was made to look a fool for failing to store enough grain, the nascent Society was already making its name as a selfless Christian organization, inspiring the Cardinals and officials of the Curia to help the beleaguered citizens as well. Come the spring of 1539, the Pope received letters from throughout Italy and even the King of Portugal, requesting the services of the Company. Understanding that their new calling would require centralized leadership, the companions organized themselves under Ignatius, who sketched out a proto-constitution (called the Formula) for Pope Paul's approval.⁹⁸ Before the

⁹⁵ Caraman notes that Ignatius must have been fully aware of his 'Spanishness' in the eyes of the Italians and Romans. The wound of the Spanish sack of Rome was still fresh, and Spaniards were often distrusted. This is reflected in Loyola's insistence toward the end of his autobiography that his companions stay on guard and act as tamely as possible, so as to avoid "malicious gossip." See Caraman, 119-20 and *Autobiography*, 89.

⁹⁶ Caraman, 120.

⁹⁷ The home the companions moved into was supposedly haunted by poltergeists, but this did not deter them, as they stayed there from October 1538 to February 1541. See Caraman, 120.

⁹⁸ We will address the contents of this and the final constitution below.

Society was ever officially formed, though, its members were being sent across Italy. Broët and Rodrigues were sent to Siena, Favre and Láñez to Parma and Piacenza, Codure to Velletri, and Bobadilla to Naples.⁹⁹

The Company waited impatiently for approval while three cardinals, including Cardinals Contarini (Loyola's close friend now), Ghinucci (secretary of Briefs), and Guidiccioni (an ascetic theologian who did not approve of the establishment of new Orders). Francis Xavier, ill during much of the year, acted as Loyola's secretary, sending letters throughout Italy to gain recommendations from the various cities the Company had preached in. After a year, Guidiccioni conceded and approved of the Formula, adding only one revision – the Order could only take on sixty men. This was fine with Ignatius, who had never envisioned more than a small organization of quality men in the first place. With the issuance of the Bull *Regimini militantis Ecclesiae* in September 1540, the Society of Jesus was confirmed, followed quickly by their relocation to a new headquarters in Rome, and the unanimous election of Loyola to Superior General once the scattered Companions returned in early 1541.¹⁰⁰ True to his nature, Ignatius refused the position twice, journeyed to the Franciscan friary of San Pietro in Montorio, and only returned once the friar, his confessor, sent him back with a written letter of approval.

Ignatius recognized the changes that would need to be made to his own attitude now that he was in command of a new and highly-demanded religious order. No longer could he spend his days searching his soul or contemplating his visions, which he continued to receive intermittently. He could no longer treat his companions as like-minded friends – he was their Superior General, and he held all authority in the Society with the blessing of the Pope. What seemed a lifetime of

⁹⁹ Caraman, 122.

¹⁰⁰ Caraman, 125-6.

spiritual growth had led him from an injured warrior in 1521 to a veteran pilgrim, trained theologian, and itinerant preacher by 1541, at the age of fifty. He had traveled through Spain, France, Italy, and the Holy Land, and returned to take his message to Rome, the heart of Christendom. Though his visions would continue, and his Exercises finally take book form, the conversion and spiritual evolution of Ignatius Loyola had effectively come to its stopping place.

VII. Superior General

Ignatius at first struggled to act as Superior General to his friends and companions. Compounding this difficulty, many of the Jesuits had already left Rome, and more were to leave soon. Faber was in attendance of the Conference of Ratisbon in 1541, Xavier would reach Goa in India before pronouncing his official vows as a member of the Society, Rodrigues became the personal confessor to King John III of Portugal and held much influence over him, Bobadilla would attach himself to the army of Charles V in Italy and Spain. Others would scatter over the next few years across Europe and the vast colonial empires of Spain and Portugal, and later France.

