

# Accompanying: A core feature of the Ignatian way of doing advocacy

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## **Accompanying.**

**A core feature of the Ignatian way of doing Advocacy.**

A Proposal for a Thesis

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

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From the Boston College School of Theology and Ministry (Weston Jesuit)

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## Foreword

The thesis to be demonstrated in these pages is that a core feature of the Ignatian way of doing advocacy (IA) consists in *accompanying*, understood as remaining close to the people IA serves and to the people's reality in order to advocate for their rights.<sup>1</sup> In this thesis, it is demonstrated how being companions with the people is a cornerstone of any advocacy that seeks to be effective, Christian, and Ignatian. We show that accompanying the people whose cause is being advocated 1) is consistent with the history of Ignatian Advocacy and with its heritage of Ignatian Spirituality, 2) is more effective and credible, and 3) is a "Christological" way of doing advocacy.

Methodologically, the thesis proceeds as follows. In a *first chapter* it explains that accompanying is a central characteristic of IA. In order to do so, a brief account of IA's history is given, followed by a brief definition and explanation of the main features of IA. In the *second chapter* we give theological arguments to sustain our thesis. Concretely, we ground our understanding of accompanying, as practiced in IA, on the Theology of Creation-Incarnation, Anthropological Theology, Ecclesiology of Discipleship, and Theology of the Cross. The *third chapter* is focused on the practical aspects of accompanying. Concretely, the case is made that advocacy is more effective when it manages to interrupt the mainstream narratives of power with the narratives of the powerless on whose behalf it is advocating, narratives that demands accompaniment. To make our point, reference is made first to scholarly research on power and power relations to explain the importance and depth of power issues. In a second moment we refer to the studies of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to illustrate our claims with some

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<sup>1</sup> I use "accompanying" or "being companions" instead of "accompaniment" to keep the sense of dynamism that better conveys the idea of IA being on the move with the people, and of IA being developed out of the experience. It also conveys the idea that although being companions includes mutual and bidirectional accompaniment, it is not reduce to that. Rather, it involves sharing, being with and, in IA advocating together.

case studies. Finally, in *the fourth chapter*, we draw on JRS's reports and publications to show how JRS exemplifies the proper way of doing IA. Concretely, it is argued that, *because it is accompanying the people*, JRS advocacy is effective, Ignatian, and Christological.

May the last word of this introduction be devoted to a clarification; in this thesis I use the plural form “our” or “we” in order to acknowledge the fact that this thesis has been an exercise of being accompanied. First and foremost by my co-mentors, David Hollenbach S.J. and Meg Guider O.S.F., and closely followed by a thorough English grammar editor, Joe Owens S.J. Moreover, the plural form pays tribute to the fact that many other Jesuits and friends of the Ignatian family have been giving feedback to drafts of this thesis and that these lines, however discrete, are in debt to all their contributions and comments.

## **I History of Ignatian Advocacy (IA).**

IA was born from an encounter with the needs of God's children. Elias was the chaplain priest for a “parish” of 30,000 refugees in a JRS camp in Tanzania.<sup>2</sup> The catechist responsible for care of the sick urged him to visit a hospitalized woman who was persistently asking for the Fr. to bring her communion. After a long day, the catechist led him to the poorest section of the hospital. There, lying on a canvas stretcher with a hole in the middle to help her defecate without disturbing the nurses, was a widow left to die, surrounded by her four children. Her name was Modesta, and her “room,” with roof and “walls” of plastic, resembled a greenhouse. On the ground the rats ran about and fed on Modesta's food bowl, left on the floor for lack of any furniture. When Elias apologized to Modesta for arriving late and failing to bring Holy Communion, “she replied smiling, but firmly: ‘*Chakula!*’ That means: ‘Food!’”

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<sup>2</sup> (Lopez 2010, 382-3)

“I was hit in my guts,” Elias recounts. “This shock put me into movement.” This encounter triggered the revision of the “charitable services for the needy in the hospital and the rest of the camp.” Immediately a task of investigation, denouncing corruption, and advocating for change was begun. As a result of the movement of compassion triggered by Modesta, the JRS team accompanying her felt the need to mobilize its SJ contacts to better advocate for the cause of the refugees starving and mistreated in that camp. As a result of this advocacy effort, the JRS obtained two different parliamentary resolutions asking European governments to send food to the Great Lakes region, “that was systematically suffering food shortages under the so-called donor fatigue.” Witnessing and affective accompaniment triggered the ethical, legal and humanitarian questions that led towards advocacy: How is this happening, how can we change this situation, where and with whom shall we talk in order to achieve this change?

This story of how the encounter between Elias and Modesta “moved him to action” exemplifies the core meaning of advocacy not only for the JRS but for the whole IA network.<sup>3</sup> This approach means that accompanying, serving, and advocating are three dimensions or three moments of a particular way of being present among God’s people: the Ignatian way. The essence of IA was actually born from this encounter, which continues to inspire the IA way of proceeding and constitutes its source of legitimacy.<sup>4</sup> It was Elias’s accompaniment, his being present and accessible for Modesta, that allowed JRS to serve her, and it is what gave Jesuit international institutions the credibility they needed to advocate for her cause in the centers of

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<sup>3</sup> In Elias words “la propuesta de las redes ignacianas nace del aprendizaje con e impulso de Modesta, que la amistad en el Señor al servicio de la misión con Jacques Haers SJ nos hizo madurar y proponer el tema de redes en el taller que tuvimos de discernimiento apostólico en común en Drongen, Bélgica. Allí fué donde se lo propusimos a Fernando Franco aprovechando que estaba gente de todo el mundo trabajando con la SJ (José Ignacio García que representaba a EC, Mauricio García del CINEP de Colombia, etc...). Source: personal communication.

<sup>4</sup> As Elias recounted, in a personal interview during the JRS workshop in BC 2011, it was reflecting on the case of Modesta what triggered the whole idea of getting a better coordination of the Ignatian Network of institutions and resources and the needs of the people the SJ accompanies in the grassroots movement. Ignatian advocacy has inscribed in its certificate of birth the encounter with a suffering woman. Like the sirophenician that triggered in Jesus the compassion of God, the encounter with God in Modesta was the sprinkle to lite the fire of IA.

power.<sup>5</sup> Elias's recount is an example of what IA is aimed at: to let our lives and our narratives be interrupted by those whom we accompany, and to advocate and defend their cause by replacing the sinful narratives at the centers of power with the narratives of joy and sorrow of the people we accompany. IA is aimed at interrupting the narratives according to which some lives are expendable.

## **1. Developing the Ignatian Advocacy Network:**

Advocating and caring for the poor, the migrant, and the marginalized can be traced to Ignatius and his first companions.<sup>6</sup> In its first foundational document the Society of Jesus (SJ) made the core of its mission

“to reconcile the estranged, compassionately assist and serve those who are in prisons or hospitals, and indeed, to perform any other works of charity, according to what will seem expedient for the glory of God and the common good.”

Drawing from its rich history of serving and advocating the cause of the poor, the SJ understands its mission today as the “service of faith, of which the promotion of Justice is an absolute requirement.”<sup>7</sup>

The SJ wants to be faithful to its mission to promote Justice in this globalized world, in which markets, politics, and information are more and more interconnected in complex networks of forces. In this changing world the SJ wants to be faithful to its call to work for justice, which means working for the reconciliation and restoration of the broken social relations produced by

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<sup>5</sup> The credibility of SJ advocacy, is due not to the mere fact of presence but derives from "how" we are there" García Jimenez in (Social Justice Secretariat SJ 2010)

<sup>6</sup> Nearly a year after arriving in Rome (1537) a famine crisis affected Italia and the first Jesuits organized a service to provide shelter, and food to hundreds of poor peasants (JRS 2000, 47-8). See also "advocacy" itself is hardly something alien in the life of the Society. The history of the Society shows apostolates that were close to social reality and certainly close to decision-makers.

<sup>7</sup> GC 32 D 4, N 2; The SJ had already been involved in advocacy. The Jesuit Refugee Service and Fe y Alegría, are SJ institutions that have been developing substantial advocacy activities, from lobbying governments to running campaigns on the ground, for over the last 20 years. [<http://ignatianadvocacy.wordpress.com/workshop/experiences-experiencias/>]



unequal sharing of wealth and power.<sup>8</sup> The SJ understands that this work for justice requires it to have a public presence in order to influence public opinion and the decision makers: “we must clearly incorporate the public dimension of political incidence in our work for justice.”<sup>9</sup>

In a globalized world driven by unequal power relations, the SJ response has been to ponder how it can intervene and change power relations in global governance in order to make the powerless better off.<sup>10</sup> The SJ is particularly well suited to engage in this, for it has a “broad network of associated institutions which have the capacity to address the new context of globalization like few other institutions.” The shared “common identity and values allow deep synergies [to develop] out of the usual inter-institutional dynamics.”<sup>11</sup> In the global world, the Society of Jesus, as a whole, becomes a theological body called to emerge as a global actor, addressing global issues which individual people cannot tackle. The Society of Jesus and the Ignatian Network have the potential, as worldwide organisations with an enormous capacity for intellectual research and political action as well as a strong spiritual commitment, to attain that holistic view. They are increasingly called to act as global actors, that is, to constitute “bodies” with an efficient commitment to the service of God’s Reign, through the alliance with God’s poor, who are the carriers of creative transformation. In order to do that, the SJ has increasingly invested efforts in organizing its capacity to respond globally to global problems of injustice.

The SJ concern for global dynamics springs out of the compassionate contemplation of the world proper to Ignatian Spirituality, which is born from partaking in the mission of the

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<sup>8</sup> The reality of “unjust social relationships and marginalisation, abuse and poverty abound” make urgent the need of a “grace-filled vision of the Kingdom of God as a feast, a meal that we are all called to share by committing ourselves concretely, in the here and now, to building sustainable communities of solidarity” by which “we share in God’s own commitment and work amongst us.” (Haers 2011)

<sup>9</sup> (Comision Interprovincial Apostolado Social 2009, 61, 119)

<sup>10</sup> La cuestión que se nos plantea no es puntual y local, sino universal y de poder...Toda iniciativa que no tenga en cuenta estas dos dimensiones sí es ingenua y, probablemente, ineficiente.” (Comision Interprovincial Apostolado Social 2009, 63)

<sup>11</sup> Dani Villanueva.

Trinity.<sup>12</sup> The SJ and its Networking understand their mission as building bridges between rich and poor, establishing links for collaboration between the decision makers and those who can hardly make their voice heard. The SJ global concern is the SJ response to God's call to work in God's service.<sup>13</sup> Understanding that working for justice involves working for the change of unjust structures, the SJ has progressively increased its efforts to better understand and organize the proper way of doing advocacy.<sup>14</sup>

This concern has crystallized in the form of specific workshops and meetings which have produced what is called the Ignatian Advocacy Network (IAN).<sup>15</sup> A key moment in this process was the recognition by CG 35 that advocacy is an important part of the SJ mission of promoting a justice arising from faith.<sup>16</sup> Advocacy is therefore understood by the SJ as part of its mission of changing the structures that keep God's people oppressed.<sup>17</sup> The aim of the IAN is "to use the Society's untapped capacity to influence public policy in favor of the common good and of those rendered weak and voiceless."<sup>18</sup> The IAN is a developing effort of networking and coordinating SJ assets toward the mission of working for justice. It aims to use the SJ capacity "to influence public policy in favor of the common good and of those rendered weak

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<sup>12</sup> (Comision Interprovincial Apostolado Social 2009, 18)

<sup>13</sup> (Comision Interprovincial Apostolado Social 2009,19)

<sup>14</sup> There are two major SJ political advocacy centers, one in USA located in Washington and it is engaged in: direct advocacy before the government, advocate corporations through socially responsible investing, and helping the research and report work of other SJ institutions working on the field. With regard to Europe, the Jesuit European Office (OCIPE) is located in Brussels, and mostly advocates agencies responsible for shaping European policies.

<sup>15</sup> Part of this process has been: A Workshop on Violence and War organized by the Social Justice Secretariat (SJS) in 2005; a workshop on Common Apostolic Discernment in 2007 and a meeting of Jesuit NGOs and institutions close to the social apostolate; a specific Workshop on Ignatian Advocacy in "el Escorial" in 2008; participation of the SJ as institution in the World Forums 2009; Workshop of Loyola 2011.

