

THIRD AND FOURTH WEEKS: WHAT THE DIRECTORIES SAY

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THE BREVITY, conciseness and even density of the text of the *Spiritual Exercises* were as apparent and as problematic to the contemporaries of Ignatius as they have been to subsequent generations. In 1552, only four years after the approbation of the Exercises by Paul III and the printing of the Latin translation of André des Freux (commonly called the Vulgate), Polanco was expressing the hope that Ignatius 'would complete the Directory of the Exercises which is so much needed'.¹ Already the annotations and additions within the text itself were seen as insufficient to guide directors in their work. But it seems to have been difficult to get Ignatius to commit his ideas to paper, and so the ideal of having a full Directory written by the author of the *Exercises* himself was never realized. All we have are some brief notes, mainly on the Election (the Autograph Directory), some observations communicated orally either to Polanco or Nadal, and a set of directives dictated by Ignatius to Juan Alonso de Vitoria (or at least their substance)—this last while Ignatius was supervising Vitoria as he was giving the Exercises in Rome, probably to Lorenzo Maggio. These documents combined are sometimes loosely known as the Autograph Directories.²

All of this left the first General Congregation in 1558 dissatisfied, and it confided to Diego Laynez, Ignatius's successor as General, the task of drawing up a Directory for the Exercises which could then be regarded as official.³ By the second General Congregation in 1565 little seems to have been accomplished, and so this Congregation charged Francis Borgia, the incoming General, with the implementation of the earlier directive.⁴ For this purpose Borgia set up a committee consisting of Diego Miró, Assistant for Portugal, Juan de Polanco, Secretary of the Society, and Alfonso Ruiz, master of novices at San Andrea in Rome. This committee achieved very little, apparently because of irreconcilable differences of

interpretation between Miró and Polanco. However, the two men did produce Directories of their own, Polanco in 1573-75,⁵ and Miró in 1577-81,⁶ but by then Everard Mercurian was General. Mercurian himself wished very much to be involved personally in the work of composing an Official Directory, but his other responsibilities did not allow him to bring it to completion. During his generalate, however, Miró's Directory became semi-official because of its widespread acceptance and use in the Society.⁷

Claudio Aquaviva, from the beginning of his long term as General in 1581, was determined to bring to a successful conclusion this lengthy process of producing a satisfactory Official Directory. The key role now began to be played by Gil González Dávila. In 1585 Aquaviva sent him the existing Directories of Polanco and Miró, as well as two others which are unknown (one may possibly have been the fragmentary but precious Autograph Directories of Ignatius). Dávila responded with critical comments on these Directories as well as a sketch for a Directory of his own.⁸ There followed a document entitled 'A Directory of Various Fathers' which is a compilation by an anonymous author of Dávila's Directory, the four Directories used by him, and other notes, especially those by Mercurian. This piece of patchwork (*cento*), as it is called in the preface,⁹ was scrutinized by Aquaviva and his Assistants who decided on which paragraphs to retain. This work resulted in a provisional Directory being printed and distributed to the provinces in 1591.¹⁰

Reactions were sought and obtained, but not in great numbers or of much import. At the fifth General Congregation in 1593 these were discussed by a commission presided over by Dávila.¹¹ This commission, composed of ten fathers, was not to bring into question the main lines of the Directory but to improve the text in points of detail. Afterwards a final revision was made, again by Aquaviva and his Assistants, after which the definitive and official version of the Directory was printed at Florence in 1599.¹²

This brief sketch of the genesis of the Official Directory is perhaps sufficient to indicate the need felt in the early Society for help, in the form of practical guidelines, in the giving of the Exercises. It also shows the difficulties involved in providing such a handbook. Apart from the pressure of other work which undoubtedly slowed up the process, there were differences of opinion within the Society, not only on particular points but even on the nature of the Exercises themselves. Some of these will appear later in this

paper. The final text was inevitably the result of a set of options which in turn emerge from certain theological and spiritual presuppositions, not altogether unrelated to what was happening outside the Society. The ultimate criterion which must be applied in evaluating the Official Directory (or indeed any of the early Directories) is how faithfully its options harmonize with the text of the *Exercises* themselves.