Only Ignatius, of the original companions, would remain permanently in Rome.¹⁰¹ He spent much of his time in the early years caring for the city's urban poor, especially women, particularly former prostitutes. Many of these women he housed in cloisters, but for some, he established St. Martha's, an educational facility which helped to re-introduce the women into society and ready them for marriage.¹⁰² Ignatius personally preached to the women, who greatly enjoyed his sermons.¹⁰³ He would also found protective houses for the Jews of Rome, who enjoyed tolerance under Pope Paul III.

Ignatius, at this point, was the central administrator at the heart of the Jesuit machine through its first sixteen years. He was busy during his days writing letters and giving orders to

¹⁰¹ Caraman, 129.

¹⁰² It would be useful here to mention that Ignatius kept up a lively correspondence with wealthy men and women that he had met during his travels, often asking them for money to fund his projects. It is likely that his personal noble status helped him convince potential patrons to offer aid.

¹⁰³ Caraman briefly discusses the tender place in Ignatius's heart that St. Martha's kept – among his personal papers in his desk was a short letter from one of the women asking him to preach two sermons instead of just one, so that they might “have a little consolation.” See Caraman, 131. The house was an issue of contention, however, as many prominent men, including the Pope's secretary, were irate at having their mistresses taken from them and ‘reformed.’ However, both Pope Paul III and Pope Pius IV approved of St. Martha's. See Caraman, 131-2.

the scattered Jesuits. He was also spending hours a day writing the Constitutions, which would form the backbone of the new order. Most important of the rules he was drafting was the Jesuits primary focus on overseas missions. Though much of their first few years were spent in Italy, the Jesuits would spread throughout Europe and into the colonial frontiers of the Catholic powers. Ignatius understood that the vow to go wherever the Pope would send them, whether it be to the Turks, to the Protestants, or to the Indies, would become the central pillar of the order. Though it was not written into the Constitutions, Ignatius's personal approach of befriending the powerful around him worked wonders for the other Jesuits, who endeared themselves to figures such as the King of Portugal, John III, the Duke of Ercole, and various other noble figures, alongside the bishops and archbishops they would be working closely with.¹⁰⁴

It is telling to Ignatius's particular genius for organization that he, alongside his secretary from 1547, Juan de Polanco, created a systematized, meticulously filed set of correspondence that consisted of letters, orders, and commentary on nearly every disparate aspect of the Society's doings throughout the world. Soon enough, he had established a system of quarterly reports that showed how the Jesuits, wherever they might be, were getting along. Many of these were used to drum up support for the order, particularly the letters of Xavier, some of which were printed and distributed throughout Europe.¹⁰⁵ Ignatius, fully aware of the difficulties involved in writing and transporting such a vast amount of correspondence, at times attempted to seek a method for providing a better, more efficient courier service in order to provide a stronger cohesion to the scattered Society.

¹⁰⁴ There was even a plan to arrange a personal meeting with Henry VIII in an effort to bring his loyalty back to the Church, but this was quickly dismissed as folly. See Caraman, 143.

¹⁰⁵ See Caraman, 150-1.

The *Spiritual Exercises*, which had been mostly complete by the late 1520s, was still being edited haphazardly throughout his life. The final version that saw print was completed in 1541, and it was published in Latin in 1548. Though he would continue revising parts of it until his death, these edits were gradually incorporated into the published version. The book itself had become, by the time of his death, a major element in the training of the Jesuits. Every young man who entered into the Society took part in a humanist education with scholastic theological elements, and also spent the usual four-week period completing the Exercises. To this day they remain a cornerstone of Jesuit training.

To the end of his days, Ignatius spent his life essentially in a routine, interrupted only by the occasional visit, and the illnesses of his later life. During the last years of his life, when he was dictating his *Autobiography* to Câmara, Ignatius produced for the young Portuguese various parts of his personal diary, spiritual journals, and private letters. Much of this Loyola personally destroyed before his death, and what we have remaining was found hidden in his desk drawer in his room. However, with all that we know of his beliefs just from the writing of others, we can see that, despite its mystical origins, his approach to the Church was thoroughly modern and reform-minded. The centralized bureaucracy he formed allowed the Jesuits to manage their rapidly-growing enterprise, which were heavily focused on reforming local parishes in Europe, as we will see in the next section. This final section will focus on Ignatius's personal impact on the early Jesuit order.

