

## **Salvific Community**

### **Part One: Ignatius of Loyola**

*Dedicated to the Jesuit Scholastics  
of the Indonesian Province*

What is the point of comparing, in theology, differing outlooks? At least, comparisons can produce illuminating questions. Ignatian spirituality and Koranic monotheism<sup>1</sup> can be studied as two such outlooks; and a helpful course of questioning arising from their confrontation is this: how does each of the two portray, and convey, its project? That is to say, what is their salvific proposal? In some way, both Ignatius of Loyola and the Koran see *community* as the key solution to the world's problems; what are, then, their conceptions of community?

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1 The present text reproduces the first part of my paper «The “Society of Jesus” and the “Middle Nation”. Salvific Community, Ignatian and Koranic», prepared for the *JAM* meeting («Jesuits among Muslims»), Gregorian University, September 15-20, 2011. (The lecture's oral character was often retained.) The surprising composition of Ignatian spirituality and Koranic monotheism can be explained in light of the thematic approach chosen for the Roman meeting; it was probing the heuristic value of Ignatian motifs for a theological appraisal of Islam. The paper's second part will be published in *Gregorianum*, as well. I am grateful to D. AYOTTE, S.J., and M. ROTSAERT, S.J., for their comments on previous versions of the article.

## I. NOSTER MODUS

What we want to undertake here, is an attempt at doing «Ignatian theology»; and that, in a triple sense. We want to do theology like Ignatius, with Ignatius and from Ignatius<sup>2</sup>.

### 1. Like Ignatius

We want to proceed like Ignatius. That is to say,

- we want to be conscious of method, without applying it in a formalistic or slavish manner<sup>3</sup>;
- we want to learn our method by reflecting on practice, rather than deciding it beforehand<sup>4</sup>;
- we want to use a decidedly Biblical approach, rather than founding ourselves on a particular philosophico-theological system<sup>5</sup>;

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2 The endeavour to do Ignatian theology is no common theological gesture yet. The obvious objection is: Ignatius never wrote a theological treatise. «To the retort that Ignatius was no theologian, one should point out that he was more, not less, than a theologian, and that in consequence he can set tasks even for tomorrow's theology». K. RAHNER, «Reflections on a new task for fundamental theology», in id., *Theological Investigations*, XVI, London 1979, 156-166, 166. See also K. RAHNER, *Ignatianischer Geist. Schriften zu den Exerzitien und zur Spiritualität des Ordensgründers*. Sämtliche Werke, XIII, Freiburg (Br.) 2006. Among the other authors who have tried to develop an Ignatian theology are E. PRZYWARA, *Deus semper maior. Theologie der Exerzitien*, 3 volumes, Freiburg (Br.) 1938-1940, enlarged and edited in 2 volumes, Munich 1964; H. RAHNER, *Ignatius als Mensch und Theologe*, Freiburg (Br.) 1964; B. HALLENSLEBEN, *Theologie der Sendung. Die Ursprünge bei Ignatius von Loyola und Mary Ward*, Frankfurt (M.) 1994.

3 The freedom with which Ignatius sets rules and with which he goes beyond them can be observed in all founding texts of the Society of Jesus and might show that his aim is to educate human beings for freedom; cf. IGNATIUS OF LOYOLA, *Spiritual Exercises*, (= *Exx.*) 4.18, etc.

4 Why, for example, would Ignatius in his so-called *Autobiography* tell even stories from the time when he was «knowing as yet very little about humility or charity or patience», (§ 14) and «his knowledge of spiritual things was still very obscure» (ibid.)? The account can be read as the unfolding of spiritual wisdom by learning, also from experience, including mistakes. And POLANCO's *Chronicon* is meant to serve as a collection of events from which to learn, cf. J. O'MALLEY, *The First Jesuits*, Cambridge (MA), 1993, 10-11.

5 Ignatius' *Spiritual Exercises* are full of direct and hidden references to the Bible, especially to the New Testament (cf. C.M. MARTINI, «Bibla y ejercicios», *Diccionario de Espiritualidad Ignaciana*, Bilbao 2007, 228-229, cf. the literature ibid., 230; cf. also: J. BEUTLER, «Die Rolle der Heiligen Schrift im geistlichen Werden des Ignatius», in M. SIEVERNICH – G. SWITEK, edd., *Ignatianisch. Eigenart und Methode der Gesellschaft Jesu*, Freiburg (Br.) 1990, 42-53, and: F. ROSSI DE GASPERIS, *Bibbia ed esercizi spirituali. La Bibbia negli esercizi spirituali e gli esercizi spirituali nella Bibbia*, Roma 1982.) One may for example say that the Exercises' four «weeks» follow a Gospel sequence: conversion—living with Jesus—his death—and resurrection.

- we want to start from human experience, that also includes an authentic respect for the other's point of view<sup>6</sup>;
- we want to serve humanity in its fulfillment, rather than work in mere theoretical construction or academic ambition<sup>7</sup>;
- we want to provide, however, professional work, rather than casual repetitions of what seems evident<sup>8</sup>;
- we want to venture new and personal discoveries<sup>9</sup>;
- we want, therefore, to offer, on one and the same subject, different, discreet, disjointed points of view, *topoi*, that are not an exhaustive treatment but leave room for further exploration (and risk a certain «punctuality», or «pointillism»)<sup>10</sup>;
- we want to proceed in a faithful dialogical balance between individual courage and familiarity with ecclesial tradition<sup>11</sup>;
- and we want to feed back into the life of the Church what we are finding<sup>12</sup>.

## 2. *With Ignatius*

We want to work «with» Ignatius. That is, we want to take inspiration from his written *texts*, from his political, administrative, spiritual and methodological *decisions*, from the *experience* that lies at the basis of his work and that a lived Ignatian spirituality conveys today; this includes a humble *prioritising* of living reality over verbal expression, a *reconciliation* between individual assertion and community service without providing a predefining formula to resolve this tension, and, especially, a focus on the personal relationship with *Christ*.

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6 *Exx.* 22 addresses the «good Christian», who should «save» what «the neighbour» says.

7 This is to echo the Ignatian motto of *iuuare animas*: helping human beings on their way to salvation. Cf. *Monumenta Ignatiana. Sancti Ignatii de Loyola institutiones Societas Iesu*, I, Rome 1934 (= *Const.*), 3.156.163.204.307.446.547. 582.605.638.765.812.813.

8 Ignatius and his companions had exposed themselves successfully to the academic criteria of the best universities of their times. This can be taken as a strife for transparency (rather than obscurantism) and for an application of contemporary quality standards (rather than self-satisfaction).

9 Cf. *Exx.* 2.

10 The *Constitutions* and *Exercises* are intricately structured texts containing numerous lists of points; one finds the same pointed style in Ignatius' letters, e.g., to the Fathers attending the Council of Trent (*Epistolae* 1:386-389).

11 Cf. *Exx.* 170.

12 Cf. *Const.* 136.

We want to learn from Ignatius. That is, we want to listen to Ignatius' wordings and experiences in their own right rather than inquire and conjugate him according to the common dogmatic treatises; we want to use categories we find in Ignatius to understand and evaluate other theological and religious propositions; and, again, we want to feed back into the expressions of the Church, e.g. in theological teaching, what we begin to understand in this study<sup>13</sup>.

## II. COMMUNION IN THE SON OF GOD

The Ignatian understanding of community, indeed, the profile of Ignatian theology gains shape in the light of this question: what is behind Ignatius' decision to name the fellowship he founded the «Society of Jesus»?

### 1. Traditional answers

For the name «Society of Jesus» a number of backgrounds have been suggested in the course of Jesuit history.

a. Some claim that *Compañía de Jesús* is a military metaphor. A key section of Ignatius' *Spiritual Exercises* (§ 138) can support this explanation: Christ is presented as *summo capitano general* in his «camp».

b. Pedro Ribadeneira had been commissioned by the Society's third Superior General, Francisco de Borja, to compose a biography of Ignatius. It appeared in 1572 in Naples and became the successful, indeed canonical *Vita Ignatii Loyolæ*. Ribadeneira points out the foundation's military imagery and the founders' martial intentions. Ribadeneira explains «Society of Jesus» by associating *Compañía* with the *sueldo* «of the Son of God, Jesus Christ our Lord». Then, he speaks of the order as *sagrada y gloriosa milicia*. Jesus is *gran Caudillo* and *capitán*<sup>14</sup>.

c. Feliciano Delgado<sup>15</sup> follows Hugo Rahner's<sup>16</sup> analysis that the name has to be seen in context with Ignatius' experience to be placed with Christ. Delgado has two arguments against a military understanding of «Compañía

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13 Such a feedback has, arguably, already taken place; an example of such a movement «from Ignatius» to the Church's life is the notion of «mission». Cf. the appendix to this article.

14 *Vita Ignatii Loyolæ* auctore PETRO DE RIBADENEYRA (= *Monumenta Historica Societatis Iesu*, XCIII), Rome 1965, 273. *Sueldo* is the soldier's pay, and stands for soldiery. A *gran Caudillo* is a *reconquista* leader. By contrast, the *Spiritual Exercises* use *caudillo* only for the «enemy» (§§ 138-140.340).

15 F. DELGADO, «Compañía de Jesús», *Diccionario de Espiritualidad Ignaciana*, Bilbao 2007, 347-350, 348-349.

16 H. RAHNER, «Die Vision des heiligen Ignatius in der Kapelle von La Storta», in id., *Ignatius als Mensch und Theologe*, Freiburg (Br.) 1964, 53-108, 91.94.

de Jesús». α. Only the second generation of Jesuits brought the soldier imagery into the centre of Ignatian spirituality; β. The Jesuits' standard translation of *compañía* into Latin is *societas*. This rendering, rather than e.g. *miles*, indicates a non-military intention. Feliciano Delgado might have added a third argument. γ. The only time Ignatius uses *compañía* in the *Spiritual Exercises* (viz., § 284) he did not refer to a troop but clearly meant «fellowship»: on the way to the transfiguration «*tomando en compañía Christo nuestro Señor a sus amados discipulos*—Christ our Lord is taking in his fellowship his beloved disciples».

d. A possible etymology of «company» provides a different semantic association: «companions» are those who «share the same bread». This etymology can be disputed by the objection that the second part of Latin *companionio* is *pagus*; then, the original meaning of *companionio* would be «from the same area». The derivation of *companionio* from «bread» (*panis*) works, however, well: Latin *companionio* literally means «bread fellow, messmate». *Companionio* occurs only in later Latin texts, and when it is found first, in the 6<sup>th</sup> century Frankish law code *Lex Salica*, it seems to be a translation of a Germanic word: Gothic *gahlaiba* «messmate», from *hlaib* «loaf of bread». So the idea of bread companionship may have been there from the start. In English, «companion» replaced the Old English word *gefara* «traveling companion», from *fara* «go, fare», which still exists in the German word for *socius*: *Gefährte*<sup>17</sup>.—The primary etymological association of *compañía* is, then, at least not directly military.

e. Even before the foundation of a religious order, Ignatius and his friends chose the name *Societas Jesu*, because they found that «they had among

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17 *The Oxford English Dictionary*, III, Oxford 21989, 587, s.v. «companion».

themselves no head but Jesus Christ, whom alone they wanted to serve»<sup>18</sup>. This explicit justification makes no mention of soldier imagery.

f. One may refer to the Church's legal vocabulary: *compañía* / *societas* is a pious association or consociation in the Church<sup>19</sup>.

g. The name *Societas Jesu* existed already before Ignatius as a religious group's title: it was the self-designation of a small military order approved and recommended by Pius II in 1450<sup>20</sup>.

Though there is surely truth in these answers, they might underestimate Ignatius' theological foundations. «Society of Jesus» is a core concept for the New Testament, and has far-reaching implications for theology.

## 2. New Testament communion

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18 H. RAHNER, *Ignatius von Loyola als Mensch und Theologe*, Freiburg (Br.) 1964, 51; on p. 457, footnote 39 he indicates his sources, merely stating: «Chron I 72 f. – FN I 203 f.». This is a reference to two texts, both of which are in fact by JUAN DE POLANCO, namely from his detailed Latin History (*Chronicon*) and from his short Spanish history (*Summarium*); the latter was written in 1546/1547, the former only in 1573/1574. Here are the relevant passages: (1) *Vita Ignatii Loiolae et Rerum Societatis Jesu Historia* auctore JOANNE ALPHONSO DE POLANCO, I (= *Monumenta Historica Societatis Jesu*, I), Rome 1894, 72-73: «coeperunt orare et cogitare quod nomen ipsis magis conveniret; et cum considerassent quod inter se nullum caput haberent praeter Jesum Christum, cui soli servire optabant, visum illis est ut Ejus nomen sibi imponerent, quem pro capite habebant, et Societas Jesu ipsorum Congregatio vocaretur. Cum autem Ignatius, Romae vicinus, visionem illam de qua | superius mentio facta est, qua Pater Aeternus Societatem Filio commendabat, et Filius protectionem ejus suscipiebat, vidisset, verisimile est hanc sententiam de nomine Societatis Jesu altius animo Ignatii impressam fuisse». In translation: «They began to pray and think which name might more fit them; and as they considered that they had amongst themselves no head but Jesus Christ, whom alone they wished to serve, it seemed to them they should give themselves His name, whom they had as their head, and that their congregation should be called 'Society of Jesus'. When, however, Ignatius had that above mentioned vision near Rome in which the Eternal Father commended the Society to the Son and the Son accepted to protect it, this decision about the name of the Society of Jesus was most probably stamped more deeply into Ignatius' soul». (2) *Summarium Hispanicum de Origine et Progressu Societatis Jesu* auctore P. IOANNE DE POLANCO, in *Fontes Narrativi de S. Ignatio de Loyola et Societatis Jesu Initiis*, I (= *Monumenta Historica Societatis Jesu*, LXVI), Rome 1943, 146-256, 204: «visto que no tenían cabeza ninguna entre sí, ni otro prepósito sino a Jesucristo, a quien sólo deseaban servir, parecióles que tomasen nombre del que tenían por cabeza, diciéndose la Compañía de Jesús. Y en esto del nombre tuvo tantas visitaciones el P. M<sup>o</sup> Ignacio de aquel cuyo nombre tomaron, y tantas señales de aprobación y confirmación deste apellido». In translation: «Given that they had among themselves no head or other superior than Jesus Christ, whom alone they wished to serve, it appeared to them that they should take the name of the one they had as their head, calling themselves 'Society of Jesus'; and in this name Father Magister Ignatius had many visitations of him whose name they took, and many signs of approval and confirmation of this naming».

19 J.E. VERCRUYSE, «Jesuiten», *Theologische Realenzyklopädie*, XVI, Göttingen 1987, 660-670, 660. The 1983 *Codex Iuris Canonici* uses both *consociatio* and *associatio* (e.g., canon 325.1).

20 *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, XIV, New York 1912, s.v. «The Society of Jesus».

Paul of Tarsus developed his preaching out of his own experience. Human beings cannot, he saw, be liberated through their own efforts from deathly self-centeredness. The only solution is, he says, entering into communion with Christ. What is that to say, communion with Christ? Christ is, for Paul, the historical Jesus *and* the risen Lord, he is the person one can encounter in an individual relationship *and* he is the sphere of power in which one can truly live. What he means by entering into communion, is a process which is, at the same time, mental, emotional and physical, individual and communitarian, instantaneous and continuous. Entering into communion with Christ means for Paul, experiencing the union with Jesus in his life, death and resurrection; and it is a transformation that is expressed and operated in the authorised community's action of baptising; it is the cognitive realisation that this is the beginning of eternal life in God; and it is practice of a life style like Jesus'.

The Pauline expressions used for communion with Christ remain in flux. The action of entering, baptism, is symbolic. It has, therefore, many correct interpretations; the words used for it can vary. This is so because for witnessing to Christ, priority is not with the expressive formulae. They are secondary. Prior, foundational and decisive is reality experienced: the Christ event. Since it also needs witness today, the question how to make the event understood in conceptual, cultic and social expression remains, of course, relevant.

What we have sketched here is at the centre of New Testament soteriology and Christology. One of the wordings Paul uses for this salvific personal communion is *κοινωνία*<sup>21</sup>. *Κοινωνία* is an activity: partaking, sharing; and it is a social state: fellowship.

