

DISCERNING BEHIND THE RULES Ignatius's First Letter to Teresa Rejadell

By PHILIP ENDEAN

WE HAVE almost nothing in English on how the *Spiritual Exercises*, came to be composed.¹ Someone needs to write a good, concise book on the subject, drawing on four rather different kinds of expertise. Firstly, and most obviously, there are the fruits of close textual scholarship, done chiefly by Spanish Jesuit scholars working prior to Vatican II. Secondly, there are lively discussions in current theology regarding the nature of experience, the relationships between experience and language, and the various senses in which experience might yield knowledge of God. Thirdly, contemporary historians are coming to look at sixteenth-century Catholicism in quite new ways. The early Jesuits were known as 'reformed priests'.² Their life and ministry need to be understood in the context of far-reaching reform movements in Catholicism that were, to some extent, independent of the Protestant schism. Finally, over the past twenty-five years or so, we have been making and giving directed retreats, and reflecting on the experience. Used carefully, these reflections may give valuable insight into the meaning of the actual text.³

In this article, I want to explore a document which would probably be a major source of evidence for such a book. On 18 June 1536, Ignatius wrote a letter from Venice to one Teresa Rejadell, a nun of the Santa Clara Benedictine convent in Barcelona.⁴ It seems that Rejadell had been in correspondence with one Cacles.⁵ Both she and Cacles had written to Ignatius from Barcelona, outlining her situation and asking Ignatius for advice. Ignatius's letter in reply is important because it may articulate a general understanding of spiritual progress which he subsequently revised considerably. The definitive versions of the *Spiritual Exercises*—on this hypothesis—embody a later, different view of the matter.⁶ Claims of this kind inevitably involve some guesswork, and we can never conclusively settle the details. But two general points

seem persuasive. Firstly, the *Spiritual Exercises* do have a significant pre-history. Secondly, the 1536 letter contains Ignatius's thoughts on discernment in a form interestingly different from that of the Rules as we know them.

In what follows, I shall go through the letter in detail, quoting liberally from my own translation,⁷ and adding some commentary. At the end, I shall offer some reflections on the significance of this early material for our making and giving of the Exercises today.

The problem of false humility

Ignatius begins by expressing his joy in the Lord at receiving Teresa's letter, provisionally endorsing the steps Caces had taken, and indicating his agreement to her general request. He then firmly states his opinion:

in two ways the enemy is making you upset—but not so that he⁸ makes you fall into the guilt of sin, which would separate you from your God, and Lord—rather, he makes you upset in the sense of separating you from his greater service and your greater tranquillity. The first of these ways is that he insinuates a false humility. The second—he introduces an extreme fear of God, in which you remain too long and become too occupied.

The bulk of the letter consists in an elaboration of these two 'ways'.

Ignatius does not know Rejadell personally. Thus we can take it that, as Ignatius describes these two forms of spiritual disturbance, he is expounding a theory of spiritual growth which he sees as *generally* applicable. He talks of, ' . . . the general procedure of the enemy's with those who love God our Lord and are beginning to serve him . . . '

The first kind of disturbance, false humility, comes at the end of a process. With a beginner in the spiritual life, the enemy normally uses three 'weapons', one after another. At the outset, the enemy tries discouragement, taunting us with questions:

How are you going to live your whole life in such great penance, deprived of relatives, friends and possessions—in such a lonely life, without even slight respite? You can be saved in other ways without such great risks!

We are led to forget the ways in which the Creator and Lord helps those who break with the enemy. Then, the enemy tries vainglory, tempting disciples to believe themselves far more advanced than they actually are. If that second tactic fails, the enemy tries a

third: false humility. When a person is experiencing God's gifts, and beginning to live a new kind of life, the enemy insinuates that, '... they are sinning through another kind of vainglory, because they are speaking in their own favour . . . (He) works to lead us into false humility, that is, into an exaggerated and perverted humility'.

Ignatius reads Rejadell as succumbing to this third strategy:

For this, your words provide apt testimony. For . . . you say you are a poor religious, and, 'it seems to me I want to serve Christ our Lord'. You do not even dare to say 'I want to serve Christ our Lord', or 'the Lord gives me desires of serving him'—rather you say 'it seems to me I want to'. If you look properly, you will clearly understand that these desires of serving Christ our Lord are not from you, but given by the Lord; and you will speak like this: 'the Lord gives me increased desires of serving him—i.e. the very same Lord himself'. You are praising him because you are making his gift known. You are exulting in *him*, not in yourself, since you are not attributing that grace to yourself.