Third and Fourth Weeks: content and order

The overall policy setting out the correct approach to giving the Exercises was clearly expressed by Mercurian and followed by all the other Directories:

The method of giving the Exercises ought to be kept straightforwardly, with the same order as prescribed by Father Ignatius in the documents, and which is known to have been observed by Father Ignatius, Father Laynez, Favre, Paschasius, etc.¹³

Thus in presenting the Third Week the Directories keep faithfully to the sequence of contemplations in the body of the Exercises (Exx 191,201,208) and in The Mysteries of the Life of Our Lord (Exx 289-298), while in the Fourth Week they follow the sequence found in The Mysteries of the Life of Our Lord (Exx 299-312), from which only the first contemplation on the apparition of the Risen Christ to his mother appears in the body of the text (Exx 219). This material, and the order of its use within each day, are treated in greatest detail in the Directory of Miró.¹⁴

Some relatively minor issues are raised from time to time. Polanco, for example, has noticed that in the first exercise of the Third Week the points (Exx 194) are more limited in scope than the history (Exx 191). The points focus solely on the Last Supper, while the history begins at Bethany, then moves to Jerusalem and the preparations for the Supper, and apart from the Supper itself includes the washing of the feet, the institution of the Eucharist, and Christ's discourse to the disciples. Polanco's response to this apparent anomaly is that all of this material may be proposed for meditation in one exercise, but that often the Supper, washing of the feet and institution of the Eucharist will be sufficient for the exercitant. He concludes with a wise remark which applies more widely than the context of the Third Week:

It would not be incongruous if the history which is proposed were to extend somewhat more broadly than the meditation (at least generally), for the meditation is limited to fewer matters which can better be considered in one exercise.¹⁵

Polanco also comments on repetitions. Again, although written in his chapter on the Third Week, his approach has relevance also to the previous and following weeks, as he himself remarks. One ought to linger in repetitions not only on those places where one has received greater consolation (see Exx 62,118) but also on those which one has passed over rather briefly in one's earlier meditations.¹⁶ In his chapter on the Fourth Week Polanco makes a similar comment in the context of using less than the number of points presented in the text of the Exercises, provided that the exercitant receives what he is seeking in the prayer.¹⁷ He also distinguishes between the way of giving points to experienced exercitants and to those of little spiritual experience. For the former one need merely touch on the mystery to be contemplated, while the latter will be helped by having the material teased out more fully.¹⁸

Miró envisages the situation where there is a gap between the making of the first two Weeks and the beginning of the third. In such a case he would want the exercitant to repeat the First Week briefly (including confession and communion and the meditation on the Prodigal Son), as well as the Kingdom, before the exercises of the Third Week.¹⁹ Similarly he envisages a person having made the first three Weeks and there then being a gap in time before he comes to the fourth. Again Miró would ask for a brief First Week as above (but he does not mention the Kingdom) before entering the Fourth Week.²⁰

Dávila takes up Polanco's distinction between exercitants of more or less skill and experience in spiritual affairs, and urges greater help for those who need it. In the Third Week this might be by using the questions: 'Who is suffering? What is he suffering? At whose hands? For whom?'²¹ These four questions eventually find their way into the Directories of 1591 and 1599.²² On each appearance they are referred to as already commonly in use.

More controversial was the issue of adding extra exercises to those given in the Ignatian text itself. This practice seems to have been most common in the First Week and was justified by the

paragraph added in the Vulgate (and in the *Versio Prima* of 1547) in section 71 of the Exercises:

If the one giving the Exercises judges that it would be profitable for the exercitant, other exercises may be added here, for example, on death and other punishments for sin, on judgment, etc. Let him not think that this is forbidden, though they are not given here.

It is not certain if this was Polanco's insertion in the text or that of Ignatius himself. In either case Ignatius must have given it his approval. A similar paragraph appears in one of the Autograph Directories:

As to the number of exercises which are to be proposed, besides the regular five, others may be usefully added, such as on death, judgment, and such topics, if it is necessary for the exercitant's finding what he is seeking, for example, sorrow, etc. Therefore, if he is already finding what he is seeking through the regular five exercises, additional ones will not be needed.²³

It is clear that such exercises were to be additional in a strict sense, that is, added after the usual five of the First Week, and only if the graces of the First Week had not yet been received. They were by no means considered as alternatives to those presented by Ignatius, nor were they to be casually interspersed with them.

This question of additional or complementary meditations became a divisive issue among the early writers on the Exercises. While all wanted to be faithful to the spirit of Ignatius and his method, different emphases and interpretations arose. The very flexibility and adaptability built into the Exercises made a consensus harder to establish. How many and what kind of meditations could one add without adulterating the method and intention of Ignatius? A more restrictive and a more liberal tendency arose, the former best represented by Miró, the latter by Blondo. The differences were often much deeper than just this single issue. The very purpose of the Exercises could be in question.

