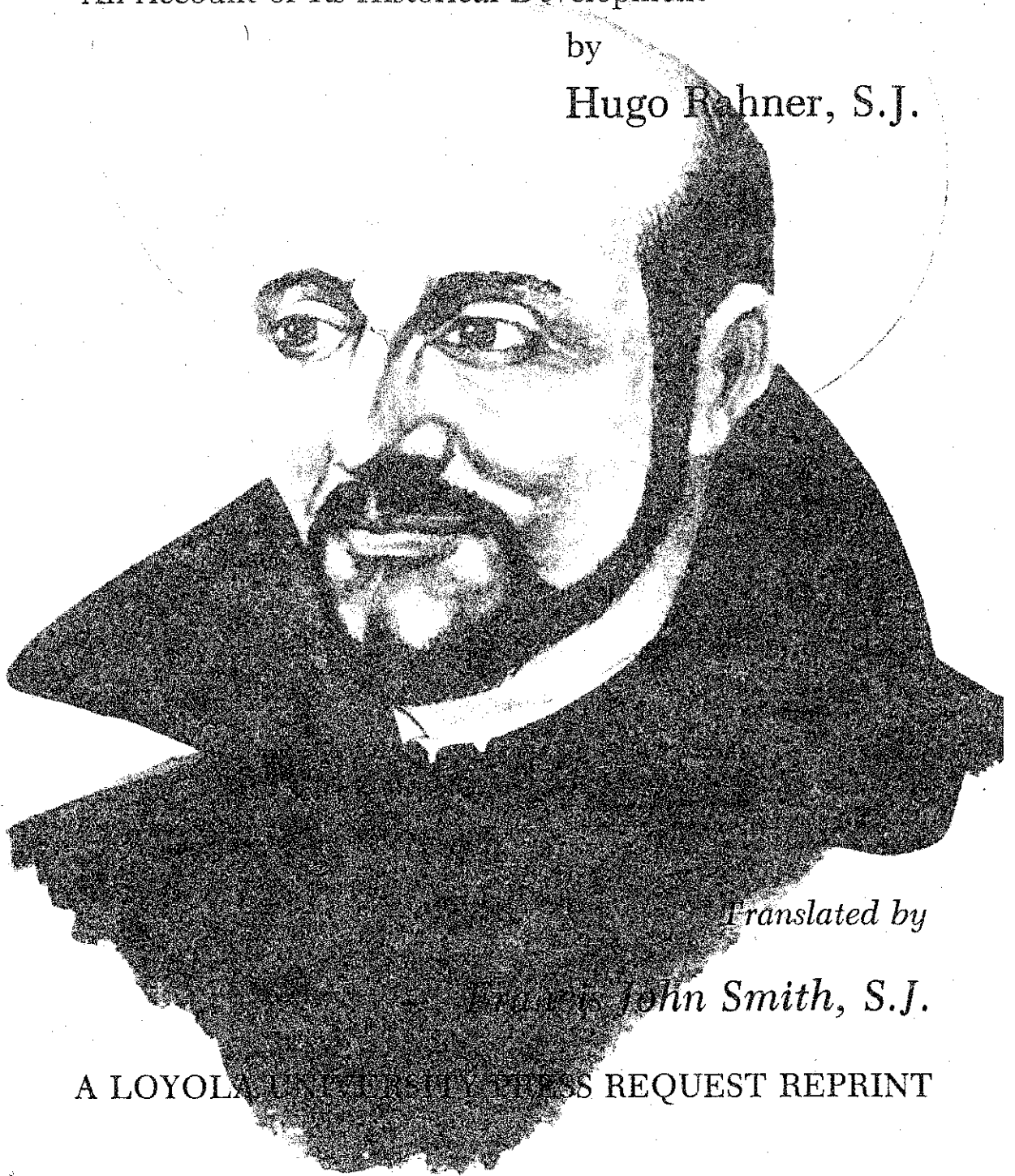


THE SPIRITUALITY OF ST. IGNATIUS LOYOLA

An Account of Its Historical Development

by

Hugo Rahner, S.J.



Translated by

Thomas John Smith, S.J.

A LOYOLA UNIVERSITY PRESS REQUEST REPRINT

TWren
2/3/88

The Spirituality of
ST. IGNATIUS LOYOLA

LOYOLA UNIVERSITY PRESS
is pleased to make
this out-of-print book
available once again
to its old friends.

This book* is a

Loyola

request

reprint

The Spirituality
OF
ST. IGNATIUS LOYOLA

An Account of Its Historical Development

by HUGO RAHNER, S.J.

Translated by
FRANCIS JOHN SMITH, S.J.