Ignatius seems here to be applying what he sees as standard, generally valid, teaching. Rejadell is to counteract the enemy's suggestions. If we are led into vainglory, then we should mull over our sins and wretchedness—if we are made downcast, we must reaffirm our faith and hope in the Lord.

At this point, one begins to see differences between the pattern of spiritual growth envisaged in this 1536 text, and in the text of the *Spiritual Exercises* proper. The temptation to false humility is a temptation 'under the appearance of good'. According to the later text, the occurrence of such temptations is a sign that the person concerned should be given the Second Week Rules for Discernment (Exx 9-10).⁹ The letter, however, is still clearly dealing with the first stages after conversion. The texts differ also in the practical steps they suggest. In the Second Week Rules, the strategy suggested is that the temptation be traced back to where it started (Exx 334-5)—here, however, the advice is closer to material in the First Week Rules and, particularly, to the sixth of the Notes on Scruples. One must work resolutely against the temptation (Exx 324, 351).¹⁰

The second enemy strategy: fear of God's absence

Ignatius then begins to expand the second claim he made about Rejadell's situation at the outset:

Coming now to the second point. Just as the enemy has placed in us a form of fear under the cover of a humility which is false, so

that we do not speak even of good, holy, and beneficial things, so he brings after this another, far worse, fear, that is, the fear that we are distant, separated, and away from our Lord. This largely follows on from what has happened previously. For, to the extent that with the first fear the enemy got victory, so he finds it easy to tempt us with this other sort.

Ignatius attempts to account for, or explain, this second fear in two ways. Firstly, he expounds the doctrine that was later to be articulated in the fourth of the Notes on Scruples (Exx 349-50). The enemy capitalizes on the distortions of our consciences. If a person is lax, then the enemy seeks to destroy any sensitivity to sinfulness; if they are over-sensitive to the possibility that they may be in sin—presumably Teresa's plight—then the enemy,

. . . works to overwhelm¹¹ that conscience which is so fine, making a sin in what is no sin, insinuating a fault where there is perfection, so as to be able to throw us into confusion and distress us; and, where he cannot cause sin, or hope to be able to succeed in it fully, at least he works to cause torment.

In the later text, however, these ideas are placed in the context of an important distinction, a context which gives them new significance. We can be scrupulous in the normal sense, and simply form wrong judgements to the effect that an action is sinful. This kind of scrupulousness is the result of misinformation, proceeds from within ourselves, and is of no value. But there is another kind of scruple, arising from an inner conflict. Counter to our previous, settled judgment, 'the enemy' may insinuate, falsely, that a habit is sinful. In the 1536 letter, such a situation is simply to be deplored as an enemy stratagem; in the Notes on Scruples, the evaluation is more nuanced. A situation such as Rejadell's can be of some temporary value in purifying and cleansing the soul, and separating it from all appearance of sin. We are not told explicitly how this is so; presumably Ignatius means that the inner conflict can lead to a greater knowledge of 'the deceits of the bad chief' (Exx 139).

Ignatius then tries another way of accounting for the fear. He talks of consolation and its opposite (not yet called desolation): two 'lessons'—or even 'things to be read' (*lectiones*)—one of which the Lord gives, the other which he permits. Consolation,

. . . casts out all disturbance, and draws us into total love of the Lord. Those whom the Lord lights up in such consolation, are also those to whom he uncovers many secrets—more on this below. Finally, with this divine consolation, all hardships are a pleasure,

all fatigues are rest. For the one who proceeds with this interior fervour, warmth and consolation, there is no load so great that it does not seem light to them, nor any penance or other hardship so great, that it is not very sweet. This shows to us and opens the path containing what we must follow—and flee from the opposite. It is not always within us, but proceeds always at its specific times as it is ordered. And all this is for our profit.

