


Article

The Spanish Aggiornamento of Ignatian Theology and Spirituality: Axes and Figures

Eduard López Hortelano 

Department of Moral Theology and Praxis of the Christian Life, Pontifical University Comillas,
28015 Madrid, Spain; elopezh@comillas.edu

Abstract

This study examines the renewal of Ignatian spirituality from the Spanish school, emphasizing the contributions of General Pedro Arrupe during his eighteen-year tenure leading the Society of Jesus. Arrupe's vision prioritized deep interior experience over mere religious practices, advocating for a spirituality rooted in divine gift and surrender. His leadership inspired a return to the fundamental principles of Ignatian spirituality, marked by a profound sense of God's presence, self-offering, and a commitment to the apostolic mission. The research is organized around three main axes: textual and exegetical, historical and contextual, and systematic or dogmatic Ignatian theology. The first axis explores the contributions of scholars like Antonio María de Aldama and José Calveras, who emphasized returning to the original Ignatian texts and their exegetical significance. Their work highlighted the centrality of Christ, the spiritual exercises as a transformative tool, and the dynamic relationship between mission and identity within the Society. The second axis focuses on historical and contextual analysis, particularly through the work of Cándido de Dalmases, Ricardo García-Villoslada, and Jesús Iturrioz. These scholars reassessed Ignatius of Loyola's biography and historical influences, moving beyond hagiographical narratives to consider broader theological and social movements of the 16th century, such as Erasmus' humanism and the Catholic Reformation. The third axis, systematic Ignatian theology, is examined through figures like Pedro de Leturia and Ignacio Iparraguirre, who explored the doctrinal dimensions of Ignatius' writings. Key themes include the Christocentric nature of Ignatian spirituality, the role of discernment in governance, and the balance between mysticism and apostolic mission. This research underscores the ongoing relevance of Ignatian spirituality by contextualizing its renewal within historical, exegetical, and theological frameworks, demonstrating its adaptability and enduring significance in contemporary spiritual discourse.

Keywords: Ignatian spirituality; exegetical analysis; theological renewal



Academic Editor: Alex Villas Boas

Received: 16 October 2025

Revised: 3 November 2025

Accepted: 5 November 2025

Published: 12 November 2025

Citation: López Hortelano, Eduard. 2025. The Spanish Aggiornamento of Ignatian Theology and Spirituality: Axes and Figures. *Religions* 16: 1440. <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel16111440>

Copyright: © 2025 by the author. Licensee MDPI, Basel, Switzerland. This article is an open access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) license (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

1. Introduction

Andrew Spira's *The Invention of the Self* (Spira 2020) offers a novel perspective on the emergence of the modern self within the framework of Western spirituality. He argues that, beginning with the Renaissance, an introspective and autonomous notion of the individual took shape—a vision that resonates profoundly with the *Spiritual Exercises* of St. Ignatius of Loyola (1491–1556). In these Exercises, a methodical structure is proposed so that the retreatant might examine his interiority, become aware of his deepest desires, and make decisions oriented toward following Christ. Thus, although composed in the sixteenth century, the *Exercises* contain elements that anticipate the modern subjectivity

Spira analyzes, such as the centrality of personal consciousness and interior freedom, to the point that one can speak of their synchronicity with an acute contemporary crisis of meaning, or the planetary-scale psychic epidemic, as Constantini and Pinkler have noted in the Spanish edition of Carl Gustav Jung's Black Books (Jung 2023, p. II). Certainly, St. Ignatius does not propose an abstract spirituality but one that is embodied and directed toward the transformation of the self through discernment, despite the limitations of such a spirituality (Estrada 2019). This process of self-knowledge is not an end in itself, but a means of uniting oneself more intimately with God. While introspection for Spira appears as the axis of modernity, for Ignatius it is integrated into a communal and ecclesial experience. In this way, Spira's thought allows us to reread the *Exercises* as a bridge between medieval spirituality and the emerging modernity.

During the twentieth century, the *Spiritual Exercises* were rediscovered by theologians, mystics, and educators as a key tool for renewing Christian spiritual life, particularly in the post-conciliar context. Well-known authors such as Karl Rahner (1904–1984) and Hans Urs von Balthasar (1905–1988) saw in them a concrete path to a personal experience of God, in a time marked by secularization and institutional skepticism. In this context, Spira's reading of the self as an active interior construction finds resonance with Ignatian pedagogy, which insists that each person must assume freely and responsibly his or her own spiritual quest. The recovery of discernment, the personalization of faith, and the attention to the affective movements as signs of the Spirit are hallmarks of this renewal. The *Exercises* became a means of reconciling modernity and faith, reason and experience. Their language, deeply psychological and adaptable, facilitated their application outside strictly religious settings. For this reason, Ignatian spirituality proved crucial in responding to contemporary challenges, fostering a faith lived out of interior freedom. This renewal was not a betrayal of St. Ignatius's legacy but rather a return to its most dynamic and transformative sources.

The dialogue between Spira's ideas and the *Spiritual Exercises* helps us to understand why the twentieth century required a spirituality that placed the self at its center—not as an isolated entity, but as a subject in the process of conversion. St. Ignatius offers a path in which the self does not remain enclosed within itself but opens to transcendence through discernment. In this sense, Ignatian spirituality provides a synthesis between the modern subjectivity Spira describes and the theological orientation of Christianity. The Ignatian renewal of the twentieth century allowed many believers to recognize themselves in a faith that was personalized and critical, yet at the same time profoundly ecclesial. This integration is crucial today, in an age defined by quests for authenticity and meaning in the face of fractures in our world and in the human condition (Han 2021). Thus, Spira's work not only illuminates the past but also helps to interpret the ongoing relevance of the Ignatian method. The self-constructed within the *Exercises* is a self oriented toward mission, toward the other, toward the Kingdom. In this dynamism between introspection and sending, between freedom and surrender, lies the transformative force of contemporary Ignatian spirituality.

From this perspective, the present study focuses on the way in which the category of experience emerges as a privileged path for recovering and renewing *ignacianidad* (*ignacianity*) in the twentieth century, within a Spanish context of spiritual authenticity and theological renewal. Within this framework, it is argued that the Christology of the *Spiritual Exercises* functions as the keystone, since it articulates Ignatian spiritual dynamism with the centrality of following Christ, thus shaping the believer's identity. Building on this core, the study analyzes the contributions of seven Spanish Jesuit authors—Aldama, Calveras, Dalmases, García-Villoslada, Iturrioz, Leturia, and Iparraguirre—who, from different perspectives, profoundly enriched the understanding and transmission of Ignatian spirituality. These authors are organized around three complementary approaches: the textual or exegetical,

centered on philological and hermeneutical fidelity to the foundational texts; the historical or contextual, which situates the *Exercises* and the figure of Ignatius within their cultural and institutional development; and the systematic or dogmatic, which seeks to integrate Ignatian intuition into a coherent and contemporary theological framework. Taken together, the study aims to show how the interplay of experience (*cognitio Dei experimentalis*)—in other words, from our perspective, the attempt to describe the experience of God (*Erfahrung*, in German) (García Gutiérrez 2023, p. 56)—Christology, and diverse academic approaches constitutes a fertile itinerary for the renewal of Ignatian spirituality in dialogue with the demands of contemporary thought.

2. The Inner Experience as a Way of Reclaiming Ignatian Identity

Undoubtedly, to begin by examining the most distinctive marks of the renewal of Ignatian spirituality within the Spanish school necessarily means taking as a point of departure the magisterium of Superior General Pedro Arrupe (1907–1991). His eighteen years of apostolic governance of the Society, up until his resignation in 1983, profoundly contributed to the depth, fidelity, and renewal of Ignatian spirituality in the post-conciliar era. However, it is important to keep certain considerations in mind from the outset of our analysis, for the complexity of the contemporary world—together with the succession of conflicts and crises of every kind throughout the twentieth century—reveals the most fundamental crisis: the crisis of faith.