The Third Week of its very nature, since it covered the whole of the Passion, did not evoke any need for additional material. But in the Fourth Week a custom arose of going beyond the Ignatian text. Following Dávila,²⁴ the Official Directory says:

There might here be added some meditations on the glories of paradise and the future bliss of the just, the pledge of which we have received in this mystery of Christ's resurrection; for as the apostle tells us, 'God has raised us up with him and made us to sit with him in the heavenly places' (Eph 2,6).²⁵

Cordeses included the coming of the Holy Spirit.²⁶

After the circulation of the provisional Directory of 1591 requests came in from the province of Naples and from the anonymous author of the *Dubia* that points be provided for the meditations on the glories of paradise and the future bliss of the just. The desire was for greater uniformity and to avoid each director following his own inclination, perhaps in a less than wise manner.²⁷ The commission did not reply directly to these requests concerning Fourth Week meditations, but made this interesting comment on the desire for 'some points or at least ways (of presenting) or convenient formulae' for other additional meditations, as well as some other matters:

Let the director himself do this, separately from the meditations proper, and let them not be called the Exercises.²⁸

This main query about these additional meditations in the Fourth Week is whether they really fit into the dynamic of the Exercises, or whether Ignatius had a definite purpose in ending with the Ascension.

Affections sought in the Third and Fourth Weeks

When dealing with the Third Week Polanco makes a distinction between those affections which are directly sought as proper to this week and others which are also appropriate, especially when one applies the matter of the meditation to oneself. The former correspond to the third prelude of the first exercise (Exx 193) and are named as 'the sorrow of compassion, indignation against ourselves, and shame, since because of us our Lord is about to suffer'. Here, as is his wont, Polanco is following the Vulgate, but has added the adjectival phrase 'against ourselves' to the word 'indignation'. At this point the Autograph had used the Spanish word *sentimiento* which then became *sensus* in the *Versio Prima*. Puhl opts to translate this as 'compassion', the concept which Polanco has rather linked with the preceding word *dolor* (the same in both Spanish and Latin versions) with his phrase 'the sorrow of

compassion'. These affections, Polanco teaches, are very useful, not only for beginners but also for those who are experienced in contemplation, since

we especially wish here to honour the humiliation of Christ, his afflictions and sorrows, through a grateful remembrance, and the taking on of similar sufferings, at least through compassion.²⁹

This is the primary focus of the Third Week, the heart of its prayer.

But other affections ought not to be excluded, especially, as indicated above, when the Passion is reflected back and applied to one's own life. Then one might anticipate and expect affections of love, hope, the desire to imitate Christ in patience, humility and obedience, in charity, and so on in other virtues.³⁰ Here Polanco is implicitly commenting on section 194 of the *Exercises* with its repeated insistence on the need to reflect and draw some profit from what one is gazing at, hearing and noticing in the contemplations.

In his summary of the Exercises, again staying close to the Vulgate, Polanco expresses the third prelude of the first contemplation as follows:

He is asking for sorrow, and indignation against himself, and shame, because the Lord of all things is offering himself to such great torments because of my sins.³¹

And correspondingly in the second contemplation:

To ask (to experience) mourning and lamentation that I may suffer with Christ who is suffering for me.³²

The strength and density of the Latin *ut Christo pro me patienti compatiar* is not easily conveyed in modern languages.

Miró speaks of the exercises of the Third Week as bringing 'sadness and mourning', and so as not being suitable for evoking the tranquillity and peace of soul needed for the Election. Therefore they are to be given only after the Election is completed.³³

In commenting on the composition of place in the Third Week, Dávila wants the exercitant to make himself present to the mystery as if it were 'for him alone'. This attitude he supports with the words of Paul, 'he loved me and gave himself up for me' (Gal 2,20), and those spoken by Christ in a vision reported by

Pseudo-Dionysius, 'I am ready to die for them again'³⁴ (see Exx 195, ' . . . what he desires to suffer'). Furthermore, he teaches that Christ had our sins and ingratitude present to his consciousness throughout the Passion.³⁵