Ignatius' great example in apostolic zeal was Paul. He could write: «God is faithful; through Whom you were called into the communion of His Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord»<sup>22</sup>. Impressively, Paul gives space for dynamic understanding when saying that God has called Christians into communion with Christ. He is simultaneously saying two things. It is through God's graceful election expressed in vocation that you *were* able to become Christians; at the same time, this call is continuing for you: you *are being* called again and again to truly realise, make real, what this life in communion with Christ means. You have been called, and you are being called, into the salvific relationship, the *κοινωνία* of Christ, which again has more than one meaning: the communion between you and Christ, the communion of creatures in Christ, the communion that is Christ, his body.

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21 *Koinōnia*; e.g.: «The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a *participation* in the blood of Christ?» (1Cor 10:16).

22 1Cor 1:9. Πιστὸς ὁ θεός, δι' οὗ ἐκλήθητε εἰς κοινωνίαν τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν.

It is striking to hear this verse in the Vulgate, the Bible translation that can be seen as informing the linguistic habits of Latin Christendom. A fair English translation of what Paul wrote in 1Corinthians 1:9 is: «God is faithful; through Whom you were called into the communion of His Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord». Let us now see the Vulgate's rendering: „Fidelis Deus per quem vocati estis in *societatem* Filii eius Jesu Christi Domini nostri.« The Vulgate can translate Paul's κοινωμία as *societas*<sup>23</sup>; it is, then, probable that the New Testament concept of κοινωμία is in the background of Ignatius' wording when he feels commissioned to found the *Societas Jesu*.

John, in his first letter, also employs the word κοινωμία. He speaks of the communion «we» are able to have, through the proclamation of the Gospel, with each other, and with the Father and the Son<sup>24</sup>. Whenever John uses the word, the Vulgate translates *societas*.

Ignatius, describing what he had long prayed for and finally felt fulfilled shortly before entering Rome, in the La Storta vision (1537), uses the expression, he «was placed with Christ»<sup>25</sup>. Ignatius and his *socii*, his fellows, are being associated, consociated, placed, by God the Father, into the companionship of Christ, who is carrying the Cross. This responds to the line of the *Anima Christi* prayer, as Ignatius knew it: «*Et pone me iuxta te*—And place me next to you»<sup>26</sup>. In its Trinitarian dynamics, however, the experience is more than a fulfillment of contemporary pious imagery: origin and aim of the whole movement is God the Father<sup>27</sup>; and the movement is: participating in Christ. Ignatius's first interpretation of his experience on the way to Rome is: «Maybe we will die as martyrs»<sup>28</sup>. Entering into communion with Christ is

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23 Half a dozen occurrences. The Vulgate can render Paul's κοινωμία in other places as *communio* and *communicatio*.

24 1John 1:3: «What we have seen and heard, we announce to you, too, so that you may have communion with us; and our communion is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ – ὁ ἐώρακαμεν καὶ ἀκηκόαμεν, ἀπαγγέλλομεν καὶ ὑμῖν, ἵνα καὶ ὑμεῖς κοινωνίαν ἔχητε μεθ' ἡμῶν. καὶ ἡ κοινωνία δὲ ἡ ἡμετέρα μετὰ τοῦ πατρὸς καὶ μετὰ τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ». John may be alluding to the power flow within the true vine (John 15:1-5) and the «being one» in God of the farewell discourse (John 17:21).

25 *Autobiography*, § 96: «Iddio Padre lo metteva col suo Figliuolo». Cf. H. RAHNER, «Die Vision des heiligen Ignatius in der Kapelle von La Storta», in id., *Ignatius als Mensch und Theologe*, Freiburg (Br.) 1964, 53-108.

26 B. FISCHER, «Das Trierer Anima Christi. Der bisher unveröffentlichte älteste nichtlateinische Text des Anima Christi aus einer Hs. des frühen 14. Jh.s in der Trierer Stadtbibliothek», *Trierer Theologische Zeitschrift* 60 (1951) 189-196; H. RAHNER, *Ignatius von Loyola als Mensch und Theologe*, Freiburg (Br.) 1964, 300.

27 *Ibid.*, 91.

28 *Monumenta Ignatiana*, IV.1, 378; *Fontes Narrativi*, II, 377, quoted after H. RAHNER, «Die Vision», footnote 83.

sharing Christ's fate, and feeling his closeness in the anticipation of resurrection. The birth moment of the Society of Jesus is, being placed into salvific communion with Christ.

Ignatius is often quoting from memory, but the Vulgate was clearly «in the air»<sup>29</sup>. If this, the New Testament reality of *κοινωνία*, is in the background of Ignatius' experience and wording of *societas Jesu*, its theological implications need to be addressed.

### III. COMMUNION AS THEOLOGICAL KEY

The *κοινωνία* dynamics shed a stimulating light on three areas of theological reflection, that is, on relationship, action, and representation, thus proposing a theology of person, of history and of the Church.

#### *1. Relationship: an Ignatian theology of person*

Why does Ignatius want to live in the communion (*societas*) of Christ? The first and fundamental answer to this is, because he loves Christ. Ignatius' Spiritual Exercises are intended to serve the retreatant to know, love and follow Christ more<sup>30</sup>. This is what a *friend* wishes. He feels attracted by Christ. Being a friend of Christ means for Ignatius, quite naturally, following him; that again not only means to follow his instructions but to imitate his life style, indeed accompany him in his life, in his work, and that is, also in his labour, even suffering<sup>31</sup>. The same dynamics can be felt in Paul's letter to the Philippians when he, in prison, writes, he wishes «to know [Christ] and the power of his resurrection and the communion of his sufferings, becoming like him in death, so that somehow I may also reach resurrection»<sup>32</sup>. Friendship has become the sharing of life; and the Vulgate makes Paul speak here of *societas* again: «ad agnoscendum illum et virtutem resurrectionis eius et societatem passionum illius configuratus morti eius».

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29 R. GARCIA-MATTEO, «Hat der Mystiker die Theologie nötig? Zur Relevanz der philosophisch-theologischen Studien bei Ignatius von Loyola», in T. GERTLER – S.C. KESSLER – W. LAMBERT, edd., *Zur größeren Ehre Gottes. Ignatius von Loyola neu entdeckt für die Theologie der Gegenwart*, Freiburg (Br.) 2006, 12-34, 30.

30 *Exx.* 104: demandar lo que quiero: será aquí demandar conocimiento interno del Señor ... para que más le ame y le siga.

31 *Exx.* 95: quien quisiere venir conmigo, ha de trabajar conmigo, porque siguiendome en la pena, tambien me siga en la gloria; cf. 146.

32 Phil 3:10-11. Τοῦ γινῶναι αὐτὸν καὶ τὴν δύναμιν τῆς ἀναστάσεως αὐτοῦ καὶ τὴν κοινωνίαν τῶν παθημάτων αὐτοῦ, συμμορφιζόμενος τῷ θανάτῳ αὐτοῦ εἰ πὼς κατακτήσω εἰς τὴν ἐξάνστασιν τὴν ἐκ νεκρῶν. (The articles in front of «communion» and «sufferings» can be later additions, but that does not touch our point.)

Since friendship is sharing life, Ignatius cannot separate, in his relationship with Christ, friendship and *service*. «Siervo» and «amigo» (servant and friend, *Exx.* 54.146) go together<sup>33</sup>, notably in the famous «amar y servir» (*Exx.* 233). There is a dignity, generosity and joy in the friend's offering himself for service, because he is absorbed by the project of his Lord (*Exx.* 97-98). So, a second answer to the question, why Ignatius wants to live in communion with Jesus is, because he is enthused by his project.

The generous offering of the servant is, however, not a self-annihilation. It happens in the joyful anticipation of the resurrection; but looking towards the future gain is not a bargain either. It is not based on calculation but on personal *trust*<sup>34</sup>. This giving up is an entering into the sacrificial dynamics, where action and passion, God's and human activity, certainty and risk, come together. So the next answer to why Ignatius is looking for Christ's *κοινωνία* is because he trusts him.

This trusting is possible because, for Ignatius, a fulfilled relationship is mutual communication. Communication is not taken in the sense of transmitting information only, but of putting at the other's disposal one's own possession, potentiality and power: what one has and can (*Exx.* 231)<sup>35</sup>. This giving is a two-way activity. Part of the point of Ignatius' Spiritual Exercises is to make the retreatant conscious of what (s)he has received<sup>36</sup>. The same accentuation is found in Paul: «I live in the faith of the Son of God, who has

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33 In the Fourth Gospel, Christ calls his disciples friends, not servants any more (15:15), but the Book of Revelation introduces John as servant again (1:1); likewise Paul, Peter, James and Jude refer to themselves as servants of Christ at the beginnings of letters; being friend and servant seems to go together.

34 *Exx.* 95 contains the promise that those following Christ enter into the glory. A promise is a challenge to trust. It is interesting to see that Paul is often careful when he speaks about the resurrection. In the passage quoted above, Phil 3:11, he uses the respectful «εἴ πως καταστήσω εἰς τὴν ἐξανάστασιν, I may *if by any means possible* meet the rising». Cf. also 1Cor 15:35-58 where Paul rejects giving details about what resurrection life is concretely: we simply do not know, we can only say that it will be different and that we need to commit ourselves in perseverance (v. 58). So, again, trust is required.

35 El amor consiste en comunicación de las dos partes, es a saber, en dar y comunicar el amante al amado lo que tiene o de lo que tiene o puede, y así, por el contrario, el amado al amante.

36 *Exx.* 234: traer a la memoria los beneficios rescibidos de creacion, redempcion y dones particulares.

loved me and handed himself over to me»<sup>37</sup>. It is past self-giving, and, in Ignatius, also present and future self-giving<sup>38</sup> that can be felt in relationship with God. So, it is out of the *experience* of love that Ignatius wants to be in the «societas» of Christ.

Ignatius understands relationship in a subtle way; it is mutual giving without trying to make the other an equal. The language of mutual inhabitation, mutual immanence comes in<sup>39</sup>, where living in the other is obviously something very different for, on the one hand, God-in-human being<sup>40</sup>, and, on the other, for us-in-God. For Ignatius, the fulfilled relationship seems to be love, and that is the friend's attitude—*amigo* is formed from *amar*. And it seems that loving someone is, for Ignatius, striving for his/her fulfillment. This is the sense of the *iuvare animas*<sup>41</sup>, because human fulfillment is salvation<sup>42</sup>; and this is the sense of the retreatant's self-giving into God's will<sup>43</sup>, which is God's project<sup>44</sup>, so we can say: God's fulfillment is his Kingdom. Now, it is important to see that for Ignatius the individual person is not being modeled into a pre-existing cliché<sup>45</sup>. Each story is different, and each personality is different. Christ is not interchangeable, nor is Christ's friend. The logic of friendship includes the *individuality* of the relationship.

The relationship Ignatius is letting happen is, however, not a friendship standing in awe, remaining in adoration; it is a highly active relationship. The

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37 Gal 2:20: ζῶ δὲ οὐκέτι ἐγώ, ζῆ δὲ ἐν ἐμοὶ Χριστός· ὁ δὲ νῦν ζῶ ἐν σαρκί, ἐν πίστει ζῶ τῆ τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ ἀγαπήσαντός με καὶ παραδόντος ἑαυτὸν ὑπὲρ ἐμοῦ. The whole verse translates: «I live, but it is no more I: Christ lives in me. Insofar I still have a carnal life, I live in the faith of the Son of God, who has loved me and handed himself over to me». In the seemingly contradictory formulation «I live but it is no more I», Paul is touching the limits of language; what appears to be contradictory and thus illogical is in fact the reflection of the priority of experience over expression.

38 *Exx.* 234: el mismo Señor desea dárseme en quanto puede según su ordenación divina.

39 John 17:21; Paul speaks of being in Christ and Christ in us, e.g. Gal 2:4.17.20.

40 *Exx.* 235: haciendo templo de mi (cf. 1Cor 6:19).

41 *Const.* 307: animas ad finem ultimum consequendum, ad quem creatae fuerunt, iuvare.

42 *Exx.* 23: El hombre es criado para alabar, hacer reverencia y servir a Dios nuestro Señor y, mediante esto, salvar su ánima.

43 *Exx.* 234: dispomed a toda vuestra voluntad.

44 *Exx.* 95: Mi voluntad es de conquistar todo el mundo y todos los enemigos, y así entrar en la gloria de mi Padre.

45 Cf. e.g., *Exx.* 9.

κοινωνία of friendship, the becoming of a *socius* of Jesus, is: to be *activated*. Persons seem to be, according to Ignatius, giving and working beings<sup>46</sup>.

There is a rather unnecessary quarrel in Christian theology whether the relationship between the divine Persons, and therefore also between a human person and God, is better encapsulated by the concept of mutual self-communication, or mutual self-distinction<sup>47</sup>. Ignatius can be of help here, because he would say that the best way of expressing this mutual love relation is both giving and distinguishing: *honouring*<sup>48</sup>.

## 2. Action: an Ignatian theology of history

If it is possible to develop the understanding of *societas Jesu* in the light of the New Testament experience of κοινωνία with Christ, we must also study the relationship between Jesus' historical sufferings and the disciple's post-Easter communion with these sufferings. Ignatius wants the retreatant to feel pain with Christ and to feel with pain that Christ has suffered «for me»<sup>49</sup>. Ignatius is thus establishing a *societas passionum Jesu*, a communion in Jesus' sufferings (cf. Phil 3:10).

This has four implications for a Christian theology of the believer's relation to history.

a. First, the lively entering into the events and their sequence, the reality and its drama, amounts to an important theological positioning. It is not a general insight into the existence of God, the goodness of a moral life or the principles of cosmic harmony that are salvific. It is, rather, the «knowledge»

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46 *Exx.* 236: habet se ad modum laborantis. *Exx.* 95: trabajar comigo.

47 W. PANNENBERG has reclaimed this expression from classical German philosophy for today's Trinitarian theology with a new accentuation. His contribution is the observation that in their mutual self-distinction the divine Persons make themselves dependent on each other (W. PANNENBERG, *Systematische Theologie*, I, Göttingen 1988, 340); but in offering «mutual self-distinction» as a way to understand the original relationships within the Trinity, he does not reject the conception of Trinitarian «mutual self-communication». PANNENBERG sees Christ's oneness with his heavenly Father as manifest in his trustful, obedient submission to the Father's will (ibid., 337); and on the other hand, in the Father's entrusting everything to the Son (p. 339). PANNENBERG, therefore, does not oppose self-distinction to self-communication but lets the two concepts explain each other. «Self communication» is important for PANNENBERG's ethics, too: W. PANNENBERG, «Einer ist gut», in id., *Beiträge zur Ethik*, Göttingen 2004, 90-98, 93-94. So an either/or contrasting of Trinitarian models of self-distinction over against self-communication is unnecessary.

48 *Exx.* 23: alabar, hacer reverencia y servir a Dios nuestro Señor.

49 *Exx.* 203: demandar lo que quiero, lo qual es propio de demandar en la pasión, dolor con Christo doloroso, quebranto con Christo quebrantado, lágrimas, pena interna de tanta pena que Christo pasó por mi (cf. the «for me» in Gal 2:20).

of Christ, as Ignatius stresses, in an affective, internal and dynamic way<sup>50</sup>; and «knowledge of Christ» was already the objective of Paul's striving<sup>51</sup>. What is to be realised is that a particular history *has happened*, and that it is the way to human salvation<sup>52</sup>. In this historical view, Ignatius does not take apart an earthly Jesus from a victorious Christ. The suffering man is «Christ our Lord»<sup>53</sup>, while the risen Lord can be called «Jesus»<sup>54</sup>. Ignatius apparently intends to convey the experience of a complete permeation, a mutual colouring of cross and glory, of humanity and divinity. Universal Lordship is lived in humble service<sup>55</sup>; and, on the other hand, the Easter glory already illuminates the Suffering Servant's self-offering<sup>56</sup>. It is this life that Ignatius and his friends want to share.

Here, another question needs to be answered: Ignatius uses «Christ» much more often than «Jesus» in the *Exercises*. The name «Jesus» appears in the text only when he speaks of the boy, *el niño Jesús*<sup>57</sup>, or for formal reasons<sup>58</sup>. Why did Ignatius still opt for *Societas Jesu* rather than *Societas Christi*? As we have just seen, this is not a decision for the earthly, or suffering Lord over against the risen. The pre-Easter Jesus is, for Ignatius «Christo». A distinction of two categories is to be suggested here. «Christ» is Ignatius' way of giving *narrative* presence to the Lord. In stating «Jesus», by contrast, he allows for the Lord's *emblematical* presence. Ignatius commonly puts the name Jesus—also in forms like: IHS, Ihs, Yhs, Ihsus—at the beginning of documents<sup>59</sup>.