Afterwards comes the opposite 'lesson'. Ignatius describes this, but does not explain why it occurs:

Then, left without this sort of consolation, the other lesson soon comes. That is, our old enemy places before us every possible obstacle to divert us from what has been begun, and irritates us so much—completely counter to the first lesson—often setting before us a sadness without our knowing why we are sad, nor can we pray with any devotion, contemplate or even speak, or hear, of things about God our Lord with any interior savour or relish. Not only this—but, if he finds that we are weak, and greatly subjected to these tainted thoughts, he brings us to think as if we have been completely forgotten by God our Lord; and we end up with the impression that we are completely separated from our Lord; everything we have done, everything we were wanting to do, none of it counts.

Ignatius then tells Rejadell how she should cope:

Here we need to see who is fighting. If it is consolation, we must lower and abase ourselves, and reflect that soon the trial of temptation will come. If temptation, darkness, or sadness come, we must act against it without taking any aftertaste, and wait in patience for the Lord's consolation, which will evaporate all disturbances and shadows from outside.

Ignatius is here exploring how our inner experiences can educate us in the ways of God. Consolation 'shows us and opens the path we must follow'; it at once teaches us and transforms our possibilities, really expanding our freedom to respond to God's intimacy, to proceed on God's 'way'. Like a sacrament received in faith, it effects the divine intimacy which it signifies. Desolation, too, can be a lesson, in that it shows us the nature of the obstacles to the path. Implicitly, Ignatius is taking issue with what might be termed Christian fatalism. Storms come in the Christian life, unavoidably—but one must not resort to false ways of coping: repression, facile theologizing ('it's all God's will'), or wallowing in melancholy. The emotional movements leading us away from God need simply to be recognized as such, named for what they

are, and then counteracted with as much freedom as we can muster. We are not to be 'subjected' to them, or to take an 'aftertaste' from them.

This educative understanding of consolation and desolation seems to me the deepest point present in the text—equally, Ignatius makes it far less strongly than I have. There is no explicit sense of *why* the Lord permits desolation, and even in the *Spiritual Exercises* Ignatius articulates the positive side of desolation less than fully. More importantly, both here and in the First Week Rules, Ignatius fails to distinguish between the responses appropriate to a genuine spiritual consolation on the one hand, and a false elation insinuated by 'the enemy' on the other. The advice given in the last paragraph of the section recurs in Exx 323-4: those in consolation are to humble themselves, preparing for the desolation which will come after. Yet it only makes sense to counteract a consolation with self-abasement if it is known to be false; earlier in the letter, Ignatius has been reproaching Rejadell precisely for misplaced humility. If consolation is authentic, if it represents an invitation further into the divine self-gift, then surely the primary response should be one of relish, of reflective appreciation, of drawing profit.

If the above is correct, it follows that we need to supplement Ignatius's rules for discernment with material on the role of the good spirit in the process of conversion.¹² Some years ago, Gerard W. Hughes wrote:

The greatest and most common obstacle to spiritual development is a deep-rooted self-distrust, which can often masquerade as humility . . . If there is a basic self-distrust, then we cannot recognise consolation when it comes. If it does come, then the distrusting self immediately suspects it, and so effectively cuts off communication from God.¹³

Perhaps the incompleteness of Ignatius's rules has contributed to this collective habit of self-distrust.

More about consolation: unity with the Church

There follows in the letter a famous, but quite unclear, passage. It seems to me best read, not as describing some privileged state of mystical rapture, but as introducing three further considerations regarding the interpretation of consolation, possibly applicable only when a specific option ('one action or another') is at stake:

It remains now to say how we are to understand what we sense as we learn from God our Lord, and of how, once it is understood, we can take advantage.¹⁴ It happens that often our Lord moves

and forces our soul to one action or another by opening our soul; I mean, speaking inside it without any noise of voices, raising it entirely to his divine love; with us not being able, even if we wanted, to resist his purpose . . .

There is a shift of concern between this section and what has gone before. The themes of false humility and of fear have been left behind. Whereas before God used consolation merely to show us a 'path', now consolation forces us to an 'action'.¹⁵ Ignatius then makes the first of three comments on this kind of consolation:

. . . and the purpose of his that we take on—of necessity we conform with the commandments, precepts of the church and obedience to our superiors¹⁶—and full of complete humility, because the same divine spirit is in everything.