Dávila sees compassion as an affection to be highly esteemed at this point. It is therefore to be asked for, desired, sought and received with gratitude. But like Polanco, he does not want to limit the affections of the Third Week to this. Accordingly he lists many others, prefacing his remarks with an explicit reference to section 194 of the *Exercises*. He mentions: an appreciation of the gravity of any offence against God, and of what reconciliation means, brought about by the wisdom of God through the Passion; a sense of how God abhors and chastises sin, considering, if the Passion shows what sin does to the innocent Christ, what it will do to us, the guilty; a hatred and disgust of sin, and a zeal for souls who cost so much; a feeling for the goodness and wisdom of God who knew well how to soften people's hearts; hope and an end to discouragement; an impulse to imitate God in his costly generosity, and to imitate Christ who emptied himself, humbled himself, became obedient and so on (see Phil 2,7-8).³⁶

If for convenience sake one may use the terms primary and secondary for the affections distinguished in much the same way by Polanco and Dávila, Cordeses surprisingly limits the primary affections to sorrow for one's sins and shame that the supreme Lord is suffering so much because of those sins. This interpretation of the third prelude, taking *dolor* to refer to one's sins instead of to sorrow with or because of Christ in suffering, means that for Cordeses compassion becomes a secondary affection, along with a purpose of obedience, courage, patience, humility, gentleness and other virtues which shine out in the Passion. Also in this secondary list comes the desire to imitate Christ in suffering, for the honour and glory of God and the salvation of the neighbour, as well as affections of hope, charity, and other such virtues.³⁷

In the Directory of Various Fathers a separate chapter is devoted to giving the Exercises to Jesuits. In a section which did not find its way into the Directories of 1591 and 1599 it is said that especially in the Third and Fourth Weeks care must be taken that the soul conceive the greatest possible love of God. An indirect reference is made to the *Constitutions* of the Society (no 288):

. . . they should always aim at serving and pleasing the Divine Goodness for its own sake and because of the incomparable love

and benefits with which God has anticipated us, rather than for fear of punishments or hope of rewards.

This love is not to consist only in the taste of mystical contemplation (*in solo gustu et contemplatione*), but also in working for the salvation of the neighbour, so that all alike may love the same goodness (see Exx 230-231). This effective (not just affective) love is proper to the Jesuit vocation.³⁸

The Official Directory first lists briefly the affective graces of the Third Week as compassion, sorrow, shame, the desire to imitate Christ (in his sufferings) and love of God.³⁹ Later, in the chapter devoted explicitly to the Third Week, this Directory, like that of Dávila, urges that one be present to the mystery as it takes place, and as if it were for oneself alone; that one consider oneself as the cause of all these sufferings; that one recognize that all spiritual good comes through the merits of Christ; that one be aware how Christ had us and all our sins in detail before his eyes throughout the Passion, and that he prayed for and obtained forgiveness for us.⁴⁰

Then, again following Dávila, the 1599 Directory sees compassion as the affection most obviously proper to this Week and its contemplations, but also suggests many other graces of the same affective order. These are similar to those proposed by Dávila, though ordered in a different way. The headings in the text itself are: (i) hatred of sin; (ii) knowledge of God's goodness; (iii) confirmation of hope; (iv) love for God; (v) enkindling to the imitation of Christ; (vi) zeal for souls. An interesting and possibly significant divergence is that the Official Directory describes these graces as being 'more useful for our spiritual progress' than compassion, whereas Dávila had merely referred to them as being 'of great importance', without any comparison. This may reflect a growing suspicion of a more mystical kind of prayer within the Society at that time.⁴¹

The affective graces of the Fourth Week are always indicated more briefly. This is especially true when, as in this present paper, one is not considering the Contemplation to Attain the Love of God (Exx 230-237). In his Summary of the Exercises, presenting the first exercise of this week, Polanco has the exercitant ask for 'a participation in the joy of Christ and his mother'.⁴² Dávila emphasizes love and the desire for eternity.⁴³ The Directory of Various Fathers in its chapter on giving the Exercises to Jesuits,

as we have seen above, links the Third and Fourth Weeks in its expectation that both will lead to the greatest possible love of God.⁴⁴ The Official Directory says that the Fourth Week is wholly given over to the love of God and the desire for eternity. The resurrection of Christ and the joys which accompanied it for him serve as an exemplar of those eternal joys.⁴⁵

Third Week and the Election

Discussing the Election, Polanco considers the affective dispositions which an exercitant needs at that time. He underlines the necessity of a resignation of will in regard to the way of the counsels or the way of the commandments—a kind of equilibrium, if not indeed a positive inclination towards the counsels. Here there seems to be an implied reference to the Autograph Directory where Ignatius writes:

Just before entering on the elections, let the director dispose the exercitant to be completely resigned to following the counsels or the precepts. In order that the exercitant be the more disposed to the greater glory of God and his own greater perfection, let the director lead him to desire the counsels more than the precepts, if this option be for the greater service of God. Let the director dispose and enable the exercitant, since greater signs from God are necessary for following the precepts than the counsels. This is so because Christ advises the counsels, but places difficulties in the way of possessing material goods which one may legitimately do according to the precepts.⁴⁶

With these principles in mind Polanco suggests that if an exercitant is moving towards resignation but has not yet attained it, exercises from the Second or Third Weeks can help, as the person continues to beg for perfect resignation.⁴⁷ Miró disagrees with this use of the contemplations of the Third Week, as we have mentioned above, because they bring sadness and lamentation which are not states of soul conducive to the tranquillity needed for a good election.⁴⁸

For Dávila the Second and Third Weeks propose the imitation of the life and teaching of Christ, and the election of such a state of life as would be more pleasing to God. Both imitation and election are deeply confirmed by contemplating the mysteries of the Passion.⁴⁹ Later he says that in the Third Week the election of a good life, and the determination to serve the Lord with more earnestness, are confirmed and grounded by contemplating the last

stage of Christ's life. Here his virtues shine forth and show themselves in a more excellent way, inviting us with greater persuasive force to imitate him.⁵⁰ Following Dávila, the Official Directory places the confirmation of the Election as the first matter mentioned in its chapter on the Third Week.⁵¹

Once one accepts that the Election is the main focus and purpose of the Exercises, the importance of confirmation and its place in the Third Week are not surprising. An illuminating passage in the Autograph Directory shows how Ignatius foresees a real election taking place even when a state of life is not at issue. It is not the alternative contained in section 189 of the *Exercises*, about the amendment and reformation of one's way of life, but a more radical choice. Note especially how his words point forward inevitably to the contemplations of the Third Week:

In the Second Week where one deals with the Election, those who are already determined in their state of life do not need to deliberate over that decision. Instead of such a deliberation one might propose to them a choice between these two alternatives: first, if it be to the equal glory of God and without offence to him or harm to their neighbour, to wish to suffer injuries and opprobrium, and to be humiliated in all things with Christ, so as to be clothed with his livery, and to imitate him in sharing his cross; second, to be ready to suffer patiently all such experiences, whenever they occur, out of love for Christ our Lord.⁵²

Here the content of the colloquy of the Two Standards (Exx 147) is made, not so much a criterion for an election, as its raw material. It is as if Ignatius were not willing to omit an election even though there be no practical decision called for at that moment in a person's life. Such an 'election of suffering', if one may so name it, clearly demands the prayerful experience of the Third Week to confirm and stabilize it.

The four Weeks and the Three Ways:

For Ignatius the Election was an essential ingredient in the dynamic of the Exercises; it was their end. This Election was primarily, and remained paradigmatically, that of a state of life. Ignatius also allowed for and indeed encouraged an application of the Exercises which had as its purpose a reformation of life (Exx 189), yet this too involved an election in areas which could be changed. And we have been considering above how he proposed

an 'election of suffering'. It was Nadal, in an exhortation given in Spain in 1554, who first presented the Exercises as capable of having another end, that is, growth in religious perfection as a Jesuit.⁵³ At least this is the first example in the documents (of the *Directoria*) of the Exercises being commented on without reference to an election. But from then on, one finds the Exercises being presented, sometimes in the strict sense as leading to an election, and at other times being adapted to various other ends, such as a test (experiment), progress in the spiritual life, or a method of acquiring virtues.

The further interpreters moved away from the election-centred focus of Ignatius, the more likely they were to be influenced by, and try to wed contemporary trends in spirituality with the text of the *Exercises*. One example was to see the Weeks of the Exercises as corresponding to the traditional Three Ways of the spiritual life (purgative, illuminative and unitive). Although Ignatius himself makes a passing reference (Exx 10) to the illuminative way as corresponding to the Second Week, and the purgative way to the First, this is the only time he touches on the matter.⁵⁴ Yet the trend gained momentum. However, according to E. Iglesias:

This tendency, which one certainly does not meet in the first companions of Ignatius, is mainly represented by Fathers who were well versed in the ministry of being spiritual directors, but who were not on that account experts in the Exercises. They are Blondo, De Fabi, Cecotti, Gagliardi, and others.⁵⁵