<sup>16</sup> The GC 35 states that part of the SJ mission is to "build bridges between rich and poor, establishing advocacy links of mutual support between those who hold political power and those who find it difficult to voice their interests" [Decree 3, n 28]. Decree 3 no. 35 reads: "This Congregation urges... the universities and research centers, to promote studies and practices focusing on the causes of poverty... We should find ways in which our experiences with refugees and the displaced... could interact with those institutions, so that research results and advocacy have effective practical benefits for society... Advocacy and research should serve the poor."

<sup>17</sup> Young accounts for five faces of oppression: Exploitation, Marginalization, Powerlessness, Cultural imperialism and Violence.

<sup>18</sup> (Social Justice Secretariat SJ 2010, 7)

and voiceless.” It is an experiment of “holy conspiracy,” for it immerses the SJ in the dynamic unfolding of the mystery of the incarnation by which the Trinity made the life of the world its own. Ultimately it means partaking in the Trinitarian conspiracy, by letting the Holy Spirit guide IAN efforts by attentively and carefully listening to the reality of the poor in whom the Holy Spirit dwells.

## **2. Main features of IA.**

As it has been shown in the former section, IA is a nascent initiative of the SJ and therefore its theoretical framework is still being unfolded.<sup>19</sup> Thus far, the SJ has devoted two thematic workshops, “El Escorial”<sup>20</sup> and “Loyola,”<sup>21</sup> to reflection on IA and to the development of its characteristics and guidelines. In this section, drawing on the work of conceptualization and definition that emerged from these workshops, the main features of IA are summarily presented. Concretely it is first clarified what advocacy means in IA, and then it is shown how IA has its specificities in the otherwise common stages of any advocacy effort.

While there are different definitions of the term advocacy,<sup>22</sup> what is important in this thesis is that social justice oriented advocacy efforts all share a common feature, namely, the perception of advocacy as being responsible in the “commitment to the poor and vulnerable.” Thus, advocacy can be understood, as part of Ellacuría’s invitation to “weigh the weight of reality.” It

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<sup>19</sup> Term coined in an international Jesuit workshop in el Escorial (Spain) 2008, on the basis of the experiences of Jesuit NGOs [CINEP in Colombia; CEPAS in Congo; SAPI in India; and JRS in Africa]. See (Arancibia 2008/3)

<sup>20</sup> November 2008 in el Escorial (Spain). This workshop was composed by “45 participants, comprising Jesuits, religious of other congregations, directors of Jesuit works and lay collaborators, women and men from 22 different countries,” involved in different advocacy programs of the SJ.

<sup>21</sup> In Loyola, the GIAN worked in mapping diverse interventions on the “Five Global Networks” defined in el Escorial: Peace and Human Rights, Migration, Education, Governance of Mineral and Natural Resources and Ecology. Representatives from four continents: South Asia, Latin America, Europe and Africa. Nineteen core group members: from the US, Spain, Democratic Republic of Congo, Colombia, Peru, Australia, Philippines, Korea and India.

<sup>22</sup> It is for instance discussed how and to what extent it is different from lobbying. Turner introduces a differentiation between lobbying and advocacy: “Lobbying is the direct processing of addressing parliamentarians, officials, executives, and such. For its part, advocacy, “refers to the whole infrastructure of activities supporting the direct ‘conversation’ that engages with decision-makers.” (Social Justice Secretariat SJ, 2010,30)

is this commitment which compels the institutions engaged in social justice advocacy to “go beyond our direct service and call attention to the need to change the structures and policies that perpetuate poverty.”<sup>23</sup> In this essay, we follow the definition of Advocacy used in IA’s documents:

*"Citizen centered advocacy is an organized political process that involves the coordinated efforts of people to change policies, practices, ideas and values that perpetuate inequality, prejudice and exclusion. It strengthens citizens' capacity as decision makers and builds more accountable and equitable institutions of power."*<sup>24</sup>

IA is an SJ initiative and is therefore rooted in a Christian cosmo-vision. As the vision that moves this network, Ignatian spirituality inspires a global outlook on reality as an interconnected whole, rooted in a “friendship with the poor”<sup>25</sup> and leading the SJ to take the particular perspective of the oppressed. IA springs from the Christian hope that keeps in tension the present world and the belief that “God has deposited his future with the mean of the earth.”<sup>26</sup> It is characterized by being rooted in the conception of the world as creation, as a space to be shared by the human community that cares for the rights of all its members and for those of futures generations. An advocacy effort is Ignatian when it is inspired by love of God and love of neighbor and when it “is always *for* right relationship built on justice and the reign of God in this world.” IA understands its mission as partaking in God’s work of reconciliation and thus “seeks to reconcile the rich and the poor, powerful and powerless in right relationship of justice, love and peace.”<sup>27</sup> It holds therefore a sustainable and inclusive vision of the world. It is a creatural vision, one that believes that God is present and at work in God’s creation for the sake of their fulfillment and integral liberation (or salvation).

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<sup>23</sup> (As the conference of US bishops states in USCB 1986).

<sup>24</sup> (Eguizabal 2008) and (Social Justice Secretariat SJ 2010).

<sup>25</sup> General Congregation 34, Decree 2, #9.

<sup>26</sup> (Comision Interprovincial Apostolado Social, 2009)

<sup>27</sup> Later on, he clarifies, “We must ensure that reconciliation is directed towards a deeper justice instead of denying the claims of practical justice.” (Social Justice Secretariat SJ, 2010,35)

IA is not a flower of one day; rather it is integrated into the SJ mission for Justice.<sup>28</sup> As part of that mission it is aimed at achieving the social transformation of unjust structures.<sup>29</sup> A proper understanding of IA is essential to situate it as part of a broader picture, the SJ response to a broken world. IA is the response to God's calling; it is an ongoing dynamic process of answering God that springs from "being rooted in God and immersed in the world to contemplate, love and serve with the compassion of Christ our Lord"<sup>30</sup>. Ultimately, IA finds its motivation in the Gospel, to seek "the good of the other, whom we are called to 'amar y servir', just as we love and serve God." The SJ understands its labor of advocacy as grounded in its mission of partaking in God's mission of redemption and being sent to the frontiers by God. The IAN understands that these frontiers "include those places in which the political and economic decisions are made."<sup>31</sup> Wanting to defend and advocate on behalf of the poor and marginalized, IA is "deeply grounded on the broken reality of the poor and excluded" and seeks to make its case for "the perspective of the oppressed and excluded."<sup>32</sup>

An explanation of how IA has some common features with any advocacy effort, and how it has some proper characteristics that make it "Ignatian" follows.

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<sup>28</sup> Entiende la promoción de la justicia como la transformación estructural y cultural de nuestras sociedades. (Comision Interprovincial Apostolado Social 2009, 185)

<sup>29</sup> IA advocacy works "towards transforming the unjust laws, policies, practices, ideas and attitudes and the power relations that maintain a system which is oppressive or unequal." Xavier Jeyaraj SJ in (Social Justice Secretariat SJ, 2010,19)

<sup>30</sup> (Comision Interprovincial Apostolado Social 2009, 181)

<sup>31</sup> *La misión apostólica de la Compañía de Jesús. Una fe que haga justicia. Conclusión de la reunión de coordinadores de Asistencia* (mayo 2008)" in (Sal Terrae April 2009)

<sup>32</sup> Frank Turner S.J. in (Social Justice Secretariat SJ 2010, 30)

### **a. Shared conceptions with other advocacy efforts:**

Strategically IA shares the general steps involved in any advocacy campaign. Because IA works by creating and using social and political spaces available within the system,<sup>33</sup> it is aimed at producing sustainable structural changes in it.<sup>34</sup> In order to meet this end IA uses research and investigation to influence public policy, it engages institutions of governance, and it seeks to bridge the gap between grassroots movements and macro-level policies. Therefore, IA not merely interacts with decision makers but seeks to do it in a way that allows the marginalized to have an important part in the process, in deciding what issues are to be advocated and in the whole advocating campaign decision making.

We subsequently explain the common features of any advocacy campaign that are: a) Defining objectives, b) Diagnosis of resources, c) Proposing alternatives, d) Defining target audience, e) Planning, g) Networking and, f) Evaluation.

a. Defining objectives. IA is an advocacy effort grounded in the local community and starting from the initiatives of the community. It helps to articulate the communal claims and needs in different levels of interactions and networking at various levels from the local to the international.<sup>35</sup> Therefore, the first step in IA is to ask: what does the grassroots community want? IA aims to create the conditions in which the marginalized improve their socio-economic

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<sup>33</sup> "the principal good being sought is not the reversal of some particular pattern of dominance, but the establishment of a more equitable set of relationships, in which appropriate decisions are made through fairer, more participative process." (Turner 2012)

<sup>34</sup> Characteristics of SJ mission for Justice: "Incluye las dimensiones de reflexión, investigación e incidencia pública en su actuación, así como la transformación de las estructuras políticas y el cambio en los valores culturales que causan la exclusión." (Comision Interprovincial Apostolado Social 2009, 182)

<sup>35</sup> "Our experience in recent decades has demonstrated that social change does not consist only in the transformation of economic and political structures, for these structures are themselves rooted in socio-cultural values and attitudes. Full human liberation, for the poor and for us all, lies in the development of *communities of solidarity* at the grass roots and nongovernmental as well as the political level, where we can all work together towards total human development.<sup>10</sup> And all of this must be done in the context of a sustainable, respectful interrelation between diverse peoples, cultures, the environment, and the living God in our midst. (d.3, 10; cf. d.2, 13; d.3, 6; d.26, 6.10)

situation. Moreover, it is at the core of IA that the marginalized often understood to be victims or survivors, actually become agents and protagonists of their improvement process. Therefore IA has to keep the communal needs and demands at the center of its advocacy efforts.<sup>36</sup> The IA way of proceeding consists in working with the community and developing the communal capacity of the marginalized people. To meet that end it is crucial to start from their reality and listen to their narratives.

b. Assessment of resources - What is the situation? As Lopez says, "there is no deep and qualified advocacy without deep and qualified research in the field."<sup>58</sup> IA has to analyze the power relations that are at work in every concrete situation, and it has to transform those power relations that promote marginalization. In order to do this, it is crucial for IA to remain with the people, letting their reality interrupt our preconceptions and frameworks. The first step is therefore to evaluate the available capacity and resources of the community and define possible points of departure. This analysis requires thorough research and documentation. Concretely, it involves expert analysis of the situations of poverty and injustice done on the basis of direct field work with people and communities.<sup>37</sup>

c. Community centered: at the grassroots level, IA works through, for, from and with the local communities. As Villanueva puts it:

“Each step of the process, each dynamic within the advocacy network should be framed into the overarching idea of a community of solidarity. This is a people-centered relational advocacy. Community of practice, communities of discernment.”<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> Ignatian Advocacy (IA) respects the experiences and perspectives of the people and groups most affected by injustices. It stands with the poorest and most marginalized seeking to enable their participation and to make their voices heard. (Turner 2012)

<sup>37</sup> “Reafirmamos la necesidad de un análisis político y económico para desafiar los fundamentalismos ideológicos (económicos, políticos y religiosos), y para proponer alternativas más humanas.” (Social 2008/3, 84)

<sup>38</sup> (Villanueva 2007,16)

The IA way of proceeding involves fostering and enhancing community structures and relations. The IA work of empowering the marginalized is understood as “facilitating the building up of just communities or communities of solidarity.” This community building process may sometimes involve the task of facilitating the restoration of broken relations between allies and opponents. It is crucial for IA to draw on the grassroots groups in every step of the process. They have direct access to the community and its needs and can facilitate the collection of raw material for the analysis of the experts. The input of the community is crucial for collecting narratives/stories and case studies. Working close to the grassroots helps IA to listen to the people it serves as they express their needs and claims with their own voice and in their own terms. Keeping the people at the center of its Advocacy is crucial to IA.

d. Propose alternative scenarios: What is possible? In order to achieve structural change, IA uses political incidence to transform the conditions and the structures of power that marginalize people.<sup>39</sup> The goal of IA is the transformation of the “unjust laws, policies, practices, ideas and attitudes and the power relations that maintain a system which is oppressive or unequal.”<sup>40</sup> If IA is to achieve any real change, it needs to engage with experts and socio-political thinkers in order to propose new policies that are realistic and feasible. When offering possible alternatives to the decision makers and public leaders, IA can draw on the SJ research capacity for the intellectual work necessary to raise critical questions about the problems and to present alternatives based on the universal values of justice and the common good.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> “IA engages critically and constructively with centers of power to promote more just and inclusive relationships.” (Turner 2012)