It is not clear what kind of necessity is meant to determine the conformity here invoked.¹⁷ Is it that of an obligation laid on us, whereby we must conform ourselves obediently to the laws of the Church and our superiors, if necessary ignoring the implications of our consolation? Such is the position of later texts, notably the thirteenth of the Rules for Thinking with the Church¹⁸ (Exx 365). Or, is Ignatius asserting that when our true consolations direct us towards specific options, they are inevitably in keeping with our ecclesiastical obligations, conformed to them by God? Linguistic considerations tell in favour of this latter reading.¹⁹

Neither of these alternatives, however, yields a theology or a strategy adequate to the reality of 'the enemy', the fact that human beings are subject to sin and error. The former resolves all conflict by making an arbitrary presumption in favour of church authority. The latter amounts simply to the assertion that there can be no ultimate inconsistency in the manifold workings of the Holy Spirit. This point, however true, tells us just nothing about how to cope with negative forces, or with the fact that, to some extent, the individual, authority, or both will always be failing to follow the Spirit's lead.

What we need is a subtler understanding of how a course of action, an *operación*, can be divinely willed for us. A clue comes in Ignatius's presentation of the Incarnation. Here, there is a divine decision to enfold humanity within the life of God's trinity; yet the accomplishment is made dependent on Mary's acceptance. To put the point more generally: God lovingly invites us to establish the Kingdom, but does not annul our freedom to choose. Thus, to follow Christ, to imitate this divine initiative, is to live out a life in free relationship, relationship between creatures whose

freedom is radically blighted. Christian commitment is grounded on a passionate desire for the intimacy of God—a desire which leads us to imagine certain options, and work towards them. But success—however much in one sense ‘the will of God’—remains subject to chance and to the freedom of the human choices. The course of Christ’s life was shaped, decisively, by the positive choice of Mary—and by the ambiguous choices of others.

Such vulnerability is the dark side of commitment to the Kingdom. Insofar as our interactions—including our ecclesial interactions—involve us in evil, error and tragedy, these latter are realities to which we must eventually submit, in union with the crucified Jesus. But we must emphatically resist any attempt to sanctify whatever comes to us—from hierarchs or others—as simply a gift from God.²⁰

How the enemy distorts consolation

The second of Ignatius’s observations deals with subtler strategies of the enemy:

Where quite often we can be deceived is that, after the consolation or inspiration of this kind, as the soul remains in delight, the enemy arrives—looking totally joyful and attractive; he does this so as to make us add to what we have sensed from God our Lord, so as to make us get out of order, and totally lose balance.

Here, in embryo, we have two of the key ideas of the Second Week rules. The enemy can appear insidiously, ‘as an angel of light’, in the period immediately following a genuine consolation when we are still psychologically elated (Exx 332, 336). The later text expands these ideas, breaks them down, and develops them. In particular, and problematically, the devil’s wiles are contrasted with a ‘consolation without preceding cause’, indubitably proceeding from God alone.

Problems with prudence

Finally, despite some serious obscurities in the text, we have raw material for a valuable rule which Ignatius never elaborated:

Other times, he has us reduce the lesson received, setting before us obstacles, things out of keeping, on the ground that we are not wholly fulfilling everything that has been shown to us. And one does need more care here than in anything else—often restraining the great desire to tell of the things of God our Lord, and other times speaking more than the extent to which the desire or movement will accompany us. For, in this matter, I need to pay

attention more to the readiness of the others than to my desires. At this point, the enemy thus helps increase or diminish the good purpose received . . .

Discretion is obviously a necessity in spiritual conversation, but it may all too easily lead to a denial or suppression of holy desires, of the prophetic and charismatic. Let me attempt a formulation of the rule that was never written:

It is a mark of the evil spirit to lead the soul into confusion. When God our Lord, or the good spirit, has filled a soul with good thoughts, that person naturally wants to make use of the lesson they have received by sharing it with others. Yet often there are any numbers of reasons, good and bad, why the insight cannot be shared then and there. At such a point, the enemy moves in, leading the soul to undervalue or forget or doubt what they have in fact genuinely received from God our Lord. Thus, little by little, beginning from what seems like commendable prudence, the soul loses the capacity to be fired with the love of God.

The letter then ends personally and conventionally. Ignatius expresses the hope that he and Rejadell can meet in Barcelona, and in the meantime he recommends her to correspond with one Castro.²¹

Conclusion: the ways of experience

One clear conclusion emerges from this rather complex study. The Ignatian rules had a pre-history, and Ignatius was giving spiritual exercises of some kind for a number of years before he formulated the rules as we now know them, with their divisions into First and Second Week Rules for Discernment, Rules on Aims, Notes on Scruples, and Rules for Thinking with the Church. Beyond that, we have to become rather more tentative. With a text like the Rejadell letter, there can be few knockdown exegetical arguments. Moreover, a full account of the pre-history would have to draw on other sources.²² But the basic point, however we go on to specify it, is well established.