Yet this interpretative approach to the Exercises was not confined to such mavericks. It existed also in the mainstream of the Society's understanding of the Exercises, so much so that a separate chapter on the Three Ways appeared in the provisional Directory of 1591 and was retained in the Official Directory.⁵⁶ In a trenchant criticism of this decision Ignacio Iparraguirre writes:

We do not believe that this addition was the right thing to do. Instead of making more universal the doctrinal base of the Exercises, it restricted it, curtailing it within a particular current, which is doubtless magnificent in itself, but is the product of the tastes of one epoch. The Exercises fit perfectly within the Three Ways. One can produce a genuinely Ignatian commentary enclosing them within this system. But one can also understand the Exercises while prescinding from that tendency. The Directory ought not to

have restricted itself to any one epoch or tendency, but only to have included those elements which are objective and universal.⁵⁷

It is not our purpose here to discuss in detail the issues raised by Iglesias and Iparraguirre, but this brief introduction of the topic can serve as a background for our search in the Directories for indications of how the Third and Fourth Weeks were seen in the context of the Three Ways.

Third and Fourth Weeks: illuminative or unitive?

Mercurian was the first to develop at some length the link between the Three Ways and the Exercises.⁵⁸ He gives a reference to Pseudo-Dionysius,⁵⁹ but there is a strong likelihood that he was more immediately influenced by Bonaventure, as he calls the third way 'perfective' rather than 'unitive' (the term used by all the other writers on this subject in the Directories). Bonaventure had used 'perfective' in his work *De triplici via*, although the combination 'perfective union' appears in its Prologue.

Applying the triple schema, Mercurian regards the First Week as purgative, the Second as illuminative, and both the Third and Fourth as perfective. In the Third Week he points to the exercitant's will being perfected, of his growing in the virtues, even to perfect charity which is the height of perfection. The Fourth Week is devoted to the enkindling of divine love. Then he looks back again to the Third Week, saying that what is true of the Fourth Week is also true of it. The Third Week is totally given over to the Passion and love of the Lord. It is here that the living exemplar of all the virtues and of all perfection is placed before us, Christ our Redeemer on the cross.⁶⁰ This is very much an ascetical rather than a mystical interpretation of the experience of the Third and Fourth Weeks. Perfection is understood in moral terms and there is no real encouragement of a more unitive (mystical) approach.

Mercurian ends his comments with a balanced and clear exposition of how the Three Ways interweave with one another, and are in fact operative at the same time. The distinction between the weeks is one of emphasis and prime focus.⁶¹ These reflections prevent an over-simplistic view of the Ways (and so of the Weeks) as being totally discrete. However, this point of view is easier to present when, like Mercurian, the ways are understood in ascetico-moral terms, so that (for example) the perfective way is no more

than the perfection of the virtues of the purgative and illuminative ways rather than different quality of experience (that is, union).

When Dávila was evaluating Mercurian's document, he approved of this linking of the Exercises with the tradition of the ways, and considered it to be in harmony with what Ignatius taught in the Annotations. (Note that he wrote 'unitive' rather than 'perfective' although he had Mercurian's text before him). Dávila's approval, however, is limited to the general principle, and he calls for further and clearer explanation.⁶² In fact, in his own exposition Dávila presents a different application of the ways from that of Mercurian.

For Dávila the First Week is purgative, the Second and Third Weeks are both illuminative, and only the Fourth is unitive. The Second and Third Weeks go together because the contemplations of the Passion strongly confirm the prayer and experiences of the Second: the imitation of the life and teaching of Christ, and the election of that way of life which is most pleasing to God. The Fourth Week is unitive because through the exercises of this Week the exercitant is set on fire with love of the eternal homeland, so that he longs to be dissolved and to be with Christ (see Phil 1,23).⁶³

Later Dávila puts thing even more clearly. The Fourth Week corresponds to the unitive way of love and desire for eternity. This stress on the glory and reward which the just hope for, and on the risen Christ seen as their pledge, points the exercitant's attention very much towards the after-life. The union envisaged tends to be more that promised for the next life rather than that which is ontologically real and experientially attainable (to some degree) in this life; it is a union one hopes for rather than a union one experiences.⁶⁴ So while Dávila's interpretation of the unitive way is not the ascetico-moral one of Mercurian, one might still ask if he too is being over-cautious of a mystical interpretation which might point to a present experience of union, stressing instead a desire for union.