The adage *Vocatus atque non vocatus, Deus aderit* (“Called or not called, God will be present”), recorded by Erasmus of Rotterdam in his *Collectanea adagiorum*, originates from the Oracle of Delphi and encapsulates a theological and anthropological intuition of profound spiritual resonance. When Carl Gustav Jung had this ancient proverb inscribed above the doorway of his home in Küsnacht in 1908, it acquired renewed meaning within the framework of depth psychology (Jung 2023, p. 19). For Jung, the phrase symbolized the inescapable presence of the divine within the human soul, even when rational consciousness seeks to deny or ignore it. The adage expresses that the spiritual dimension does not depend on explicit invocation but dwells within interiority as a constitutive reality of being. Thus, it reveals that the experience of God is not an external imposition but an inner event arising from the unconscious and from the dialogue with mystery (Frohlich 2023). In this sense, the maxim embodies a vision of spirituality as an existential and transformative experience, wherein the divine manifests both in conscious seeking and in the silent depths of the soul.

2.1. Spiritual Experience

Certainly, spirituality cannot be lived merely through devotions, external imitations, or religious contexts that define religiosity. Depth is one of its essential marks. Pedro Arrupe situates spirituality in gift and self-surrender (far removed from voluntarism or mere effectiveness): the surrender to God. This is clearly perceptible in two fundamental moments that we might call his own Cardoner (cf. *Au* 30). The first occurs at the beginning of his vocation: “Usted se acordará tal vez de que, cuando en Valkenburg y en Marneffe planeábamos soñando [...] aquellos planes de moral, medicinas, psiquiatría y no sé cuántas cosas más [...] Ahora es todo lo contrario: no planeo, pero estoy convencido de que estoy en el puesto al que Dios me ha destinado [...] Planeo solamente un proyecto: el de echarme en manos de Cristo y que Él me lleve” (Iglesias 2005, p. 24).¹ The second, similar in tone, takes place at his farewell as Superior General after eighteen years of apostolic governance, when his physical strength was limited: “Yo me siento, más que nunca en las manos de Dios. Eso es lo que he deseado toda mi vida, desde joven” (García 2013a, p. 135).²

When Pius XII (1947) declared that objective piety (the prayer of the Church) could not be separated from subjective piety (personal prayer), the idea was recovered that

prayer—whether meditation, contemplation, or any vocal form—constituted a personal preparation (*presidia militiae christianae*) for living intensely the mystery of faith, particularly the Eucharist. Therefore, it is intrinsic to existence that both dimensions (personal and communal) be reciprocal in the spiritual journey and that from their interaction arises what we now call interior experience. According to Waaijmann (2002), Arrupe should be placed within the spiritual phase that interprets spirituality through the concept of experience. The understanding of the spiritual life has passed through various stages. The first corresponds to the mystical stage of the seventeenth century, which led to the ascetical reaction a century later. The third, more theological, characterizes the nineteenth century. However, Pedro Arrupe anticipates what the Second Vatican Council would later emphasize: understanding the human being within his own existence (GS nn. 12–13) and recognizing the interdependence and relational nature of humankind as part of God’s salvific design (GS n. 23).

In this sense, when Arrupe approaches spirituality according to the Ignatian way, he departs from the preconiliar worldview that conceived it as a detachment from the world and a battleground to be fought (a “spiritual struggle” against temptation). Rather, the essence of spirituality lies in language (how the experience of God is articulated) and time (from where it is lived). From this perspective, the world reveals a spiritual dignity in tension toward the fullness of the Kingdom. A first milestone is that spiritual life is situated within a mystical perspective (as opposed to the scholastic one), where reflection on Christian life seeks to *taste* God and immerse oneself in the mystery. From this it follows that Arrupe’s Ignatian perspective is not confined to concepts or ideas; his way of living and transmitting spiritual experience pertains to a mysticism as an exercise of love and a mode of knowing God—where to contemplate Him is to see Him, and to see Him is to know Him.

Undoubtedly, the mystical experience is placed above asceticism. Gift and self-surrender are the conditions of possibility for a renewed and *aggiornata* Christian spirituality. They constitute the *principle and foundation* that Arrupe initiated for himself and for the entire Society, stemming from a practical logic that would even lead him to transform the novitiate into a field hospital: “Y Él allí, en el sagrario, contemplándolo todo y esperando nuestra invitación para que tomase parte en la obra de reconstruirlo todo. . . Salí de la capilla y la decisión fue inmediata. Haríamos de la casa un hospital” (Arrupe 1965, p. 176).³ Within this framework of interest in spirituality, his contribution acquires particular relevance for two reasons. First, because it would lead to a renewal of the spirituality of the Society of Jesus. Second, because he would extend it into a dynamic and a fundamental, practical, and existential attitude characterized as a way of life encompassing all dimensions: God, humanity, death, history, suffering, and injustice.

This surrender is only possible when it arises from the center of God within the life of the subject. Perhaps this image anticipates what Rahner would later expect from a mystical Christianity—one not primarily understood through political or sociological categories. For this reason, the Lord’s disposition must be the center, “que busquemos constantemente qué podemos hacer en su mayor servicio, y lo realicemos lo mejor posible, con amor, desprendidos de todo. Que tengamos un sentido muy personal de Dios” (García 2013a, p. 136).⁴ The Ignatian tradition, following the path marked by the *Spiritual Exercises*, begins with the *Principle and Foundation* (SpEx 23)—that is, the recovery of God’s centrality as Creator and Lord; and if this is so, then the human person is a creature who must refer all things to Him in order to order one’s life rightly. Interior life is the point of departure: “Mi posición ante el Señor ha de ser de humildad y agradecimiento profundísimos. El puesto para el que Él me ha elegido exige una pureza de alma extraordinaria” (Arrupe 2002, p. 69).⁵

2.2. Christology and Spirituality

Arrupe recovers the Christological value of Ignatian spirituality to the point of affirming: “Jesucristo está en el sagrario realmente. Él, el Salvador del mundo, el Rey de la creación, la Cabeza de la Iglesia y de la Compañía. Él está ahí y me habla, me dirige” (Arrupe 2002, p. 71).⁶ The Christian experience is defined by its personal nature. This personal dimension is characterized by a love for Christ that is both exclusive and unique. To a certain extent, all human affections are subordinated to this primacy of love to which Ignatian spirituality constantly returns, since “al fin y al cabo, lo único que queda es Jesucristo [...], que me ha de orientar y ayudar siempre, aun en las circunstancias más difíciles y en las incomprendiones más dolorosas” (Ibid.).⁷

Ignatian spirituality finds its absolute center in the figure of Jesus Christ—not only as an object of contemplation, but also as a model of life and a criterion for discernment. In the *Spiritual Exercises*, Saint Ignatius proposes a direct, affective, and committed relationship with Christ, especially with his humanity. From the contemplation on the Incarnation to the Passion, the exercitant is invited to know the Lord inwardly, in order to love and follow him more deeply.

This centrality is not merely doctrinal but profoundly existential: Christ becomes a companion on the journey and the point of reference for all decisions. Following Jesus entails embracing his way of life, his vision of the world, his preferential option for the poor, and his radical obedience to the Father. Through this process, the person gradually shapes his or her own *modo de proceder* according to that of Christ. Thus, Ignatian spirituality seeks not merely to form believing Christians, but disciples who live with Christ and like Christ. This centrality of Jesus is also expressed in mission, understood not as activism but as participation in God’s redemptive work. Ignatius conceives the Christian life as a concrete response to the call of Christ the King, who summons all to collaborate in the transformation of the world. For this reason, Ignatian discernment is neither neutral nor self-referential: it always seeks to identify how and where Christ can be followed more faithfully. Christ is not merely a spiritual teacher but the ultimate horizon of meaning and the measure of love. The relationship with Him is cultivated in prayer but verified in action. Thus, the Christ of Ignatian spirituality is not only the Crucified One but also the Risen One—He who sends, consoles, and walks with us. This integrative and dynamic vision makes Jesus the beating heart of the entire Ignatian experience, in which contemplation and commitment are united in a life transformed by the love of God.