VIII. Ignatius and the Jesuits

The Catholic Reformation that followed in the wake of the spread of Protestantism in Europe was driven in many areas, both geographically and intellectually, by the Jesuits. Ignatius's own personality and spiritual thought shaped the work of the Jesuits, inspiring their approach to spirituality, their educational project, their international character, their ministry in charity and print, and their expansion of Catholicism overseas. In the following pages, we will briefly look at these elements of a wider Catholic reformation that occurred in the 16th and early 17th century, and how Ignatius's personal brand of spirituality flavored them.

At the heart of Ignatian spirituality is the 'election' of one's own path in life. This essential element of Free Will derives, of course, from Catholic orthodoxy, particularly in the context of rising Lutheran and other Protestant beliefs. However, we ought to recognize that Loyola believed choice was a major factor in his life. As we saw, the young Ignatius was raised to be a cleric before choosing the life of the *hidalgo*, but, when given the chance to start again at the age of thirty, after much consternation, Ignatius chose a new life of faith. Though it merely accented a point made by Catholic theologians for centuries against challenges from within and without the Church, Ignatius's championing of Free Will served to energize the Church. For Ignatius, Christ had given him the opportunity to make up for his past iniquities, and he took this chance wholeheartedly. It would seem, then, totally understandable why in the Rules, he considers Free Will to be not up for debate.

Ignatius lived in a time of deep turmoil for the Catholic Church, where its authority in North and Central Europe had eroded primarily due to what, in his eyes, amounted to a scriptural disagreement. To Loyola, Scripture was not even of utmost importance – in general his respect for

the written word was always secondary; action was his outlet and his goal. Like Luther, Ignatius tried to calm his troubled mind with personal austerities, and like Luther, he failed to do this. But unlike Luther, who found his answers in the writing of St. Paul, Ignatius discovered his solution through mystical vision. As Laínez stated, “that even if no Scriptures had been given to us to teach us the truths of faith, he would nevertheless have determined to give up life itself for them, purely on account of what he had seen with the soul.”¹⁰⁶ The contemplative nature of Ignatius’s personal devotion and the mystical aspect of his understanding of the Christian faith provided through God would heavily influence the Jesuits and the Church in the years during and after his time as Superior General.

The contemplative element of Ignatian meditation would become a cornerstone of the Society. Inspired by the *Spiritual Exercises*, and driven by Loyola’s vivid mysticism, the early Jesuits slowly led Catholic spiritual thought away from the medieval mystics, who had emphasized mystical union with God. Few Jesuits explicitly noted this departure, though some would loudly decry the brand of Quietism practiced by the older mystics. Indeed, as Dickens argues, many contemporary Catholic mystical thinkers considered both meditation and contemplation to be equally effective, or at least cooperative, methods for bettering one’s soul.¹⁰⁷ Because of the explicit nature of Loyola’s call to meditate on Christ’s life and passion, the Jesuit order fostered a tradition of mystics who attempted to bridge their founder’s views with the Spanish Carmelites.¹⁰⁸ Ignatius was, of course, renowned for his mystical insight and contemplative nature. In fact, when

¹⁰⁶ Dickens, 75.

¹⁰⁷ Dickens, 79-80.