It seems likely, moreover, that the composition of the Rules involved a relatively protracted process of working and reworking. There was loss as well as gain, and the final versions are by no means immune from theological and practical criticism. Why did Ignatius not keep what seems a very helpful insight about pastoral prudence? Is it really valid to see 'temptation under the appearance of good' as the sign for giving a retreatant the Second Week discernment rules (Exx 10)? Could not the teaching about tracing a desolation back to its source be appropriate for any desolation, crude or subtle?

The close, conjectural work on early texts that I have been trying to do in this article obviously satisfies some people's historical curiosity. But that is not all. There are also two points of wider interest which this kind of study brings out. Firstly, we are enabled to put some critical distance between ourselves and Ignatius's actual formulations, both of the Rules in particular and of the Exercises in general. The rules do not articulate facts purporting to be true of all people at all times and in every place; still less did they drop out of heaven ready-made at Manresa. Rather, they attempt rough, provisional generalizations, grounded on the possession of a skill, on a growing familiarity with the ways of God's action in human hearts. They draw informally on theological and other theory, sometimes rather half-baked theory—for their typical setting is an ordinary conversation, not a theological textbook. Ignatius effectively makes this point at the end of the 1536 letter:

Matters have been raised which cannot be written about like this—at least, not independently of a long-standing process. Even then, there would remain things which are better left to be sensed rather than declared—still less in a letter.

The rules reflect received wisdom at the time the book of the *Spiritual Exercises* received its final shape; they are not the last word.

Secondly, and more importantly, the process of composition models the nature of spiritual growth. Knowledge of God is not like knowledge of facts, acquired once and for all. If we believe that a feature of our experience in some way reveals God to us, then that feature has the nature of a symbol: a particular whose meaning is of significance for the whole. It thus also becomes a promise, for we shall only know the fullness of its meaning at the end of all things—and then only in some analogous, mysterious way. If an event reveals Jesus Christ to us, then it is not to be clung to. Rather, we are to let it empty us into the divine fullness, which involves, inescapably, the fullness of humanity too. It entails the risk of expansion, of encounter and of transformation through such encounter. Whatever Ignatius experienced at Manresa impelled him to share the experience with others, and thus to grope towards new understanding of the original experience. It is this untidy process that underlies all the rewriting.

The 1536 letter characteristically uses images of journeying for the spiritual life. Though conventional enough, this usage is no redundancy. Ignatius desires to be of service to all who 'proceed (*caminan*) under (God's) good will and approval'; consolation opens to us 'the path containing what we must follow'; the enemy puts

in obstacles to 'divert us (*desviarnos*) from what has been begun'. The encounter with God deepens through the process of history, through successive interactions with others, through growing knowledge of success and failure.

The early Jesuit writers were all convinced that the Manresa experience decisively shaped the *Spiritual Exercises*. I have no wish to dispute this conviction, but only to interpret it in the light of a viable understanding of experience. In particular, I want to insist that the validity of a written formulation of the art of discernment cannot, in any simple way, depend on its closeness to the 'original' Manresa experience. For one cannot isolate the meaning of any human experience from the life-history in which it is embedded. Ignatius simply could not have had his experiences at Manresa had he not learnt previously to recognize and interpret phenomena in certain ways. Moreover, the content and significance of those experiences were only disclosed as Ignatius lived them out and, in some way, tried to share them with others.

T. S. Eliot, in 'East Coker', elegantly pointed up the illusion that knowledge could come from one particular experience in isolation:

There is, it seems to us,
At best, only a limited value
In the knowledge derived from experience.
The knowledge imposes a pattern, and falsifies,
For the pattern is new in every moment
And every moment is a new and shocking
Valuation of all we have been.

As we try to discern behind the rules, we see a succession of more or less adequate attempts to interpret ongoing experience. Patterns of meaning change as the tradition accumulates—sometimes in ways that have lasting significance and validity, sometimes in ways that may simply reflect the books Ignatius (or one of his companions) has read, or even the quirks of an individual exercitant.