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50 *Exx.* 104: conocimiento interno.

51 Phil 3:8: γνώσις Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ τοῦ κυρίου μου; and 3:10 Paul says he wants γινῶναι αὐτόν.

52 Cf. *Exx.* 23: El hombre es criado para alabar, hacer reverencia y servir a Dios nuestro Señor y, mediante esto, salvar su ánima; 102: que todos descendian al infierno; 95: conquistar todo el mundo y todos los enemigos.

53 *Exx.* 130.158.190.191.195.201. *Exx.* 175 envisages both the earthly and the risen Christ. Matthew's (pre-Easter) and Paul's (post-Easter) vocation experiences are mentioned together.

54 *Exx.* 218.221.224.301.304.305.306.

55 *Exx.* 144.146.

56 *Exx.* 196: considerar como la Divinidad se esconde.

57 *Exx.* 114.134.162.

58 *Exx.* 47 has «Jesu Christo o nuestra Señora» probably to avoid saying: Christo nuestro Señor e nuestra Señora; and the material in *Exx.* 261-312 simply follows New Testament wording.

59 He is not the only 16<sup>th</sup> century Christian to do so; cf. the first line of Martin Luther's 1520 treatise *De Captivitate Babylonica Ecclesiae*: «IHESUS».

Emblematical usage means: by presenting Jesus' name, Ignatius sets himself, and his readers, into the presence of the person of Jesus. Just like a written document, the name of the Society called for this emblematical, rather than narrative, presence of Jesus. Thus, all texts of the *Formula Instituti* speak, right at the beginning, of «the society, which we wish to be called by the name *Jesus*»<sup>60</sup>. Emblematical presentation is, one might dare say, a sacramental usage, since it is, at the same time, sign and instrument. The statement of Jesus' name mentions and offers Jesus' presence: and knowing him is, after all, the primary relation in the Ignatian view of history.

b. Second, now, how can I get access to this salvific history? It is by realising that it has happened «for me»<sup>61</sup>. The whole process of the Exercises leads into Christ's story. The *κοινωνία* consists in entering into Jesus' «mysteries», i.e., the events of his life; by applying Christ's attitude (self-giving) and effect (redemption) to oneself, the human being enters into the sacrificial dynamic that leads to the glory of the Father<sup>62</sup>. Thus a traversing of time is happening. The separateness of different moments along the time vector is overcome. Past (Christ's cross), future (standing before God in his glory), and presence become one. A *bridging* across time periods is taking place; it is quite common to the Bible<sup>63</sup>.

c. Third, this moment is the *kairos*, the decisive instance of fulfillment, as Mark presents Jesus' proclamation (1:15). Ignatius, too, is focussing all diverse moments into that point, in which «election» turns from the retreatant's choice<sup>64</sup> into God's electing him/her<sup>65</sup>.

d. Fourth, thus, the person who hears the elective call today is set into Christ's history of present activity. He/she is in the communion of Jesus because (s)he is active with Christ today. What is really happening when a person is in the *κοινωνία* of Christ is that (s)he is taking part in the divine activity; this person is today acting within the Trinity. That is why Ignatius dares say that what he does is not only done with the intention that God may be glorified in everything<sup>66</sup>, but «for the greater glory of God». Implied is a

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60 *Const.*, 16.26.375.

61 *Exx.* 53, and, again, *Exx.* 203: que Christo passó por mi.

62 *Exx.* 95: así entrar en la gloria de mi Padre.

63 Especially in the Bible's «now» and «today» memory is presence: Ex 19:1, Deut 5:48 etc., 2Cor 6:2, Heb 3:13.

64 *Exx.* 196: En toda buena elección, en quanto es de nuestra parte ... .

65 *Exx.* 98 is suggesting to pray for what the Exercises cannot, of course, guarantee, because of God's freedom: queriéndome vuestra sanctísima majestad elegir y rescibir en tal vida y estado.

66 Ut in omnibus glorificetur Deus, 1Pet 4:11 used in the *Regula Benedicti* 57.9.

view of the history salvation, which sees that an increase of God's glory through the growth of His Kingdom is actually taking place<sup>67</sup>. This growing is God's work, but he wants to incorporate creatures as his co-workers<sup>68</sup>. In this sense, a human action can really be for the greater glory of God, that is, can be a further step in the unfolding history of his Kingdom.

So Ignatius' theology of history is: I can actively enter into God's history by communion with Christ.

### 3. Church: an Ignatian theology of representation

The *κοινωνία* of Jesus Paul was mentioning in 1Cor 1:9 (you have been called into his communion) is not so much an inner certainty of being personally united with Christ, as it is the case in the prison letter, Phil 3:10, when Paul speaks of his communion with Jesus' sufferings. The communion the Corinthians were called into is first of all the Church<sup>69</sup>. We are left with a challenge here. We are discovering now that Ignatius is suggesting as a name for his fellowship a word that is actually designating the whole Church. Is he, thus, not depriving the world-wide ecclesial community of one of its richest characterisations: Church as Christ-communion?

Such an objection could only be made within a framework that is dividing entities strictly. Often, our separations seem clear but do not correspond with life. The Bible's ontological habits leave room for other types of entities than only middle sized solid state objects. The Bible has learned to think in terms of «corporate personality»<sup>70</sup>. Representation is an important kind of

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67 Cf. 2Cor 4:15: «... so that the grace that is reaching more and more people may cause thanksgiving to overflow to the glory of God». The Church has been reluctant to see a growing realisation of God's Kingdom happening within the history of the Church; this was particularly clear in rejecting Joachim of Fiore's view that a new phase of ecclesial existence, a third kingdom, was starting with the mendicants. What is happening in the history of the Church should not be seen as producing something beyond Christ; but as an ever fuller fathoming of what has been offered to the world by Christ.

68 1Cor 3:9: «θεοῦ γὰρ ἐσμὲν συνεργοί—we are God's co-operators». Cf. 2Cor 6:1.—In his article on the Ignatian *Ad maiorem Dei gloriam*, Karl Rahner uncovers only four levels of the motto: human intention, spiritual choice, realistic acceptance, and divine sovereignty. (K. RAHNER, «Vom Offensein für den je größeren Gott. Zur Sinndeutung des Wahlspruchs 'Ad maiorem Dei gloriam'», in id., *Sämtliche Werke*, XIII, Freiburg (Br.) 2006, 471-487.) RAHNER unfolds the motto's ascetic meanings, including their dangers, and reflects on the implied dogmatic innovation in one direction: Human beings can discern a call from God that cannot be deduced from principles. Karl Rahner does, however, not reflect on the other dogmatic implication of the motto: it implies that God is allowing human beings to take part in the process of his self realisation as his glorification by his creatures.

69 Paul uses the word «to call» as God's elective opening for human beings to membership and ministry in the Church. He has already used it in this sense twice in the lines before 1Cor 1:9, viz., in vv. 1 and 2.

70 H.W. ROBINSON, *Corporate personality in ancient Israel*, Edinburgh <sup>2</sup>1981.

relationship for Israel's self-understanding. The Levites, for example, live the *tāmīm* existence of total belonging to God that all of Israel is actually meant to realise<sup>71</sup>; but since not everybody can do it, at least one tribe does, representing the whole. Priesthood in Roman Catholic tradition has come to be seen similarly: the priest is representing a particular type of holiness and wholeness also of those who have different vocations; and Christian life according to the evangelical counsels wants to represent the Gospel's dynamics to the whole Church, and world<sup>72</sup>.

In a representational ontology one specific fellowship—to avoid the word «group»—can stand in for the whole; it is, thus, also inspiring to others. A similar existence is actually to be ascribed to the universal Church. It is, again, not a group within humanity. It is, rather, representing the expected union of all human beings (cf. *GS* 1), indeed of all creatures. The Church is the visible, anticipated fulfillment of the history of salvation, «when all will be Eucharist» (Didier Rimaud).

The community is commissioned to represent; it also has authority. Human beings can, in the name of God's community, and out of communion with him, have authority and even pass it on. The salvific office in the Christian understanding of priesthood has its root here.

The logics of representation can explicate an intuition that is momentous in Ignatius' own development. Representation can be reflected in the experience of being called to stand in for Christ, to take part in his body; that is, his life, his life style and also his people. After years of helping souls as a lay man, Ignatius understands that ordination to the priesthood was an apostolic means for the service he wants to provide. Thus, the Society acquires a sacerdotal character. In its most faithful moves, however, the Society of Jesus never saw itself as part of a hierarchy of power over others; rather, priesthood has been seen as taking part in Christ's own ministry of salvation for all of creation.

Is the call that Ignatius felt he had to answer, then, a call to assemble a representative body of members who live in an also visible communion, or was the founding idea, rather, a «*communitas ad dispersionem*»<sup>73</sup>? In theological debates, *communio* ecclesiologies can be opposed to *missio* ecclesiologies. The question behind that is whether the Church is primarily meant to be a visible community of people working together and caring for each other; or, rather, an open entity, constantly overcoming its own borders. Ignatius' key word is, we have seen, *κοινωνία*, that is, communion; but the Ignatian experience of communion with Jesus is expressly the one of being

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71 G. LOHFINK, *Braucht Gott die Kirche? Zur Theologie des Volkes Gottes*, Freiburg (Br.) 1998, pp. 339-340.

72 Cf. J.-C. GUY, *La vie religieuse. Memoire evangelique de l'Eglise*, Paris 1989; also: S. MADRIGAL TERRAZAS, *Estudios de Ecclesiología Ignaciana*, Bilbao 2002.

73 32<sup>nd</sup> General Congregation of the Society of Jesus, Decree 2, § 17.

sent<sup>74</sup>. The communion that becomes possible in Christ does not depend on geographical togetherness<sup>75</sup> but transforms it. There is an obvious extroversion in the Ignatian understanding of community, and thus, of Church.

Ignatius' plan was not a Church reformation; but the effect of his foundation has been, in several ways, reforming and transforming for the Church. His experience to be called into *societas* with Jesus has become fruitful for the whole Body of Christ. Part of the reason will be the inner dynamism of *societas* as *κοινωνία*. Its ambiguity as social community and personal communion provides a powerful mutual corrective in order to avoid, for the life of the Church, both an introverted spiritualism and an externalised clericalism.

#### IV. CONCLUSION: UNIQUE COMMUNION

We have studied Ignatius' experience of being *socius* of Jesus in three dimensions; i.e., person, history and Church. All three of them have an important feature in common. They do not allow for abstraction, they cannot be generalised, they are not exemplary of a principle that could be expressed differently. Personal friendship, the events of a particular history, and the Church cannot be replaced by other instances. In that, the implication of Ignatian soteriology and Christology is a theology that lives from the unicity and salvific universality<sup>76</sup> of Jesus, of the history of salvation testified by the Bible, and of the Church.

This exploration into *κοινωνία* theology has been ventured in view of a comparative project: Ignatian Christology and soteriology, and Koranic monotheism are to shed light on each other. To both, we want to put the same question, viz., what is salvific community? For an Ignatian theology, the answer is: communion with Christ and thus, growing unity with all: *societas Jesu*. The Koran's answers and their confrontation with the present findings require another study.

#### SUMMARY

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74 Cf. e.g., *Exx.* 145.146.307.

75 FRANCIS XAVIER is notoriously remote from the Society's growth in Europe: he was missioned to Asia; but his spiritual presence helps shape the Society's Constitutions (cf. X. LÉON-DUFOUR, «La conversazione spirituale dell'opera missionaria e nelle lettere di Francesco Saverio», in H. ALPHONSO, ed., *La «Conversazione Spirituale». Progetto Apostolico nel «Modo di procedere Ignaziano»*, Rome 2006, 39-48). The *Constitutions* have no theologically significant word for Jesuits in living in one place, as would be, e.g., 'community;' still, of course, those who belong to the 'body of the Society' have, wherever physically present, also the mission of testimony through their life as *communio*.

76 This is a quote from the subtitle of the Declaration *Dominus Iesus* of August 6, 2000.

What is salvific community for Ignatius of Loyola? It is communion with Christ, a dynamic for which Ignatius used the expression *societas Jesu*. This wording has a revealing intertextuality. *Societas* is the Vulgate's rendering of Pauline and Johannine *koinōnia*: «sharing in (Christ)». The NT overtones of the Ignatian experience of communion can be explored regarding a theology of relationship (person), of action (history) and of the Church (representation). Being a person is understood as being friend and servant, history as the salvific *kairos* of Christ's activity, and the Church as the communion representing him—each time a typically Christian conception deciding always for that option that cannot be generalised through abstraction.

## APPENDIX

### IS «MISSION» AN IGNATIAN COINAGE?

The Ignatian experience became an inspiration for the Latin Church's rediscovering and redetermining of «mission;» but was the word created by the early Society Jesus? A founding father of Catholic missiology, JOSEPH SCHMIDLIN, boldly states the Latin Church owes the word to the Jesuits; but then he adds some doubt:

What we call «mission» today, was designated as *apostolatus, propagatio fidei, de procurando salute* etc. in the Middle Ages, and even in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. The «missionary» was an *operarius*. Only in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, «mission» appears consistently in today's sense, e.g. already in the bull of installation of the Propaganda in 1622: *missionibus omnibus ad praedicandum et docendum evangelium et catholicam doctrinam superintendant* (quoted after *Ius Pontificium* I 3). Indeed, the word occurs in the first half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, e.g. when St. Francis Xavier was sent out (cf. ALEXANDRE BROU, *Saint François Xavier*, I, Paris 1912, 78-79: «choisi pour cette mission»). Thus it is quite plausible that what essentially helped to shape and promoted the concept's formation was the practice of the Jesuits, which called their initial residences even in the home countries, especially in heretical regions, *missiones*. According to other authors, the roots are to be traced among canonistic phenomena at the end of the Middle Ages, especially among the mendicants («disturbances in ministry»)<sup>77</sup>.

On top of the vocabulary mentioned by SCHMIDLIN, pre-Ignatian words for organised Christian proclamation were *plantatio ecclesiae, conversio infidelium*, and *praedicatio gentium*<sup>78</sup>. A claim that «missions» is a Jesuit coinage would obviously be overstating the point in terms of idea and practice. On the linguistic level, words like *destinare* in Latin and *enviar* in Spanish are detectable before IGNATIUS OF LOYOLA in ecclesial documents that delegate men to work abroad apostolically<sup>79</sup>.

So far, however, there seems to be no evidence of a pre-Jesuit usage of *missiones* for the institutional framework, activity, or place of overseas

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<sup>77</sup> J. SCHMIDLIN, *Katholische Missionslehre im Grundriß*, Münster 1923, 29-30.

<sup>78</sup> I am grateful to Prof. Dr. M. SIEVERNICH, S.J., for this hint. cf. M. SIEVERNICH, „La Misión y las Misiones en la Primitiva Compañía de Jesús,« in *Ite inflammate omnia. Selected historical papers from conferences held at Loyola and Rome in 2006*, Rome 2010, 255-273.

<sup>79</sup> *Destinare*: In his bull *Inter cetera* of May 4, 1493, Pope ALEXANDER VI is ordering the Spanish kings to «destine» suitable men to the new lands and islands in order to instruct the inhabitants there. *Enviar*: The 16<sup>th</sup> century Franciscan JERÓNIMO DE MENDIATA cites a 1524 *Instrucción*, in which Franciscan Minister General FRANCISCO DE LOS ÁNGELES «sends» ten of his men to Mexico (*Historia eclesiástica indiana*, <http://www.cervantesvirtual.com>, book 3, chapter 9, accessed January 14, 2013). I am grateful to Prof. Dr. Dr. M. DELGADO, Fribourg (Ü.), for helpful advice on this point.

Gospel witnessing; and, with IGNATIUS' Spiritual Exercises, the word «mission» itself gained a particular Ignatian colour<sup>80</sup>. What does it consist in?

For the first Jesuits, «mission» had a triple semantic, viz., a personal, an operative and territorial one<sup>81</sup>; that is to say, they took «mission» as being sent, as task, and as area.

FRANCIS XAVIER became the figurehead of the newly awoken missionary spirit. His activity, again, springs from his self-understanding of being sent by Christ—a sending FRANCIS experienced in his Ignatian spiritual formation (cf. *Exx.* 146)<sup>82</sup>. Here, the understanding of mission is clearly personal: Christ is electing, dispatching and accompanying his servants and friends.