According to Cordeses all the exercises on the life, Passion, death and resurrection of Christ belong to the illuminative way. He sees them as leading the exercitant to that practical (as opposed to speculative) knowledge of matters of faith, both more intensively and more extensively.⁶⁵ It is only with the Contemplation to Attain the Love of God that one enters the unitive way. Here Cordeses breaks new ground by interpreting this way in an explicitly mystical sense. In this contemplation we unite ourselves with God by our

faith and hope, but most immediately by love and charity, by which,

we embrace him in our heart, and we possess him, and we transform ourselves into him, according to that verse of John, 'God is love, and whoever abides in love, abides in God, and God in him' (1 Jn 4,16). It is necessary to aspire to this perfect union through a perfect charity which is passionate and violent.⁶⁶

There is perhaps a hint here as to why Cordeses was under suspicion in his spiritual teaching from people such as Miró and Francis Borgia.

The Official Directory sees the First Week as corresponding in some degree (*proportione quadam*) to the purgative way. Similarly the Second and Third Weeks belong partly to the purgative way and partly to the illuminative way. Among other benefits of the Second and Third Weeks it says that

there is engendered in the soul a certain energy that drives out all concupiscence; that makes the soul fervent for the endurance of poverty, contempt and hardship of every kind; that shakes off all negligence; that imparts a readiness for vigilant and strenuous performance of good works.⁶⁷

The Fourth Week then corresponds to the unitive way:

It is wholly devoted to exercises in the love of God and the desire for eternity. The exemplar of these eternal joys is set before us in Christ's resurrection and in the joys which attended it even in this world.⁶⁸

As with Dávila, the resurrection of Christ is the pledge of our future glory. Paul is paraphrased, 'If Christ has risen, we too shall rise'. When the Fourth Week is looked at as including the Contemplation to Attain the Love of God,

it issues in the soul's being united with God through love, which is fostered by meditating on God's goodness and benefits, and on how much he did and suffered on our behalf; fostered too by our desire for heavenly glory, and by the consideration of God's presence in every thing and in every place; rejoicing in his perfections, wishing to please him alone and for his sake alone;

now praising him, now magnifying him, now in awe at his immensity . . . all of which correspond to the unitive way.⁶⁹

If this goes beyond Dávila in its openness to a more mystical interpretation, the unitive element seems to come from the Contemplation to Attain the Love of God than from the exercises on the Resurrection. The latter still seem to evoke rather the desire for union. The joys which attended Christ's Resurrection 'even in this world' await us only in the next.

The comments on the provisional Directory of 1591, sent by the province of Naples, raise a pertinent question. If the Fourth Week, at least to some degree, corresponds to the unitive way, could not the same be said of the Third, (a) since it begins with the Last Supper at which the Eucharist, a sacrament of union, was instituted, and (b) since otherwise Christ would not have left us in his own life an example of the unitive way?⁷⁰ The response of the commission which evaluated the feedback was cautious, yet open-minded: 'The Third Week too, in its own manner, belongs to the unitive way, although this is more proper to the Fourth'.⁷¹ Nevertheless, the suggestion was not incorporated into the Official Directory.

My own view is that a distinction needs to be made (and is not made in the Directories) between the graces sought and the graces received. In the Third and Fourth Weeks the exercitant asks for unitive graces but does not necessarily receive them, and so his actual experience may be that of the illuminative way. It seems amazing that the Directories, in considering the end of the Third Week, should give most attention to the third prelude of the first contemplation (Exx 193) where the element of union is muted (apart from the word 'compassion'), and much less to the corresponding prelude of the second contemplation (Exx 203) where it is much more explicit:

In the Passion it is proper to ask for sorrow with Christ in sorrow, anguish with Christ in anguish, tears and deep grief because of the great affliction Christ endures for me.

If one were granted the grace of sorrow with Christ in sorrow, anguish with Christ in anguish, could one really describe that experience as the illuminative way? In the Fourth Week Ignatius makes no reference to the joy and rewards of the just in heaven

(apart from Exx 229 on creating the appropriate mood for the Fourth Week). The Directories, on the other hand, emphasize this. Union then becomes more a future reality which one longs for, whereas Ignatius wants the exercitant to ask for

the grace to be glad and rejoice intensely because of the great joy and the glory of Christ our Lord (Exx 221).

This is a here-and-now sharing in the here-and-now joy of the risen Christ.

In all of this question of the Three Ways I suspect the writers of the Directories in general of being over-cautious because of their fears of illuminism (or mysticism as a whole); of not paying sufficiently close attention to the text of the *Exercises*; and possibly of not making sufficient use of the actual experience of exercitants as a theological *locus*.