<sup>40</sup> (Ibid, 19)

<sup>41</sup> In this regard, the recently created collaboration between Boston College professors and the JRS staff is a great and promising example of how the SJ can provide an umbrella for net-working that connects resources with those more in need.



e. Defining target audience: - who has the power to make this possible? IA has to draw on the SJ network and on the SJ capacity for developing relationships with key decision makers and centers of power. Moreover, since IA wants to keep the people at the center of its advocacy efforts, to make “the voice of the voiceless heard at the 'headquarters of power',” it will seek to create opportunities for direct interaction between people and power holders. In this regard Morriss classification of how power is contextualized is very enlightening.<sup>42</sup> Since IA is aimed at challenging power relations and to subvert the mechanisms that keep God’s people oppressed and marginalized, in order for IA’s advocacy efforts to be effective IA must pay attention to how power relations operate in the concrete context in which IA is working. For Morris there are three major dimensions of Power to be analyzed: First, the logistical dimension when one needs to know who are the powerful, those who have the capacity to take decisions. This fits in the approach of IA as political lobby and in the step of Advocacy that was typified above as “what can be done?” Secondly, there is a moral dimension, by which someone can be held accountable for a situation by others, either for doing or failing to do. This is what in Advocacy networks is called accountability. Thirdly the evaluative aspect. This is a very important and continuous aspect of power relations, which consists in analyzing the capacity that the social actors of a society have for making decisions and meeting their needs.

f. Research and planning. IA must think globally when developing a plan of action. When developing a study of available resources and capacities, IA has to take advantage of the institutions, the networks, the facilities, and the worldwide connections of the SJ. This is the vision that the European SJ Assistance Coordinators sought in 2003.<sup>43</sup> Once the people

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<sup>42</sup> Peter Morriss, in his book *Power: A Philosophical Analysis* (Morriss 2002) as quoted by (Lukes 2005,64)

<sup>43</sup> “En el caso de las instituciones universitarias es de especial importancia llegar a colaborar con ellas en la determinación de líneas de investigación y formación que incidan en aspectos claves de la vida social desde la perspectiva de los pobres. Sin esa aportación específica por parte de los centros universitarios, el Sector Social no tendrá la capacidad de realizar un análisis

have identified the needs and the experts have analyzed the situation and possible actions, tactics, and tools, then the IAN can develop advocacy campaigns at different levels simultaneously: lobbying as direct action aimed at influencing companies and politicians; media work such as broadcasting testimonies, facts, reports, and proposals through SJ publications and magazines; motivating and coordinating social mobilization through SJ high schools and universities.

g. **Networking:** With regard to the macro level, IA seeks to collaborate with other institutions that are part of transnational advocacy networks,<sup>44</sup> aimed at “changing procedures, policies and behavior”<sup>45</sup> of societies and states and which are organized to “promote causes, principle ideas, and norms.”<sup>46</sup> The SJ, being a transnational organization itself with connections and presence that range from the local to the international level, is especially suited for networking with other institutions that share its same values and objectives.<sup>47</sup> Concretely, the SJ with its networks of universities, cultural centers, High Schools, and parishes could be a key player in exerting moral leverage on local governments and in challenging public discourse on social justice issues.<sup>48</sup> Moreover, being an international organization with presence in both ends of the power chain (powerless communities and centers of power) the SJ could contribute in transnational advocacy networks engaged in the

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social suficientemente profundo. Sin la conexión con el Sector Social, las universidades se separan cada vez más de los intereses de los pobres para responder fundamentalmente a las necesidades de los poderes políticos y económicos.” (Comision Interprovincial Apostolado Social 2009, 107-8)

<sup>44</sup> “Networks of activists, distinguishable largely by the centrality of principled ideas or values in motivating their information.” (Keck, E. Margaret and Sikkink, Kathryn 1998, 1)

<sup>45</sup> (Keck, E. Margaret and Sikkink, Kathryn 1998, 3)

<sup>46</sup> (Keck, E. Margaret and Sikkink, Kathryn 1998,8)

<sup>47</sup> See Daniel Villanueva’s thesis. See (Keck, E. Margaret and Sikkink, Kathryn 1998, 199-204)

<sup>48</sup> (Keck, E. Margaret and Sikkink, Kathryn 1998, 29-30)

so called boomerang advocacy pattern by which advocates on the field get their claims represented in the centers of power by-passing the opposition of their local government.<sup>49</sup>

### **b. Ignatian Advocacy has specific and distinctive elements**

Ignatian Advocacy has the following specific and distinctive elements: a qualified understanding of empowerment as creating capabilities, the criterion of the Magis and the incorporation of spiritual discernment in its decision making, and finally accompanying as a key part of contextualized advocacy. Among these advocacy features we find important to start by clarifying our use of the term “Empowerment” which is an omnipresent term in Advocacy documents and workshops, but it is rarely defined. It is in my understanding a crucial feature of IA.

Relying on Nussbaum, we propose a qualified way of understanding “empowerment,” for IA. We take here Nussbaum’s definition of capabilities, which are derived from the dignity of the person as “basic capability”<sup>50</sup>; they are “not just abilities” but also “the freedoms or opportunities created by a combination of personal abilities and the political, social, and economic environment.”<sup>51</sup> The capability that Nussbaum values most is “the opportunity to plan one’s own life,”<sup>52</sup> and in the eventuality of scarce resources, Nussbaum recommends favoring what she names “fertile capabilities,” because they have the capacity of fostering the development of the rest.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> (Keck, E. Margaret and Sikkink, Kathryn 1998,12 and 144)

<sup>50</sup> (Nussbaum 2011,31)

<sup>51</sup> (Nussbaum 2011,20)

<sup>52</sup> Nussbaum gives a list of ten capabilities; Life of normal length; Bodily health; Bodily integrity; Use of senses, imagination and thought to create or produce works of one’s choice; Emotions; practical reason od; affiliation; play and control over one’s political and material environment. (Nussbaum 2011,33-4)

<sup>53</sup> For Nussbaum, the best example of a fertile capability is education, because it generates synergies with other areas of people’s lives, enhancing their freedom and opening new horizons and opportunities in society.

Empowerment usually designates the action of equipping or supplying someone with an ability.<sup>54</sup> When applied to advocacy efforts, it is neither exclusively nor mainly understood as “giving voice to the voiceless,”<sup>55</sup> and making the invisible visible. Rather, it is a way of proceeding that fosters the “capacity building of those on behalf of whom we are doing advocacy.”<sup>56</sup> It is a “process of assisting disadvantaged individuals and groups to gain greater control than they presently have over local and national decision-making and resources, and of their ability and right to define collective goals, make decisions and learn from experience.”<sup>57</sup> Concretely, it seeks to provide the “expansion of assets and capabilities, spaces and opportunities for individuals to exercise real choice over, and influence on, the issues that affect their lives.” Empowerment in IA builds on the social capital of the people, and it is attentive to the people's formulation of their needs, considering that participation is both a tool and a goal of the process. An empowerment approach implies listening to the people instead of arriving with solutions from outside the community in a top-down approach,<sup>58</sup> and it requires the active participation of community members in decision making.<sup>59</sup> As a result, the empowerment approach builds up people's capacity and confidence, “both as individuals and as participating members of groups and communities, to achieve results for themselves.” Creating capabilities therefore entails increasing the people's awareness of their rights and capabilities<sup>60</sup> and involves working with

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<sup>54</sup> The ABC's of Advocacy DanChurchAid January 2010.

<sup>55</sup> (Social Justice Secretariat SJ 2010, 19, 72)

<sup>56</sup> (Social Justice Secretariat SJ 2010,51). “El reconocimiento de la dignidad y de la capacidad de las personas destinatarias de la misión es condición necesaria para que ellos asuman su responsabilidad histórica en la construcción de una sociedad más justa...La acción integra en todas las fases la perspectiva de las personas pobres y excluidas, en la identificación de necesidades, planificación, selección de estrategias y evaluación.” “Las personas destinatarias son los sujetos de los cambios, no los objetos de nuestra labor.” (Comision Interprovincial Apostolado Social 2009)

<sup>57</sup> (Hulme 1992, 24)

<sup>58</sup> (Mansfield 2009). See also “Solutions and understanding from the outside will not lead to empowerment of those involved and is unlikely to lead to a lasting solution... To empower people, a facilitator needs to listen to others, question them and go along with their decisions.” (Gordon 2002,16)

<sup>59</sup> (Winterford 2009, 1-5)

<sup>60</sup> (DanChurchAid January 2010)

them rather than for them.<sup>61</sup> Part of this process requires promoting community building and developing networks that “support people's ability to take part in governance and claim their rights individually and in groups.”<sup>62</sup> From the point of view of Ignatian Spirituality empowerment is understood as springing from God’s promise that the Kingdom will come and from God’s working through God’s Spirit in our lives for human beings are created co-responsible and stewardess of the creation.<sup>63</sup> In this personal relationship with God we regain confidence and hope, realizing that we are not alone and that in the end it is God’s task to fulfil God’s mission.<sup>64</sup> God’s love empowers us in our mission of building just relations with others (what the CG 34 called “communities of solidarity”<sup>65</sup>) by making us aware of “our creational co-belonging.” Through this personal engagement with God we discover that we have been empowered by God, who trusts us and has commissioned us to pursue this community of fair relations which is the Kingdom of God preached by and incarnated in Jesus’ life.

IA incorporates the Ignatian *Magis* a criterion for choosing its mission; it is a key aspect of the IA way of proceeding. The term “magis” is one that St. Ignatius uses in the Exercises to refer to what should be the aim of the exercitant: to seek always the greater glory of God (which is indissolubly united to our neighbor’s well-being) as the criterion of election. In the SJ Constitutions, the *Magis* determines the criteria for considering where the mission can bear more fruit. *Magis* means the mission is wherever there is greater divine honor or greater service

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<sup>61</sup> By helping them become aware of their own “ability and power to actively change and improve their own lives.” Empowerment is the process by which communities become enabled to “express their needs, advocate for their rights, and effect sustainable development through appropriate and peaceful and /or active non-violence manners.” Lutheran World Federation Cambodia. Handout: Rights-Based Approach to Development. Version 3.

<sup>62</sup> Source from LWF Village Graduation Guideline book

<sup>63</sup> Jacques Haers SJ in Theological Foundations for our commitment to justice.

<sup>64</sup> “The Exercises are geared... to the experience and recognition of grace in one’s own life”; in the Exercises grace is understood “as divine action empowering human action... individuals are taught to expect and to recognize their own empowerment by grace.” (Traub 2008, 58)

<sup>65</sup> It expresses a sense of community, of belonging to one another, of responsibility for one another, what GC 34 called a “community of solidarity”. These communities have as reference the vision of the Kingdom is usually depicted in the Bible as a “banquet and a feast, where people – including the excluded and the poor – join at the table of peace and joy.” For Jacques this is a “vision of a healed community assembled around the Lord.” And this community arises “in the encounter with the Lord.”

to God; wherever the more universal good can be done; wherever there is greater need, more severe misery, or a lack of others to respond; and wherever people actually need us to be.<sup>66</sup>

According to Nadal, this Magis is a central and special feature of the SJ.

“The Society cares for those persons who are totally neglected or inadequately attended to. This is the basic reason why the Society was founded; this is its power; this is what makes it distinctive in the Church.”<sup>67</sup>

The SJ as an institution applies the Magis to discern its mission, pondering where and how the greater good is to be achieved, where the greatest need is to be found, or where the SJ has a special contribution to make.<sup>68</sup> Concretely the Magis, when applied to IA, means that the welfare of those worst off will be the main criterion for decision making.<sup>69</sup> In terms of advocacy that implies that the voice of the neediest will be amplified and also that the priorities of the IA will follow the criterion of the Magis, not to institutional or historical dynamics.<sup>70</sup> Magis means tension for IA; it means constantly pondering God’s call “to love and to serve” *these* neighbors, in *these* concrete circumstances of time and place,” and this evidences IA need for discernment.<sup>71</sup>

Faithful to its Ignatian heritage, IA incorporates the dimension of discernment in its decision making process. Ignatian spirituality is based on the conviction that God is willing to communicate with God’s children, who in turn find their plenitude of joy and life and their integral liberation (salvation) by following God’s will. In Ignatian spirituality this process of seeking God’s will, along with the readiness to respond, is called discernment.<sup>72</sup> It implies the deep belief that God partakes in human affairs and seeks human plenitude; it also implies the belief that God is

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<sup>66</sup> (Const VII, 2, n 623)

<sup>67</sup> (Jerome Nadal, MSHI, V.90-2, p. 1261.)