According to PEDRO DE RIBADENEIRA's Ignatian biography (1572), the word *misión* was used in the very moment when FRANCIS XAVIER was sent out<sup>83</sup>. Another first generation Jesuit, NICHOLAS BOBADILLA, originally destined for India, was unable to depart because of weak health. IGNATIUS called in FRANCIS XAVIER and told him that it was, then, from him that God was asking this service: «*esta es vuestra empresa, a vos toca esta misión*—This is your task, this mission is now up to you». The *empresa/misión* parallelism suggests an operative meaning. The biography's editor, however, considers the Latin text to be the original (cf. XIV); and it has: «*Tuum hoc, Francisce, munus, tua haec provincia est*—Yours, Francis, is this task and area (!)» (302). If *misión* stands for *provincia*, what is implied is, clearly, a territorial understanding.

An impressive evidence is the (1580) *Catalogo delle Missioni dei Padri della Compnìa quali per ordine de Sua Santità [sic] in diversi luoghi attualmente esercitano i nostri ministri in quest'anno MDLXXX*<sup>84</sup>. Though the headline uses «Missioni» as something «exercised,» thus in an operative sense, it mentions the Pope's mandate behind the Jesuits' work, thus giving a

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80 *Exx.*, 145.146.

81 M. SIEVERNICH, «Conquistar todo el mundo. Los fundamentos espirituales de las misiones jesuíticas,» in K. KOHUT – M. C. TORALES PACHECO, edd., Frankfurt (M.) – Madrid 2007, 3-23.

82 Cf. M. SIEVERNICH, «Die Mission und die Missionen der Gesellschaft Jesu,» in J. MEIER, ed., *Sendung – Eroberung – Begegnung. Franz Xaver, die Gesellschaft Jesu und die katholische Weltkirche im Zeitalter des Barock*, Wiesbaden 2005, 7-30. B. HALLENSLEBEN, *Theologie der Sendung. Die Ursprünge bei Ignatius von Loyola und Mary Ward*, Frankfurt (M.) 1994 studies the relationship between individual call and universal service in Ignatian understanding.

83 *Vita Ignatii Loyolæ* auctore PETRO DE RIBADENEYRA (= *Monumenta Historica Societatis Jesu*, XCIII), Rome 1965, 303. The biographer A. BLOU, whom JOSEPH SCHMIDLIN was referring to in the section reproduced above, has translated precisely this passage.

84 Quoted after *Diccionario histórico de la Compañía de Jesús. Biográfico-temático*, III, Madrid and Rome 2001, s.v. «misión: acepción».

*personal* ring to «mission»; and being the title of an address directory, it in fact also uses «mission» in the *territorial* sense.

A second generation Jesuit, JOSÉ DE ACOSTA, offers an early definition of *missio* (1588); he suggests an operative meaning and conceives of mission in a helpfully ambiguous way as undertaken «because of the divine Word». That can mean both out of the intention of God's sending word, and in order to sow God's saving word: «*Missiones vero intelligo eas excursiones et peregrinationes quae oppidatim verbi divini causa suscipiuntur*—Under 'missions' I understand those expeditions and journeys that are undertaken from town to town because of the divine Word»<sup>85</sup>. De Acosta's elegant *oppidatim* evidently takes up the Lukan description of Jesus' own missionary practice as «city-wise—κατὰ πόλιν» (Luke 8:1, and then, accordingly, Acts 15:21.36; 20:23).

The New Testament witnesses to Christ's sending. That is, Christ is sent by the Father, and the Christian is sent by Christ; either dynamic is referred to with the verb ἀποστέλλειν / *mittere* (e.g. John 3:17; 20:21). Mission wording then, obviously, around long before the Jesuits. The Ignatian experience seems, however, to have been stimulating, if not catalytic, in the creation of a new awareness and language of mission<sup>86</sup>.

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85 JOSÉ DE ACOSTA, *De procurandum Indorum salute* (1588), III, Madrid 1987, 330, quoted after M. SIEVERNICH, *Die christliche Mission. Geschichte und Gegenwart*, Darmstadt 2009, 127.

86 «The neologism 'mission,' coined in early Jesuit circles, denoted at first the personal or institutional mission of those who had been commissioned by a Church authority. From this term the plural 'missions' was derived which designates the task itself, as well as the intended geographical area». M. SIEVERNICH, «Christian Mission», in *Institut für Europäische Geschichte (Mainz)*, *EGO. European History Online*, <http://www.ieg-ego.eu>, § 4, accessed January 14, 2013.

## Salvific community

### Part Two: the Koran

The first part of this exploration<sup>1</sup> has studied salvific community in Ignatius of Loyola's understanding. The question now to be answered is what *the Koran* presents as salvific community. Again, a methodological reflection might clarify what is intended.

#### I. KORANIC THEOLOGY?

How can one, and how can a non-Muslim, for that matter, outline the Koranic view on a chosen subject in scholarly responsibility? The following three principles seem fair.

##### *1. Historical matching*

The Koran needs to be read historically. We might simply list quotes from the Koran. Such a procedure has the advantage that, by its positivist nature, it cannot be wrong. Three points have to be kept in mind, however. First, a radically synchronic reading of the Koran's verses would have to accept blatant contradictions. Many can be resolved, if one sees the individual Koranic propositions as contextualised in particular situations of Muḥammad's career. Second, it is not only the occidental and thus foreign critique that poses historical questions to the text; it is, rather, a traditional Islamic approach to see each verse in its specific situation, as a response to a certain problem: the classical *tafsīr* (exegetical) discipline of *asbāb an-nuzūl* (the occasions of revelation) is studying precisely this. Third, such contextualised reading, though closer to Muḥammad's life and to Muslim exegetical tradition, is in fact not of mathematical certainty; but that is not to

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<sup>1</sup> *Gregorianum* 94 (2013) 593-609.

say it is thwarted from the outset. Once you do history, some conjecture is inevitable. That does not render arbitrary all historical claims. There are criteria for historical research that help us attain a level of certitude. There fore, we will, carefully, coordinate the Koranic quotes in a chronological framework. Guidance for this are not the traditional Muslim presentations of Muḥammad's life (*sīra*); rather, a historical order which, in the footsteps of Theodor Nöldeke<sup>2</sup>, starts from literary features of the Suras and verses, may provide a relatively reliable framework here.

## 2. Restriction to the Koran

Why should one only use Koranic formulations? Are there no other sources for Muslims, and thus, for Islamic Studies? Should *ḥadīths* (Arabic plural: *aḥadīth*) not be used equally, i.e., messages about normative actions and logia of Muḥammad? The answer is that they are pretty much all a product of forgery and thus completely unreliable is too easy. The *isnād-plus-matn* method<sup>3</sup> offers a reasonably safe grounding for historicity claims in *ḥadīth* research. Within Muslim theology and legal methodology (*uṣūl al-fiqh*), «authentic *aḥadīth*» have always been reckoned as a second revealed source next to the Koran.

Moreover, recent Muslim reflection has, however, been able to challenge successfully the assumption that for a truly Islamic life in its classical manifestations, the Koran has ever been of definitive authority<sup>4</sup>. The «Koranicity» of Islam seems a false belief shared by Islamic fundamentalists, Muslim modernists and Western scholars. This surprising agreement can be

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<sup>2</sup> F. SCHWALLY, ed., *Geschichte des Qorāns von Theodor Nöldeke*. Part 1: Über den Ursprung des Qorans, Leipzig 1909. Now convincingly applied by A. NEUWIRTH, *Der Koran als Text der Spätantike. Ein europäischer Zugang*, Berlin 2010; id., *Der Koran*, I. Frühmekkanische Sureen, Berlin 2011. G. Weil had, already by 1860 (*Historisch-kritische Einleitung in den Koran*, Bielefeld 1878<sup>2</sup>), developed a four phase scheme of Mecca I, II, III, and Medina, similar to Nöldeke's.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. especially H. MOTZKI, *The Origins of Islamic Jurisprudence. Meccan Fiqh before the Classical Schools*, Leiden 2001.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. M. Paçacı's researches; especially: «Çağdaşçı Dönemde Kur'an'a ve Tefsire Ne Oldu?», in *İslamiyât* 6 (2003) 4, 85-104, translation and commentary by F. KÖRNER: «Was ist in der Moderne aus Koran und Koranexegese geworden?», in *Alter Text – Neuer Kontext. Koranexegese in der Türkei heute*, Freiburg (B.) 2006, 130-163; «Klasik Tefsir Neydi?», in *Klasik Yeniden Düşünmek Sempozyumu*, Istanbul 2006, translation and commentary by F. KÖRNER: «Klassische Koranexegese – was war das?», *Münchener Theologische Zeitschrift* 58 (2007) 127-139; «Çağdaşçı «Kur'an'da Kadın»Yorumunun Eleştirisi», in B. GÖKKIR – N. YILMAZ – Ö. KARA – M. ABAY – N. GÖKKIR, edd., *Tarihten Günümüze Kur'an'a Yaklaşımlar*, Istanbul 2010, 559-585, which F. Körner hopes to publish in commented translation.

explained. All of them may be, in their own ways, victims of a modern textualism. Still, a theology based on scriptural rather than traditional quotes, will, especially when offered by a non-Muslim, normally be considered as less controversial, given the spiritual role of the Koran in all forms of Islamic life.

Comparing Ignatius and the Koran, that is, one form of 16<sup>th</sup> century spirituality with another religion's basic text, that is, 7<sup>th</sup> century formulations, seems a rather unfair attempt. Our purpose is not to find out which is better, but to permit mutual illumination. We must keep in mind the profound differences in origin, nature, self-understanding and status of the Koran over against Ignatian spirituality.

### 3. *Formulating Theology*

The Koran is not presenting a full-fledged theology of salvific community. On this or similar subjects, the text is not explicit, let alone is it offering a thematic passage; therefore, we need to survey the whole. Then, a theological outline needs to draw on what the Koran says and implies. This step leaves room for violent and still hidden hermeneutic manipulations. The result will therefore need discussion, especially with Muslim interlocutors.

## II. THE LINGUISTICS OF KORANIC COMMUNITY

What kind of a community does the Koran describe, create and offer? And to what extent is it salvific? The Koran has three typical ways of expressing community.

### 1. *Group*

Often, the Koran's verses end in the formula «they belong to those who are...»: *mina l...-īn*. This ending could be called the *clausula partitiva*<sup>5</sup>. The *clausula* sounds unnecessarily periphrastic. «They belong to those who are righteous (*mina ṣ-ṣāliḥīn*)», is apparently more complicated than simply saying «They are righteous (*ṣāliḥīn*)». Perhaps this is not mere coincidence or compulsion to rhyme. The Koran likes to think in terms of groups, and, for that matter, of binary groups. You should be part of the right group, is the Koran's basic message.

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<sup>5</sup> This is how the present author suggests to call it. It had a bad reputation in Western research, especially since T. Nöldeke's verdict that it was a product of lacking poetic imagination and of rhyme compulsion (*Geschichte des Qorāns*, 6); but A. Neuwirth is eloquently trying to rehabilitate it, pointing out the *clausula*'s triple function as poetic speech, party dichotomy and paraenetic appeal (*Der Koran als Text der Spätantike*, 753-760).

Often the righteous are characterised as those who will receive reward. Promised is both a this-worldly compensation, and, especially, eternal happiness<sup>6</sup>.

For a theology of community, this has three consequences: (a) There seem to be already established values, and groups associated to them; what you are to do is not to create a new cell, but decide for the right party. (b) A good–bad dualism seems presupposed. (c) The Koran tries to motivate its hearers with the attraction of belonging to the right group.

### 2. *Share*

What the righteous ones get in paradise — and, contrary, the evildoers in hell — is, «their portion». The word is elucidating: *ḥalāq*, «portion, share» is the Hebrew *ḥēleq*, which can have the same meaning. It is in fact a key word for Israel's theological self-understanding. The Lord (*YHWH*) is Israel's portion, and Israel is God's portion<sup>7</sup>. The word comes into the Koranic vocabulary only in Medina, i.e., after 622 C.E.. For a Koranic theology of community, three lessons can be learned from this evidence: (a) Israel's theology of the relationship between God and his people, as personal and mutual belonging, is not being continued in the Koran. Rather, «portion» has become de-personalised: a reward in eternal living conditions (luxury, over against torture). (b) The logics of portions is now legal, that is, one has a commercial claim to one's compensation in the hereafter (Sura 2:102). The portion is result of divine reckoning (Sura 2:202). (c) But the portion granted to human beings is not restricted to the hereafter; the concept includes, rather, what you get in this world now, in order to use it (Sura 9:69).

### 3. *With*

A study of community needs to take into account Koranic usages of the preposition «with». The associative aspect can be expressed in Arabic by the preposition *ma'a*. Is there a «with» relationship between God and the

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<sup>6</sup> Suras 12:101; 26:83; 16:122; 5:84;4:69; eschatologically explicit *wa-alḥiqnī bi-ṣ-ṣāliḥīna*: Suras 12:101; 26:83; 27:19; 21:75.86; 29:27; 68:50.

<sup>7</sup> Deuteronomy 4:19-20: «And when you look up to the sky and see the sun, the moon and the stars — all the heavenly array — do not be enticed into bowing down to them and worshipping things the Lord your God has apportioned (*ḥ-l-q*) to all the nations under heaven. But as for you, the Lord took you and brought you out of the iron-smelting furnace, out of Egypt, to be the people of his inheritance, as you now are». Jeremiah 10:15-16: «They [the idols] are worthless, the objects of mockery; when their judgment comes, they will perish. He who is the Portion (*ḥ-l-q*) of Jacob is not like these, for he is the Maker of all things, including Israel, the tribe of his inheritance — the Lord Almighty is his name».

believers? That God is «with» the patient ones, is a recurring formula (Suras 2:153.249; 8:46.66); but «with God» is only used in a polytheist sense — putting other candidates of adoration «next to Him» — and that is, of course, rejected (Suras 6:19; 17:22). What does it mean for human beings that God is with them? It means that God is helping them for victory, though the successful outcome may not be immediately obvious in the course of the events (Sura 8:65-66; expressly, with «troops», Sura 9:40). Contrary to what one might expect from our previous findings, this relationship of helping is mutual between God and human beings: *in taṣṣurū llāha yaṣṣurkum* (Sura 47:7: «if you help God, he will help you»). Helping God means accepting Muḥammad's mission and taking part in it actively and unselfishly (Sura 29:69): «those who fight with (fī) Us, We will lead them in Our ways, God is with those who do good» (*wa-llaḍīna ḡāhadū fīnā la-naḥdiyannahum subulanā wa-inna llāha la-ma'a l-muḥṣinīn*).

The usage of the Koranic *ma'a* can be summed up in two theses: (a) The divine–human co-operation is expressed by the preposition «with», showing that God is not replacing but supporting human activity. (b) There is a mutuality of action; not only God helps the believers, they are also encouraged to help God.

### III. A KORANIC THEOLOGY OF COMMUNITY

In the course of the Koran's proclamation, a development of its community theology can be observed. Community means, for the Koran, salvific participation in five different realities:

#### 1. *Community as harmony with cosmic rhythms*

The day cycle of the sun and the month cycle of the moon (cf. 6:96) seem to have been the primary points of regulation for Islamic conduct from early on. Cultic practices — several daily prayers — according to cosmic rhythms were probably part of Islam's founding impulse, first without deliberate dissent from other Meccan prayer styles. Living within the structures of creation was, then, a criterion for salvation in the eyes of the first Muslims.

#### 2. *Community by access to the original*

The heavenly book (*kitāb*) grants guidance in how to think and speak about God, and in how to act correctly. It grants authority to the proclaimer of such guidance. The ability to quote from this source also creates, according to the Koran, a unity of understanding between all groups who base their lives upon such an access. During the phases «Mecca II» and «Mecca III» (that is, ca.

616-622 C.E.), a particular fraternity is expressed towards Christians and Jews as «People of the Book»: *ahl al-kitāb*. For the later Meccan Muḥammad, this community in the *kitāb* is a way of achieving independence from the cultic life around the Ka'ba and its theological implications. The Jewish outlook with its concentrated direction and its exclusive orientation towards the one God becomes the salvific alternative to the manifold inclusivism around the Meccan sanctuary. This explains why Muḥammad now teaches to prostrate with the Jews: towards Jerusalem. The change of prayer direction, *qibla*, seems to have been a turning away from a cosmic (eastward) orientation of prayer towards a place that is justified, not by natural conditions but by the history of salvation: the election of Israel and Mount Zion.