¹⁰⁸ These included Alphonsus Rodriguez (1532-1617), Louis Lallemant (1578-1635), as well as non-Jesuits, such as St. Francis de Sales (1567-1622). See Dickens, 80.

he would have visitors in Rome, he would often take them out into the garden or orchard belong to the Jesuit house, where he would stop for long periods looking at a given leaf, plant, or insect.¹⁰⁹

Despite his insistence on mystical revelation, Ignatius, in direct challenge to mystics like the *alumbrados*, understood and emphasized the value of secular and religious education.¹¹⁰ This is because Ignatius believed that not everyone can gain mystical insight, but if they were educated properly, they would not be somehow disadvantaged compared to someone like himself. His notion of education was connected to the idea of ethical Christianity, especially in service to Christ. Though he would likely not have agreed to the charge, and was probably ignorant of the connection during his life, Ignatius's mystically revealed educational focus is very similar to the humanist devotion to education, which, since Petrarch, had been advocated as a foundation for an ethical and public-serving life.¹¹¹ The educational curriculum at the early Jesuit colleges also followed a broadly humanist theme, as opposed to the scholastic curriculum which Ignatius had found so dull during his time in Paris. This included classes in grammar and rhetoric, as well as languages, mainly Greek and Latin, but also Hebrew. Furthermore, the Jesuits opened school, particularly for the education of young boys, who Ignatius specifically pointed out as potential benefiteres from a Jesuit educational program.¹¹² Polanco, the first appointed secretary to Ignatius, and later to Diego Laínez and Francis Borgia from 1547 to 1573, noted a list of reasons for the humanist educational curriculum: it "helps in the understanding of Scripture, is a traditional propaedeutic to philosophy, provides a pedagogically sound entrance into other subjects, enables a person to express his

¹⁰⁹ Caraman, 59.

¹¹⁰ His main difficulty with the *Alumbrados* was their disavowal of secular and papal authority. Ignatius consistently derived his own authority from his deference to the Pope.

¹¹¹ See O'Malley, *The First Jesuits*, 208-9. O'Malley also argues that it would be unwise to forget that the original Jesuits were all recruited from college-educated men, who came from social classes in which education was considered integral to maintaining their societal status.

¹¹² Evenett, 84.

thoughts better, fosters the skills in communication that Jesuit ministries requires, and develops the facility in different languages that the international character of the Society demands.”¹¹³ Jesuit education, then, combined various aspects of prior educational curricula and worked towards a practical goal of Christian ethical life in the Church, the Order, and society itself. This focused educational directive, combined with the flexible humanist approach, expresses a thesis that has been at the heart of Ignatius and the Jesuits since its founding. As O’Malley states, “the Jesuits created relatively few of the components of their educational program, but they put those parts together in a way and on a scale that had never been done before.”¹¹⁴

Although from the start the Jesuits were engaged in rigorous education and catechizing with their new recruits, it was not until the Duke of Sicily asked them to open a children’s school in Messina that their educational niche became apparent.¹¹⁵ Though Ignatius initially considered the school a gamble, especially since he was so short on men, it paid off within months, as young men poured into the ranks of the Jesuits, leading to the opening of similar schools in Palermo, Naples, and Venice. The schools, called colleges, would become the major bases of the Jesuit missions in Europe and the rest of the world. The initial attempts at Jesuit education began in Spain, at places like Valencia (1544), Valladolid, Barcelona, and Gandia (1545) and Alcalá.¹¹⁶ Further colleges were established in Bologna (1546), Messina (the first one to gain significant renown), Salamanca (1548), Palermo (1549), Burgos, as well as the Collegium Romanum (1550), and Collegium Germanicum in Rome (1552).¹¹⁷

¹¹³ O’Malley, 210.

¹¹⁴ See John W. Donahue, *Jesuit Education: An Essay on the Foundation of Its Idea* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1963), 39-40; cited in O’Malley, 225.

¹¹⁵ Eire, 451-2.

¹¹⁶ See Dickens, 84.

¹¹⁷ See Dickens, 83.