<sup>68</sup> “The more universal the service, the more it is divine.” General Congregation 34, Decree 21, #1.

<sup>69</sup> “Our priorities are guided by the greater need, where others are less apt to help.”

<sup>70</sup> Based on (Villanueva 2007)

<sup>71</sup> “This tension is intrinsic... discernment is required.” (Turner 2012)

<sup>72</sup> Discernment “as a religious or spiritual process means critical reflection on human or specifically religious experience either of individuals or a group or a community” (Lonsdale, Discernment 2005, 247)

able to create new possibilities out of nothing.<sup>73</sup> Discernment implies the belief that when we are facing “significant life choices, God’s Holy Spirit can enlighten us” by moving us through the “the deeper desires and passions of our hearts.” To discern is therefore to seek God’s will in order to engage in God’s mission.<sup>74</sup>

From a social justice perspective it can be understood as a prayerful exercise of paying attention to where the greatest common good is to be fostered and where evil is to be confronted. The Ignatian tradition understands that God can make God’s will known through the deepest feelings of our heart.<sup>75</sup> That means taking our feelings into account and letting our senses be affected by reality.<sup>76</sup> It is not a matter of whim. Rather Ignatian discernment “dwells on the sustained quality of these feelings in order to 'discern' which are of God, and which genuinely enrich our lives and unite us with others.” It is a continuous process<sup>77</sup> of “critical awareness” which puts us in touch with ourselves and with reality.<sup>78</sup> Drawing on this Ignatian intuition, the SJ assumes that when discerning 'decisions' related to its promotion of justice these inner feelings need to be “nourished and tested by personal encounter with the oppressed.”

Discernment is a key element of the IA way of proceeding because it understands itself as partaking in the SJ’s compassionate response to God’s call. Discernment is crucial for IA since its response is situated in the midst of tensions, with limited resources and with institutional,

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<sup>73</sup> I the so-called *Autobiography* Ignatius recounts how he gradually moved from confusion and agitation to a calmness of spirit by recognizing the way God works is through peace, tranquility, and beneficence (cf. *Autobiography* # 27-30), that God is a “helping God,” and that he—Ignatius—was called to participate in this helping mission (cf. the summary statement in # 50 of the *Autobiography*). The confirmation of Ignatius’ choice was the consolation that he felt, that is, affection for the ways of God. This is reflected in the *Spiritual Exercises* in the so-called “second time” of making a choice (*Spirit* also explains why the early Jesuits characterized their corporate works, “ministries of consolation.”

<sup>74</sup> “This is the setting which discernment presupposes: a willingness to look at and appreciate the signs of God’s love for us and in response to listen to the voice of the Spirit of God and to follow where the Spirit leads.” (Traub 2008, 172)

<sup>75</sup> “This mode of knowing is reflected in the hebrew verb *yadah*, signifying the kind of intimate knowledge resulting from the unification of intellect, feeling, and actions. Ignatian spirituality speaks of it as *sentir*, a felt knowledge that pervades the whole of one’s being.” (Traub 2008, 193)

<sup>76</sup> “Discernment is not only a faith-filled reasoned response; it is also an affective summons, affective implementation, and affective style.” [Howard Gray, S.J. document for the JRS BC consultation]

<sup>77</sup> “To the interplay between experience, analysis, reflection, decision, action and evaluation.” (Turner 2012)

<sup>78</sup> of what is right and wrong in one’s own life and attitudes, one’s society and culture, and in specific situations.” (Traub 2008,54)

political and donors' demands to weigh and handle. IA needs discernment to ensure that it is serving the interests of God's people and that it is keeping "the right intention - to serve the oppressed," rather than seeking either "our own glory and success" or the glory and success of donors and public standards.<sup>79</sup> Discernment is necessary not only to decide how to invest the scant economic and human resources, but also to negotiate its profile: should IA keep a prophetic voice? or is it to downplay that for the sake of a more pragmatic approach? These are ongoing tensions in which many elements are mingled (donors, agencies, reputation, politics, media, western pressures...), but it is vital that the people and their needs remain at the center. Each concrete situation where conflicts of interest and personal issues arise demands a careful and prayerful pondering of possibilities since these tensions will remain.<sup>80</sup> As Turner puts it, IA draws on "the practice of personal and communal discernment" to guide its "decisions, strategies and priorities." Lastly and fundamentally, discernment is not only a way of making good decisions; it also helps those engaged in IA to become aware of the fact that IA serves God's mission and that God is at charge. It ultimately means gaining awareness of how "the Holy Spirit is caring and comforting us in the midst of our mission even when this is deployed in situations of apparent chaos."<sup>81</sup>

Finally, IA finds that all the former features explained above converge in this, accompanying the people it serves. Accompanying, understood as being with the people, as sharing their lives, joys and sorrows to better understand their needs and foster their strengths. Accompanying involves accompaniment that etymologically comes from "one who shares the bread" and thus conveys a strong personal implication. Accompanying in IA should be understood as "being

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<sup>79</sup> The need for time and space of discernment was a point stressed over and over again in the BC JRS workshop.

<sup>80</sup> "It is a process of finding one's own way of discipleship in a particular set of circumstances; a means of responding to the call of Christian love and truth in a situation where there are often conflicting interests and values and choices have to be made. It is the gift by which we are able to observe and assess the different factors in a particular situation, and to choose that course of action which most authentically answers our desire to live by the gospel." (Lonsdale 2000,173)

<sup>81</sup> As Gary Smith SJ put it in the BC JRS consultation.



with.” For IA accompanying is an incarnated way of empowering from within the community we serve because the community has become ours. As it has been briefly explained in the introduction, we use of the gerund form “accompanying” precisely to convey this notion of dynamism and of journey: accompanying is a friendship shared on a journey, it is the sharing of experiences of sorrows and joys of uncertainty and hope what makes us companions.<sup>82</sup> Accompanying triggers our advocacy efforts, the reality of the poor and oppressed puts a demand on us when we let it affect us. Moreover, since IA wants to serve and advocate the cause of *concrete people*, *being with* the people becomes part of IA in order for our Advocacy efforts to respond to people’s demands and needs. Accompanying means that we stay with the people to discern with them how better serve them, it means “being present day after day and paying attention to the moment, to individual people, and listening to their experiences,” and involves putting the community we serve in the center (IA’s features as explained above). Accompanying is a way of personally engaging the whole person IA serves, letting the reality of the person “affectar” our own reality is what the Ignatian spirituality demands of the Ignatian way of doing social apostolate and specially advocacy.<sup>83</sup> As contextualized advocacy, accompanying is IA way to gain a “concrete understanding in flesh and in bone” of the reality of the people whose cause it advocates.

As *A Qualified Way of Doing Advocacy* puts it “accompaniment and direct contact with the people whom we serve and or who we advocate, is one of the essential features which makes our advocacy Jesuit.” IA requires becoming aware of the place where we stand, the influences

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<sup>82</sup> Paraphrasing “A new way of being present.”

<sup>83</sup> “Nuestro trabajo en lo social no tendrá el sello de identidad ignaciano, si prescindiendo del compromiso personal que engendra un espíritu de compasión evangélica, se queda relegado a la sola gestión organizativa y a la administración eficaz de recursos a favor de los más débiles, o a unas acciones de incidencia política para el cambio de las estructuras. (Comisión Interprovincial Apostolado Social 2009,21) “El contacto con la realidad es imprescindible para llegar a ser coherentes y creíbles de manera que legitimemos nuestra incidencia pública. Nuestro compromiso con la realidad es fuente para un posible rearme ético.” (Ibid, 67-8

we experience, the interests and motivations and those of the people we are called to serve. By remaining with the people it serves IA responds to the mission of the SJ: “Our commitment to help establish right relationships invites us to see the world from the perspective of the poor and the marginalised, learning from them, acting with and for them.”<sup>84</sup> Accompanying in IA means listening to the people, their claims and demands and involves investing time in hearing them and letting them frame their needs in their own words. It implies sharing in solidarity with the people resources and responsibility so that they have part in building their future. In this sense, accompanying thus understood gives birth to empowerment (which as explained above is a central feature of IA), because it gives back dignity and self-worth to the people that are our companions.

## **II Ignatian Theology, the theological foundation for IA:**

This section discusses some key features of what can be called “Ignatian Theology,” which springs from modern interpretations of the Ex and will help me sustain theologically some of the key characteristics of IA.<sup>85</sup> By naming this theology “Ignatian” we do not imply that it “necessarily involves adherence to a body of particular theological positions found in the writings of St. Ignatius,” because as Dulles puts it, “Ignatius, though he had studied theology, was not a professional theologian.”<sup>86</sup> Moreover, this perspective is relying mostly on the interpretations of 20th century Jesuit theologians who have a cultural background quite different from St. Ignatius, who seems for instance to have had a conception of Incarnation clearly

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<sup>84</sup> CG 35 Decree 3

<sup>85</sup> “In what follows I assume that an “Ignatian theology” can be identified and elaborated by constructing its interpretation, explicit or implicit, of the Spiritual Exercises.” Also (Dulles, 1991, 523) “it appears that there are characteristic Jesuit concerns and themes in theology. These stem principally from the example and writings of St. Ignatius of Loyola.” See also (Dulles 1982)

<sup>86</sup> (Dulles 1982,1-2)

atonement oriented.<sup>87</sup> This intermingling of theology and Ignatian Spirituality that here is named Ignatian Theology is suitable for IA because, as Hollenbach explains, “it is a theology that seeks to lead those who have the privilege of the education and resources of most Jesuits to put those resources at the service of those who are poor and crucified.”<sup>88</sup> Concretely it is explained how this theology provides a theological foundation for our main thesis, namely, that one of the central features of IA is being close to the people it serves. It is also shown that Ignatian Theology provides a foundation for the understanding of empowerment proposed in this paper, namely, empowerment as creating capabilities.

The term Ignatian Theology is commonly understood the theology that undergirds or is distilled from the writings of St. Ignatius;<sup>89</sup> hence, it is usually done by Jesuit theologians and other theologians influenced by Ignatian Spirituality.<sup>90</sup> The ground from which this Ignatian Theology springs is Ignatian Spirituality, which in the context of this paper is best understood as a form of “practical mysticism.”<sup>91</sup> Essentially, Ignatian Theology may be qualified as “Christocentric, anthropocentric, ecclesiocentric, and theocentric.”<sup>92</sup> In what follows we claim that there is an Ignatian take on Theology that has its own theology of Creation-Incarnation, a theological anthropology, an ecclesiology oriented to mission, and finally a theology of the Cross that is consistent with the former. In order to explain these main points this section first refers to the work of different theologians,<sup>93</sup> and then it focus on the work of some

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<sup>87</sup> This point is clearly made by (Arzubalde 1991, 358-9;367-8) In Hollenbach’s words: “It is a mainstream theology interpreted in light of the distinctive charism of Ignatius and of the Society of Jesus as this has developed in recent history.”

<sup>88</sup> David Hollenbach comments to a draft version of this paper.

<sup>89</sup> (Dulles 1982); “Ignatian theology” “Does not necessarily involve adherence to a body of particular theological positions found in the writings of St. Ignatius.” “A variety of competing theologies, bound together by a loose family resemblance, can all legitimately claim, in one way or another, to be Ignatian.”