In Ignatian spirituality, the spiritual process undergoes a significant inversion in relation to traditional frameworks of Christian life, in which the ascetical preceded and prepared the mystical. Whereas in classical currents the purification of the soul—through renunciation, sacrifice, and mastery of the passions—constituted the necessary threshold for attaining mystical states of union with God, Saint Ignatius proposes an inverse itinerary: the mystical experience, understood as a personal and immediate encounter with Christ, takes place at the beginning of the spiritual journey, and from it flows an ascetical life as an active and committed response.

In the *Spiritual Exercises*, the foundational moment is the loving contemplation of the person of Jesus, especially in the mysteries of his public life and his Passion. This contemplation awakens an interior movement oriented toward discipleship and personal transformation. Such a foundational experience of received love gives rise to an ascetical dynamic not grounded in obligation or voluntarist effort, but in the desire to configure one’s own life according to that of Christ.

This shift carries far-reaching theological and anthropological implications. First, it recognizes that the spiritual subject is not self-constructed through renunciation but is instead formed by the gratuitous experience of divine love. The initial mystical experience—

as gift, illumination, and attraction to Christ—establishes the affective and motivational center of the Christian life, while asceticism emerges as its logical consequence: a concrete exercise of love and freedom in response to that experience.

In this sense, discernment—the key of Ignatian spirituality—functions not as a mechanism of self-control but as a means of interiorly converting the grace experienced into concrete choices of life, service, and self-giving. Thus, the Ignatian process does not eliminate the ascetical dimension but radically reinterprets it: it is not a path of perfection aimed at reaching God, but the way in which one lives—coherently and freely—the reality of having been reached by Him. This inversion, which moves from the mystical to the ascetical, enables a more integrated, affective, and incarnate spirituality—one profoundly attuned to contemporary sensibility.

3. Main Currents and Spanish Authors of the Twentieth Century

The table under analysis (Table 1) brings together seven prominent members of the Society of Jesus (Aldama, Calveras, Dalmases, García-Villoslada, Iturrioz, Leturia and Iparraguirre) and details both their bibliographical output and the research areas in which each specialized. Although heterogeneous, this grouping allows certain lines of convergence to be drawn among their respective trajectories. In the case of Antonio M. de Aldama, his work analyzes on interpreting the “Formula of the Institute,” which constitutes the normative core of the Jesuit order and establishes its fundamental structure. His commentary not only contextualizes the sources and development of this document but also delves into its significance for Ignatian life. In this way, the interest in the theological and constitutional foundations of the Society emerges as one of the keys to the overall picture.

Table 1. Spanish authors and approaches.

Author	Publications	Focus
Aldama	>20	Structure and Theology
Calveras	15–20	Editing sources
Dalmases	>25	Editing sources
García-Villoslada	10–15	Biography
Iturrioz	10–12	Pastoral Ministry
Leturia	15–20	History of Society of Jesus
Iparraguirre	>30	Systematic analysis

Conversely, Calveras and Dalmases are distinguished by primarily philological and editorial work. Both participated in the critical edition of the *Exercitia Spiritualia Sancti Ignatii de Loyola*, published in the series *Monumenta Historiae Societatis Iesu* (Sabau 2010). The importance of their work lies in the recovery and authentication of documents that are essential for understanding the earliest Ignatian texts and, thereby, the genesis of Jesuit spirituality. In a different register, Ricardo García Villoslada offered a biographical approach through his *San Ignacio de Loyola: Nueva biografía*, published in 1986 and regarded by various scholars as the most comprehensive biography of the Society’s founder. The hagiographic character of this text, issued in Madrid by the Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos, reveals the combination of historical rigor and literary sensitivity with which the figure of Ignatius of Loyola is treated.

In addition to these profiles, the table mentions Iturrioz and Leturia, whose research complements the pastoral and historical dimensions of the topic. Iturrioz focused on pastoral praxis and spiritual accompaniment, offering an applied perspective directed at the daily life of those undertaking the Exercises. Leturia, for his part, addressed the history of the Society with particular emphasis on its Franciscan roots; in one of his essays, reissued in 2021, he notes that Ignatius adopted from that tradition the practice of poverty, devotion

to the name of Jesus and the contemplation of God in all things. Finally, Ignacio Iparraguirre stands out for his exhaustive research on the Spiritual Exercises: he was recognized as a specialist in their history and produced a trilogy analyzing their practice during Ignatius's lifetime, their subsequent development up to the promulgation of the Directory and their systematic evolution during the seventeenth century (Begheyn 2019). From the overall comparison it emerges that, although the number of publications per author ranges between ten and thirty, each contributes to a coherent corpus that combines doctrinal analysis, source editing, biography and pastoral work. This mosaic of approaches illustrates the richness and complementarity of Jesuit historiography, in which the recovery of texts, historical context and systematic analysis coexist to offer a comprehensive understanding of the identity and mission of the Society of Jesus.

3.1. Textual and Exegetical Axis

Antonio M.^a de Aldama (1908–2005) undertook the 1962 edition of the *Institutum Societatis Iesu* documents and produced a purely exegetical commentary on the *Formula* and the *Constitutions*. His intent was none other than to elucidate the distinctive way of life proper to the Jesuits: “Las apreciaciones de los autores se refieren más a la organización de la Compañía en general y a su actividad que al libro mismo de las Constituciones ignacianas” (de Aldama 1981, p. 30).⁸ Thus, began a “dry” return to the sources as a means of presenting the *Constitutions* and the *Formula* as expressions of religious life. In this endeavor, Aldama moves beyond the regulatory framework that had, until then, been the most common perspective, toward a more spiritual or animating interpretation, recovering the Institute's more missional dimension: from “missions” in the plural to *mission* in the singular: “Lo que aquí pretendemos hacer, es un comentario exegético. Intentamos solo investigar lo que realmente quiso decir san Ignacio en cada uno de los pasajes que estudiamos. Para lograrlo nos servimos principalmente del método crítico [. . .] Sin embargo, además de estudiar la palabra, el texto mismo de las Constituciones, acudimos también a los hechos históricos con una mira ambiciosa a dar algo del Sitz im Leben” (de Aldama 1973, p. vi).⁹

The Christological value of spirituality is recovered, stemming from the same sources—identity and mission. Following Christ entails poverty and humility. First, it emphasizes evangelical poverty; second, its apostolic or missionary projection (edifying one's neighbor); and third, Aldama stresses its ascetical dimension (poverty distances one from greed, leading to a happy and pure life). In this regard, the *Spiritual Exercises* are both source and soul:

“Los Ejercicios son fuente—ciertamente instrumental—[. . .] de aquellos dones interiores que unen el instrumento de Dios con la mano divina, de los cuales habla san Ignacio en el n.2 de la Parte décima (Co 813) [. . .] Diríamos en otros términos que los Ejercicios son el instrumento de que se sirve la Compañía para formar al sujeto de las Constituciones, que es el jesuita, el cual ha de ser un hombre espiritual; y en este sentido con razón se pueden llamar ‘alma’ de las Constituciones” (de Aldama 1976, p. 135).¹⁰

Thus, the *Exercises* are understood as the mediating means through which the Society shapes the Jesuit—its subject—as a spiritual man; in this sense, they may rightly be called the “soul” of the *Constitutions*. However, there was also a measure of reserve in certain circles. Some critical voices (O’Leary 2012; Worcester 2008; Mooney 2009)—particularly from more existential or pastoral perspectives—argued that Aldama's excessive systematization risked reducing the spiritual experience to overly rational frameworks, insufficiently attentive to the flexibility required in individual accompaniment. Others observed that, by focusing so strongly on structure (O’Reilly 2016), his approach could at times relegate to the background the affective and experiential dimension that Saint Ignatius himself so deeply

valued. Despite these critiques, Aldama was widely recognized as one of the principal figures behind the modern rediscovery of the *Spiritual Exercises*, and his work continues to be fundamental to contemporary Ignatian formation.