The colleges were staffed by ordained Jesuit priests, but also by younger members who had yet to be ordained, dubbed “scholastics.”¹¹⁸ The rapid increase in colleges, and their subsequent success, can be attributed to many factors. The schools were unique in that they charged no tuition. Also, they offered a religiously-oriented humanist curriculum, taught the compatibility between the humanities, Aristotelian philosophy and science, and the theology of Thomas Aquinas. This derived primarily from the Ignatian notion that God was to be found in everything, alongside the older Scholastic tradition of the Latin Averroists, who believed that theology and science could rightfully coexist. Finally, the colleges benefitted from a central authoritative control from Rome, which could control which Jesuit went to which school, and make sure the curriculum was kept on a consistent track across the world.¹¹⁹ Finally, the Jesuits were simply, on average, better educated than most local schoolmasters, and thus provided a more robust and useful education for their students.¹²⁰ The fact that their children could have free top-flight education led many non-Catholic families to convert in order to send their children to the schools.¹²¹

By the later 16th century, the Jesuits began to struggle under the weight of all the schools they had opened. Even by 1553, they were already suffering from manpower issues which would become virtually endemic for much of the Society’s history.¹²² Although the schools often served as the bases for the Jesuit missions, they were inherently a drain of useful manpower for those very missions. Indeed, though Ignatius anticipated the writing of humanist-inspired anti-Protestant literature through Jesuit educational outlets, he did not foresee the manpower problems that would

¹¹⁸ See Eire, 453. Older scholarship seems to confuse these ‘scholastics’ with actual scholastic theologians.

¹¹⁹ The overture to Aristotelianism and Scholastic theology is made directly by Ignatius in the Eleventh Rule for Thinking with the Church, in *Spiritual Exercises*, 363, p. 135.

¹²⁰ For a full list of possible factors in Jesuit educational success, see O’Malley, 226-7.

¹²¹ Eire, 454.

¹²² O’Malley, 227.

ensue, especially due to the early successes the Jesuits had had in recruiting men from all around Europe. This pan-European (and later worldwide) outlook, however, would be important throughout Jesuit history.

The Society was international from the beginning, a fact which implicitly countered the nationalist Protestant churches that Luther and other Reformers promoted. Ignatius was Basque; his original six companions included a Navarrese, Francis Xavier, three Castilians, Salmeron, Laínez, and Bobadilla, a Savoyard, Peter Faber, and a Portuguese (Simão Rodrigues). They were joined soon after by another Savoyard, Claude Le Jay, and two Frenchmen, Brouet and Codure.¹²³ By 1552, twelve years into the order's existence, a full third of the orders' members, 318 people, were Portuguese.¹²⁴ Indeed, the Portuguese allowed for the rapid expansion of the Jesuit missions overseas, particularly through the influence of Simon Rodrigues on the Portuguese King John III, who actively sponsored the mission to India of Francis Xavier.¹²⁵ The Society, though it recognized the unique threat of the Protestants in the 1540s, maintained its dedication to the worldwide mission, and continued to lead expeditions into India, Malacca, Ceylon, and Japan. Though the Protestants remained high on the list of Catholic problems in the 16th century and beyond, the Jesuits devoted equal resources to combatting them and on converting the world's pagans and heretics.

Ignatius saw the Protestants as willfully ignorant of the important aspects of Christian faith, namely the choice to follow God and the importance of unity within the Church. Loyola, likely without meaning to, wrote the *Exercises* as a direct repudiation of the Protestant movement. The

¹²³ Dickens, 76.

¹²⁴ Dickens, 82.

¹²⁵ See Dickens, 82, O'Malley, 30, and Caraman, 144. When Xavier died, he allegedly spoke his last words in Basque, honoring the man he called his 'most dear father of my soul.' Caraman, 181.

book was written initially with the goal of training the will of the exerciser to better serve God. The notably Protestant-aware passages, specifically the Rules for Thinking with the Church, are wedged in at the very end of the book, and were clearly written later. Ignatius, in his desire to not waste time, simply refused to address the errors of others. This is why he would not read Erasmus or Vives, who were Catholic but were known for their open criticism of the Church. It was simply not his role to challenge the thought of learned writers. His aim was to aid the souls of the masses, and his material source for this was Catholic tradition, electrified by the humanism that so naturally exuded from his mental character.