NOTES

The main source for this paper is the collection entitled *Directoria Exercitiorum Spiritualium*, edited by Ignatius Iparraguirre, Rome (1955), and appearing as vol 76 of the *Monumenta Historica Societatis Jesu (MHSJ)*. All references to this work will be given simply as *Dir.* followed by page number.

¹ *Polanci Complementa*, I, 82.

² *Dir.* 67-105.

³ *Institutum Societatis Jesu*, II, 181, (Decree 107).

⁴ *Institutum Societatis Jesu*, II, 211, (Decree 93).

⁵ *Dir.* 272-346. ⁶ *Dir.* 365-418. ⁷ *Dir.* 487, (Comment by Dávila).

⁸ *Dir.* 483-529. ⁹ *Dir.* 576.

¹⁰ *Dir.* 562-751. The Directory of Various Fathers and the Directory of 1591 are printed on the left-hand pages; where they diverge, the two texts appear in parallel columns.

¹¹ *Dir.* 755-793 (Comments from the provinces); *Dir.* 794-801 (Commission's report).

¹² *Dir.* 562-751. The Official Directory is printed on the right-hand pages.

¹³ *Dir.* 268. ¹⁴ *Dir.* 409-413. ¹⁵ *Dir.* 319.

¹⁶ *Dir.* 320. Interesting comments on the value of repetitions from Mercurian, in *Dir.* 268.

¹⁷ *Dir.* 321-322. ¹⁸ *Dir.* 320. ¹⁹ *Dir.* 409.

²⁰ *Dir.* 411. ²¹ *Dir.* 526. ²² *Dir.* 728-729.

²³ *Dir.* 85. ²⁴ *Dir.* 528. ²⁵ *Dir.* 733.

²⁶ *Dir.* 559. Polanco too includes Pentecost, see *Dir.* 322-323.

²⁷ *Dir.* 781-782, 784-785. ²⁸ *Dir.* 784. ²⁹ *Dir.* 319.

³⁰ *Dir.* 319-320. ³¹ *Dir.* 342. (See Exx 193). ³² *Dir.* 343. (See Exx 203).

³³ *Dir.* 403.

³⁴ Pseudo-Dionysius, *Epistolae* 8 (*P.G.* 3, 1100).

³⁵ *Dir.* 526. ³⁶ *Dir.* 526-527. ³⁷ *Dir.* 558.

³⁸ *Dir.* 630-632. ³⁹ *Dir.* 639. ⁴⁰ *Dir.* 729.

- ⁴¹ *Dir.* 729-731. (For Dávila, see *Dir.* 526).
- ⁴² *Dir.* 343. ⁴³ *Dir.* 527. ⁴⁴ *Dir.* 630-632.
- ⁴⁵ *Dir.* 640-641, 733. ⁴⁶ *Dir.* 72. ⁴⁷ *Dir.* 309-310.
- ⁴⁸ *Dir.* 403. ⁴⁹ *Dir.* 496. ⁵⁰ *Dir.* 525.
- ⁵¹ *Dir.* 727-729. ⁵² *Dir.* 78. ⁵³ *Dir.* 120-121.
- ⁵⁴ More accurately, Ignatius uses the word 'life', not the word 'way'. See the *Autograph* (Exx 10): *la vida ylluminatiua, la vida purgatiua*. (*MHSJ*, vol 100, p 150).
- ⁵⁵ E. Iglesias, 'La mente de San Ignacio en los Ejercicios', *Manresa*, vol 30, no 114, (Jan-Mar 1958), pp 89-90.
- ⁵⁶ *Dir.* 742-749. (Ch 21 in 1591 Directory; ch 39 in Official Directory).
- ⁵⁷ Ignacio Iparraguirre, *Historia de los Ejercicios de San Ignacio*, vol 11, (Bilbao—Rome 1955), p 446.
- ⁵⁸ *Dir.* 246-248.
- ⁵⁹ Pseudo-Dionysius, *De hierarchia caelesti*, ch 3 (*P.G.* 3, 165).
- ⁶⁰ *Dir.* 247. ⁶¹ *Dir.* 248. ⁶² *Dir.* 488-489.
- ⁶³ *Dir.* 496. ⁶⁴ *Dir.* 527-528. ⁶⁵ *Dir.* 559.
- ⁶⁶ *Dir.* 560. ⁶⁷ *Dir.* 745. ⁶⁸ *Dir.* 733.
- ⁶⁹ *Dir.* 745-747. ⁷⁰ *Dir.* 782. ⁷¹ *Dir.* 798.