Furthermore, he stands as a forerunner in the study of Ignatian spirituality from an interdisciplinary perspective: “Sería más importante buscar las fuentes que la inspiraron [...] Estudios semejantes deberían ser llevados a cabo desde otros puntos de vista, como la patristica, la literatura teológica medieval, la ascética, la legislación canónica y religiosa [...]” (de Aldama 1977, pp. 12–13).¹¹ In this way, Aldama anticipated later approaches that would integrate historical, theological, and spiritual disciplines in order to achieve a more comprehensive understanding of Ignatian sources and inspiration.

In this context, José Calveras (1890–1964) must also be situated, as he produced a textual commentary on the *Spiritual Exercises*, allowing the mystical perspective (not as a phenomenon) to enter his hermeneutical approach through the meaning and significance of Ignatian language: Calveras, *un tiempo sublime*. This Jesuit is profoundly linked to the first half of the twentieth century, an era characterized by a search for interiority and originality that sought to bring forth what was most genuine and expressive: “Un hombre que marcó una época” (Rambla Blanch 2013), a man who marked an era. Such was Calveras’s task in his studies on the *Spiritual Exercises* of Saint Ignatius. Hence the adjective *sublime*, for future generations received his legacy, expanded it, and deepened it.

He played a central role in the renewal of Ignatian spirituality through his exhaustive study of the historical and contextual sources. As a historian and expert on Saint Ignatius, Calveras undertook a meticulous investigation of original documents, letters, diaries, and testimonies from the founder’s first companions, offering a more vivid and precise understanding of the spiritual and human environment in which the Ignatian work was conceived. His scholarly labor remarkably contributed to dismantling ahistorical or rigid interpretations, restoring to the *Exercises* their character as a vital, adaptable, and profoundly relational process.

By emphasizing the importance of accompaniment, the exercitant’s freedom, and the centrality of discernment, Calveras helped recover key elements that had been obscured by moralistic or manualist readings. His approach also illuminated the affective and dynamic dimension of the Ignatian spiritual journey, enabling numerous formators and spiritual directors to apply the *Exercises* in diverse contexts—beyond the cloister or the intensive retreat. He was a forerunner of the pastoral and contextual rereading that would flourish in the post conciliar period, influencing generations of Jesuits and laypeople devoted to spirituality. Although not always the most systematic thinker, his fidelity to the sources and his passion for Saint Ignatius profoundly shaped the Ignatian renewal of the twentieth century.

Fifty-nine articles form his corpus, most of them published in the journal *Manresa*, except for three that appeared in *Miscelánea Comillas*, *Estudios Eclesiásticos*, and *Archivum Historicum Societatis Iesu*. His work (2017) seeks to return to the charismatic sources—or those that inspired the Ignatian text. Thus, emerge the testimonies of Nadal, Laínez, Polanco, and Ribadeneira, close collaborators of Ignatius of Loyola; likewise, the experience of the *Cardoner*, which Ignatius regarded as one of the foundational sources for the subsequent development of the Ignatian text.

Moreover, his *Cuestiones doctrinales y técnicas* aim at uncovering the core of the *Exercises*: The Ignatian spiritual system, the question of love as a theological virtue, orientation toward Christ, disordered attachments, and the will of God. A significant portion of his work consists of the group of articles titled *Tecnicismos* (1926), which revolve around the notions of disordered affections and indifference. This central section concludes with the more philological analyses that Calveras—by virtue of his academic training and professional

formation—carried out: the vocabulary of the *Exercises* and the exegesis of the text. Finally, in the third section, *Concreciones pedagógicas*, he addresses the art of giving the *Exercises*, or the proper manner to be observed by the one who directs them.

The scholarly reception of José Calveras's oeuvre was marked by considerable appreciation, particularly within the Society of Jesus and among academic and historiographical circles devoted to Ignatian studies. His philological and contextual approach to Saint Ignatius of Loyola and to the early Jesuits was regarded as pioneering insofar as it sought to recover the spiritual and anthropological depth of the founder beyond the devotional or institutional stereotypes that had come to dominate post-Tridentine representations. Calveras's meticulous engagement with the primary sources revealed a sustained effort to restore the *Spiritual Exercises* to their original vitality, liberating them from the rigid interpretative frameworks that had accumulated over successive centuries of pedagogical and theological mediation. In this respect, his work anticipated and, to some extent, undergirded the spiritual and pastoral renewal later promoted by the Society of Jesus in the wake of the Second Vatican Council.

Nonetheless, Calveras's contributions were not exempt from critical reservation. Certain sectors received his historical orientation with circumspection (Prosperi 2015; García de Castro 2016), fearing that an emphasis on contextualization might attenuate the normative or theological authority of the established Ignatian tradition. Moreover, the erudite rather than systematic or pedagogical nature of his writings limited their immediate impact on pastoral praxis, even as they exercised a profound influence within formative and academic milieus.

Those circles that regarded Calveras's work with some degree of hesitation generally stemmed from more traditional currents within Ignatian spirituality and theology, particularly those formed under the influence of the *manualist* and *neo-scholastic* paradigms that dominated the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and persisted, with varying degrees of adaptation, well into the mid-twentieth century. Such perspectives favored a more codified and prescriptive reading of the *Spiritual Exercises*, articulated around fixed schemes of “principles and means,” and often viewed with suspicion any historical approach that might relativize their universal application or call into question the stability of inherited structures. Their apprehension extended also to what they perceived as an excessive *historization*, which risked portraying Saint Ignatius merely as a man of his own epoch, without sufficiently highlighting the *transhistorical* and doctrinal dimensions of his spirituality.

Even so, Calveras's research laid a formidable foundation for subsequent Jesuit scholars—most notably Aldama and Iparraguirre—who would articulate more systematic interpretations of the *Exercises* while remaining indebted to his historical insights. Taken as a whole, Calveras stands as an indispensable reference point for any rigorous comprehension of Ignatian spirituality, whose reception, while diverse in tone, was ultimately characterized by intellectual respect and enduring fruitfulness.

3.2. Historical and Contextual Axis

Under the guidance of Cándido de Dalmases (1906–1987), the biography of Ignatius of Loyola (*Fontes Narrativi* and *Fontes Documentales*) was revisited through new historical contributions and a renewed engagement with the sixteenth-century context, in contrast to earlier hagiographic tendencies: “La bibliografía ignaciana se va enriqueciendo año tras año con decenas de nuevos títulos. Para ir acercándonos a esa meta se ofrecen dos caminos: dedicar monografías especiales a las varias partes de su vida o a los aspectos de su personalidad y repetir los ensayos de una biografía total” (de Dalmases 1979, p. xii).¹²

Dalmases, a twentieth-century Catalan Jesuit and historian, played a pivotal role in the renewal of Ignatian spirituality through his rigorous historical, philological, and

theological research on the origins of the Society of Jesus and on the figure of Saint Ignatius of Loyola. His scholarly work is distinguished by a critical and penetrating reading of the Ignatian sources—particularly the *Constitutions*, the *Letters*, and the *Spiritual Diary*—texts which Dalmases not only edited with exemplary academic precision but also interpreted with remarkable theological sensitivity. In contrast to the normative or overly systematic readings characteristic of the neo-scholastic period, Dalmases proposed a recovery of the spiritual and pastoral dynamism of Ignatius, emphasizing the flexibility, discernment, and incarnational nature of his spirituality.