*Reprinted by arrangement with the author
and/or the original publisher.
This book is now sold only by
Loyola University Press.

LOYOLA UNIVERSITY PRESS

Chicago 60657

© 1980, LOYOLA UNIVERSITY PRESS

A Loyola Request Reprint*

ISBN 0-8294-066-4

Originally published by Verlag, Styria/Graz, Austria

IMPRIMI POTEST Josephus M. Egan, S.J.
Praepositus Provincialis
Provinciae Chicagiensis
Die 20 mensis februarii 1953
(Sig. Prov.)

NIHIL OBSTAT E. A. Cerny, S.S., D.D.
Censor Librorum

IMPRIMATUR Franciscus P. Keough, D.D.
Archiepiscopus Baltimorensis
Die 14 mensis martii 1953

The nihil obstat and imprimatur are official declarations that a book or pamphlet is free of doctrinal and moral error. No implication is contained therein that those who have granted the nihil obstat and imprimatur agree with the opinions expressed.

Library of Congress Catalog Card Number: 53-5586

Original copyright, 1953, by the NEWMAN PRESS

*Reprinted by arrangement with the author and/or the original publisher. This book is now sold only by Loyola University Press.



THE ultimate purpose and the subject matter of this book call for a word of explanation, since at first sight the two seem to have little or no connection with each other.

The final aim of the book may be stated in a single phrase: service in the Church. The word "service" is a sacred word and conceals within itself a whole hierarchy of values, which rise one above the other to the highest within reach of a rational creature, the service of God. The word itself as well as those who are willing to render service has been misused in order to train slaves of the state. As a consequence there is a newly awakened sensitivity which makes many unwilling to hear even the word "service." For them it is synonymous with a helpless, galling servility or a task performed without love. Today we must restore the sacredness of service by showing that there still exists one kingdom—and only one—in which a man can render service as a free and joyous servant, as a noble soldier. This is the Kingdom of God, existing here in the Church. There is all the more necessity for proclaiming this fact because voices of unfavorable criticism have been raised in the very portals of the

Church. True, this criticism is often "nothing more than the indignation and complaints of love" (Ida Friederike Görres), and proceeds from a highly sensitive love for the Mystical Body of Christ, the Church. But it is impossible to eliminate safely the danger of a new form of spirituality unless one proves its genuineness and justifiableness by sober, humble service in the Church. It is just this commonplaceness which is the Church's most hidden and Christian mystery.

The aim of this book is to serve as interpreter of those profound words of our Holy Father, Pope Pius XII, in his encyclical on the Mystical Body of Christ: "It is not enough to love this Body for the glory of its Divine Head and its members who are in heaven. We must also manifest love by deeds toward those still in this mortal life." Since the days of St. Ignatius, this attitude has been called "thinking with the Church"; for this true servant, this noble soldier of the Church, was the one who handed down to us these "Rules for Thinking Rightly with the Church." This attitude is as old as the Church herself. Accordingly, it is the purpose of our book to present the development of the essential features and history of this spirit of service in the Church.

What has been said will serve as a justification for the apparently remote connection between the subject matter of the book and its purpose. Speculative consideration tends to become more questionable, the more sublime and incomprehensible "the attitude" we have to circumscribe and fix within bounds. To ward off this danger we must keep before our minds the realization of this attitude which can be seen only in man as he actually

appears in history. We come to know what is saintly only through the saints. Hence we choose a saint whose ideal of perfection is essentially formed by service in the Church, namely, St. Ignatius Loyola. All results of our studies in the life of this Saint may seem at first blush to refer only to the narrower field of the history of the Society of Jesus, but we shall use them to serve our ultimate aim as fixed above. However, it is only by this historical fidelity to smaller things that we shall be able to raise and extend our gaze across the undiscovered and immense lands of the mysterious history of the spirit where the great men of the Church from Ignatius of Antioch onward join hands with one another. These men transmit from generation to generation that loyalty to the humble Church here on earth which is so needed by the men of our day. They have been cruelly disillusioned by all worldly slogans and passionately long for an ideal as a model of their lives.

If this book can contribute, even in a small way, toward exciting in the hearts of the present generation of Christians a willingness to serve in the Church such as we see exemplified in the lives of her great men at all times—a willingness to serve that is modest in speech and criticism, but courageously energetic in action—then it has accomplished its purpose.

HUGO RAHNER, S.J.