<sup>90</sup> “This is not because only Jesuits can have the Ignatian spirit, nor because all Jesuit theologians are authentically Ignatian, but because where we find Jesuits gravitating toward views that in some way correspond to Ignatian insights, one may legitimately presume an Ignatian derivation.” (Dulles 1982,3)

<sup>91</sup> “It can be called a mysticism of involvement,” understood as a “combination of world affirmation and world denial, reserve and commitment, personal creativity and obedient submission. It finds the sacred in the secular, God in creatures, grace in nature, contemplation in action, freedom in obedience, and, ultimately, life in death.” (Dulles 1991, 525)

<sup>92</sup> “Jesuit theology may be expected to be marked by a mysticism of grace, Christocentrism, ecclesial loyalty, esteem for the human, respect for freedom, and adaptability to changing situations.” (Dulles 1991, 538)

<sup>93</sup> I mainly quote Wênin, Gesché and Moltmann.

representatives of Ignatian Theology that can best help me make my basic thesis, namely, that it provides a theological foundation for one of the central features of IA, being close to the people it serves.<sup>94</sup> Finally, occasional reference to the Spiritual Exercises (Ex) are made, particularly to the so-called “second week,” (which is the part of the Exercises devoted to the following of Jesus) because Ignatian Advocacy is the Society of Jesus response to Jesus’ call.<sup>95</sup>

## 1. Incarnation and Creation.

According to the narrative of creation in Genesis, God created in otherness: God created the human being as a being other than God and as someone capable of entering into relationship with God.<sup>96</sup> According to the Scripture, the human being is created as a free partner called to fulfill the vocation of becoming son with the Son.<sup>97</sup> This being created to be God’s image on earth is what differentiates human beings from the rest of created beings.<sup>98</sup> Interestingly enough, this being called to be God’s image on earth implies that God shares God’s capacity to create with the human being. God appoints human beings the stewards of creation,<sup>99</sup> and in order to let them deploy their creative power and exercise their mission of stewardship, God steps back and “rests.”<sup>100</sup>

As Rahner puts it, if God is *the* Almighty, it follows that power as such should be “reserved to

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94 I mainly rely on the works of Jon Sobrion S.J., Ignacio Ellacuría S.J., and J.I. Gonzalez Faus S.J. See (Ashley 2000, 18).

95 Ellacuría considers the Second Week “with its contemplations on the life of Jesus and the election of a way of life,” as the “most typically Ignatian, the heart of the Exercises, and hence the focal point for the interpretation of the Exercises.” This focal point lies in the.” (Ashley 2000, 27)

96 “La relación de Dios con su imagen es más íntima que la relación de Dios con la creación que es expresión de su voluntad. El ser humano es creado a imagen y semejanza de Dios, es creado ‘capax Dei’.” (Gesché 1995)

97 “El hombre fue creado en la Imagen de Dios según la Imagen de Dios...principio divino de donación de sí, o arquetipo... fue creado en Cristo, o según Cristo, que es la Imagen del Dios invisible; y su inserción en Cristo es la meta del acto creador.” (González Faus, 1984, 289).

98 “Se puede pensar que toda la existencia de Dios, toda su obra de creación se juega sobre esta cuestión, ¿Cómo entrar en relación de amor con el ser humano, de tal forma que pueda ser plenamente él mismo?” (Wénin 2007,191)

99 (Löning, 2000, 107-12)

100 (Wénin, 2007,27-41)

God alone;” therefore, the power God’s creatures hold comes from God.<sup>101</sup> Hence, by creating, God “the almighty he who alone is really mighty” ceases to be alone and ceases to keep power only to Godself. In creating, God is sharing the power of being.<sup>102</sup> Thus, power as coming from God is in principle something good; the question is that it can be “subject to perversion and misuse.”<sup>103</sup> As a consequence, Rahner claims that the use of power “is not irrelevant to salvation: it is a process of either salvation or perdition.”<sup>104</sup> IA that seeks to engage in transforming structures of power that foster uneven power relations favoring the powerful over against the powerless, finds in the theology of creation its blue print. IA seeks to intervene in righting power relations, in God’s very special and concrete way, by “making God’s power present”<sup>105</sup> from inside history, remaining close to the people, becoming one of them, empowering them from within.

Reframing our advocacy terminology in terms borrowed from scripture and from Rahner, we would say that, in creating, God disempowers Godself to let human beings exercise their capabilities and gain power.<sup>106</sup> This movement of God’s retraction was explained in Jewish literature as kabala or “Tzimtzum”<sup>107</sup> and as kenosis in Trinitarian Theology.<sup>108</sup> All these terms convey a complex and wonderful image: out of love and as part of God’s creative

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<sup>101</sup> (Rahner, 1974, 391)

<sup>102</sup> “All beings, simply because they exist-in themselves and in contrast to others- inevitably have power.” Rahner, *Theology of Power*. Search references. (Rahner, 1974, 391-2)

<sup>103</sup> (Rahner, 1974, 396)

<sup>104</sup> (Rahner, 1974, 402)

<sup>105</sup> Ellacuría in (Ellacuría, *The Historicity of Christian Salvation* 1993, 282)

<sup>106</sup> “Es el secreto de su dulzura: Es signo de la libertad de Dios, Creador del universo que pone término a su poder y que abre para la criatura un espacio de libertad”. (Wênin 2007,15)

<sup>107</sup> “Concepto clásico de la Cábala desarrollado por Rabbi Issac Luria; significa literalmente contracción...La contracción es total, lo infinito en su totalidad y poder se ha alienado en lo finito entregándonos a él... Renunciando a su propia invulnerabilidad, el eterno fondo del mundo permitió a éste que existiera.” (Jonas 1992,206)

<sup>108</sup> “Creation can be seen as the grafting ad extra of the trinitarian life itself, a freely desired grafting. It would not be an abstract causality, but an act of communication and self-giving by the divine life itself.” Ellacuría in (Ellacuría, *The Historicity of Christian Salvation* 1993, 276); “El mundo tiene su lugar para ser en el espacio de relación que es la pericoreis trinitaria por lo que participa de su vida... La creación puede ser considerada una auto-expresión de la Trinidad, por medio de la cual las divinas personas-en-relación habilitan un lugar, en el seno de la vida divina, para lo que no es Dios” (D. Edwards 2006,41).

action, God leaves space for another being to be free before God and to be co-creator.<sup>109</sup> God is the omnipotent one who has freely renounced the exercise of God's omnipotence.<sup>110</sup> In this paradox, God has freely limited God's possibilities,<sup>111</sup> for God has freely renounced God's full power by giving responsibility to human beings and allowing them to become God's image.<sup>112</sup> This is the most powerful example and the greatest paradigm of empowering and of accompanying that IA could possibly find.<sup>113</sup>

Ignatian Theology shares with other Incarnation Theologies the understanding that God not only creates the world but also inhabits it, for God rested in God's creation and is sustaining it from within.<sup>114</sup> For Rahner, the God who wants all human beings to come to the fullness of life (be saved) is "the ground of the world";<sup>115</sup> God is to be found in it as in a "mirror."<sup>116</sup> God is being-with and remaining-with the creation, which at the same time exists as a being in itself different from God.<sup>117</sup> God cares for and guides creation and works in it through the Holy Spirit, to the point that the fate of creation is not indifferent to God. Rather, God has so invested God's Glory in creating that creation is not an experiment or a show taking place outside or far from

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109 Drawing on Flp. 2 Moltmann comments "Dios se priva de su omnipotencia que todo lo llena y, como Creador, toma la figura de siervo... en un sentido más profundo, crea cuando prepara, cuando se retira." (Moltmann, Jurgén 1987, 102).

110 "Es necesaria la omnipotencia para ser capaz de renunciar a uno mismo y entregarse a otro... para ser capaz de replegarse en el dar con vistas a preservar la independencia y libertad del destinatario del don", (D. Edwards 2006, 53); "God himself goes out of himself, God in his quality of the fullness which gives away itself." (Rahner, Karl 1958, 115)

111 "Es fiel sólo a la decisión propia de llevar hasta el final su alianza contraída de forma libre" (H. v. Balthasar 1997, 234).

112 "Dios, en vez de como ser absolutamente ilimitado, debe ser entendido como un Dios que acepta libremente los límites que le impone el hecho de amar a unos seres creados y finitos" (Estrada 1997, 204)

113 "El hecho de que la omnipotente naturaleza fuera capaz de descender a la bajeza del hombre... es una cierta superabundancia de poder." (Gregorio de Nisa, citado por (H. v. Balthasar, *Mysterium Salutis* III/2 1971, 252)

114 "Desde la óptica de la criatura, esta relación constituye su participación finita y específica en las relaciones trinitarias de Dios... a través de la creación continua, las criaturas están ya en Dios, y Este está presente ya en ellas, habilitándolas para ser y devenir", (Edwards, D., 2006, 42).

115 (Rahner, *Ignatian Mysticism and joy in the world* 1963, 284)

116 "If we wish to be Christians, we must profess belief in the universal and serious salvific purpose of God towards all men." (Rahner, *Christianity and Non-Christian Religions* 1966, 122)

117 This concept of God inhabiting the creation without the creation becoming God is called "Paneisteísmo" which means "todo está en Dios... como movimiento hacia Dios, tal como escribía Tomás de Aquino <Todas las cosas tienden a asimilarse a Dios>". (González Faus, 1987, 51)

God. As Teilhard would have it,<sup>118</sup> creation is evolving and displaying its capabilities, breathing in God's divine medium.<sup>119</sup>

It is proper to our understanding of Ignatian Theology, to have a broad conception of Incarnation. In this conception, Creation is part of the Incarnation and has its plenitude in Christ as the highest possible instance of God's communication.<sup>120</sup> For Rahner and Teilhard, Christ is considered to be the Alpha and Omega of Creation, crowning the whole created order.<sup>121</sup> In this conception, the Incarnation of the Son is not necessarily linked to the fall;<sup>122</sup> it is rather the culmination of creation, showing God's willingness to be in relation with God's creatures.<sup>123</sup> In Jesus God becomes human history,<sup>124</sup> and conversely human history becomes the history of God.<sup>125</sup> The God of creation, the God depicted in Scripture walking with God's people, becomes human and in so doing opens up new possibilities: "God's self-revelation comes by making 'more' history, that is, a greater and better history than existed in the past."<sup>126</sup> We might still ask with Anselm, "Cur Deus Homo?" And we might respond with Irenaeus of Lyon, so that God

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118 Who was "undoubtedly inspired, in part, by the Christology of the Spiritual Exercises," (Ashley 2000, 533)

119 "Es Dios mismo, que se muestra... como siendo el centro de todas las cosas, de todos los seres, y como el destino de todos ellos, es como un "Foco universal" que nos ilumina, es como "la sonrisa universal." (Quiles 1975,23)

<sup>120</sup> "Are there any valid arguments against the position which holds that the possibility of creation rests on that of Incarnation?... The Logos who has become part of the world is not merely the facto mediator of grace by his merit... he is also the person who by his free Incarnation creates the order of grace and nature as his own presupposition (nature) and his milieu." (Rahner, *Nature and Grace* 1960,176)

121 (Dulles, 1982) see also (Dulles 1991).

122 "Ignatius holds that, prior to the Fall, the Incarnation was already in the divine plan, but that only after the Fall was it revealed that the Son would be a figure of suffering. Many Jesuit theologians, working out of the Christocentrism of Ignatius, have maintained that even if Adam had not sinned, Christ would have become man." (Dulles, 1991,4)

<sup>123</sup> "God himself is man is both the unique summite and the ultimate basis of God's relationship to his creation, in which he and his creation grow in direct (and not in converse) proportion. This positive nature of creation... reaches its qualitatively unique climax, therefore in Christ... the all-embracing in whom... creation finds its stability." (Rahner, *The Humanity of Jesus* 1953,43 )

124 "Dios es un "proceso" que asume en camino hacia la plenificación final (1Cor 15,28). En este proceso, Dios, participa en y se deja afectar por la historia en el Hijo, y... la historia es asumida en el Espíritu." (Sobrin, Jon 1977,171).

125 "El Dios del reino es el origen y el fundamento de la historia, pero también su meta y el impulso para caminar hacia ella a través de la historia... una historia que está toda ella atravesada y sustentada por el obrar de Dios." (Vitoria CORMENZANA 2008, 241)

126 (Ellacuría, *The Historicity of Christian Salvation* 1993, 259); see also (Kevin F. Burke 2000) 157-166; "[T]he Logos became man, that the changing history of this human reality is *his* own history: our time became the time of the eternal, our death the death of the immortal God himself." (Karl Rahner 1958, 113)

would be the God of many children;<sup>127</sup> or with Rahner, “If God wills to become non-God, man comes to be,”<sup>128</sup> or as Ellacuría puts it, “Only a God who has come down into history can raise it up to God.”<sup>129</sup>

Ignatian Theology properly understands that God’s Incarnation reveals the real greatness of humanity: human beings are created to share God’s divinity, to become part of the Trinitarian relations, to share God’s life.<sup>130</sup> This is the theological foundation that IA claims for the rights of its beneficiaries; they have been created in God’s image and “to have life in abundance” by developing their capabilities. This movement of Incarnation is the way God has chosen to reveal Godself and to let human beings share in God’s plenitude and joy. In what we would call salvation understood in a proper way,<sup>131</sup> God accompanies and empowers God’s people in a paradigmatic way for IA, taking the risk of being with and sharing their lives and responsibilities.<sup>132</sup> Out of God’s desire to be God of many children, God trusts in a mysterious combination of God’s grace and human freedom. God creates human beings as open-ended, as a project of becoming in process what in image they are: sons and daughters in the Son, image of God.