He was among the principal advocates of a more historical and less idealized understanding of the Jesuit founder, without thereby diminishing the depth of his spiritual experience. Moreover, his active participation in the rediscovery of the Ignatian sources helped consolidate the post conciliar renewal of the Society, promoting a “return to the sources” as a hermeneutical criterion for pastoral and spiritual aggiornamento. Although his work did not focus exclusively on the *Spiritual Exercises*, his research proved crucial for understanding the context, evolution, and pedagogical intention underlying Ignatian spirituality.

As with other Jesuits devoted to historical scholarship, however, certain pastoral and formative sectors regarded his work as overly academic, arguing that its high degree of erudition did not always translate into immediate applications for spiritual practice or the accompaniment of the *Exercises*. Likewise, in some conservative contexts, his critical and demythologizing portrayal of Ignatius—as a man of flesh and blood, marked by inner tensions and spiritual growth—was met with discomfort, as it challenged idealized or hagiographic representations (Endean 1987; O'Reilly 2020). Nonetheless, such reservations were comparatively minor in view of the broad recognition accorded to his scholarly and spiritual contribution (Maryks 2014).

In this line, Ricardo García-Villoslada (1900–1991) must also be situated. His figure helps us to understand the sixteenth century as a source: Ignatius, Erasmus, and Lutheranism. That is to say, the sources are not only textual but also historical, encompassing the spiritual movements (Franciscan Observance and *alumbradismo*) that situate Ignatius of Loyola within a specific time and place. To comprehend Ignatius's figure, García-Villoslada studies the milieu of Erasmus and Lutheranism. In this sense, he distances himself from the historiographical commonplace that portrays the Society of Jesus and Ignatius as the standard-bearers of the Catholic Counter-Reformation. To that end, he advances a new and gradually accepted idea: The Catholic Reformation. As he writes, “no es justo contrarreformizar demasiado a Ignacio de Loyola, pues conserva no pocos elementos pretridentinos y murió dos años antes que Carlos V y casi siete antes de que se concluyera el concilio de Trento” (García-Villoslada 1965, p. 282).¹³ He was particularly interested in emphasizing the universality of the human conception, the ecclesial relationships embodied by historical figures such as Caraffa, and the apostolic and missionary spirit of the Society of Jesus.

This Jesuit, historian, and theologian, played a pivotal role in the renewal of Ignatian spirituality through his biographical and theological approach to Saint Ignatius of Loyola, particularly through his monumental work *San Ignacio de Loyola. Nueva biografía*, published in 1986. This work marked a turning point in Ignatian studies by offering a rigorous yet accessible synthesis based on exhaustive research of primary historical sources, including the *Autobiography*, *Constitutions*, *Spiritual Diary*, and Ignatius's correspondence. Villoslada presented a profoundly human, dynamic, and evolving image of Ignatius, moving away from traditional hagiographies and showing how his spirituality emerged from a vital process of searching, suffering, discernment, and fidelity. This approach contributed to a more existential understanding of Ignatian spirituality, in which the subject does not

begin from prior perfection but is transformed through personal encounter with Christ and apostolic commitment. Moreover, his work significantly influenced the formation of Jesuits and laypersons, consolidating a vision of the founder that integrated history, psychology, and theology.

The biography of Saint Ignatius of Loyola written by Ricardo García-Villoslada and the one later produced by Enrique García Hernán ([García Hernán 2013](#)) represent two distinct—complementary yet contrasting—approaches to the study of the founder of the Society of Jesus, each with significant implications for the understanding and renewal of Ignatian spirituality. Villoslada, drawing on his Jesuit and theological formation, composed a biography deeply engaged with Ignatius’s spiritual legacy. His interpretation is critically grounded in the sources but still marked by an edifying and theological intention. His narrative retains a certain apologetic tone, emphasizing the inner coherence of Ignatius as saint, founder, and spiritual guide, seeking a synthesis that would illuminate contemporary spirituality without undermining fidelity to the Ignatian ideal. Although methodologically rigorous, his approach remains within the Jesuit tradition of presenting Ignatius as a normative model of Christian and religious life. García Hernán does not attempt to systematize a spirituality but rather to portray a plural, ambiguous, and at times contradictory Ignatius—a historical figure in transformation. From this standpoint, Ignatius appears not as an idealized saint but as a person marked by tensions, errors, emotions, and social networks, whose spirituality is forged in dialogue (and conflict) with his context.

Finally, the last representative of this historical axis, Jesús Iturrioz (1909–1998), examined the relationship between the founder and what was founded: Ignatius and the Society. This figure is of exceptional importance. His studies—*Años juveniles* ([Iturrioz 1981](#)), for example—tend to demythologize the figure of Ignatius across his different historical stages, particularly that of the founder: “Es menester borrar en absoluto la imagen, tantas veces puesta de relieve, de un Íñigo fundador: el autoritario que dicta un código jurídico, impuesto a la Compañía; un estratega que planifica sobre mapas acciones que luego tratará de desarrollar en el campo real del apostolado; el solitario místico que, aislado en sus *camerette* de La Strada, redacta entre místicos arrebatos un documento más místico que de gobierno” ([Iturrioz 1977](#), p. 110).¹⁴ From this line of inquiry emerge significant theological and spiritual elements: the name of the Society, Christ as the head of this Institute, the *principio y fundamento* of the Society, and the meaning of the fourth vow and of obedience.

3.3. Ignatian and Systematic or Dogmatic Axis

To conclude this section, we turn our attention to two figures who represent this more dogmatic axis. Pedro de Leturia (1891–1955) advances an initial Ignatian systematic theology through his *Estudios I* ([de Leturia 1957a](#)) and *II* ([de Leturia 1957b](#)), relating them to the *Autobiography* and the *Constitutions*. From a textual perspective, his approach moves toward the internal logic of the *Spiritual Exercises*—that is, toward an exploration of the Ignatian spiritual process itself. Some authors share the view that Pedro de Leturia represented a “Roman-centered” and ecclesiologically controlled reading of Ignatian spirituality, emphasizing its obedience to Rome and its theological orthodoxy ([Heiding 2012](#)). More recent currents—particularly those inspired by studies such as those of O’Reilly and Maryks—advocate for a contextual, experiential, and mystical rereading of Ignatius of Loyola, in which the saint’s interior process and personal historicity carry greater weight than his institutional integration within the Society of Jesus.

What aspects define a more distinctive Ignatian dogmatics within Christian spirituality? Pedro de Leturia and Ignacio Iparraguirre, both twentieth-century Jesuits and historians, occupied a central place in consolidating a rigorous Ignatian systematics by

addressing, with erudition and critical method, the foundational sources of Saint Ignatius of Loyola's spirituality and thought.

Leturia, a specialist in the history of the Society of Jesus and its missions, contributed to contextualizing the missionary and apostolic dynamism of the Ignatian charism within the global processes of the sixteenth century, emphasizing the indissoluble link between contemplation and action. His archival and documentary work laid the foundation for subsequent studies, offering a broad understanding of mission as a constitutive dimension of the Ignatian spirit.

Ignacio Iparraguirre (1911–1973), on the other hand, stood out for his monumental work *Historia de los Ejercicios de San Ignacio* (Iparraguirre 1946, 1955), in which—through meticulous research into manuscript sources, versions, and historical uses of the *Spiritual Exercises*—he established a solid and nuanced systematization of the Ignatian spiritual itinerary. His work enabled the discernment of interpretative layers that had accumulated over the original text and proposed a reading that combined historical fidelity with theological applicability. Both authors helped shape what may be called a scientifically grounded Ignatian theology, serving both Jesuit formation and post conciliar spiritual renewal by providing tools for an integral, critical, and updated understanding of Saint Ignatius's legacy.

What are the defining characteristics of this Ignatian system?