Ignatius's final gift to the Catholic faith was the one closest to his heart: the ministry. Well before the Jesuits earned a reputation for their educational excellence, they were valued for their abilities as preachers, confessors, and caretakers of the needy. It is easy to imagine an entire class of priests trained in the humanities would be an extremely powerful force, and this was the case with the Jesuits, who to a man were trained in rhetoric, along with grammar and the other liberal arts. In the courts of various kings, the Jesuits would become renowned as preachers, using their skills to influence the royalty and nobility of various nations.¹²⁶ To their advantage, the Jesuits were licensed by the Pope to administer the sacrament of penance without episcopal permission. They used this power to become confessors to vast amounts of laypeople, who would normally be unable to access the bishop, who usually held such a power. Moreover, their Ignatian focus on empathy and empowerment earned them a fantastic reputation among the crowds, who were used to being scolded by churchmen, not encouraged.¹²⁷

¹²⁶ These include: "Emond Auger, Pierre Coton, and Louis Bourdaloue in France...Jeremias Drexel at the Bavarian court...Piortr Skarga, at the Polish court..." and others. See Eire, 455.

¹²⁷ Their presumed 'laxity' in moral punishment would lead to their being at the center of an enormous religious controversy over their rule of probabilism in the 17th century. See Eire, 455-6.

Regarding the lower classes, Ignatius, as we saw above, felt at home working among the poor and disenfranchised, especially in his home at Rome. He instilled this attitude to the Jesuits as a whole through the requirement that all initiates actively serve their community during their training. The Jesuits were also notable for staffing hospitals, often becoming physicians, and caring for the sick during times of plague.¹²⁸ Prisons and brothels were also on their agenda, as Jesuits actively attempted to reform petty criminals and prostitutes, creating networks of thankful individuals who would often help in the lay confraternities the Society established and oversaw in order to better carry out their charitable functions.¹²⁹ In fact, Ignatius was the model for these charities, especially his Casa Santa Marta halfway house that was discussed above.

Though Ignatius was more at home with working directly with the poor or pursuing his desired position of missionary to the Holy Land, he promoted the writing of Christian literature through the College system he had established. Books on all subjects were written by Jesuits, but the order especially promoted devotional books, catechisms, and anti-Protestant material. Because of the international nature of the Society and its administrative connectedness, books traveled quickly from one institution to another, being translated and printed in various languages throughout Europe.¹³⁰ Many Jesuits from Protestant-ruled countries were forced to work clandestinely when at home, smuggling Jesuit material into their country, often personally, and under constant threat of death as foreign agents or spies.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, was Ignatius's desire to spread the news of Christ throughout the world, a desire which shaped Jesuit missions into the far-flung colonial possessions

¹²⁸ For an analysis of Jesuit experiences during plague epidemics in 16th century Europe, see A. Lynn Martin, *Plague?*.

¹²⁹ These confraternities often had a particularly Jesuit bent – the *Spiritual Exercises* were often conducted by members of the confraternity as a rite of initiation. See Eire, 458.

¹³⁰ See Eire, 458.

of Catholic nations throughout the world. Seeing millions of souls lost to Protestantism, Catholic writers would develop an ethos that made sense of the colonial conversions as a sort of compensation.¹³¹ Though evangelization (if we ought to use that word) began in the New World with Christopher Columbus's second voyage in 1493, it did not begin in earnest until the Franciscans arrived in 1500, noting the abuses of the Spaniards up to that point. The situation was worse by the time the Dominicans reached the New World in 1510. The Jesuits entered onto the scene in 1572, spreading out from Mexico City and establishing fortified villages, called reductions, on the periphery of the colonial empire (including the Alamo, in San Antonio, Texas), where they taught the natives western agriculture and religion. In Brazil, the Jesuits were active by 1549, and they spread across the Spanish colonies in the next two decades, building Colleges and schools, as well as churches.