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127 “Para esto se hizo hombre la Palabra e hijo de hombre el Hijo de Dios: para que el hombre, captando la Palabra, recibiendo la filiación, se convierta en hijo de Dios”, (Adv.Haer, III 19 I) as quote in (González Faus, La Humanidad Nueva 1984, 479)

<sup>128</sup> And Rahner continues, “the Son of Man, and men, who exist ultimately because the Son of Man was to exist.” (Karl Rahner 1958, 116)

129 (Ellacuría, 1993, 260)

130 God created the world “porque lo desea y porque quiere tener un socio con quien compartir la dicha del ser y de la vida”, (Gesché A., 1995,317).

131 El “modo de salvar propio de Dios es encarnarse,” (Gesché A., 1995,311). Salvation designates in this paper: A positive state of affairs (life, dignity, freedom, fraternity) that is an ongoing process and that therefore takes different forms. It implies struggle against structures and the uprooting of such structures, and on the other hand internal, to accompany the person in getting rid of her sin and then salvation involves redemption. (J. Sobrino,2008, 57-8)

132 Burke summarizes Ellacuría’s conception of Salvation in History “Far from abandoning the people to their pain, God becomes involved in their struggle and empowers them to leave the situation of oppression.” (Kevin F. Burke 2000,160); “The way God has to save is engaging in liberation from within history and that movement draws God near suffering people.” (Kevin F. Burke, Robert Lassalle-Klein (editors) 2006)



Creation and incarnation find their fundament and roots in God's desire to share God's glory, in God's desire to be in communion.<sup>133</sup> The Incarnation of the Son is a sacrament of God's willingness to be in close relation to the free beings God created. It is also God's partaking in creation with all its possible downsides.<sup>134</sup> Seen from this perspective, Ignatian Theology understands that Jesus died on the cross not as a culmination of the incarnation, but because in the created world sin has power even over the Son of God.<sup>135</sup> Again we find here a theological fundament for our claim that IA, in remaining with the people, partakes in the way God does things. As Christians we confess that the incarnation is the normative way of talking about God,<sup>136</sup> that in Jesus of Nazareth God was made one with a human being, that God was made history.<sup>137</sup> Therefore we got to know God as God revealed Godself in Jesus.<sup>138</sup> As the effort of a Christian institution, IA can find guidance and example in the dynamic of Incarnation: God made Godself one with God's people. Just as God became human to bring joy and fullness to human beings from within, sharing with them life and joy, hope and sorrow, so IA is called to do likewise.

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<sup>133</sup> "If, as Pius XII emphasizes, grace and glory are two stages of the one divinization of man; if, as classical theology has always emphasized, glory means a self-communication of God to the created spirit which is... God's imparting himself to." ((Rahner, *Nature and Grace* 1960,175)

<sup>134</sup> "Un Dios que no está alejado, separado y cerrado en sí mismo, sino involucrado en aquello por lo que se preocupa... este Dios cuidador no es ningún mago que en el acto mismo de preocuparse ya resuelva lo que es motivo de su preocupación. Algo ha dejado por hacer a otros actores, haciendo así que lo que le preocupa esté en manos de ellos." (Jonas 1992,205).

<sup>135</sup> "Por ser un amor situado en un mundo irredento." (J. Sobrino, 1977,159). Then with Ireneus we claim that history is the progressive process by which the spirit gets use to leave amongst humans and of humans to perceive God's will and get to God. [esta historia es el «lento acostumbrarse» del Espíritu a morar en la carne]

<sup>136</sup> "Cuando Efeso y Calcedonia afirmaron que el auténtico concepto de Divinidad se construía en el cristianismo con los elementos concretos aportados por la vida humana de Jesús, se constituyó a la historia en la categoría válida para pensar correctamente al Absoluto, es decir, a Dios." (Segundo 1980,670)

<sup>137</sup> "Lo especial, lo propio, lo único del cristianismo es que encuentra la vida y la esencia de Dios precisamente en la particularidad histórica que es Jesús de Nazaret." (Segundo, 1990, 665). Ellacuría states: "In the incarnation... God has interiorized himself in history," because in the "historical incarnation of the Word makes the Father and the Holy Spirit present" in "a radically distinct manner." (Lassalle-Klein 2009,377)

<sup>138</sup> "Porque Dios no es lo que queda en Jesús una vez que se le resta el hombre y su historia... es la historia misma de Jesús, su modo concreto de ser hombre, lo que elevado a la potencia de lo ilimitado nos indica lo que Dios quiso ser y de hecho es." (Segundo 1980, 665)

IA finds its normative way of doing advocacy in the Incarnation of the Son, who became incarnate so that God could address humans as companions in their own language. The Incarnation means that God was made history to reveal the possibilities of history and to share our humanity so that we could grasp God's divinity. God was in Jesus enacting God's liberation from within, establishing with human beings a personal "relationship," in which God became a "direct partner" of all human beings.<sup>139</sup> God made the cause of the poor and the impoverished God's own. God has thrown his lot in with the poor of the earth to the point that God has promised not to wipe the tears from God's eyes until the tears are wiped from the faces of all those who suffer, all those who have been crucified by history.<sup>140</sup> This is how God engages with reality, coming close to the people, remaining with them, being one with them, especially with those in greatest need, and we claim that God's way of proceeding should be normative for IA.

Finally, the Incarnation is the principle that governs the logic of the Ex. It is central to the theology undergirding the Ex, namely, that God can be found "to the highest degree possible, in human life and history,"<sup>141</sup> that God is to be found in the world and through the world.<sup>142</sup> The spirituality and logic of the Ex are profoundly incarnational; they rely on the revelation of a personal God who is willing to encounter and be encountered by human beings, who is freely communicating Godself.<sup>143</sup> Essential to the Ex is the understanding that the "God made manifest in history" can be found in human affairs and daily life because Incarnation implies that "no

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<sup>139</sup> "God, in the movement of his gracious self-bestowal upon man and in verbal revelation, has assumed a relationship to man," and through "becomes direct partner of man himself." (Rahner, *The Church's Commission* 1971,304)

<sup>140</sup> Ellacuria defines the "crucified people" as that "vast portion of humankind, which is literally and actually crucified by natural,... historical, and personal oppressions." (Ellacuría, 1993,580). It is an expression that denounces and "unmasks the present world order by reconnecting the appearance of the 'subspecies of the nonexistent' with the parallel appearance of the obscene wealth and narrow concentrations of power" (Burke 2003,124)

<sup>141</sup> (Endean, 2001,70)

<sup>142</sup> "'divinity' here must be interpreted in Christian terms." Which entails "God united to human flesh and blood, to Jesus in the incarnation, and to humanity at large in grace." (Endean, Spring 1995,90)

<sup>143</sup> We all have "access to this mysterious fundamental reality," he understands that Ignatius teaching presupposes that God is permanently present in reality capable of communicating directly with the person. (McGuinness, March 1999,97)

dimension of human life lies beyond God's care and concern.”<sup>144</sup> It is proper to the Ignatian Mysticism of reality to understand that God is to be found in reality, in the concreteness of human history, because God is “eternally in solidarity with creation.”<sup>145</sup> In Ignatian Spirituality, God is a “living God Who is always at work in history,”<sup>146</sup> communicating Godself, since God’s Christ and Spirit “are a part of human history, and constitute its deepest reality.”<sup>147</sup> IA finds in the Lord who is bring about the liberation of God’s people from within reality an invitation to seek God in the midst of its advocacy efforts.

## **2. Theological Anthropology: Human beings are created to be “capax dei.”**

As a consequence of this theology of creation and Incarnation, “God's presence extends to the whole world,” and the locus of God's self-revelation is “God's living and working in the diversity of everything and every person.”<sup>148</sup> It is proper to Ignatian Theology to understand that God’s self-communication does “presuppose the creature,” who is capable of “experiencing God” as part of the creature’s openness to God’s grace, which “we call spirit.”<sup>149</sup> God is God’s gift to God’s creatures as a “birthright,”<sup>150</sup> inwardly present in the believer through the Holy Spirit.<sup>151</sup> As a result, human nature itself is a mystery, for in its essence it is transcendently open to the Mystery of God.<sup>152</sup> It is inherent to the Ex that human beings are creatures of God, and that they remain in existential dependence on God and surrounded by God,

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144 (USCB 1986, # 30)

145 (Endean, Spring 1995,92)

146 (Giuliani, April 1995,19)

147 (Endean, 1990, 403)

148 (Exx 235-236). It is this to which Karl Rahner responded by distinguishing the particular empirical patterns of human history from the underlying transcendental structure present in all of them. (Theobald 43/4 October 2004, 152)

149 (Rahner, *The Anonymous Christian* 1963, 392)

150 (McGuinness March 1999)

151 (David M. Stanley 426-8).

<sup>152</sup> “Man is therefore mystery in his essence... referred to the incomprehensible God... the transcendence which we are and which we accomplish brings our existence and God’s existence together: and both as mystery.” (Karl Rahner 1958, 108); This transcendental openness is at the root of any metaphysics of knowledge. (Rahner, *Nature and Grace* 1960,178)

who cares for them (Principle and Foundation and Contemplation to Attain Love).<sup>153</sup> This being created in God and sustained in God makes of the human being an irreducible creature,<sup>154</sup> always open by nature to grace, yearning to be more than she is in any concrete moment.<sup>155</sup> Moreover, as Rahner puts it, Ignatian Theology holds that the human being is capable of being assumed by God: “[T]he creature is endowed, by virtue of its inmost essence and constitution, with the possibility of being assumed, of becoming the material of a possible history of God. God’s creative act always drafts the creature as the paradigm of possible utterance of himself.”<sup>156</sup>

Central to Ignatian Theology and at the core of the Ex is the conception that human beings are able to perceive God’s will for them and that by doing God’s will they achieve salvation (fully rejoicing in God), which Ignatius calls God’s visitation and consolation.<sup>157</sup> The Ex understand that the human being is “capax dei,” that there is an inner openness in the human being to the transcendent, to the point that in the Ex human sensation is a sign that opens the human being to transcendence.<sup>158</sup> Ignatian theology holds that human nature is radically open to a transcendent perception of reality, what Aloysius Pieris SJ called the “mysticism of reality.”<sup>159</sup> Ignatian Theology adheres to Ignatius’ “world-affirming” mysticism, which seeks to discern the presence of

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<sup>153</sup> In arguing in the same line, Rahner states: “we can only speak ultimately of God by engaging... in anthropology; and ultimately any information about anthropology... can be given only when we engage in theology.” (Rahner, *The Dignity of Man* 1954,240-1)

<sup>154</sup> When explaining the features of man’s human nature, Rahner claims that: “Man is Spirit... dependent on the total unity of reality, i.e. on God.” Moreover, for human partaking in the divine, “each man is someone unique” human beings are “‘immortal’ and the subject of an eternal destination and and destiny.” (Rahner, *The Dignity of Man* 1954,239)

<sup>155</sup> “Our actual nature is never ‘pure’ nature... It is a nature which is continually being determined... by the supernatural grace of salvation offered to it.” (Rahner, *Nature and Grace* 1960,183)

<sup>156</sup> (Karl Rahner 1958, 115)

<sup>157</sup> See “Discernimiento” in (Grupo de Espiritualidad Ignaciana 2007,607-611)

<sup>158</sup> Rahner contends that the existence of God is the condition of possibility of human intelligence and the object to which such intelligence tends. (Fields 1996, 230)

<sup>159</sup> For Endean, “those who have developed these spiritual senses” have a “sensitivity... schooled in the Gospel — and hence, quite spontaneously, they see in ordinary every-day occurrences the power and wisdom of God, even where others perceive only stumbling-blocks and scandal.” (Endean, 1990, 412)