First, Christocentrism grounded in the humanity of Christ: “San Ignacio se detiene largamente en la humanidad de Jesucristo, la presenta al ejercitante como objeto de contemplaciones y aplicaciones de sentidos; pero creemos que esto es siempre en su mente un primer paso, un proceso que no puede culminar sino en esferas más trascendentes” (Iparraguirre 1958, p. 44).¹⁵

Second, the dynamism of spiritual processes, based on discernment as a form of spiritual and apostolic governance: “A la Compañía no le da formas fijas, sino actitudes móviles; no ministerios específicos determinados, sino principios que han de ser actuados funcionalmente” (Iparraguirre 1968, p. 284).¹⁶

A third aspect concerns the recovery of the theological root of Ignatius's actions: “El tiempo actual nos ha capacitado para comprender a san Ignacio de manera más auténtica y real, porque nos lo ha situado en la posición justa, nos lo ha proyectado en el tiempo en que se movía. San Ignacio se formó y trabajó en un momento histórico similar al de hoy, tiempo de inter-épocas, de paso de generaciones, de renovación de estructuras, de retorno a las fuentes, de renacimiento. Ha hecho falta vivir esa realidad para comprender cómo era necesaria esta dimensión existencialista, temporal y dinámica” (Iparraguirre 1968, pp. 283–84).¹⁷

Fourth, the demythologization of intellectualism in favor of an affective Ignatius—an affirmation of mystical experience as both source and motor of spiritual dynamism.

Finally, the *Exercises* move from a state of perfectionism toward an integral Christianity or apostolic mission entrusted by God to the exercitant. This entails a recovery of the Ignatian character of the *Exercises*, which Iparraguirre does not locate in terminology or technicalities, but in their style, mode, and order. Notably, in *Fuentes y estudios* (Iparraguirre 1956, pp. 23–26), he clearly describes the principal deformations: affective (merely emotional, like that of the *alumbrados*), intellectualist and rationalist, anti-mystical, individualistic, and overly methodical.

4. Discussion

The adaptation and personalization of the Ignatian spirit that animates the process of the *Spiritual Exercises* in its various modalities foreseen in the *Annotations* was undertaken by Ignacio Iglesias (1925–2009), who placed particular emphasis on the union between prayer

and mission or commitment. He distinguished himself by his ability to reinterpret Saint Ignatius's *Spiritual Exercises* from a deeply pastoral and contemporary perspective. Through work (García 2013b), Iglesias promoted a living reading of the Ignatian charism, centered on the personal experience of God and on spiritual accompaniment. His approach—more existential than scholastic—contributed undeniably to the renewal of Ignatian spirituality, especially after the Second Vatican Council, by emphasizing discernment as the axis of Christian life and creative fidelity to the original text of Saint Ignatius. In a context of secularization and cultural change, Iglesias helped adapt the Ignatian method to the challenges of the modern world, without sacrificing its rigor or theological depth.

It is, however, worth highlighting the last major commentary on the *Exercises* by Santiago Arzubialde (2009). This monumental work studies the *Exercises* within the parameters of the spiritual tradition, the patristic heritage, and the framework of Systematic Spiritual Theology. From two methodologically distinct perspectives, both represent significant and complementary contributions to the renewal of Ignatian spirituality in the twentieth century. Iglesias belongs to a pastoral and formative tradition that seeks to make the spiritual experience of the *Exercises* accessible to concrete persons in contemporary and often lay contexts. His works exhibit a narrative, direct, and pedagogical style, marked by a desire for the practical aggiornamento of the Ignatian method rather than historical or systematic analysis. His language, free from technicalities, enables a wide audience to live and understand the Ignatian spiritual experience, with clear emphasis on personal discernment, the interiorization of the Gospel, and spiritual accompaniment.

Arzubialde, by contrast, belongs to the academic sphere, producing work oriented toward the theological, philosophical, and historical grounding of Ignatian thought. As a scholar, he developed a rigorous and wide-ranging scientific corpus, most notably *Los Ejercicios Espirituales de san Ignacio*. He combines solid textual and philological criticism with a systematic interpretation of the anthropological, Christological, and ecclesiological horizons of Ignatian spirituality. In his view, Ignatian renewal lies not so much in pastoral simplification or adaptation, but in the hermeneutical clarification of the method's foundations—particularly the discernment of spirits and the theological structure of the *Exercises*. Whereas Iglesias represents a charismatic and pastoral renewal focused on the concrete applicability of the Ignatian itinerary, Arzubialde embodies a scientific renewal, seeking to anchor Ignatian spirituality in a critically informed, historically grounded, and theologically articulated understanding. The convergence between the two provides a more complete vision of the Ignatian legacy: one that is lived (Iglesias) and one that is understood (Arzubialde), thus fulfilling the dual demand for vital and intellectual fidelity to the charism of Saint Ignatius of Loyola.

In the recent history of Ignatian spirituality, a generation of scholars stands out for systematizing the legacy of twentieth-century Jesuit authors. Antonio M. de Aldama is considered the most influential author in the study of the *Constitutions* (Pudhicherry 2012). First, Santiago Arzubialde moves in continuity with the tradition of Calveras and Dalmases. In addition to co-editing with Jesús Corella a meticulous edition of the *Constitutions of Ignatius of Loyola* (1993), he delivered in 2006 the lecture “La herencia Calveras Dalmases en la tradición española de los Ejercicios del siglo XX en la perspectiva pneumatológica actual”. Arzubialde explicitly acknowledges that the philological methods of Calveras and Dalmases made it possible to reconstruct the redactional itinerary of the *Exercises*, and he argues that this heritage must be read in light of the action of the Spirit. His own research on the *Formula of the Institute* shows how Aldama, Iparraguirre, and others forged the substratum upon which contemporary readings can build; at the same time, he emphasizes the need to reinterpret the *Constitutions* in light of Vatican II and pneumatological discernment.

Second, José García de Castro has focused on the epistolary and the *Spiritual Diary* of Ignatius of Loyola. His doctoral thesis (García de Castro 1999) explores linguistic and lexical aspects of the *Diario espiritual*, and subsequent articles have interpreted the grace of “devoción” as a criterion of authenticity in the Ignatian experience (Staab 2024). In this recent study, Staab notes that García de Castro holds that *devoción* is an exceptional grace that enables Ignatius to recognize the presence of God. Moreover, in his works on Ignatian mysticism and culture, García de Castro draws on the biography by Ricardo García-Villoslada—considered the most complete on Ignatius—and on the factual rigor of Dalmases’s biography, thus integrating into his historical reflection the legacy of these authors.

Third, Javier Melloni has contributed to the intercultural reception of the *Exercises*. In his book *Los Ejercicios de san Ignacio y las tradiciones de Oriente* (2013), he compares the *Exercises* with traditions such as Yoga and Zen. An analysis by Jacques Scheuer underscores that his study focuses on three spiritual paths—Hinduism, Buddhism, and Christianity—whose common goal is the transformation of the person; Melloni insists that these three paths are initiatory or mystagogical rather than merely speculative exercises (Scheuer 2022). Although he does not dwell on Spanish commentators, his reading presupposes the reliability of the Ignatian text established by Calveras and Dalmases and benefits from the historical exposition of the *Exercises* by Iparraguirre. His hermeneutical approach, centered on spiritual dynamics and interreligious dialogue, thus broadens the horizon of reception of these sources beyond the Western world.

5. Conclusions

The research highlights that the resurgence of Ignatian spirituality in Spain is grounded in the introspection of the modern self and the centrality of interior experience. Following Andrew Spira’s theses on the invention of the self, it becomes evident that the *Spiritual Exercises* provide a structure for examining one’s own interiority, discerning desires, and orienting decisions towards following Christ. This introspection, far from being an end in itself, is integrated into the ecclesial community and oriented towards mission, articulating inner freedom with self-giving to others. The twentieth century rediscovered the *Exercises* as a bridge between modernity and faith, fostering a synthesis between modern subjectivity and Christian theology. Consequently, Ignatian renewal responded to the contemporary crisis of meaning by promoting a personalized, critical, and ecclesial faith. This movement relied on the category of experience, combined with Christology, as the keystone for updating Ignatian identity. Additionally, the leadership of Pedro Arrupe was emphasized; he situated spirituality in the self-gift to God and the mystical experience as the starting point, distancing himself from external devotions. His writings highlight that spiritual life must integrate personal and communal dimensions, recovering the centrality of God and interiority as the driving forces of Christian transformation.