In 1542, Francis Xavier arrived in Goa, on the west coast of India. Within three years he had baptized over ten thousand people along the Pearl Fishery Coast, before moving on to Malaya.¹³² In 1548, he built the College of Holy Faith in Goa into a missionary training center, and then moved quickly into Japan, where he was awed at what he considered a culture that was, for the first time in his travels, on par with European society.¹³³ Next moving to convert the Chinese, he died of high fever in 1552, before he could ever make it to shore. His successes in the East laid the foundation for a massive Jesuit influence in the region, in India, Indonesia, Japan, and China. In fact, he was so venerated as a missionary that the calls to canonize him came earlier than they did for Ignatius, though they were simultaneously canonized in 1622.¹³⁴

¹³¹ See Eire, 467.

¹³² See Eire, 499-500.

¹³³ It seems that Xavier found a particular affinity between Japan's feudal society and the one that he had grown up in.

¹³⁴ See Eire, 500.

But this mission was not exclusively to the New World or the Indies, as many Catholics, especially Jesuits, found the Catholic laymen of Europe to be wanting, especially because of their superstitions and lack of basic knowledge of Catholic tenets. For this reason, as seen above, catechisms became a major genre of Jesuit literature. Historians claim that this focus on a narrower image of Christianity, throughout the Catholic world, was the mark of a distinctly modern understanding of religion.¹³⁵ In areas such as Germany, Corsica, Sicily, and Southern France, Jesuits worked hard to educate the masses in religious matters.

And where was Ignatius in all this? Organizing it from the heart of the Jesuit universe, Rome. Though he had personally desired to be a missionary like Xavier, he would find his skills as a leader of men put to great use in personally administering the Jesuits from 1540 until his death in 1556.¹³⁶ It was his tireless efforts to organize and publicize Jesuit activity throughout the world that resulted in the Society becoming easily the most important Catholic religious organization involved in the colonies.

Overall, the Jesuits were a major driving factor behind reform in the Catholic Church in the 16th century, shaping the look of early modern Catholicism through the vision of their founder. Their work to include the laity, predicated on ideas prevalent in the *Devotio Moderna*, was achieved primarily through education and charity, along with their service in traditional clerical roles. Furthermore, Ignatius Loyola's personality and spiritual thought left its stamp on both the Jesuits as an order and the Catholic world in general. His directorial effort and spiritual guidance

¹³⁵ See Eire, 469.

¹³⁶ His death is interesting in that it was somewhat sudden and little remarked upon. However, it caused a minor crisis in the Society, as Polanco gathered the Jesuit leadership to elect a new leader. Laínez was unanimously chosen to succeed Loyola, but abroad, Nadal and Bobadilla actively challenged the ruling. It was not until 1568 when a Congregation of the Jesuits met to formally elect Laínez as the next Superior General. See Caraman, 201-3.

molded early modern Catholic reform, and helped shape the future of the clergy in a rapidly secularizing Europe.

Conclusion

Ignatius of Loyola has inspired millions of Catholics through the Society that he founded and the words he wrote. Despite the signs of his life, personality, and spiritual thought stamped on the Jesuits as well as the Colleges and charities he founded, he is nevertheless often thought of as little more than a name. Whereas figures like Luther and Calvin have outlived their time on earth and become mythologized in the history of the Reformation, it seems their Catholic counterpart, Ignatius, has for the most part been forgotten by popular history. Of course, much of this has to do with Ignatius's character. Without becoming hagiographical, he was clearly a very humble man, or at least, his humility was one of the characteristics most widely remarked upon by his fellow Jesuits. We can recall many examples of this, but probably the best is the episode when he was first elected Superior General. Despite likely being fully aware of the natural leadership traits he possessed, he nevertheless refused the offer twice, going so far as to retreat to confession (a common devotional method of his) and wait until his confessor gave him a signed note commending him for the position as leader of the Society of Jesus. This humility resulted in his legacy becoming interwoven with the legacies of his only book, the *Spiritual Exercises*, and with that of the Society itself. I hope this paper has helped, in some ways, to shine a light on all three of these legacies, showing them as distinct and having a unique life of their own, but also all intricately connected through the pillar of Ignatius's own life.