While this union with Jewish prayer will later, in Medina, be abandoned for a Mecca orientation of prayer (2:142), access to the heavenly deposit of divine revelation, the *kitāb*, remains a theologically important claim. It now provides a different freedom. It legitimates Muḥammad's authority to mark his disagreement with the Jews. It also becomes clear that «having part in the Book» is no sufficient salvific condition: it is no guarantee for correct conduct (4:44).

Next to the *kitāb*, another original reference point now gains importance, viz., Abraham (Sura 2:124-241). Abraham is earlier than Moses and his «book»; Abraham is not restricted to the Jews; and his foundation is, according to the Koran, at hand in Mecca. Being in communion with Abraham is, therefore, the winning card over against Mosaic community, and the perfect justification to conquer the Ka'ba.

### 3. Community as agreement

Disagreement becomes a major issue in the growth of the Islamic community. Meccan lack of obedience was processed rather easily; those who rejected Muḥammad's monotheistic thrust were declared unbelievers. In Medina, however, even the People of the Book expressed disagreement with several of Muḥammad's claims concerning his political and prophetological posture, and consequently, also concerning his theological position. Now, «unbeliever» came to mean a person who rejected Muḥammad's mission. A new theology of agreement had to be developed. It seems in this context that the Koran is presenting an interpretation of the whole of history in terms of agreement and disagreement.

The initial human situation was «one people», (*umma wāḥida*, Sura 2:213); our present human state, however, is discord (*iḥtilāf*). God's project is a re-establishment of universal agreement, humanity's natural and original condition. It had been for this reason that all prophets were sent. It is not the prophets that were in contradiction; they were, rather, all equal in what they said (monotheism) and experienced (rejection and late success). It is, rather,

other human beings that develop discord. The Koranic theology of religions implicitly distinguishes two types of differences between religions (Sura 5:48). There are variations — they only concern random forms of cultic observance (*šir'a* and *minhāğ*), that is, adiaphora; and there are, on the other hand, divergences — they are essential, and concern, due to their doctrinal nature, truth. According to the same verse (5:48), variations are willed and made by God (*ğa'alnā*), they need no correcting judgement and have a positive effect: they entice the competitors for the better. Divergence, however, is a product of human deviant arbitrations (*ahwā'*). Divergence is to be avoided (*lā tattabi'*) and needs prophetic judgement (*fa-ḥkum*) according to the *kitāb*, so that truth be re-established.

#### 4. Community by «in-recitation»

The semantic development of the word *qur'ān* demonstrates how, in the case of Islam, community is being created by verbal proclamation. One might speak of three phases, viz., reading, recitation, and lectionary. H. Wolfson had formulated that, as opposed to the Christian notion of incarnation, the Koran implies the claim of being the divine word's «inlibration»<sup>8</sup>. This leaves us with a major problem. The Koran's own claim is not so much to be the *kitāb* (liber, «book») but to be the *kitāb*'s actualisation. Therefore, we will propose another formula. The Koranic view is that in the Koran, the divine word finds (rather than its incarnation or inlibration) an «in-recitation». (a) Muḥammad presented readings from the heavenly book, that is, appropriately contextualised proclamations originating from the transcendent text. Community by «in-recitation» means, in this early phase, that all who listen to those readings are part of the salvific congregation. (b) These readings were orally absorbed by the early community. They were not recited only once, they were, rather, re-used in cultic practice by Muḥammad and its followers. *Qur'ān* now comes to mean, rather than situational reading from the heavenly book: recitation of a text that had been proclaimed earlier. Community by «in-recitation» is to say in this phase, that the assembly is becoming itself because it has its own, identity-marking texts to declaim. Recitation used to be the actualisation of heavenly words by the prophet; recitation now becomes the quasi sacramental action of manifesting divine presence. It is a chanted, therefore aesthetic and numinous — rather than rational — encounter with God's message. (c) During its codification, *qur'ān*

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<sup>8</sup> H.A. WOLFSON, *The Philosophy of the Kalam*, Cambridge (MA) 1976, 246: «inlibration, that is, the embookment of the pre-existent Koran in the revealed Koran». A decade before him, H. HAAG had already spoken of God's Word becoming book («Buchwerdung des Wortes Gottes»): J. FEINER – M. LÖHRER, ed., *Mysterium Salutis. Grundriß heilsgeschichtlicher Dogmatik*, 1, Einsiedeln 1965, 289.

acquires a third meaning, following the Syriac *qeryānā*: a collection of texts, not arranged according to a meaningful order other than user-friendly liturgical access. It is to serve as a handy but solemn source book for the community's various cultic occasions: lectionary. Community by «in-recitation» now means that the group is made up by those who have, and have access to, the visible text with all its dignity; community by «in-recitation» has become union in the recitation's codified version.

### 5. Community as *umma*

The Koran's project is to establish a tribe that is not defined genetically but by accepting God's guidance and thus potentially unites all of humanity<sup>9</sup>. The Hebrew Bible's word *umma* («tribe», Genesis 25:16, etc.) is becoming the Koran's programmatic designation of the salvific community. In Medina, the followers of Muḥammad receive their designation to be «proper/middle-of-the road community» for the whole of humanity (*umma wasaʿt*, Sura 2:143). The *umma*'s prayer life at the day of «coming together» (Sura 62:9, *yawm al-ḡumʿa*, that is, «Friday») is markedly different from Judaism and Christianity, and it is expressing a universal unity, like any *qibla*-directed activity. Now, salvific community has become a sociologically established entity; unity in the quantitative sense of inner undividedness and external distinctiveness. It is exclusive in two senses: in so far as God is not a part of it, and in so far as not everybody belongs<sup>10</sup>.

## IV. OPEN EXCLUSIVISM

A Koranic theology of salvific communion is, however, not presented appropriately if it is only seen as exclusivist. For a more balanced picture,

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<sup>9</sup> A. NOTH, «Früher Islam», in U. HAARMANN, ed., *Geschichte der arabischen Welt*, Munich 1987, 11-100.

<sup>10</sup> One might contest this by pointing out that God is portrayed as being close to humanity and that therefore, exclusivism is not the right concept for a Koranic theology of community; one might try to prove this with the famous Koranic saying that God is closer to human beings than their jugular vein (Sura 50:16). The verse is, however, not speaking of a closeness in communion but in control. That is clear from the wording of the same verse: «We (God) know what his (man's) innermost self-whispers within him: for We are closer to him than his neck-vein» (translation: M. Asad). — There is another form of exclusivism in the conception of *umma* in the so-called *Constitution of Medina*, which may be a historical document. There, the Muslims declare themselves literally to be an *umma* at the exclusion of all others: *min dūn an-nās*; the text in: IBN HIŠĀM, K. *Sīrat rasūl Allāh*, ed. F. Wüstenfeld, Göttingen 1859-1860, 341-344; a translation is offered by W.M. WATT, *Muhammad at Medina*, Oxford 1981, 221-225.

three points need to be made, the first is setting the Koran's view into its original context, the second reflects upon its fundamental intention, and the last is sketching a Koranic ontology of participation.

*1. Context: anti-associationism*

The Koran's exclusive tendencies and its reluctance to use, for example, *ma'a* («with») as designating a relationship between human beings and God need to be seen in their religious context. The Koran's main concern is *tawhīd*, literally: letting God be one<sup>11</sup>. What does «one» mean here? It is primarily a quantitative claim. It means, there is no other divinity, so, God is unique; and it means that there are no parts in God, since having parts is seen as a sign of imperfection.

A classical triple unfolding of the Koran's monotheistic thrust in social, cognitive and cultic practice would be: promoting social structures, religious talk and cultic forms that correspond to God, who has neither parts nor peers<sup>12</sup>. This classical list could be completed by a fourth level, spiritual psychology. The decisive question is where one directs one's intentions, if fully accepting God's oneness. «Oneness» as spiritual attitude means total commitment to the «ways» of God, i.e. his cause (e.g., Sura 5:54). The Islamic mystics, the Sufīs, will radicalize the understanding of oneness as purity of intention: *tawhīd* is, then, not acting for reward but for God<sup>13</sup>; even, *tawhīd* can come to mean attributing «being» only to God<sup>14</sup>. *Tawhīd* as perfect spiritual orientation may well be the Arabic version of the basic Christian attitude the New Testament and the ascetic traditions of and the Early Church called ἀπλότης — simplicity<sup>15</sup>.

The Koran's intent is to bring humanity back to its primeval belief in the one God (7:172). This is, according to the Koran, a necessary project of reform of human conditions. That is to say, the original posture of the human being vis-à-vis the Creator and Judge has to be re-established over against false belief, just like other social grievances, too, have to be eradicated, e.g.

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<sup>11</sup> The word is a noun in the causal form of the numeral «one» (*wahad*); so, *tawhīd* is something like: «the one-ing».

<sup>12</sup> D. GIMARET: «Tawhīd», *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, X, Leiden 2000<sup>2</sup>, 389: *rubḥūya – asmā' wa-ṣifāt – 'ibāda*.

<sup>13</sup> R. GRAMLICH, *Der eine Gott. Grundzüge der Mystik des islamischen Monotheismus*, Wiesbaden 1998, 179.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 289.

<sup>15</sup> E.g., 2Cor 11,3; on the early Christian tradition, cf. H. BACHT, «Einfalt», *Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum*, IV, Stuttgart 1959, coll. 821-840.

killing children for material concerns<sup>16</sup>. The grievance against which Koranic *tawḥīd* is deployed is demarcated with a commercial term<sup>17</sup>. It means «association, partnership»: *širk*. Theological association is the Koranic critique's core point of 7<sup>th</sup> century Arab society; and it is the unforgivable sin (Sura 4:48); we are used to translate *širk* by «polytheism». *Širk* should, however, also be seen as a conception of participation, community. In other words, *širk* is a *koinōnia* notion; but in God's realm, community is now being seen as reducing God's oneness, divinity, honour, power and efficiency.

Since fighting *širk* is the Koran's fundamental thrust, we will hardly find Koranic enthusiasm for any theology that offers a communion in which God is giving himself. Still, the Koran's conception of salvific relationship can be formulated also in terms of inclusive community. The Koran wants to bridge existential gaps. One is the distance between God and human being, the other the separation among human beings. The two Koranic bridging projects may be called inter-human universalism and divine-human cooperation.

## 2. Project: universalism

We have already seen the Koranic project for humanity: the Koran reminds its hearers of the initial human situation when all of humanity was one *umma* (cf. above, section III.5; Sura 2:213). Here, the Koran is not only looking back. Intending to re-establish the initial state of humanity, the Koran is in fact presenting a future human unity: a universal project. Because of this thrust towards unification, the Koran does not want to develop an understanding of historical particularity. Particularisms, claims of election and special vocations create, in the Koranic vision, disagreement. That is also why not even Muḥammad is seen to be different from other prophets (Suras 17:77; 2:136); quite to the contrary, he is legitimised through an appeal to his similarity to the messengers before him. Special is only that the message is, this time, secured from distortion. Therefore, no further prophets needs to follow him<sup>18</sup>. In comparison one can say the following: the Church claims to exist out of the ἐξουσία<sup>19</sup> which Christ had been given to give; in Koranic thought, out of respect for God's absolute power, the prophet, let alone the community, feels entitled to pass on prophetic authority. The *umma* does not represent God; it corresponds to his orders (cf. Sura 16:90); and it is in

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<sup>16</sup> Cf. T. NAGEL, *Mohammed. Leben und Legende*, Munich 2008, 326.

<sup>17</sup> J. HOROVITZ, *Koranische Untersuchungen*, Berlin 1926, 60.

<sup>18</sup> Sura 33:40 can be read this way.

<sup>19</sup> *Exousia*: «authority»; Mark 6,7; John 20,21.

surrendering to God's will that union is established. This consists, in fact, in a triple movement: accepting what cannot be changed as God's now incomprehensible will (cf. Sura 18:65-81); fulfilling God's intention in cultic and social practice; and letting, thus, unity grow among human beings.

### 3. Active participation

Four, possibly surprising, aspects may show that there is actually a thinking of active human–divine participation at the basis of the Koran's theology.

a. God at work in the believers' action. When the *umma* proves to be successful in matters military, Medinan Koran passages provide a theological reading of these victories. Thus, there is a Koranic reflection of the events at the battle of Badr, where Muḥammad and his followers won against the Meccan elite in 624 C.E. What seemed to be the Muslims' success at Badr was in fact God's retribution of the unbelievers, foretold by the Meccan punishment narratives: «It was not you [believers] who killed them [the unbelievers who were killed at Badr], it was God. It was not you [Muḥammad] who threw [or, shot], it was God»<sup>20</sup>. The Koran's interpretation of contemporary events can serve as one hint at a Koranic theology of divine–human collaboration. Possibly the Islamic theologians, subtle and creative in their theories of action<sup>21</sup>, were following this late Koranic theology.

b. The believers helping God. As we have already seen, human beings can, according to the Koran, «help» God (cf. above, section II.3; Sura 47:7). God does, however, not need any help, because he is independent and rich in himself (*ḡanī*, Suras 29:6; 3:97). Helping God means to be committed in the defence and diffusion of Islam; a typical Koranic wording for this is «striving in God's ways» (9:24 etc.).

c. God witnessing. The semantic field of «witnessing» (*š-h-d*) is amply present in the Koran. We find human beings' credal testimony designated by this word. It does not presuppose ideas of perception, presence or memory. Witnessing is, rather, verbal affirmation without doubt (cf. 5:83)<sup>22</sup>. Human beings can, in that sense, bear witness to God's Lordship (7:172) and unicity (6:19); and that is what God expects (3:81). God has His witnesses on earth;

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<sup>20</sup> Sura 8:17, pointed out by D. MARSHALL, *God, Muhammad and the Unbelievers. A Qur'anic Study*, Richmond (U.K.) 1999.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. especially J. VAN ESS, *Theologie und Gesellschaft im 2. und 3. Jahrhundert Hidschra. Eine Geschichte des religiösen Denkens im frühen Islam*, IV, Berlin 1997, 482-512.

<sup>22</sup> The «hypocrites» are hypocrites precisely because they say they testify to Muḥammad's prophecy, without being convinced (63:1).

He seems to want such support. There is, however, yet another type of witnessing also present in the Koran. Interestingly, God is, according to the Koran, also Himself witnessing; in what sense? God's witness is an affirmation, meant to remove all doubt. «God witnesses» is not referring to any prove actively given in addition, not even an experience of security. «God witnesses» can have two contexts, viz., verbal propositions or actions. For a proposition, «God witnesses» is an affirmative claim like «God knows», comparable to an oath, giving authority to a statement, possibly by an implied threat of sanction for those who reject what is being claimed (3:18; 4:166). In the context of actions, God's witnessing presence is to remind people of their eschatological responsibility in their existential decisions now (3:81). Both functions are closely related. In each case, the purpose of God's witness is to remove doubt (cf. 11:54).

d. God and his messenger. God has been sending messengers (*rusul*), one to each nation, and prophets (*nabīyūn*) for right guidance. God is entrusting his message to them, their action and fate is in the focus of God's governance. In the case of Muḥammad, God's cause becomes more and more identified with His messenger; the prophet's voice and verdict is to be obeyed like God's (8:46). In Medinan verses we find mention of a third authority. The hearers are instructed to obey God and His messenger, and now, additionally: «and those who order» (*ulū l-amr*, Sura 4:59.83). We encounter growing human participation in God's own authority.

This list of participatory aspects may suffice to demonstrate that it would be exaggerated to say the Koran poses God strictly on the other side of creatures. Rather, we find several Koranic tendencies towards a theology of representation. In human–divine collaboration, the Bible knows of yet another pattern: even human actions *against* God, his plans, his rules, his elect are integrated into salvific history (cf., e.g. Genesis 45:5). Such a pattern is unknown to the Koran.

## V. CONCLUSION: NATURAL COMMUNITY

The Koranic findings can be synthesised as follows.

1. A communion of divine and human intention, and even action — military and judicial — is envisioned in the Koran. A quasi-identification of God and creature seems acceptable when the power of those who get their legitimation out of the Koran is in question.

2. Community is, for the Koran, a counter-group with a universal project, that is, with the perspective to overcome contrasts; belonging to it means to have the divine promise of eternal *and* this-worldly reward; and to have the divine right and the divine help to overtake the others.

3. Salvific communion is, for early Koran passages: returning to the natural monotheistic creed; later, in Medina, decision for the one rightly guided community becomes a salvific criterion as well.