The second axis of conclusions concerns the diversity of approaches that renewed the *Exercises* through academic and pastoral contributions. The study examines Aldama, Calveras, Dalmases, García-Villoslada, Iturrioz, Leturia, and Iparraguirre who promoted the recovery of sources, historical contextualization, and theological systematization. Antonio M. de Aldama stood out for his exegetical commentary on the *Formula* and the *Constitutions*, recovering Ignatius’s original intent and underscoring the mystagogical dimension of the spiritual process. José Calveras, for his part, offered a philological approach that restored the freshness of the *Exercises*, emphasizing the freedom of the exercitant and the centrality of discernment. His research recovered testimonies from the first Jesuits and provided pedagogical concreteness for guiding the *Exercises*. Other authors, such as Dalmases and García-Villoslada, focused on biography and history, while Leturia and

Iturrioz addressed the pastoral dimension and spirituality in everyday life. The conjunction of these works forms a coherent corpus that integrates doctrinal analysis, edition of sources, biography, and praxis, evidencing the richness and complementarity of Jesuit historiography. Together, these perspectives show that the twentieth-century Ignatian renewal was not monolithic but the result of a dialogue between academic rigor and pastoral sensitivity, capable of responding to contemporary challenges and articulating interior experience with mission.

The study shows clear limitations by restricting itself almost exclusively to Spanish authors, without assessing how their contributions were received on other continents or considering the work of non-Spanish scholars. The return to the sources of the Exercises promoted by José Calveras and Cándido de Dalmases produced critical editions that became international references. However, translations into French by Maurice Giuliani and other vernacular versions sometimes obscured nuances of the original text, so the Spanish authors were not always understood in their richness. This linguistic limitation influenced the diffusion of works such as those of Aldama or Calveras in America and Asia, where audiences accessed translations of the Exercises rather than the exegetical studies. Dalmases himself warned that to interpret Ignatius's thought fully it was essential to consult the Spanish text, since the author's mind is found in what he himself wrote. Outside the Spanish-speaking world, figures like American George Ganss translated and commented on the Exercises but rarely engaged with the full span of Spanish scholarship. In France, by contrast, a school emerged that approached Ignatian spirituality from phenomenological and sociological perspectives: Michel de Certeau combined psychoanalysis, sociology and semiotics in his investigations and taught religious anthropology in California and at the École Pratique des Hautes Études; his work, marked by the Ignatian "optimism" and the conviction that the world is God's house, reinterpreted the Exercises through everyday life and social commitment. Other French thinkers, such as Gaston Fessard with his dialectic of the *Spiritual Exercises*, offered philosophical readings that hardly interact with the Spanish tradition. The next research step could compare the historical-critical and Christological approach of the Spanish school with the phenomenological and sociological orientation of the French school, analyzing how the interpretation of Ignatian experience and the "self" varies according to methodology. Such a contrast would allow an evaluation of the global reception of Ignatian studies, shed light on the cultural mediations in their diffusion and propose a synthesis combining Spanish textual rigor with French existential sensitivity.

Funding: This research received no external funding.

Institutional Review Board Statement: Not applicable.

Informed Consent Statement: Not applicable.

Data Availability Statement: No new data were created or analyzed in this study. Data sharing is not applicable to this article.

Conflicts of Interest: The author declares no conflicts of interest.

Abbreviations

The following abbreviations are used in this manuscript:

Au	<i>Acta Patris Ignatii scripta a P. Lud. González da Câmara 1553–1555. Fontes Narrativi</i> , vol. 1, Rome 1943: 354–507.
SpEx	<i>Spiritual Exercises. Exercitia Spiritualia. Monumenta Historica Societatis Iesu</i> , vol. 100, Rome 1969.

- Co *Constituciones de la Compañía de Jesús*. Monumenta Constitutionum II, vol. 64, Rome 1936.
- GS *Gaudium et Spes*. Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the modern world, on December 7, 1965. *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 58 (1966): 1025–1120.

Notes

- 1 “You may perhaps remember that, when we were in Valkenburg and Marneffe, we dreamed as we planned [...] those projects on morality, medicine, psychiatry, and I do not know how many other things [...] Now it is quite the opposite: I make no plans, but I am convinced that I am in the place to which God has destined me [...] I plan only one project: to surrender myself into the hands of Christ and let Him lead me”.
- 2 “I feel myself, more than ever, in the hands of God. That is what I have desired all my life, since my youth”.
- 3 “And there He was, in the tabernacle, contemplating everything and waiting for our invitation to take part in the work of rebuilding it all. . . I left the chapel, and the decision was immediate: we would turn the house into a hospital”.
- 4 “May we constantly seek what we can do for His greater service, and carry it out as best as possible, with love and detachment from all things. May we have a deeply personal sense of God”.
- 5 “My attitude before the Lord must be one of profound humility and gratitude. The position for which He has chosen me demands an extraordinary purity of soul”.
- 6 “Jesus Christ is truly present in the tabernacle—He, the Savior of the world, the King of creation, the Head of the Church and of the Society. He is there, and He speaks to me, He guides me”.
- 7 “After all, the only one who remains is Jesus Christ [...], who must always guide and help me, even in the most difficult circumstances and the most painful misunderstandings”.
- 8 “The observations made by the authors refer more to the organization and activity of the Society as a whole than to the Ignatian *Constitutions* themselves”.
- 9 “What we aim to do here is an exegetical commentary. Our only intention is to investigate what Saint Ignatius actually meant in each of the passages we study. To this end, we rely primarily on the critical method [...] However, in addition to examining the words and the text of the *Constitutions* themselves, we also turn to historical events, with the ambitious purpose of providing something of the *Sitz im Leben*”.
- 10 “The *Spiritual Exercises* are a source—certainly an instrumental one—[...] of those interior gifts that unite God’s instrument with the divine hand, of which Saint Ignatius speaks in no. 2 of Part Ten (*Const.* 813) [...] In other words, we might say that the *Exercises* are the instrument employed by the Society to form the subject of the *Constitutions*—the Jesuit—who must be a spiritual man; and in this sense, they may rightly be called the ‘soul’ of the *Constitutions*”.
- 11 “It would be even more important to seek the sources that inspired it [...] Similar studies should be undertaken from other perspectives, such as patristics, medieval theological literature, asceticism, and canonical and religious legislation [...]”.
- 12 “Ignatian bibliography continues to grow year after year with dozens of new titles. To move closer to that goal, two paths are offered: to devote specialized monographs to the various stages of his life or to specific aspects of his personality, and to continue attempting comprehensive biographical studies.
- 13 “It is not fair to over-Counter-Reform Ignatius of Loyola, for he retained a considerable number of pre-Tridentine elements and died two years before Charles V and nearly seven years before the conclusion of the Council of Trent”.
- 14 “It is necessary to erase completely the oft-emphasized image of an Íñigo the Founder: the authoritarian figure who dictates a juridical code imposed upon the Society; a strategist who plans on maps the actions he will later seek to implement in the real field of the apostolate; or the solitary mystic who, secluded in his *camerette* of La Strada, composes—amid mystical raptures—a document more mystical than administrative”.
- 15 “Saint Ignatius dwells at length on the humanity of Jesus Christ, presenting it to the exercitant as the object of contemplations and applications of the senses; yet we believe that, in his mind, this is always a first step—a process that can reach its fulfillment only in more transcendent realms”.
- 16 “He does not give the Society fixed forms, but rather dynamic attitudes; not specific, predetermined ministries, but principles that are to be actualized functionally”.
- 17 “The present age has enabled us to understand Saint Ignatius in a more authentic and realistic way, for it has placed him in his proper context and projected him into the time in which he lived and acted. Saint Ignatius was formed and carried out his work in a historical moment similar to our own—a time between epochs, of generational transition, of structural renewal, of return to the sources, of renaissance. It has been necessary to experience this reality in order to understand how essential this existential, temporal, and dynamic dimension truly was”.