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Time Line of Ignatius of Loyola

- 1491 – Iñigo de Loyola is born at Loyola Castle around 23 October
- 1492 – Conquest of Granada by Ferdinand and Isabella
 - Christopher Columbus sails for the New World
- 1506 – Loyola begins his education under Juan Velazquez de Cuellar
- 1515 – Scandal in Azpeitia
- 1516 – Charles I crowned King of Spain
 - Erasmus publishes an edition of the New Testament in Greek and Latin
- 1517 – Ignatius enters into the service of the Duke of Najera
 - Martin Luther publishes the *Ninety-Five Theses*
- 1519 – Charles I of Spain becomes Charles V of the Holy Roman Empire
- 1521 – Siege of Pamplona; Loyola is injured and returns home
- 1522 – Arrival in Manresa; beginning of the *Spiritual Exercises*
- 1523 – Pilgrimage to Jerusalem
- 1524 – Return to Barcelona and beginning of university education
- 1526 – Travels on foot to Alcala University
 - Imprisoned by local authorities for 42 days on fears of Illuminist heresy
 - Likely encounters the works of Erasmus and Luther for the first time
 - Clears heresy charges; forbidden to teach until he finishes his university education
- 1527 – Travels to Salamanca
 - First rendition of the *Exercises* delivered to some followers
 - After a second imprisonment for teaching, he leaves for Paris
- 1528 – Arrival in Paris, begins education at the College de Montaigu
- 1529 – Earns bachelor’s degree in Latin Studies
 - Begins master’s program in philosophy at the College de Sainte-Barbe
 - Meets Francis Xavier and Peter Favre
- 1530 – *Confession of Augsburg* delivered
- 1531 – Henry VIII breaks with the Catholic Church
- 1532 – John Calvin begins studies at the College de France

- 1533 – Ignatius received Licentiate degree, allowing him to teach legally
- 1534 – Affair of the Placards; John Calvin flees Paris
- Receives master’s degree
 - Begins study of theology at the Dominican convent of St. Jacques, where he studies Peter Lombard and Thomas Aquinas
 - August 15 – Makes vow with six companions form the Company of Jesus at Montmartre
- 1535 – Falls ill and returns home
- 1536 – John Calvin publishes *The Institutes of the Christian Religion*
- Ignatius journeys to Venice and awaits his companions to arrive from Paris.
- 1537 – Companions arrive in Venice
- Due to war with the Turks, no ships are available for a trip to Jerusalem
 - Companions are ordained; decide to form a religious order in Rome
 - Ignatius travels to Vicenza to prepare spiritually for his first Mass
- 1538 – First Mass in Rome
- Companions assist the people of Rome during the harsh winter
 - Final persecution by Augustinian friar Agostino Mainardi, who is sentimental towards Luther’s teachings
- 1539 – “First Sketch of the Institute of the Society of Jesus” is drafted
- Pope Paul III gives oral approval for the Society
- 1540 – Paul III grants formal approval; issues bull *Regimini militantis Ecclesiae*
- Francis Xavier leaves for India
- 1548 – *Spiritual Exercises* approved for printing
- 1553 – Jesuit Constitutions adopted
- 1555 – Ignatius finishes dictating the *Autobiography*
- 1556 – Ignatius dies in Rome
- 1622 – Ignatius is canonized by Pope Gregory XV

Ignatius of Loyola's Intellectual Lineage