4. The Koranic conception of divine–human communion has, however, its clear reservations, too. God is not putting his project at risk by getting involved in human history. The Koran presents God in great, fascinating independence. This may plant in the believers a profound sense of respect for God, a sincerity in their understanding of life, a feeling of their responsibility and a clarity in word and action.

#### EPILOGUE: CONTRASTING COMMUNITIES

Our guiding question — what is salvific community? — was derived from the what we had found in Ignatius of Loyola. Still, so far, each of the two outlooks has been presented in its own right. Now the findings from both sides should be allowed to interact. Ignatian and Koranic theology of salvific community can shed light upon each other so that characteristic parts of their respective profiles can become visible. Five aspects may be pointed out.

a. Construction. Community in its fulfilment is for Ignatius the living unity in three dimensions: the disciple is called to live in communion with Christ, in God's love (*Exx.* 234), and in the Church. Christ is the giver, the model and the body of this community. It is through him, with him and in him that the communion lives. The community conceived by the Koran also contains a dimension of divine–human togetherness and of the believers' unification amongst themselves to form one future people. There is a third dimension, too, but it is not that of a personal union with the prophet; rather, it is the community in the Book, earlier described as in-recitation (above, section III.4). It seems fair to mark a difference here: the place of the body of Christ in the New Testament construction of salvific community has no counterpart in the Koranic theology of community.

b. Mediation. Especially earlier Koran passages see salvific community in doing what is right, and in immediate relation with God (2:254); mediators are unnecessary, even unacceptable. For Ignatius, God's «immediate» (*Exx.* 15) working with the creature is fundamental, too. He knows, however, that such immediacy can only be attained by mediation: through the service of the giver of the exercises, through the sacramental life of the Church, and through Jesus. After all, for Ignatius, salvific communion is: living with Jesus.

c. Representation. When studying the two theologies of salvific community, we were able to observe different types of representation between God and His community, or between God and individuals. In Koranic perspective, we were able to describe four types of representative

relationship: helping, witnessing, prophetic sending, and the affirmation that the Muslims' military success was in fact God's. In all, one might speak of a *supportive representation*. Each has, interestingly, its own type of mutuality. God is representing himself to human beings to support them, also to side with the truthful ones; or he is making human beings represent him in order to support them. If seen in the light of Ignatian theology, one may, however, discover that the relationship of representation is limited. Representation is merely supportive; God is never venturing, according to the Koran, a representation that would allow a fusion of limits between God and his representative. Ignatian spirituality, by contrast, envisages what we might call an *identified representation* between human beings and God himself. In this view, God's honour and his project, but not only his cause, rather: God himself is affected by what is happening in and to his body, that is, his people, the Church, and Christ.

d. Transformation. The Koran's project is evolving during the years of its proclamation. Towards its end, its aim is the foundation of a new human society; a new type of nation. It is for this new nation that the Koran provides a framework: oriented to God, directed by rules that give security to human beings. Individual conversion is explicitly addressed; but with the development of Muḥammad's role from preacher to politician, the basic Koranic gesture becomes more and more legislative. The Koran lends itself to an application in social and political activity for a better world. Consequently, Muslims of all generations have grounded in the Koranic impulse both their vision of a perfect human society and their political work towards it. Ignatius' approach is different. He does not invest in Church reform, let alone societal change through, say, sharper preaching, clearer rules, not even through a new Council<sup>23</sup>. Ignatius seems to see that what is needed and what can really change things is that each person be integrated into the Christ event. Ignatius' means of reform are the Spiritual Exercises. In his perspective, the human predicament is «sinning and acting against the Infinite Goodness» (*Exx.* 52), which leads to hell (*Exx.* 106); what the human being therefore needs is God's grace; and that is redemption (*Exx.* 107), concretely, first of all, pardon and forgiveness for his/her sins (*Exx.* 241). It is offered in Christ's incarnation and death (*Exx.* 53) and can be appropriated during the Spiritual Exercises. God's grace is, however, not limited to pardoning; it works by «helping» humanity (*Exx.* 240.320.98.139) and — because of that help — he can use creatures as help, too (*Exx.* 23). So for Ignatius, the place, means and aim of human transformation is a person's entering into the reconciling community in Christ: from sacramental confession and communion (*Exx.* 44) through poverty with Christ (*Exx.* 167) «within» the

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<sup>23</sup> J. O'MALLEY, *The First Jesuits*, Cambridge (MA), 1993, 321.

Church (*Exx.* 351) into «helping everyone» (*Exx.* 146) and thus coming to share in the Father's glory (*Exx.* 95).

e. Ethical orientation. In both Koranic and Ignatian outlooks human beings come to see courses of action to be done. How do the two outlooks derive and justify these acts? In other words, what is the character and rationale of Koranic, and of Ignatian ethics? The Koran enjoins general regulations revealed in the heavenly instruction (*kitāb*) and can thus claim to be creating the best society (3:110). It is, however, not claiming to provide a new ethic but, rather, to confirm (*ṣaddaqa: taṣdīq*) what is known to be right (*ma'rūf*). The Koran sees itself as the balanced orientation on all levels, doctrinal, ethical, ritual: it comes as alleviation (*tahfīf*: 2:178; 4:28) of earlier, heavier religious demands and it warns against exaggerations (4:171; 5:77). In this, the Koran positions itself in an ethic of the middle way between all extremes (2:143)<sup>24</sup>. The problem with this is that one can thus justify one's course of action as balanced whatever one is doing, because all depends on where one places the extreme.

Ignatius can also urge people to moderation<sup>25</sup>; but for him, the middle is neither ethical principle nor aim; it is, rather, the point of departure for an election (*Exx.* 179) — the unpredictable call of God's freedom. Insight into what each person is to do and why this should be right does not follow from revealed or naturally known principles; it emerges, rather, from the personal encounter with Christ. In communion with him, that is, with his life style (*Exx.* 167) and out of a personally elective sending (*Exx.* 98), the retreatant comes to know what (s)he is to be and to do. The truth, the ethical validity, of such a vocational injunction — mission — cannot be predicted, deduced or proven before its probation in history; such an injunction's only limit is the Church's life as ethical, formative and missionary framework (*Exx.* 170). An Ignatian ethic will always stress the experience of a personal sending by Christ; in comparison with a Koranic ethic, the Ignatian vision is, therefore, less philosophical in that it cannot be constructed out of general principles.

In the first part of this exploration<sup>26</sup>, we have outlined an Ignatian theology of person, action and representation. Taking now a closer look at ethics, how would a Koranic perspective compare with that? The human person is, for the Koran, the addressee of the call to serve only God (2:21). History is,

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<sup>24</sup> This sounds Aristotelian. Virtue, for Aristotle, is in the μεσότης (*mesotēs*: *Nicomachian Ethics*, Book II, chapter 6, 1106b36-1107a2) i.e., in the middle way; but Aristotle has built into his designation of virtue the criterion of human reason: «the middle as a reasonable person (φρόνιμος/*phronimos*) would set it» (ibid.).

<sup>25</sup> Cf., e.g., Ignatius' letter to Francis of Borja of september 20, 1548, *Sancti Ignatii de Loyola Societatis Iesu fundatoris Epistolae et Instructiones*, II, Madrid 1904, 237.

<sup>26</sup> *Gregorianum* 94 (2013) 593-609.

Koranically seen, the time, in which a certain set of patterns (faith / success; unbelief / punishment) is repeatedly happening and which is thus offering to human beings now the possibility to choose either side (19:41-58). Human action is the actualisation of a person's decision for or against divine service; accordingly, Final Judgement will rule (2:110). Representation is taking place where human beings are responsibly administering what is entrusted to them (23:8), i.e., when they are fulfilling what is God's general will.

The comparison of two visions of salvific community has led us to outline Ignatian and Koranic ethics. The findings can be pinpointed in three dimensions. (i) For the Koran, correct living only requires to share and practice the Koranic values — with or without knowing the Koranic wording or the person of the prophet; for Ignatius, true life is more than sharing Jesus' values: it is living in communion with him. (ii) The Koranic outlook sees the basic problem of human beings in their need to be energetically reminded of what they have already known to be the good; but in principle, the human person can know it and can do it. The Ignatian view presupposes that the human being has lost original justice (*Exx.* 51) and that it is therefore in need of a healing that is more than injunction. A historical event of salvation is needed, into which the human person can enter in order to be healed: the communion with Christ. (iii) The more «philosophical» approach of the Koran is rationally more convincing — no recognition of a particular historical event is required; the disadvantage of it is that here, a religion is implying to be identical with human reason and that everybody originally was Muslim (cf. 7:172; 3:67). Such an outlook will have less understanding for unbelief in comparison with a faith that is aware of its own status as confession (Romans 10:9), that is, as a free entering into communion.

Though the above comparison of Ignatius and the Koran may have been heuristically efficient, it is epistemologically problematic. The contexts of the two outlooks could hardly be more disparate. After all, what Ignatius offers are «exercises» for an individual entering «con grande ánimo y liberalidad» (with generous freedom, *Exx.* 5) into a prayerful deepening of one's friendship with Christ (cf. *Exx.* 104), while the Koran presents itself as the public proclamation of God's call to conversion in a mostly polytheist setting.

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ABSTRACT

What is salvific community for the Koran? Recurring formulas indicate a Koranic tendency to categorise human beings as members of opposing groups; the believers are God's «share»-holders, and in a co-operative relationship with the Creator. Chronologically, the Koran's community conception develops from harmony with cosmic rhythms via accessing God's original message to becoming one human tribe. The basic attitude is «open exclusivism». In comparison with a Christian view, different accentuations can be made out in the construction of community, its mediation, representation, transformation and ethics.

*Keywords:* theological anthropology, community (concept), Christian–Muslim dialogue.

#### RIASSUNTO

Cosa è, per il Corano, una comunità salvifica? Formule ricorrenti indicano una tendenza Coranica di categorizzare gli uomini come membri di gruppi opposti. I credenti collaborano con il Creatore e ricevono la buona sorte. Durante gli anni della proclamazione del Corano la concezione della comunità si sviluppa. All'inizio, comunità salvifica è l'armonia con i ritmi cosmici, poi l'accesso al messaggio divino, e finalmente il diventare una sola tribù umana. L'atteggiamento di base è un «esclusivismo aperto». Paragonandolo con una visione cristiana, si possono individuare accentuazioni diverse in cinque campi: come la comunità viene costruita, mediata, rappresentata, trasformata, e come fonda la sua etica.

*Parole chiave:* antropologia teologica, comunità (concetto), dialogo cristiano–musulmano

## Salvific community

### Part Two: the Koran

The first part of this exploration<sup>1</sup> has studied salvific community in Ignatius of Loyola's understanding. The question now to be answered is what *the Koran* presents as salvific community. Again, a methodological reflection might clarify what is intended.

#### I. KORANIC THEOLOGY?

How can one, and how can a non-Muslim, for that matter, outline the Koranic view on a chosen subject in scholarly responsibility? The following three principles seem fair.

##### *1. Historical matching*

The Koran needs to be read historically. We might simply list quotes from the Koran. Such a procedure has the advantage that, by its positivist nature, it cannot be wrong. Three points have to be kept in mind, however. First, a radically synchronic reading of the Koran's verses would have to accept blatant contradictions. Many can be resolved, if one sees the individual Koranic propositions as contextualised in particular situations of Muḥammad's career. Second, it is not only the occidental and thus foreign critique that poses historical questions to the text; it is, rather, a traditional Islamic approach to see each verse in its specific situation, as a response to a certain problem: the classical *tafsīr* (exegetical) discipline of *asbāb an-nuzūl* (the occasions of revelation) is studying precisely this. Third, such contextualised reading, though closer to Muḥammad's life and to Muslim exegetical tradition, is in fact not of mathematical certainty; but that is not to

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<sup>1</sup> *Gregorianum* 94 (2013) 593-609.

say it is thwarted from the outset. Once you do history, some conjecture is inevitable. That does not render arbitrary all historical claims. There are criteria for historical research that help us attain a level of certitude. There fore, we will, carefully, coordinate the Koranic quotes in a chronological framework. Guidance for this are not the traditional Muslim presentations of Muḥammad's life (*sīra*); rather, a historical order which, in the footsteps of Theodor Nöldeke<sup>2</sup>, starts from literary features of the Suras and verses, may provide a relatively reliable framework here.

## 2. Restriction to the Koran

Why should one only use Koranic formulations? Are there no other sources for Muslims, and thus, for Islamic Studies? Should *ḥadīths* (Arabic plural: *aḥadīth*) not be used equally, i.e., messages about normative actions and logia of Muḥammad? The answer is that they are pretty much all a product of forgery and thus completely unreliable is too easy. The *isnād-plus-matn* method<sup>3</sup> offers a reasonably safe grounding for historicity claims in *ḥadīth* research. Within Muslim theology and legal methodology (*uṣūl al-fiqh*), «authentic *aḥadīth*» have always been reckoned as a second revealed source next to the Koran.

Moreover, recent Muslim reflection has, however, been able to challenge successfully the assumption that for a truly Islamic life in its classical manifestations, the Koran has ever been of definitive authority<sup>4</sup>. The «Koranicity» of Islam seems a false belief shared by Islamic fundamentalists, Muslim modernists and Western scholars. This surprising agreement can be

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<sup>2</sup> F. SCHWALLY, ed., *Geschichte des Qorāns von Theodor Nöldeke*. Part 1: Über den Ursprung des Qorans, Leipzig 1909. Now convincingly applied by A. NEUWIRTH, *Der Koran als Text der Spätantike. Ein europäischer Zugang*, Berlin 2010; id., *Der Koran*, I. Frühmekkanische Sureen, Berlin 2011. G. Weil had, already by 1860 (*Historisch-kritische Einleitung in den Koran*, Bielefeld 1878<sup>2</sup>), developed a four phase scheme of Mecca I, II, III, and Medina, similar to Nöldeke's.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. especially H. MOTZKI, *The Origins of Islamic Jurisprudence. Meccan Fiqh before the Classical Schools*, Leiden 2001.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. M. Paçacı's researches; especially: «Çağdaşçı Dönemde Kur'an'a ve Tefsire Ne Oldu?», in *İslamiyat* 6 (2003) 4, 85-104, translation and commentary by F. KÖRNER: «Was ist in der Moderne aus Koran und Koranexegese geworden?», in *Alter Text – Neuer Kontext. Koranexegese in der Türkei heute*, Freiburg (B.) 2006, 130-163; «Klasik Tefsir Neydi?», in *Klasik Yeniden Düşünmek Sempozyumu*, Istanbul 2006, translation and commentary by F. KÖRNER: «Klassische Koranexegese – was war das?», *Münchener Theologische Zeitschrift* 58 (2007) 127-139; «Çağdaşçı «Kur'an'da Kadın»Yorumunun Eleştirisi», in B. GÖKKIR – N. YILMAZ – Ö. KARA – M. ABAY – N. GÖKKIR, edd., *Tarihten Günümüze Kur'an'a Yaklaşımlar*, Istanbul 2010, 559-585, which F. Körner hopes to publish in commented translation.

explained. All of them may be, in their own ways, victims of a modern textualism. Still, a theology based on scriptural rather than traditional quotes, will, especially when offered by a non-Muslim, normally be considered as less controversial, given the spiritual role of the Koran in all forms of Islamic life.

Comparing Ignatius and the Koran, that is, one form of 16<sup>th</sup> century spirituality with another religion's basic text, that is, 7<sup>th</sup> century formulations, seems a rather unfair attempt. Our purpose is not to find out which is better, but to permit mutual illumination. We must keep in mind the profound differences in origin, nature, self-understanding and status of the Koran over against Ignatian spirituality.

### 3. *Formulating Theology*

The Koran is not presenting a full-fledged theology of salvific community. On this or similar subjects, the text is not explicit, let alone is it offering a thematic passage; therefore, we need to survey the whole. Then, a theological outline needs to draw on what the Koran says and implies. This step leaves room for violent and still hidden hermeneutic manipulations. The result will therefore need discussion, especially with Muslim interlocutors.

## II. THE LINGUISTICS OF KORANIC COMMUNITY

What kind of a community does the Koran describe, create and offer? And to what extent is it salvific? The Koran has three typical ways of expressing community.

### 1. *Group*

Often, the Koran's verses end in the formula «they belong to those who are...»: *mina l...-īn*. This ending could be called the *clausula partitiva*<sup>5</sup>. The *clausula* sounds unnecessarily periphrastic. «They belong to those who are righteous (*mina ṣ-ṣāliḥīn*)», is apparently more complicated than simply saying «They are righteous (*ṣāliḥīn*)». Perhaps this is not mere coincidence or compulsion to rhyme. The Koran likes to think in terms of groups, and, for that matter, of binary groups. You should be part of the right group, is the Koran's basic message.