Precisely because whatever happened at Manresa was an experience of God, it was a generative experience. It led Ignatius—and ourselves after him—to enter more deeply into the movement of God's self-gift to all people. Thus new significances constantly arose, and continue to arise—new ways of understanding and appropriating the original event. Of course, not all these ways are equally valid—critical discrimination, however difficult, remains a necessity. Yet only by engaging in such a process, with all its risks, are we truly faithful and responsive to the 'so great good received' (Exx 233).

NOTES

¹ English-speaking readers still have to rely on de Guibert, J., S.J.: *The Jesuits: their spiritual doctrine and practice*, trans William J. Young, S.J., ed George E. Ganss, S.J., second edition (St Louis, 1972), pp 113–122, which was substantially complete by the time of the original author's death in 1942; and Rahner, Hugo, S.J.: *The spirituality of St Ignatius Loyola: an account of its historical development*, trans F. J. Smith (Chicago, 1968)—a study first published in 1947.

² See Schurhammer, Georg, S.J.: *Francis Xavier: his life, his times*, 4 volumes, trans M. Joseph Costelloe, S.J., vol 1, *Europe 1506–1541* (Rome, 1973), pp 501–5; Tacchi-Venturi, Pietro, S.J.: *Storia della Compagnia di Gesù in Italia*, 2 volumes (Rome 1930–51), vol 1.2, pp 179–80.

³ In default of a full bibliography, I give four representative references. The late Fr Miguel Nicolau, S.J., to whom we shall be ever indebted for his pioneering work on Nadal, wrote a valuable synthesis of research into the pre-history and sources of the *Exercises* that supplements and updates the pages in de Guibert: 'Origen de los Ejercicios de S Ignacio', *Manresa*, 42 (1970), pp 279–94, 377–96. On human experience and the knowledge of God, see, for example, Lash, Nicholas: *Easter in ordinary* (London, 1988). My sentences on the historical background reflect the influence of Fr John W. O'Malley, S.J., in particular his 'The Jesuits, St Ignatius, and the Counter Reformation: some recent studies and their implications for today', *Studies in the spirituality of Jesuits*, 14.1 (January 1982). The kind of writing on the practice of the Exercises to which I refer is exemplified in many back numbers of *The Way Supplement*, and also in a volume such as *Notes on the Spiritual Exercises of St Ignatius Loyola: the best of the Review*, ed David L. Fleming, S.J. (St Louis, 1981).

⁴ There are editions of this letter in MHSJ *Epistolae Ignatii* 1, pp 99–107, and BAC *Obras completas de San Ignacio*, 4th edition (Madrid, 1982), pp 657–64. English translations can be found in *Letters of St Ignatius Loyola*, selected and translated by William J. Young, S.J. (Chicago, 1959), pp 18–24; and Rahner, Hugo: *Saint Ignatius Loyola: letters to women*, trans Kathleen Pond and S. A. H. Weetman (Freiburg, Edinburgh and London, 1960), pp 331–5.

The Hugo Rahner volume contains a full account of Ignatius's dealings with Teresa, together with translations of all their extant correspondence (pp 329–68). Until her death in 1553, Rejadell was one of the leaders of a reform group within the convent. In the course of the inevitable conflicts within the community, her group repeatedly sought some kind of incorporation into the nascent Society.

We know Rejadell's first name only from a manuscript history of the Aragón province—see n 2 of the MHSJ edition.

⁵ The MHSJ editors identify the figure mentioned here as the Lope de Cáceres who was one of Ignatius's companions during his student years in Spain, and whose first name is mentioned in the trial process at Alcalá (*Epistolae Ignatii* p 100, n 3; pp 88–9, n 6; *Fontes Documentales* p 331). From the *Autobiography*, it seems that these three Spanish companions initially kept up some sort of contact with Ignatius after the latter went to Paris, but that eventually the links were broken. We are told that Cáceres went back to his home town, Segovia, and led a life 'which seemed to indicate that he had quite forgotten his former intentions' (*Inigo: original testament: the autobiography of St Ignatius Loyola*, trans William Yeomans, S.J. [London, 1985]—hereafter Aut—nn 79–80). Lope de Cáceres is not to be confused with the Diego de Cáceres, who was associated with Ignatius in Paris.