Introduction

IT IS THE unanimous opinion of both friends and enemies of the Society of Jesus that St. Ignatius was instrumental, by means of his Spiritual Exercises and by the Order he founded, in turning the course of Church history into new channels. "Since the dawn of history," says R. Fülöp-Miller, "there are few men who have followed out an idea to its bitter end with such iron logic, few men who have realized it with such an extraordinary output of energy and exerted such a profound influence upon the thought and action of mankind as Ignatius did." It is in this sense that his Spiritual Exercises are praised "as a book of destiny for mankind" (H. Böhmer), and his Order is conceded the glory of having done great work for civilization. This concession is made by J. C. Herder, for instance, in his *Adrastea*: "Though the name, *Jesuit*, would remain odious in all other respects, yet the good the Order has done for the human race will always be worthy of praise and will undoubtedly continue to be profitable for future generations."

These critical views, however, touch only the surface of history. Ignatius and his lifework are understood only by those who delve deep into the hidden depths where

the gigantic forces of his life's achievement are released by his secret wrestlings with God. In the final analysis, the influence of Ignatius and his Order upon the Church, upon politics, civilization and world-wide missions, derives from the spiritual life that animated them. For the great achievements which history records always have their beginnings in the tranquil center of the human heart.

Therefore we shall boldly attempt to lay bare in this study the history of the underlying forces of that ideal which St. Ignatius wished to exemplify in his own life and to bequeath to his Order.

But the attempt to uncover the history-making forces that build up the body of Christ—edification in the deepest sense of the word—demands justification both in content and in method. As to method, the question immediately arises: Is it possible at all to have a history of the human heart and its mysterious encounters with God? If the writing of history is to remain what it ought to be, then it must adhere to the sources with exactness; but the human heart is forever beyond all earthly witnesses. We desire to write both history and the unwitnessed secrets of the heart. It is indeed a bold undertaking to seek to penetrate beneath the surface of the documented sources to relive the way the Christian heart draws from the living spring that force of whose effects we may read in casually written accounts. But such an attempt is of the utmost importance for deepening our knowledge of history. This we shall endeavor to do for Ignatius and his lifework, for his Spiritual Exercises, and for the ideal of perfection bequeathed by Ignatius to the Society he

founded. Our attempt will be based on as accurate a knowledge of the sources as possible, for otherwise our work would descend to the level of a merely edifying tale or an unwarranted psychological romance. However, by breaking through the surface of texts in the sources, we aim at reaching those depths which lie beyond the pale of pure history, where the countenance of St. Ignatius in his contemplation of God takes on those unforgettable lineaments which he has handed down in the books of his spiritual experiences and in the books of the foundation of his Order. For otherwise we would remain tied down to the purely superficial type of history that merely arranges and chronicles facts and has no rule either for praise or blame by which to measure the world-transforming figure of Loyola.

As to content, our attempt is justified by the following considerations: It is a long-established fact of history that the character and thought of Ignatius found their clearest expression in the book of Spiritual Exercises and that his Order arose and is ever freshly renewed from that world of thought. But beneath the sparse words of the book of Exercises and the close-clipped sentences of the Constitutions there lies hidden a whole new world: the world of the heart of Ignatius—a clear world, yet at the same time a glowing world, one which Ignatius created from those few blinding illuminations received by him at Manresa during his mystical encounter with God. It is our desire to push forward into this world in order to get from it some inkling of the forces with which Ignatius imbued his world-wide activity. We are concerned for the present, then, with determining the exact

starting point for our investigation into the history of the Ignatian ideal.

That starting point is given by the fundamental truths of the book of the Spiritual Exercises; they enable us to enter into the very center of Ignatius' heart. According to Ignatius' opinion, the Spiritual Exercises are not a fully elaborated treatise on Christian perfection, but merely an outline, a "principle and foundation" for the life-transforming meeting of the soul with God. From the two most important meditations of this book, the exercises of the Kingdom of Christ and of the Two Standards, it is possible to sum up in a single sentence the basic plan for the formation of a life of perfection: Man is created to fight in the Church militant against Satan by reverent service of the majesty of the Triune God, by making himself like to the crucified Jesus, and by so doing to enter into the glory of the Father. The fundamental driving-force in all this is love: love that is characterized by a word distinctive of Ignatius' whole nature, the word "more" (*magis*); love which wants to do ever "more and more," which is essentially limitless, always open as it were to promptness in the service of God and in its willingness to become like to Christ; love, finally, which finds its measure in the immensity of the Eternal Father's redeeming love made visible in the Incarnate Christ, love "desiring and choosing only those things which lead more to the end for which I am created."