God “in daily business.”<sup>160</sup> This mysticism holds that the human intellect and senses, through faith and grace, are capable of reaching the transcendent in the midst of reality.<sup>161</sup> Therefore, being *capax dei* means that through our own sensation and feeling and imagination, we can find this presence of the Other in our midst.<sup>162</sup> This is most likely the intuition at the core of the expression “spiritual senses” in the Ex, which according to SJ scholars designates the ability of the human being “to find God in all things.”<sup>163</sup> For Ignatius, the human being is related to God through concrete reality and finds God in his everyday concerns and life. It is not that we have some ethical obligation to meet reality’s ontological claim upon us (this language would be alien to Ignatius). Rather, it is a whole religious conception: as created in God’s image, we are part of God’s plan for creation, and fulfilling the plan is our salvation and plenitude.<sup>164</sup> IA drinks from this well of Ignatian mysticism, which far from running away from the world understands Christian perfection as union with God “in involvement in the world.”<sup>165</sup> This is Ignatius’s way of understanding how human beings partake of the Trinitarian movement of incarnation.<sup>166</sup>

As it has been explained above, Ignatian Theology adheres to the conception that individuals find that God desires them to live their lives in plenitude, and that God lets them feel God’s desire and orientation for their lives. God wants God’s children to live in fullness and orients them toward this fulfillment.<sup>167</sup> As a consequence, each individual has to discern what is

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160 (Dulles, 1982)

161 For Ellacuría (Zubiri) “The human, as a formally open essence, and history in its essential openness are the realities in which this inscription of the Trinitarian life [creation] can give of itself more and more.” (Kevin F. Burke 2000, 167)

162 As Balthasar puts it, “sensation and imagination implicitly express the activity of spirit.” And that conversely the spirit, “even when perceiving the higher ranges of divine knowledge,” remains grounded in sensation.” (Fields 1996, 238)

163 (Endean, *The Ignatian Prayer of the Senses* 1990, 431)

164 “Christians believe in a God of self-communication, a God whose Christ and whose Spirit are a part of human history, and constitute its deepest reality” (Endean, *The Ignatian Prayer of the Senses* 1990, 403; 420-1; 423; 425; 429; 431)

165 “Ignatius is seeking to instill in the SJ a kind of mysticism that entails being involved, commitment to, and affirmation of the world.” (Endean 2001, 73)

166 Explaining how Ellacuría’s take on Incarnation is linked to ecclesiology, Burke states “The word became history through power of the Spirit, and the Word continues to become history in the community that the same Spirit gathers, animates and, sends to the world.” (Kevin F. Burke 2000) 156; see also (Kevin F. Burke, Robert Lassalle-Klein (editors) 2006) 157-9.

167 Discernment of God’s will for each individual assumes that somehow God manages to let God’s will or dream or desire for each of God’s creature be felt: the “uniqueness of God’s design” matches “the uniqueness of each individual subject, each

God's desire for her.<sup>168</sup> Ignatian theology claims that in the Spirit of Lord, we are given eyes to see and ears to hear so that we can discover both the structures and mechanisms of sin (that keep God's people impoverished and oppressed) and the presence of God guiding God's people even in the midst of struggle.<sup>169</sup> In the Spirit we seek to perceive God's gaze over the world to discover in the fabric of reality how God is at work and, conversely, to uncover veiled mechanisms that are denying God's people fulfillment.<sup>170</sup> This process of attentive seeking God's gaze, that in Ignatian Spirituality is called discernment, is essential to the way IA engages in the service of God's mission. IA needs to listen carefully to the Spirit, in an attitude of affectionate attention to reality; it needs to be attentive to the more of God in reality, looking at the world with what Metz called "a mysticism of open eyes."<sup>171</sup> According to Burke SJ, from this mysticism of reality springs a particular way of doing theology, one that has "a particular sensitivity to suffering, a theology that reflects from and on a faith that does justice."<sup>172</sup>

Since IA often will have to develop its discernment in the midst of struggle, it takes hope and strength from Ignatian Theology's understanding that the Lord who set God's people free from one oppression continues to be willingly and wholeheartedly working for the liberation of

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individual group." (Theobald 43/4 October 2004, 152) However, the matter of discerning God's will is a really rich topic that exceeds by large the aims of this paper. In a nutshell it must be said that one discerns God's will looking to one's life and seeking for a tendency whereby God is calling or moving towards a way of leaving in accordance to God's will for one. God's will for ones is understood as a way of leaving that is in consonance with God desire for one's life. In this point see: (Endean 2001,208-221); (Toner 1991,45-69); See also "Discernimiento" in (Grupo de Espiritualidad Ignaciana 2007,607-611)

168 And "Each individual is expected to find God and reach existential decisions in complete liberty, in that inner sanctuary where the person is directly in communion with its Lord." (Dulles, March 1982,9)

169 "As a result of the Spirit given to them, the followers of Jesus have the capacity to "discover, discern and realize" the presence of this "more" in historical reality." (Kevin F. Burke 2000,163)

170 "El alcance epistemológico de la praxis, de los pobres, nos lleva al terreno mismo de la espiritualidad... Se trata, nada menos, que de hacer teología como intellectus amoris." (Rodríguez Panizo, 2000,11). See (Sorbino, 1994, 42-44)

171 (Theobald 43/4 October 2004, 146) "In the end Jesus did not teach an ascending mysticism of closed eyes, but rather a God-mysticism with an increased readiness for perceiving, a mysticism of open eyes, which sees more and not less. It is a mysticism that especially makes visible all invisible and inconvenient suffering, and – convenient or not – pays attention to it and takes responsibility for it, for the sake of a God who is a friend to human beings." (Metz, 1998,163)

172 (Burke, Pedro Arrupe's Mysticism of Open Eyes 2007)

God's people.<sup>173</sup> For Ignatian Theology Jesus Christ through his "exaltation" is not in an otherworldly place but is rather "more dynamically present in the world than ever."<sup>174</sup> Therefore, it is possible to be encountered by him (Gutierrez) where he said he was to be found most certainly: in the Cross and in the neighbor, the places where God has especially revealed Godself.<sup>175</sup> Drawing on Ignatian theology, we suggest that IA is called to remain attentive to the presence of the Spirit in the world and to keep the centrality of Jesus and his life and teachings as inspiration for IA's mission. As a consequence, and in order to bridge the "historical distance separating the Scriptures" from IA's interventions in different cultural and political spaces, IA will require "inventiveness and discernment."<sup>176</sup>

IA has to cultivate a "discerning heart," a way of engaging the world which entails a process and an attitude of discernment that will help IA remain anchored in God. Against the promethean temptation of activism, the Spirit of discernment will remind IA that in the end it was born out of God's call to partake in God's liberation and that it is God who will lead IA's efforts to term.<sup>177</sup> Discernment reminds IA that its liberative praxis springs from God's call to fulfill Jesus' mission.<sup>178</sup> Ignatian Theology invites IA to bear in mind that the same Lord who sent Jesus to preach the Good News of the Liberation is calling IA to subvert reality and to become

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173 "La palabra hebrea hozetika [«que te sacó»]... también se puede leer huzetika [«Yo fui sacado contigo»]. Por decirlo así, Dios dijo: «Yo y vosotros salimos juntos de Egipto a la libertad»" (Petuchowski 2003,58)

174 (Stanley, 422)

175 "Christian communities that commit themselves to solidarity with those suffering and to confrontation with those attitudes and ways of acting which institutionalize injustice, will themselves experience the power and presence of Christ." (USCB, 1986, # 55)

176 "The Autobiography shows us how Ignatius in Jerusalem, under threat of death, had given up trying to follow the biblical text literally." (Theobald, October 2004, 151)

177 "[No es] condicionar el advenimiento futuro del Reino al esfuerzo prometeico del ser humano en la historia, ya que todo lo que Él puede hacer viene finalmente posibilitado por el don del Espíritu." (Lois, 1995,155)

178 Dios "en la plenitud de los tiempos, envía a su hijo para que hecho carne, venga a liberar a todos los hombres de todas las esclavitudes a que los tiene sujetos el pecado, la ignorancia, el hambre, la miseria y la opresión, en una palabra, la injusticia y el odio que tienen su origen en el egoísmo humano." (Gutiérrez 1972, 238)

what God dreamed for it.<sup>179</sup> Key to Ignatian Theology is the understanding that in the end one surrenders to God the mission and the efforts and trusts that God will multiply the fish and the loaves offered in the service of mission.<sup>180</sup> Finally, Ignatian Theology, follows the invitation of the Second Vatican Council to read the “sign of the times,” and in each circumstance of time and place discerns how better serve God’s mission. Like the exercitant in the first week of the Exercises, Ignatian theology invites IA to wonder in each concrete context “What have I done for Christ? What am I doing for Christ? What ought I to do for Christ?”<sup>181</sup>

### 3. An Ecclesiology of Discipleship:

The 32nd General Congregation of the Society of Jesus referred to the contemplation of the Trinity in the Ex, in which “Ignatius calls the retreatant to direct collaboration with the work of the Trinity in the world,”<sup>182</sup> as one of the key elements that define the SJ mission and spirituality. For Ignatian Theology, by partaking in Jesus’ mission the SJ actively “cooperates in the operation of the Trinity, to realize the salvific plan of God.”<sup>183</sup> This conception of being born from the Call of the Trinitarian God is proper to Ignatian Theology’s ecclesiology, an ecclesiology that understands that it is the Lord of the mission who congregates the community of disciples around him to send them to preach and enact the Kingdom of God.<sup>184</sup> Sobrino, who develops the centrality of discipleship and the Kingdom as main features of his contextual theology,<sup>185</sup> states that Ignatian spirituality is geared toward being contemplative in action and that

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179 “In Ignacio Ellacuria’s words, to save means to “overturn history,” not just mend it; it means to promote justice and announce a utopia, a civilization of love that must be a civilization of poverty to be real.” (Daniel G. Groody 2007, 100)

180 “El amor correcto hacia los pobres tiene que ser la lucha por su liberación... a los niveles mas elementales en que se juegan la vida y la muerte.” (Sobrino, 1985, 45)

181 Adapted from (Dulles, 1982)

182 (Lassalle-Klein, 2009, 373)

183 (Lassalle-Klein, 2009, 372)

184 “The Church in the mind of Ignatius is best conveyed by the term ‘community of disciples,’... an association of persons totally dedicated to the establishment of the reign of God in response to Christ’s gracious call.” (Dulles, 1982, 11)

185 The Kingdom of God is better understood as God being in charge so he proposes the term “reign of God,” that seeks to “transform a bad and unjust historical-social reality into a different good and just one.” (Sobrino, 2004, 71)



it finds its fulfillment in the mission.<sup>186</sup> In the same sense, IA is one response of the SJ to the Lord's call inviting the Ignatian Family to advocate the cause of God's children. In so doing IA partakes in the Trinitarian movement of salvation-incarnation.<sup>187</sup>

We contend that Jesus' mission, centered in the poor and the marginalized, is normative for IA. In Ignatian Theology, ecclesiology springs from discipleship, which is understood as being Jesus' companions, as sharing with Jesus, as being with him and living like him.<sup>188</sup> As Jesus was sent by God, so are the disciples sent by him. By engaging in Jesus' mission, the church partakes in the movement of the incarnation,<sup>189</sup> and she is invited to follow Jesus as the way to God, which is the way to our own fulfillment. For Ignatian Theology, it is in the humble God manifested in Jesus that the human being finds plenitude;<sup>190</sup> with Ignatius, it realizes that following Jesus means embracing God's kenotic movement of Incarnation.<sup>191</sup> As it has been noted above, Incarnation understood as continuation and culmination of creation implies that God disempowers Godself to embrace all that is human, as human.<sup>192</sup> In Ignatian Spirituality this following of Jesus should take the form of having no security but God, like Jesus.<sup>193</sup> It is by sharing this movement of surrendering to God, of embracing what Jesus loved and embraced, that we participate in the Incarnation and we come to know God and partake of God's mission

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186 When explaining his take on the expression being contemplative in action he claims "Loyola's aim is to point out the one and only locale where room is left for contemplation in action. It is to be found nowhere else except in the following of Jesus." (Sobrino, 1979, 423-4)

187 "The Ignatian vocational experience consists in a trinitarian experience, of the Trinity present and operative in this world, in all things... realizing its plan for the salvation of the whole world." (LaSalle-Klein, 2009, 371)

188 Jesús "llama personalmente al hombre a la identificación con su persona y, en ese seguimiento, a la tarea por el Reino, en y desde la participación en su misma vida." [93,3] [95,5]. (Arzubialde 1991, 221)

189 (Arzubialde 1991, 323)

190 Como Dios se ha encarnado en "la pobreza y humildad de la vida de Jesús," al abrazar estas, el ejercitante se introduce "en el dinamismo de la configuración con el Hijo." (Arzubialde 1991, 324)

191 (Arzubialde 1991, 316-7)