I see no real evidence telling either for or against the identification made by the editors.

⁶ I take this idea from Bakker, Leo: *Freiheit und Erfahrung: Redaktionsgeschichtliche Untersuchungen über die Unterscheidung der Geister bei Ignatius von Loyola*, trans E. Huger (Würzburg, 1970). The book expands a doctoral thesis presented in Dutch at the Gregorian University, Rome, in 1963. Perhaps because Bakker left the Society of Jesus in 1970, and has not, to my knowledge, written subsequently on Ignatian topics, his book has been quite unjustly neglected. The only discussion in English known to me is in Harvey D. Egan, S.J., *The Spiritual Exercises and the Ignatian mystical horizon* (St Louis, 1976), pp 25–7.

Bakker's book contains far more than I report in this study. In particular, he claims, firstly, that the 1536 letter closely reflects Ignatius's own experience at Manresa; secondly, that Ignatius subsequently modified this understanding, partly under the influence of various literary sources, partly to stay clear of the Inquisition; thirdly, that the Manresa sections in the 1553-5 *Autobiography* represent a somewhat botched attempt to superimpose the categories of the later understanding on the original experience. This is not the place to explore in detail my differences with him, but rather simply to note that he is working from an understanding of experience and revelation rather different from the one I sketch in the conclusion to this study.

Professor Bakker now teaches in the Catholic theology faculty of the University of Amsterdam; I am most grateful to him for encouragement in writing this article.

⁷ The translations given here are to be used with caution. There exists no adequate historical dictionary to guide us in the usages of sixteenth-century Spanish, and there are also major problems in establishing the original text of this letter. The present article is a shortened version of an original involving a great deal more linguistic and textual detail. At the time of writing, I hope that my translation of the whole letter, with full annotation, will appear in another context.

⁸ With some hesitation I use masculine pronouns, both for 'the enemy' and for God—but note that Ignatius later talks of the recent convert choosing 'to desire to suffer with their Creator and Lord'.

⁹ I have used the translation by Elder Mullan, S.J., in Fleming, David, S.J.: *The Spiritual Exercises of St Ignatius: a literal translation and a contemporary reading* (St Louis, 1978), with occasional amendment to avoid exclusive language.

¹⁰ On the basis of these and other observations, Bakker argues that only subsequent to 1536 did Ignatius come to the understanding embodied in Exx 10, whereby temptation under the appearance of good indicates a certain spiritual maturity, and readiness for the second group of rules. Ignatius probably took this idea from St Bernard (pp 39-44, 144-7, 151-68, referring to Sermons 63 and 64 on the Song of Songs: *S Bernardi opera vol II: Sermones supra Cantica Canticorum 36-86*, ed J. Leclercq and others [Rome, 1958], pp 164-70).

¹¹ *enbolumar*—a word listed in no dictionary available to me.

¹² Two recent practical studies of the First Week which contain hints in this direction are: Veale, Joseph, S.J.: 'The First Week: practical questions', *The Way Supplement*, 47 (Summer 1983), pp 15-27; Hughes, Gerard W.: *God of surprises* (London, 1985), pp 74-6.

¹³ 'Spiritual development and the directed retreat', *The Way Supplement*, 38 (Summer 1980), pp 6-17, at 16.

¹⁴ *Agora resta hablar, lo que sentimos leyendo* (textual variant *seyendo*) *de Dios N. S., cómo lo hemos de entender, y entendido sabernos aprovechar*. If the variant is accepted, the translation reads literally 'what we sense being of God our Lord', with unclarity as to the precise force of the gerundive.

¹⁵ In this interpretation, I differ both from Bakker, pp 49-62, and from Rahner, Karl: 'The logic of concrete individual knowledge in Ignatius Loyola', in *The dynamic element in the Church*, trans W. J. O'Hara (London, 1964), pp 84-170, especially 152-4. Both interpret this passage as referring to some particularly privileged form of consolation, later termed by Ignatius 'consolation without preceding cause' (Exx 330).

Rahner stresses the metaphor of silent speech. He thereby claims that the experience in question is a non-conceptual, self-authenticating awareness of the divine transcendence. Such a claim—quite apart from the speculative problems it raises—ignores the fact that the experience directs us to an *operación* (cf Bakker, p 52). For Bakker, Ignatius is here drawing on his memories at Manresa, and expects Rejadell to follow the pattern of his own progress. Thus, after her bout of false humility and scruples, she is likely to have a particularly elevated experience like that of Ignatius at the Cardoner. Ignatius is therefore giving her some prior warning and counsel.