The final step in the development of this love is an element that is of decisive importance for a full understanding of the deep nature of Ignatius' thought. The

essential illimitability of the love driven on by the "more" is restricted by the ideal of service in the visible Church militant. This immeasurable love has to prove its genuine Catholicity by the measure, so to speak, of the flesh and blood of Christ's Mystical Body. In this way, boundless love becomes for Ignatius "discreet" love, to make use once again of one of Ignatius' key words. Every grace must be measured by the law of the Church; every love, by the spirit of obedience; every spirit, by the Mystical Body of Christ, our Lord. From the union of this irrepressible love with its limitations within the body of the Church is released that enormous force which can be verified historically in the work of St. Ignatius. That was the peculiar grace of Ignatius; in it lay hidden the deepest element of his ideal of perfection. "Not to be stopped by what is greatest, yet to be held in check by what is least, that is divine." This is the description given of the real Ignatius in the *Imago Primi Saeculi Societatis Jesu (1640)*, written by an anonymous Jesuit. Hölderlin, as we know, greatly admired this line and placed it at the head of his work, *Hyperion*. This is the very essence of the spirit of Ignatius. He is the man of great love in the little Church.

As a consequence of this, our historical study extends its scope to an endeavor that seeks to fit the ideal of Ignatius and his Order into the general history of the development of perfection. It was precisely because he wished to place his unshackled love into the fetters of humble service in the Church, that he was changed to the little servant in the great Church. This conversion proves the genuineness of his ideal of perfection. The

law stated above, namely, that every spirit must prove its genuineness by the law of the Church, holds true also as an historical law in the history of asceticism. There is no perfection which is not "incarnate spirit," if we may be allowed this expression. Even the apparently most sublime urging of the "more" of a spirit, if it refuses to fit itself into the humble body of the visible Church, ends up as a rule in a proud spirituality. The gnosticism of the early days of Christianity, the excesses of the Egyptian type of monasticism, the Origenism of oriental theology and the wild mysticism of the Friends of God in the Middle Ages—all bear out the truth of this statement. To offset such unrestrained luxuriace the Holy Spirit is always active, but only within the limits of the Church; just as He came down in His fullness, but only upon the flesh of the Incarnate Word, so He raised up chosen men of the Church who were to be living models of true perfection. Among this group of chosen men St. Ignatius is now also to be ranked. Accordingly, we shall attempt to disclose the relations existing between these men—relations which, independent of all historical contacts, have their roots in the deep bosom of God. We should like to trace out a history of the meta-historical disposition, so to speak, which with Ignatius we shall call "thinking rightly with the Church." Ignatius is here to be elevated to the ranks of the great men of the Church, men who safeguarded for the Mystical Body of Christ its spirit by keeping it within the bounds of the humble Church on earth.

But such an outward manifestation of the Church's ideal of perfection never finds its realization except in

men as they actually exist. Hence it is to be gleaned in its outlines as well as in its conditions from the historical evolution of the man who is its prototype. That holds true also with regard to St. Ignatius. Consequently, our investigation must return again to the world of his spiritual development, though we must never lose sight of the purpose of the history of the inner heart of man as described above. This world can be known with historical exactness. It is one in which only a knowledge of the rich source materials can offer us safe guidance.

With the aid of these sources we may approach the subject of the inmost heart of Ignatius and see from three different angles the ideal he made live in the Exercises and in his Order. These three viewpoints will serve as a division of this study.

We approach first, as it were, from below—that is, we must inquire what influence his origin and descent, his education and attitude toward life, exerted upon the shaping of his basic ideas.

Secondly, we approach from the sides—that is, we must show how this fully molded personality was led into the world of the saints under the influence of Christian tradition.

Finally, we must approach from above—that is, we must explain how mystical grace took possession of his soul and transformed him with irresistible force into the man of the Church whose influence is still active even at the present day.

FOREWORD	v
INTRODUCTION	ix
CHAPTER I <i>The Influence of Ignatius' Surroundings Upon His Spiritual Formation</i>	i
1. IGNATIUS' ANCESTRY	
2. HIS EDUCATION	
3. CONCLUSIONS	
CHAPTER II <i>The Impact of the Tradition of Christian Piety Upon Ignatius</i>	16
1. IGNATIUS' PREPARATION	
2. HIS CONVERSION	
3. CONCLUSIONS	

CHAPTER III <i>The Mystical Transformation of St. Ignatius Into a Man of the Church</i>	46
1. THE MYSTICISM OF MANRESA	
2. IGNATIUS RANKS WITH MEN OF THE CHURCH	
a. Ignatius of Antioch. b. Basil, Benedict, and Augustine. c. Catherine and Bernardine of Siena.	
3. CONCLUSIONS	
a. The Spiritual Exercises. b. The Society of Jesus. c. Other Conclusions	
ABBREVIATIONS AND NOTES ON PRIMARY SOURCES	113
FOOTNOTES	115
BIBLIOGRAPHY	135
INDEX	139