References

- Arrupe, Pedro. 1965. *Este Japón Increíble. Memorias del Padre Arrupe*. Bilbao: Mensajero.
- Arrupe, Pedro. 2002. *Aquí me Tienes, Señor: Apuntes de sus Ejercicios Espirituales (1965)*. Bilbao: Mensajero.
- Arzubialde, Santiago. 2009. *Ejercicios Espirituales de S. Ignacio. Historia y Análisis*, 2nd ed. Bilbao: Mensajero.
- Begheyn, Paul. 2019. Memoirs of someone who is addicted to Jesuit History. *Archivum Historicum Societatis Iesu* 176: 509–17.
- de Aldama, Antonio M. 1973. *Repartiéndose en la Viña de Cristo: Comentario a la Séptima Parte de las Constituciones*. Rome: CIS.
- de Aldama, Antonio M. 1976. ¿Los Ejercicios son el alma de las Constituciones? *Manresa* 48: 129–40.
- de Aldama, Antonio M. 1977. *La Formula dell'Istituto S.J.* Rome: CIS.
- de Aldama, Antonio M. 1981. *Iniciación al Estudio de las Constituciones*, 2nd ed. Rome: CIS.
- de Dalmases, Cándido. 1979. *El Padre Maestro Ignacio: Breve Biografía Ignaciana*. Madrid: Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos.
- de Leturia, Pedro. 1957a. *Estudios Ignacianos I. Estudios Biográficos*. Rome: Institutum Historicum S.I.
- de Leturia, Pedro. 1957b. *Estudios Ignacianos II. Estudios Espirituales*. Rome: Institutum Historicum S.I.
- Endean, Philip. 1987. Who do you say Ignatius is? Jesuit fundamentalism and beyond. *Studies* 19: 1–76. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
- Estrada, Juan Antonio. 2019. *Los Ejercicios de Ignacio de Loyola*. Bilbao: Desclée de Brouwer.
- Frohlich, Mary. 2023. Opening Keynote: Spirit, Spirituality, and contemplative method. In *Evolving Methodologies in the Study of Spirituality*. Edited by Rossano Zas Friz de Col and Gilberto Cavazos-González. Leuven: Peeters, pp. 15–28.
- García de Castro, José. 1999. *El Diario Espiritual y el epistolario de san Ignacio de Loyola: Aspectos Lingüísticos y Léxicos*. Ph.D. thesis, Universidad de Salamanca, Salamanca, Spain.
- García de Castro, José. 2016. Silent God in a Wordy World. Silence in Ignatian Spirituality. *Theologica Xaveriana* 66: 177–205. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
- García Gutiérrez, Jesús Manuel. 2023. *Studio Teologico della Spiritualità Cristiana. Metodo, Principi e Prospettive*. Rome: LAS.
- García Hernán, Enrique. 2013. *Ignacio de Loyola*. Madrid: Taurus.
- García, José A., ed. 2013a. *Orar con el Padre Arrupe*. Bilbao: Mensajero.
- García, José A., ed. 2013b. *Sentir y Cumplir: Escritos Ignacianos*. Bilbao: Mensajero.
- García-Villoslada, Ricardo. 1965. *Loyola y Erasmo, dos Almas, dos Épocas*. Madrid: Taurus.
- Han, Byung-Chul. 2021. *No-Cosas. Quiebras del Mundo de Hoy*. Madrid: Taurus.
- Heiding, Fredrik. 2012. *Ignatian Spirituality at Ecclesial Frontiers*. Oxford: University of Oxford.
- Iglesias, Ignacio. 2005. *Pedro Arrupe: Un místico para el siglo XXI*. Bilbao: Universidad de Deusto.
- Iparraguirre, Ignacio. 1946. *Historia de los Ejercicios de san Ignacio. 1522–1556*. Rome: Institutum Historicum S.I.
- Iparraguirre, Ignacio. 1955. *Historia de los Ejercicios de san Ignacio. 1556–1599*. Rome: Institutum Historicum S.I.
- Iparraguirre, Ignacio. 1956. Fuentes y estudios de la espiritualidad ignaciana. *Manresa* 28: 7–28.
- Iparraguirre, Ignacio. 1958. *Espíritu de san Ignacio de Loyola: Perspectivas y Actitudes Ignacianas de Espiritualidad*. Bilbao: Mensajero.
- Iparraguirre, Ignacio. 1968. Exigencia ignaciana de novedad. *Razón y Fe* 177: 283–88.
- Iturrioz, Jesús. 1977. ¿Proemio o Epílogo de las Constituciones? *Manresa* 49: 99–127.
- Iturrioz, Jesús. 1981. Años juveniles de S. Ignacio en Arévalo (1506–1517). *Manresa* 53: 257–76.
- Jung, Carl Gustav. 2023. *Los Libros Negros 1913–1932*. Edited by Sonu Shandasani. Kolpase-Philemon Series. Madrid: El Hilo de Ariadna, vol. 1.
- Maryks, Robert Aleksander. 2014. *A Companion to Ignatius of Loyola*. Leiden: Brill.
- Mooney, Catherine. 2009. Ignatian Spirituality, A Spirituality for Mission. La spiritualité ignatienne, une spiritualité de la misión. Ignatianische Spiritualität, eine Spiritualität für Mission. La espiritualidad ignaciana, una espiritualidad para la misión. *Mission Studies* 26: 192–213. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
- O'Leary, Brian. 2012. *Sent into the Lord's Vineyard: Explorations in the Jesuit Constitutions*. Oxford: Way Books.
- O'Reilly, Terence. 2016. *From Ignatius of Loyola to John of the Cross*. Abingdon: Routledge.
- O'Reilly, Terence. 2020. The Spiritual Exercises and Illuminism in Spain: Dominican Critics of the Early Society of Jesus. *Journal of Jesuit Studies* 7: 377–402. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
- Prosperi, Adriano. 2015. The Two Standards: The Origins and Development of a Celebrated Ignatian Meditation. *Journal of Jesuit Studies* 2: 361–86. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
- Pudhicherry, Francis. 2012. The Constitutions of the Society of Jesus. An analysis and commentary on changing interests and perspectives (1900–2009). *Ignaziana* 14: 26–158.
- Rambla Blanch, Josep María. 2013. José Calveras, hombre de los ejercicios espirituales. *Manresa* 85: 291–309.
- Sabau, Antoaneta. 2010. Rewriting through translation: Some textual issues in the Vulgata of the Ejercicios Espirituales by Ignatius of Loyola. *Annual Medieval Studies at CEU* 16: 155–64.
- Scheuer, Jacques. 2022. The Ignatian Spiritual Exercises and non-Christian Traditions. *Ignaziana* 33: 20–69.
- Spira, Andrew. 2020. *The Invention of the Self: Personal Identity in the Age of the Art*. London: Bloomsbury.

- Staab, Christopher. 2024. "Always growing in devotion": The grace of devotion in the life of Ignatius of Loyola and the Society of Jesus. *Studies of the Spirituality of Jesuits* 56: 1–51. [[CrossRef](#)]
- Waaijmann, Kees. 2002. *Spirituality. Forms, Foundations, Methods*. Leuven: Peeters.
- Worcester, Thomas. 2008. *The Cambridge Companion to the Jesuits*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Disclaimer/Publisher's Note: The statements, opinions and data contained in all publications are solely those of the individual author(s) and contributor(s) and not of MDPI and/or the editor(s). MDPI and/or the editor(s) disclaim responsibility for any injury to people or property resulting from any ideas, methods, instructions or products referred to in the content.