Both these readings neglect the verbal links between this passage and the previous description of consolation. Here and earlier, consolation draws us, or raises us, entirely

into the divine love; in both passages, consolation is educative, showing us how to live our lives in closer union with God. Moreover, Ignatius indicated in the previous section that he would say more later about the 'secrets' uncovered in consolation.

¹⁶ *y el sentido suio que tomamos, necessario es conformarnos* (textual variant *conformarse*—it conforms).

Sentir and its cognates are notoriously difficult to translate—in practice, readings are often determined by the theological presuppositions of the translator. I opt for 'to sense' as a suitably indefinite equivalent for the verb. However, the evidence of standard dictionaries indicates a difference between *sentido* and *sentimiento*. The latter corresponds to the more affective and intuitive uses of the verb, whereas *sentido* can be translated as 'sense faculty', 'the ability to make distinctions', 'purpose', 'meaning', and 'direction'.

For a good survey of Ignatius's usage, which also well, though unconsciously, illustrates the hermeneutical process I here refer to, see Pinard de la Boullaye, Henry, S.J.: '*Sentir, sentimiento, sentido* dans le style de Saint Ignace', *Archivum historicum Societatis Iesu*, 25 [1956], pp 416–30.

¹⁷ For fuller discussion of this problem, see Schwager, Raymond: *Das dramatische Kirchenverständnis bei Ignatius von Loyola* (Zurich, 1970), pp 127–152.

¹⁸ This rule invokes the doctrine of the one Spirit operative both in Christ and in his Church to support the principle: 'What seems to me white, I will believe black if the hierarchical Church so defines'.

¹⁹ The phrase which opens the following sentence, 'where quite often we can deceive ourselves', implies a contrast with what has gone previously. If this is so, then the point about conformity with church authority is not a cautionary injunction against self-deception, but simply an assertion of the ultimate coherence of all workings of the Spirit.

The question turns on the real subject of the reflexive *conformarnos*. According to one standard textbook, by 1500 the reflexive was well established in Spanish as the predominant way of expressing the passive voice. Cf Spaulding, Robert K.: *How Spanish grew* (Berkeley, 1975), p 126.

²⁰ The foregoing is an application to ecclesiology of a suggestion by Karl Rahner regarding religious obedience. See Rahner, Karl, S.J.: 'A basic Ignatian concept', in *Mission and grace*, translated by Cecily Hastings and others, 3 vols (London, 1966), III, pp 144–175, especially pp 165–70.

²¹ This seems likely to be the Juan de Castro who had taught Ignatius in Paris, made the Exercises, and subsequently entered the Carthusian monastery at Vall de Cristo, near Segorbe. Ignatius had spent eight days in the monastery during his 1535 sojourn in Spain. See MHSJ, *Epistolae Ignatii* 1, pp 96–7, n 8, 191; Aut 77–8.

²² We have the records of the 1526 and 1527 Inquisition processes at Alcalá, investigating the activities of Ignatius and his then companions. During these, some of the first exercitants outline what they were taught. See MHSJ *Fontes Documentales*, pp 319–50, especially, for discernment material, p 334. We also have a text from 1535, in the hand of an English priest who made the Exercises in Paris, one John Helyar. See MHSJ *Exercitia Spiritualia* (1969), pp 418–54—references to the Rules on pp 445, 450–1. The latter includes rudimentary discussion of 'consolation without preceding cause'. Finally, Fr José Calveras, on the basis of a close analysis of the Latin styles in the 1541 so-called *Versio Prima*, detects three hands at work in the translation: Ignatius's, Favre's and Salmerón's. This at least suggests some likely dates: in particular, whatever is written in Ignatius's rather unpolished Latin was probably formulated by 1528, the beginning of his sojourn in Paris. At this point, Ignatius wanted, for the first time, to give his exercises in Latin, yet did not have much facility in the language. See Calveras, José, S.J.: 'Estudios sobre la redacción de los textos latinos de los ejercicios anteriores a la Vulgata', *Archivum historicum Societatis Iesu*, 31 (1962), pp 3–99, especially pp 65–6, 72.