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<sup>5</sup> This is how the present author suggests to call it. It had a bad reputation in Western research, especially since T. Nöldeke's verdict that it was a product of lacking poetic imagination and of rhyme compulsion (*Geschichte des Qorāns*, 6); but A. Neuwirth is eloquently trying to rehabilitate it, pointing out the *clausula*'s triple function as poetic speech, party dichotomy and paraenetic appeal (*Der Koran als Text der Spätantike*, 753-760).

Often the righteous are characterised as those who will receive reward. Promised is both a this-worldly compensation, and, especially, eternal happiness<sup>6</sup>.

For a theology of community, this has three consequences: (a) There seem to be already established values, and groups associated to them; what you are to do is not to create a new cell, but decide for the right party. (b) A good–bad dualism seems presupposed. (c) The Koran tries to motivate its hearers with the attraction of belonging to the right group.

### 2. *Share*

What the righteous ones get in paradise — and, contrary, the evildoers in hell — is, «their portion». The word is elucidating: *ḥalāq*, «portion, share» is the Hebrew *ḥēleq*, which can have the same meaning. It is in fact a key word for Israel's theological self-understanding. The Lord (*YHWH*) is Israel's portion, and Israel is God's portion<sup>7</sup>. The word comes into the Koranic vocabulary only in Medina, i.e., after 622 C.E.. For a Koranic theology of community, three lessons can be learned from this evidence: (a) Israel's theology of the relationship between God and his people, as personal and mutual belonging, is not being continued in the Koran. Rather, «portion» has become de-personalised: a reward in eternal living conditions (luxury, over against torture). (b) The logics of portions is now legal, that is, one has a commercial claim to one's compensation in the hereafter (Sura 2:102). The portion is result of divine reckoning (Sura 2:202). (c) But the portion granted to human beings is not restricted to the hereafter; the concept includes, rather, what you get in this world now, in order to use it (Sura 9:69).

### 3. *With*

A study of community needs to take into account Koranic usages of the preposition «with». The associative aspect can be expressed in Arabic by the preposition *ma'a*. Is there a «with» relationship between God and the

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<sup>6</sup> Suras 12:101; 26:83; 16:122; 5:84;4:69; eschatologically explicit *wa-alḥiqnī bi-ṣ-ṣāliḥīna*: Suras 12:101; 26:83; 27:19; 21:75.86; 29:27; 68:50.

<sup>7</sup> Deuteronomy 4:19-20: «And when you look up to the sky and see the sun, the moon and the stars — all the heavenly array — do not be enticed into bowing down to them and worshipping things the Lord your God has apportioned (*ḥ-l-q*) to all the nations under heaven. But as for you, the Lord took you and brought you out of the iron-smelting furnace, out of Egypt, to be the people of his inheritance, as you now are». Jeremiah 10:15-16: «They [the idols] are worthless, the objects of mockery; when their judgment comes, they will perish. He who is the Portion (*ḥ-l-q*) of Jacob is not like these, for he is the Maker of all things, including Israel, the tribe of his inheritance — the Lord Almighty is his name».

believers? That God is «with» the patient ones, is a recurring formula (Suras 2:153.249; 8:46.66); but «with God» is only used in a polytheist sense — putting other candidates of adoration «next to Him» — and that is, of course, rejected (Suras 6:19; 17:22). What does it mean for human beings that God is with them? It means that God is helping them for victory, though the successful outcome may not be immediately obvious in the course of the events (Sura 8:65-66; expressly, with «troops», Sura 9:40). Contrary to what one might expect from our previous findings, this relationship of helping is mutual between God and human beings: *in taṣṣurū llāha yaṣṣurkum* (Sura 47:7: «if you help God, he will help you»). Helping God means accepting Muḥammad's mission and taking part in it actively and unselfishly (Sura 29:69): «those who fight with (fī) Us, We will lead them in Our ways, God is with those who do good» (*wa-llaḍīna ḡāhadū fīnā la-naḥdiyannahum subulanā wa-inna llāha la-ma'a l-muḥṣinīn*).

The usage of the Koranic *ma'a* can be summed up in two theses: (a) The divine–human co-operation is expressed by the preposition «with», showing that God is not replacing but supporting human activity. (b) There is a mutuality of action; not only God helps the believers, they are also encouraged to help God.

### III. A KORANIC THEOLOGY OF COMMUNITY

In the course of the Koran's proclamation, a development of its community theology can be observed. Community means, for the Koran, salvific participation in five different realities:

#### 1. *Community as harmony with cosmic rhythms*

The day cycle of the sun and the month cycle of the moon (cf. 6:96) seem to have been the primary points of regulation for Islamic conduct from early on. Cultic practices — several daily prayers — according to cosmic rhythms were probably part of Islam's founding impulse, first without deliberate dissent from other Meccan prayer styles. Living within the structures of creation was, then, a criterion for salvation in the eyes of the first Muslims.

#### 2. *Community by access to the original*

The heavenly book (*kitāb*) grants guidance in how to think and speak about God, and in how to act correctly. It grants authority to the proclaimer of such guidance. The ability to quote from this source also creates, according to the Koran, a unity of understanding between all groups who base their lives upon such an access. During the phases «Mecca II» and «Mecca III» (that is, ca.

616-622 C.E.), a particular fraternity is expressed towards Christians and Jews as «People of the Book»: *ahl al-kitāb*. For the later Meccan Muḥammad, this community in the *kitāb* is a way of achieving independence from the cultic life around the Ka'ba and its theological implications. The Jewish outlook with its concentrated direction and its exclusive orientation towards the one God becomes the salvific alternative to the manifold inclusivism around the Meccan sanctuary. This explains why Muḥammad now teaches to prostrate with the Jews: towards Jerusalem. The change of prayer direction, *qibla*, seems to have been a turning away from a cosmic (eastward) orientation of prayer towards a place that is justified, not by natural conditions but by the history of salvation: the election of Israel and Mount Zion.

While this union with Jewish prayer will later, in Medina, be abandoned for a Mecca orientation of prayer (2:142), access to the heavenly deposit of divine revelation, the *kitāb*, remains a theologically important claim. It now provides a different freedom. It legitimates Muḥammad's authority to mark his disagreement with the Jews. It also becomes clear that «having part in the Book» is no sufficient salvific condition: it is no guarantee for correct conduct (4:44).

Next to the *kitāb*, another original reference point now gains importance, viz., Abraham (Sura 2:124-241). Abraham is earlier than Moses and his «book»; Abraham is not restricted to the Jews; and his foundation is, according to the Koran, at hand in Mecca. Being in communion with Abraham is, therefore, the winning card over against Mosaic community, and the perfect justification to conquer the Ka'ba.

### 3. Community as agreement

Disagreement becomes a major issue in the growth of the Islamic community. Meccan lack of obedience was processed rather easily; those who rejected Muḥammad's monotheistic thrust were declared unbelievers. In Medina, however, even the People of the Book expressed disagreement with several of Muḥammad's claims concerning his political and prophetological posture, and consequently, also concerning his theological position. Now, «unbeliever» came to mean a person who rejected Muḥammad's mission. A new theology of agreement had to be developed. It seems in this context that the Koran is presenting an interpretation of the whole of history in terms of agreement and disagreement.

The initial human situation was «one people», (*umma wāḥida*, Sura 2:213); our present human state, however, is discord (*iḥtilāf*). God's project is a re-establishment of universal agreement, humanity's natural and original condition. It had been for this reason that all prophets were sent. It is not the prophets that were in contradiction; they were, rather, all equal in what they said (monotheism) and experienced (rejection and late success). It is, rather,

other human beings that develop discord. The Koranic theology of religions implicitly distinguishes two types of differences between religions (Sura 5:48). There are variations — they only concern random forms of cultic observance (*šir'a* and *minhāğ*), that is, adiaphora; and there are, on the other hand, divergences — they are essential, and concern, due to their doctrinal nature, truth. According to the same verse (5:48), variations are willed and made by God (*ğa'alnā*), they need no correcting judgement and have a positive effect: they entice the competitors for the better. Divergence, however, is a product of human deviant arbitrations (*ahwā'*). Divergence is to be avoided (*lā tattabi'*) and needs prophetic judgement (*fa-ḥkum*) according to the *kitāb*, so that truth be re-established.

#### 4. Community by «in-recitation»

The semantic development of the word *qur'ān* demonstrates how, in the case of Islam, community is being created by verbal proclamation. One might speak of three phases, viz., reading, recitation, and lectionary. H. Wolfson had formulated that, as opposed to the Christian notion of incarnation, the Koran implies the claim of being the divine word's «inlibration»<sup>8</sup>. This leaves us with a major problem. The Koran's own claim is not so much to be the *kitāb* (liber, «book») but to be the *kitāb*'s actualisation. Therefore, we will propose another formula. The Koranic view is that in the Koran, the divine word finds (rather than its incarnation or inlibration) an «in-recitation». (a) Muḥammad presented readings from the heavenly book, that is, appropriately contextualised proclamations originating from the transcendent text. Community by «in-recitation» means, in this early phase, that all who listen to those readings are part of the salvific congregation. (b) These readings were orally absorbed by the early community. They were not recited only once, they were, rather, re-used in cultic practice by Muḥammad and its followers. *Qur'ān* now comes to mean, rather than situational reading from the heavenly book: recitation of a text that had been proclaimed earlier. Community by «in-recitation» is to say in this phase, that the assembly is becoming itself because it has its own, identity-marking texts to declaim. Recitation used to be the actualisation of heavenly words by the prophet; recitation now becomes the quasi sacramental action of manifesting divine presence. It is a chanted, therefore aesthetic and numinous — rather than rational — encounter with God's message. (c) During its codification, *qur'ān*

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<sup>8</sup> H.A. WOLFSON, *The Philosophy of the Kalam*, Cambridge (MA) 1976, 246: «inlibration, that is, the embookment of the pre-existent Koran in the revealed Koran». A decade before him, H. HAAG had already spoken of God's Word becoming book («Buchwerdung des Wortes Gottes»): J. FEINER – M. LÖHRER, ed., *Mysterium Salutis. Grundriß heilsgeschichtlicher Dogmatik*, 1, Einsiedeln 1965, 289.

acquires a third meaning, following the Syriac *qeryānā*: a collection of texts, not arranged according to a meaningful order other than user-friendly liturgical access. It is to serve as a handy but solemn source book for the community's various cultic occasions: lectionary. Community by «in-recitation» now means that the group is made up by those who have, and have access to, the visible text with all its dignity; community by «in-recitation» has become union in the recitation's codified version.

### 5. Community as *umma*

The Koran's project is to establish a tribe that is not defined genetically but by accepting God's guidance and thus potentially unites all of humanity<sup>9</sup>. The Hebrew Bible's word *umma* («tribe», Genesis 25:16, etc.) is becoming the Koran's programmatic designation of the salvific community. In Medina, the followers of Muḥammad receive their designation to be «proper/middle-of-the road community» for the whole of humanity (*umma wasaʿt*, Sura 2:143). The *umma*'s prayer life at the day of «coming together» (Sura 62:9, *yawm al-ḡumʿa*, that is, «Friday») is markedly different from Judaism and Christianity, and it is expressing a universal unity, like any *qibla*-directed activity. Now, salvific community has become a sociologically established entity; unity in the quantitative sense of inner undividedness and external distinctiveness. It is exclusive in two senses: in so far as God is not a part of it, and in so far as not everybody belongs<sup>10</sup>.

## IV. OPEN EXCLUSIVISM

A Koranic theology of salvific communion is, however, not presented appropriately if it is only seen as exclusivist. For a more balanced picture,

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<sup>9</sup> A. NOTH, «Früher Islam», in U. HAARMANN, ed., *Geschichte der arabischen Welt*, Munich 1987, 11-100.

<sup>10</sup> One might contest this by pointing out that God is portrayed as being close to humanity and that therefore, exclusivism is not the right concept for a Koranic theology of community; one might try to prove this with the famous Koranic saying that God is closer to human beings than their jugular vein (Sura 50:16). The verse is, however, not speaking of a closeness in communion but in control. That is clear from the wording of the same verse: «We (God) know what his (man's) innermost self-whispers within him: for We are closer to him than his neck-vein» (translation: M. Asad). — There is another form of exclusivism in the conception of *umma* in the so-called *Constitution of Medina*, which may be a historical document. There, the Muslims declare themselves literally to be an *umma* at the exclusion of all others: *min dūn an-nās*; the text in: IBN HIŠĀM, K. *Sīrat rasūl Allāh*, ed. F. Wüstenfeld, Göttingen 1859-1860, 341-344; a translation is offered by W.M. WATT, *Muhammad at Medina*, Oxford 1981, 221-225.

three points need to be made, the first is setting the Koran's view into its original context, the second reflects upon its fundamental intention, and the last is sketching a Koranic ontology of participation.

*1. Context: anti-associationism*

The Koran's exclusive tendencies and its reluctance to use, for example, *ma'a* («with») as designating a relationship between human beings and God need to be seen in their religious context. The Koran's main concern is *tawhīd*, literally: letting God be one<sup>11</sup>. What does «one» mean here? It is primarily a quantitative claim. It means, there is no other divinity, so, God is unique; and it means that there are no parts in God, since having parts is seen as a sign of imperfection.

A classical triple unfolding of the Koran's monotheistic thrust in social, cognitive and cultic practice would be: promoting social structures, religious talk and cultic forms that correspond to God, who has neither parts nor peers<sup>12</sup>. This classical list could be completed by a fourth level, spiritual psychology. The decisive question is where one directs one's intentions, if fully accepting God's oneness. «Oneness» as spiritual attitude means total commitment to the «ways» of God, i.e. his cause (e.g., Sura 5:54). The Islamic mystics, the Sufīs, will radicalize the understanding of oneness as purity of intention: *tawhīd* is, then, not acting for reward but for God<sup>13</sup>; even, *tawhīd* can come to mean attributing «being» only to God<sup>14</sup>. *Tawhīd* as perfect spiritual orientation may well be the Arabic version of the basic Christian attitude the New Testament and the ascetic traditions of and the Early Church called ἀπλότης — simplicity<sup>15</sup>.

The Koran's intent is to bring humanity back to its primeval belief in the one God (7:172). This is, according to the Koran, a necessary project of reform of human conditions. That is to say, the original posture of the human being vis-à-vis the Creator and Judge has to be re-established over against false belief, just like other social grievances, too, have to be eradicated, e.g.

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<sup>11</sup> The word is a noun in the causal form of the numeral «one» (*wahad*); so, *tawhīd* is something like: «the one-ing».

<sup>12</sup> D. GIMARET: «Tawhīd», *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, X, Leiden 2000<sup>2</sup>, 389: *rububīya – asmā' wa-ṣifāt – 'ibāda*.

<sup>13</sup> R. GRAMLICH, *Der eine Gott. Grundzüge der Mystik des islamischen Monotheismus*, Wiesbaden 1998, 179.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 289.

<sup>15</sup> E.g., 2Cor 11,3; on the early Christian tradition, cf. H. BACHT, «Einfalt», *Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum*, IV, Stuttgart 1959, coll. 821-840.

killing children for material concerns<sup>16</sup>. The grievance against which Koranic *tawḥīd* is deployed is demarcated with a commercial term<sup>17</sup>. It means «association, partnership»: *širk*. Theological association is the Koranic critique's core point of 7<sup>th</sup> century Arab society; and it is the unforgivable sin (Sura 4:48); we are used to translate *širk* by «polytheism». *Širk* should, however, also be seen as a conception of participation, community. In other words, *širk* is a *koinōnia* notion; but in God's realm, community is now being seen as reducing God's oneness, divinity, honour, power and efficiency.

Since fighting *širk* is the Koran's fundamental thrust, we will hardly find Koranic enthusiasm for any theology that offers a communion in which God is giving himself. Still, the Koran's conception of salvific relationship can be formulated also in terms of inclusive community. The Koran wants to bridge existential gaps. One is the distance between God and human being, the other the separation among human beings. The two Koranic bridging projects may be called inter-human universalism and divine-human cooperation.

## 2. Project: universalism

We have already seen the Koranic project for humanity: the Koran reminds its hearers of the initial human situation when all of humanity was one *umma* (cf. above, section III.5; Sura 2:213). Here, the Koran is not only looking back. Intending to re-establish the initial state of humanity, the Koran is in fact presenting a future human unity: a universal project. Because of this thrust towards unification, the Koran does not want to develop an understanding of historical particularity. Particularisms, claims of election and special vocations create, in the Koranic vision, disagreement. That is also why not even Muḥammad is seen to be different from other prophets (Suras 17:77; 2:136); quite to the contrary, he is legitimised through an appeal to his similarity to the messengers before him. Special is only that the message is, this time, secured from distortion. Therefore, no further prophets needs to follow him<sup>18</sup>. In comparison one can say the following: the Church claims to exist out of the ἐξουσία<sup>19</sup> which Christ had been given to give; in Koranic thought, out of respect for God's absolute power, the prophet, let alone the community, feels entitled to pass on prophetic authority. The *umma* does not represent God; it corresponds to his orders (cf. Sura 16:90); and it is in

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<sup>16</sup> Cf. T. NAGEL, *Mohammed. Leben und Legende*, Munich 2008, 326.

<sup>17</sup> J. HOROVITZ, *Koranische Untersuchungen*, Berlin 1926, 60.

<sup>18</sup> Sura 33:40 can be read this way.

<sup>19</sup> *Exousia*: «authority»; Mark 6,7; John 20,21.

surrendering to God's will that union is established. This consists, in fact, in a triple movement: accepting what cannot be changed as God's now incomprehensible will (cf. Sura 18:65-81); fulfilling God's intention in cultic and social practice; and letting, thus, unity grow among human beings.

### 3. Active participation

Four, possibly surprising, aspects may show that there is actually a thinking of active human–divine participation at the basis of the Koran's theology.

a. God at work in the believers' action. When the *umma* proves to be successful in matters military, Medinan Koran passages provide a theological reading of these victories. Thus, there is a Koranic reflection of the events at the battle of Badr, where Muḥammad and his followers won against the Meccan elite in 624 C.E. What seemed to be the Muslims' success at Badr was in fact God's retribution of the unbelievers, foretold by the Meccan punishment narratives: «It was not you [believers] who killed them [the unbelievers who were killed at Badr], it was God. It was not you [Muḥammad] who threw [or, shot], it was God»<sup>20</sup>. The Koran's interpretation of contemporary events can serve as one hint at a Koranic theology of divine–human collaboration. Possibly the Islamic theologians, subtle and creative in their theories of action<sup>21</sup>, were following this late Koranic theology.

b. The believers helping God. As we have already seen, human beings can, according to the Koran, «help» God (cf. above, section II.3; Sura 47:7). God does, however, not need any help, because he is independent and rich in himself (*ḡanī*, Suras 29:6; 3:97). Helping God means to be committed in the defence and diffusion of Islam; a typical Koranic wording for this is «striving in God's ways» (9:24 etc.).

c. God witnessing. The semantic field of «witnessing» (*š-h-d*) is amply present in the Koran. We find human beings' credal testimony designated by this word. It does not presuppose ideas of perception, presence or memory. Witnessing is, rather, verbal affirmation without doubt (cf. 5:83)<sup>22</sup>. Human beings can, in that sense, bear witness to God's Lordship (7:172) and unicity (6:19); and that is what God expects (3:81). God has His witnesses on earth;

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<sup>20</sup> Sura 8:17, pointed out by D. MARSHALL, *God, Muhammad and the Unbelievers. A Qur'anic Study*, Richmond (U.K.) 1999.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. especially J. VAN ESS, *Theologie und Gesellschaft im 2. und 3. Jahrhundert Hidschra. Eine Geschichte des religiösen Denkens im frühen Islam*, IV, Berlin 1997, 482-512.

<sup>22</sup> The «hypocrites» are hypocrites precisely because they say they testify to Muḥammad's prophecy, without being convinced (63:1).

He seems to want such support. There is, however, yet another type of witnessing also present in the Koran. Interestingly, God is, according to the Koran, also Himself witnessing; in what sense? God's witness is an affirmation, meant to remove all doubt. «God witnesses» is not referring to any prove actively given in addition, not even an experience of security. «God witnesses» can have two contexts, viz., verbal propositions or actions. For a proposition, «God witnesses» is an affirmative claim like «God knows», comparable to an oath, giving authority to a statement, possibly by an implied threat of sanction for those who reject what is being claimed (3:18; 4:166). In the context of actions, God's witnessing presence is to remind people of their eschatological responsibility in their existential decisions now (3:81). Both functions are closely related. In each case, the purpose of God's witness is to remove doubt (cf. 11:54).

d. God and his messenger. God has been sending messengers (*rusul*), one to each nation, and prophets (*nabīyūn*) for right guidance. God is entrusting his message to them, their action and fate is in the focus of God's governance. In the case of Muḥammad, God's cause becomes more and more identified with His messenger; the prophet's voice and verdict is to be obeyed like God's (8:46). In Medinan verses we find mention of a third authority. The hearers are instructed to obey God and His messenger, and now, additionally: «and those who order» (*ulū l-amr*, Sura 4:59.83). We encounter growing human participation in God's own authority.

This list of participatory aspects may suffice to demonstrate that it would be exaggerated to say the Koran poses God strictly on the other side of creatures. Rather, we find several Koranic tendencies towards a theology of representation. In human–divine collaboration, the Bible knows of yet another pattern: even human actions *against* God, his plans, his rules, his elect are integrated into salvific history (cf., e.g. Genesis 45:5). Such a pattern is unknown to the Koran.

## V. CONCLUSION: NATURAL COMMUNITY

The Koranic findings can be synthesised as follows.

1. A communion of divine and human intention, and even action — military and judicial — is envisioned in the Koran. A quasi-identification of God and creature seems acceptable when the power of those who get their legitimation out of the Koran is in question.

2. Community is, for the Koran, a counter-group with a universal project, that is, with the perspective to overcome contrasts; belonging to it means to have the divine promise of eternal *and* this-worldly reward; and to have the divine right and the divine help to overtake the others.

3. Salvific communion is, for early Koran passages: returning to the natural monotheistic creed; later, in Medina, decision for the one rightly guided community becomes a salvific criterion as well.

4. The Koranic conception of divine–human communion has, however, its clear reservations, too. God is not putting his project at risk by getting involved in human history. The Koran presents God in great, fascinating independence. This may plant in the believers a profound sense of respect for God, a sincerity in their understanding of life, a feeling of their responsibility and a clarity in word and action.

#### EPILOGUE: CONTRASTING COMMUNITIES

Our guiding question — what is salvific community? — was derived from the what we had found in Ignatius of Loyola. Still, so far, each of the two outlooks has been presented in its own right. Now the findings from both sides should be allowed to interact. Ignatian and Koranic theology of salvific community can shed light upon each other so that characteristic parts of their respective profiles can become visible. Five aspects may be pointed out.

a. Construction. Community in its fulfilment is for Ignatius the living unity in three dimensions: the disciple is called to live in communion with Christ, in God's love (*Exx.* 234), and in the Church. Christ is the giver, the model and the body of this community. It is through him, with him and in him that the communion lives. The community conceived by the Koran also contains a dimension of divine–human togetherness and of the believers' unification amongst themselves to form one future people. There is a third dimension, too, but it is not that of a personal union with the prophet; rather, it is the community in the Book, earlier described as in-recitation (above, section III.4). It seems fair to mark a difference here: the place of the body of Christ in the New Testament construction of salvific community has no counterpart in the Koranic theology of community.

b. Mediation. Especially earlier Koran passages see salvific community in doing what is right, and in immediate relation with God (2:254); mediators are unnecessary, even unacceptable. For Ignatius, God's «immediate» (*Exx.* 15) working with the creature is fundamental, too. He knows, however, that such immediacy can only be attained by mediation: through the service of the giver of the exercises, through the sacramental life of the Church, and through Jesus. After all, for Ignatius, salvific communion is: living with Jesus.

c. Representation. When studying the two theologies of salvific community, we were able to observe different types of representation between God and His community, or between God and individuals. In Koranic perspective, we were able to describe four types of representative

relationship: helping, witnessing, prophetic sending, and the affirmation that the Muslims' military success was in fact God's. In all, one might speak of a *supportive representation*. Each has, interestingly, its own type of mutuality. God is representing himself to human beings to support them, also to side with the truthful ones; or he is making human beings represent him in order to support them. If seen in the light of Ignatian theology, one may, however, discover that the relationship of representation is limited. Representation is merely supportive; God is never venturing, according to the Koran, a representation that would allow a fusion of limits between God and his representative. Ignatian spirituality, by contrast, envisages what we might call an *identified representation* between human beings and God himself. In this view, God's honour and his project, but not only his cause, rather: God himself is affected by what is happening in and to his body, that is, his people, the Church, and Christ.

d. Transformation. The Koran's project is evolving during the years of its proclamation. Towards its end, its aim is the foundation of a new human society; a new type of nation. It is for this new nation that the Koran provides a framework: oriented to God, directed by rules that give security to human beings. Individual conversion is explicitly addressed; but with the development of Muḥammad's role from preacher to politician, the basic Koranic gesture becomes more and more legislative. The Koran lends itself to an application in social and political activity for a better world. Consequently, Muslims of all generations have grounded in the Koranic impulse both their vision of a perfect human society and their political work towards it. Ignatius' approach is different. He does not invest in Church reform, let alone societal change through, say, sharper preaching, clearer rules, not even through a new Council<sup>23</sup>. Ignatius seems to see that what is needed and what can really change things is that each person be integrated into the Christ event. Ignatius' means of reform are the Spiritual Exercises. In his perspective, the human predicament is «sinning and acting against the Infinite Goodness» (*Exx.* 52), which leads to hell (*Exx.* 106); what the human being therefore needs is God's grace; and that is redemption (*Exx.* 107), concretely, first of all, pardon and forgiveness for his/her sins (*Exx.* 241). It is offered in Christ's incarnation and death (*Exx.* 53) and can be appropriated during the Spiritual Exercises. God's grace is, however, not limited to pardoning; it works by «helping» humanity (*Exx.* 240.320.98.139) and — because of that help — he can use creatures as help, too (*Exx.* 23). So for Ignatius, the place, means and aim of human transformation is a person's entering into the reconciling community in Christ: from sacramental confession and communion (*Exx.* 44) through poverty with Christ (*Exx.* 167) «within» the

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<sup>23</sup> J. O'MALLEY, *The First Jesuits*, Cambridge (MA), 1993, 321.

Church (*Exx.* 351) into «helping everyone» (*Exx.* 146) and thus coming to share in the Father's glory (*Exx.* 95).

e. Ethical orientation. In both Koranic and Ignatian outlooks human beings come to see courses of action to be done. How do the two outlooks derive and justify these acts? In other words, what is the character and rationale of Koranic, and of Ignatian ethics? The Koran enjoins general regulations revealed in the heavenly instruction (*kitāb*) and can thus claim to be creating the best society (3:110). It is, however, not claiming to provide a new ethic but, rather, to confirm (*ṣaddaqa: taṣdīq*) what is known to be right (*ma'rūf*). The Koran sees itself as the balanced orientation on all levels, doctrinal, ethical, ritual: it comes as alleviation (*tahfīf*: 2:178; 4:28) of earlier, heavier religious demands and it warns against exaggerations (4:171; 5:77). In this, the Koran positions itself in an ethic of the middle way between all extremes (2:143)<sup>24</sup>. The problem with this is that one can thus justify one's course of action as balanced whatever one is doing, because all depends on where one places the extreme.

Ignatius can also urge people to moderation<sup>25</sup>; but for him, the middle is neither ethical principle nor aim; it is, rather, the point of departure for an election (*Exx.* 179) — the unpredictable call of God's freedom. Insight into what each person is to do and why this should be right does not follow from revealed or naturally known principles; it emerges, rather, from the personal encounter with Christ. In communion with him, that is, with his life style (*Exx.* 167) and out of a personally elective sending (*Exx.* 98), the retreatant comes to know what (s)he is to be and to do. The truth, the ethical validity, of such a vocational injunction — mission — cannot be predicted, deduced or proven before its probation in history; such an injunction's only limit is the Church's life as ethical, formative and missionary framework (*Exx.* 170). An Ignatian ethic will always stress the experience of a personal sending by Christ; in comparison with a Koranic ethic, the Ignatian vision is, therefore, less philosophical in that it cannot be constructed out of general principles.

In the first part of this exploration<sup>26</sup>, we have outlined an Ignatian theology of person, action and representation. Taking now a closer look at ethics, how would a Koranic perspective compare with that? The human person is, for the Koran, the addressee of the call to serve only God (2:21). History is,

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<sup>24</sup> This sounds Aristotelian. Virtue, for Aristotle, is in the μεσότης (*mesotēs*: *Nicomachian Ethics*, Book II, chapter 6, 1106b36-1107a2) i.e., in the middle way; but Aristotle has built into his designation of virtue the criterion of human reason: «the middle as a reasonable person (φρόνιμος/*phronimos*) would set it» (ibid.).

<sup>25</sup> Cf., e.g., Ignatius' letter to Francis of Borja of september 20, 1548, *Sancti Ignatii de Loyola Societatis Iesu fundatoris Epistolae et Instructiones*, II, Madrid 1904, 237.

<sup>26</sup> *Gregorianum* 94 (2013) 593-609.

Koranically seen, the time, in which a certain set of patterns (faith / success; unbelief / punishment) is repeatedly happening and which is thus offering to human beings now the possibility to choose either side (19:41-58). Human action is the actualisation of a person's decision for or against divine service; accordingly, Final Judgement will rule (2:110). Representation is taking place where human beings are responsibly administering what is entrusted to them (23:8), i.e., when they are fulfilling what is God's general will.

The comparison of two visions of salvific community has led us to outline Ignatian and Koranic ethics. The findings can be pinpointed in three dimensions. (i) For the Koran, correct living only requires to share and practice the Koranic values — with or without knowing the Koranic wording or the person of the prophet; for Ignatius, true life is more than sharing Jesus' values: it is living in communion with him. (ii) The Koranic outlook sees the basic problem of human beings in their need to be energetically reminded of what they have already known to be the good; but in principle, the human person can know it and can do it. The Ignatian view presupposes that the human being has lost original justice (*Exx.* 51) and that it is therefore in need of a healing that is more than injunction. A historical event of salvation is needed, into which the human person can enter in order to be healed: the communion with Christ. (iii) The more «philosophical» approach of the Koran is rationally more convincing — no recognition of a particular historical event is required; the disadvantage of it is that here, a religion is implying to be identical with human reason and that everybody originally was Muslim (cf. 7:172; 3:67). Such an outlook will have less understanding for unbelief in comparison with a faith that is aware of its own status as confession (Romans 10:9), that is, as a free entering into communion.

Though the above comparison of Ignatius and the Koran may have been heuristically efficient, it is epistemologically problematic. The contexts of the two outlooks could hardly be more disparate. After all, what Ignatius offers are «exercises» for an individual entering «con grande ánimo y liberalidad» (with generous freedom, *Exx.* 5) into a prayerful deepening of one's friendship with Christ (cf. *Exx.* 104), while the Koran presents itself as the public proclamation of God's call to conversion in a mostly polytheist setting.

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ABSTRACT

What is salvific community for the Koran? Recurring formulas indicate a Koranic tendency to categorise human beings as members of opposing groups; the believers are God's «share»-holders, and in a co-operative relationship with the Creator. Chronologically, the Koran's community conception develops from harmony with cosmic rhythms via accessing God's original message to becoming one human tribe. The basic attitude is «open exclusivism». In comparison with a Christian view, different accentuations can be made out in the construction of community, its mediation, representation, transformation and ethics.

*Keywords:* theological anthropology, community (concept), Christian–Muslim dialogue.

#### RIASSUNTO

Cosa è, per il Corano, una comunità salvifica? Formule ricorrenti indicano una tendenza Coranica di categorizzare gli uomini come membri di gruppi opposti. I credenti collaborano con il Creatore e ricevono la buona sorte. Durante gli anni della proclamazione del Corano la concezione della comunità si sviluppa. All'inizio, comunità salvifica è l'armonia con i ritmi cosmici, poi l'accesso al messaggio divino, e finalmente il diventare una sola tribù umana. L'atteggiamento di base è un «esclusivismo aperto». Paragonandolo con una visione cristiana, si possono individuare accentuazioni diverse in cinque campi: come la comunità viene costruita, mediata, rappresentata, trasformata, e come fonda la sua etica.

*Parole chiave:* antropologia teologica, comunità (concetto), dialogo cristiano–musulmano