<sup>192</sup> "Desde el Origen de las Cosas comenzó un Adviento de recolección y de esfuerzo, a lo largo del cual, dócil y amorosamente, los determinismos se han ido plegando y orientando ... haciendo germinar por completo de su inmanencia el Supremo Trascendente ... y cuando llegó su día, se reveló de súbito la finalidad gratuita y profunda del Universo... Cristo es el término de la Evolución incluso natural de los seres; la evolución es santa, he aquí la verdad liberadora." (Chardin 1966, 78-9)

193 (Arzubialde 1991, 325)

of bringing creation to its plenitude.<sup>194</sup> By having God as our only safety net we are in the process of identification with Christ.<sup>195</sup>

Claiming that Jesus advocated the cause of the poor may sound like an anachronism. However, Jesus' announcement of the Kingdom "in deeds and words" had strong political implications because Jesus made those oppressed and rejected by the society the center of his concern, and he engaged in controversies with the powerful of his time on behalf of the poor. Moreover, Jesus became an outcast himself, identifying with the last and the least of God's people.<sup>196</sup> This commitment to recovering those in the margins, bringing them back to God's home, and making them the center of the Kingdom (see beatitudes) triggered the opposition of the powerful, who saw him as a threat.<sup>197</sup> Jesus was subversive because for him the marginalized person was the place of theophany par excellence (Mt 25).<sup>198</sup>

In following Jesus' public ministry, IA finds guidelines for its mission and its way of proceeding.<sup>199</sup> We contend that these are the ways in which IA has to proceed when advocating the cause of the poor: sharing their life, being close to them, and bringing their concerns to the center of IA's concerns. IA makes the poor, the oppressed, and the marginalized the center of its mission because it is following God's call to partake in the mission of Jesus, who made the poor the center of his concern.<sup>200</sup> Concretely, a central task in IA's collaborating in Jesus' mission and being sent by the Trinity is what Sobrino calls "taking

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194 (Arzubialde 1991,357)

195 The Exx are geared towards this goal as we can read in the petitions of the second week (Llamamiento del Rey (Llamamiento), las Dos Banderas (Banderas), los Tres grados de Humildad (Tres grados),) where the exercitant is invited to desire and to ask for being considered as crazy, receiving insults and being called names, for the sake of being closer to Jesus. (Ibid,313). See also (Brackley 2010, 145-7).

196 (Malina, 1995, 182-217)

197 "No es sostenible la derivación fundamentalmente apocalíptica del Reino de Dios jesuano... Un visionario aislado, por altos y subversivos que sean sus sueños, no es jamás condenado a muerte". (Aguirre 2001,59); Also (Ben-Chorin 2003, 185)

198 (Theissen 2005,249-315)

199 "The Christain community finds the crucified Jesus in the crucified people, and it follows the mesianic Jesus when it labours to take that people down from the cross." (Kevin F. Burke 2000,126)

200 (J. Sobrino, 2004,21,32-33,71-85)

the crucified people down from the cross."<sup>201</sup> Provocatively enough, Sobrino states that the disciples are sent to be "raisers," once they live in the hope of being risen by the Lord.<sup>202</sup>

For IA, this taking the crucified people down from the cross implies seeking to transform the structures that condemned them in the first place. In so doing, IA is faithful to Jesus, whose public ministry was conflictive because it involved defying those structures of power that kept God's people marginalized with discourses of purity and religious observance that veiled power struggles.<sup>203</sup> Of great importance for IA is that Jesus defied the very fabric of the structures of power inequality in his society.<sup>204</sup> He not only claimed that the poor and the marginalized were those preferred by God, but he actively opposed the power structures that were at the root of the system of marginalization,<sup>205</sup> what Ellacuría called the "kingdom of sin"<sup>206</sup> and Sobrino calls the "anti-Kingdom."<sup>207</sup> These structures of sin deny God's purpose for God's creation, and they "kill divine life."<sup>208</sup> Jesus opposed these

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201 I keep Sobrino and Ellacuría's provocative wording, because naming the impoverished and marginalized as "crucified people" denounces that their situation is the result of power relations that benefit others over and against them and therefore are rejected by God. Moreover, the expression crucified people relates to Jesus' cross where we learnt that God irrupts to make things anew. Sobrino refers to the EE of St Ignatius to illustrate Ellacuría's reference to the Third world as unveiling the sin of the First. Effectively, in the dynamic of the EE's 1st week, it is only when confronted by the light of God that the sinner becomes aware of his sinful situation. Accordingly, Ellacuría proposed that when confronted with the crucified reality one should react "bringing the crucified people down from the cross." (Sobrino, 2008, 3-8;25-6)

202 By so doing they imitate God who took Jesus down from the cross. See (LaSalle-Klein 2009, 370)

203 Sobrino identifies Jesus' denunciations that target different privileged groups, which are depicted as "oppressive" and "collective sinners who produce structural sin," are: the rich (171-4), the Scribes and Pharisees (174-5) and the chief priests (176-8). (Sobrino, 2004)

204 (Ellacuría, 1976, 35-38)

205 The purpose of Jesus' prophetic actions were the "transformation of society." (Sobrino, 2004,161)

206 "The world thus lines to be ruled by the lack of solidarity, mercy, and concern for others, ... formed by injustice and opposition to the gospel... the patent and verifiable negation of the Kingdom of God proclaimed by Jesus." (Ellacuría, 1993,274-6)

207 The Kingdom implies actively struggling against the anti-Kingdom. (LaSalle-Klein,2009,362) I refer to them as sin, because they deny God's will and desire for God's children that they will live in plenitude.

208 I make main JP II words to explain why I use the words sin and structures of sin "'Sin" and "structures of sin" are categories which are seldom applied to the situation of the contemporary world. However, one cannot easily gain a profound understanding of the reality that confronts us unless we give a name to the root of the evils which afflict us." (S.R.S. nº 36). And he continues to explain "Structures of sin which. . . are rooted in personal sin and thus always linked to the concrete acts of individuals who introduce these structures, consolidate them, and make them difficult to remove." (Pope JP II, Sollicitudo Rei Socialis, 36); Or, in Gutiérrez words: "El pecado se da en estructuras opresoras, en la explotación del hombre por el hombre, en la dominación y esclavitud de pueblos, razas y clases sociales. El pecado porque, entonces, como la alienación fundamental, como la raíz de una situación de injusticia y explotación... El pecado exige una liberación radical, pero ésta incluye necesariamente una liberación política." (Gutiérrez 1972,237)

mechanisms in the name of God and on behalf of the poor.<sup>209</sup> Sobrino and Ellacuría understand that Jesus' prophetic praxis was aimed at triggering controversies, denouncing injustice, and revealing that these situations were not the result of God's will but of men seeking power.<sup>210</sup> Thus, when IA seeks to engage in transforming power relations and the structures that perpetuate them, IA is responding to Jesus' denunciation of the structures of sin that were opposed to Jesus' revelation of a God of life was highly political,<sup>211</sup> for it is a God who demands caring for one's neighbor over and against the idols that provoke the death of the neighbor.<sup>212</sup> Hence, IA legitimately challenges oppressive power structures as a response to God's call to continue Jesus' mission, for Jesus himself engaged in controversies and defied structures of power on behalf of the poor and the marginalized.<sup>213</sup> As Sobrino puts it "Jesus himself is the historical sacrament of God's option for the poor."<sup>214</sup>

By defying these structures that keep God's people marginalized, IA follows Jesus' engagement in bringing about the Kingdom and partakes in the prophetic tradition of the Scriptures, which portrays as idols those powers denying God's people life in plenitude.<sup>215</sup> Moreover, IA engages in the movement of the Trinitarian God who not only became human, but a human serving the poor and living among them.<sup>216</sup> IA is invited to become part of what Ellacuría names "structural grace."<sup>217</sup> And once again, in Jesus IA discovers not only "what" its

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209 (Sobrino, 2004, 95-99)

210 (Sobrino, 2004). See also (Kevin F. Burke, Robert Lassalle-Klein (editors) 2006) 175

211 (Ellacuría, 1976,23;46-50)

212 (Sobrino, 2004, 163) In Sobrino's own words, for Jesus "right service of God not merely can be, but must necessarily be service of humankind."

213 Jesus was killed as a revolutionary According to Harrington "what got Jesus killed ... was the fact that he was a radical threat to the religious and political powers of his time." Jesus "got in the way" by defending the victims of their policies, in the name of the Kingdom of God..." he goes on to state that the four Gospels coincide in "suggesting that his death was ... the logical consequence of who Jesus was and the circumstances in which he lived and worked." (Lassalle-Klein 2009, 368)

214 (Sobrino, 1993, 688)

215 Sobrino links Jesus uncloaking idolatry with the Jewish Testament tradition, in which the relation of God with God's people is always threatened as a temptation of idolatry. (Sobrino, 2004, 185-193)

216 (Sobrino, 1993, 686-7)

217 Which are the structures that "objectify grace" because they serve as "vehicles of that power in favor of humanity." (Kevin F. Burke 2000,169)

mission is, but “how” it is to be carried out, the way it must proceed to transform the reality of the impoverished and the oppressed. As Lassalle-Klein remarks, for Sobrino the miracles, the preaching, and the closeness of Jesus allowed the poor to believe in new opportunities and possibilities thus far denied to them; they perceived that in Jesus God was bring about the Liberation of God’s people.<sup>218</sup> IA seeks to continue Jesus’ mission, which meant for the poor and marginalized a source of hope and resistance, for it meant that God was coming close to them.<sup>219</sup> In Ellacuría’s words “Jesus becomes present and intervenes in a special salvific way as the fundamental mediator of God’s history in seemingly profane places, such as that of the poor in this world.”<sup>220</sup> This is for Ellacuría how Christianity understands transcendence, as “empowering the people for their struggles,” and this is one of IA’s declared aims.

Finally, by deploying a critical analysis of reality and raising a prophetic voice on behalf of the poor, IA is serving the mission of the Church. Following Ellacuría’s historicization of salvation, Sobrino claims that “since poverty and suffering are massive and have historic causes, mercy must be historicized as a struggle against injustice, in favor of justice.”<sup>221</sup> Historicized mercy demands that the church engage in advocating the cause of the poor, by means of “prophetic denunciation,” proclaiming the truth about victims and perpetrators, and naming the victims to save them from nonexistence.<sup>222</sup> IA by remaining close to the people and advocating their cause is contributing to this prophetic role of the church.

Ellacuría’s statement that the church’s option for the poor should not be passive is of great importance for IA. This observation is in continuity with the Catholic Social Teaching’s principle of

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218 “El reino de Dios es lo que ocurre entre Jesús y los enfermos, entre su fuerza y la fe de las personas: ambos elementos deben unirse... La presencia del Reino de Dios radica en tal experiencia del Espíritu Santo.” (Moltmann, 1997,17-8).

219 For Sobrino “we must see [the miracles] through the eyes of the poor country folk of Galilee as liberative signs and expressions of God’s compassion. The miracles arouse faith “in a God who, coming close, makes us believe in new possibilities actively denied to the poor in history.” (Lassalle-Klein 2009,364)

220 (Ellacuría, 1993,274)

<sup>221</sup> (Sobrino, 2004, 26)

222 (Sobrino, 2008, 27-9). Likewise in (Sobrino, 1993, 689-90)

subsidiarity and with what in regard to IA has been called people-centered empowerment.<sup>223</sup> Ellacuría and Sobrino demand that the dignity and the needs of the poor be at the center of any poverty alleviation initiative.<sup>224</sup> They claim that the poor should be at the key active agents of their own process; they should be allowed to take the lead, and they should demand that their opinion be taken into account. This will require radical inclusivity, patience and accompaniment.<sup>225</sup>

Just as Jesus' prophetic standing consisted in the "critical contrasting of the proclamation of the fullness of the Kingdom of God with a definite historical situation," so IA is called to engage in the prophetic denunciation of the power structures that under different discourses of truth (see Power section) veil unequal power relations.<sup>226</sup> By so doing IA serves the mission of the Church, which seeks to be "mediatrix of salvation" in society and is called to have a "critical" function. As Rahner puts it, "It becomes clear that the unity between love of God and love of Neighbor implies an *attitude of protest and criticism of society*."<sup>227</sup> As Jesus made the cause of the poor his own cause, IA sees in the reality of the poor a sign of the times that is the result of unfair distribution of power, which has to be challenged.<sup>228</sup> Looking at our world from God's perspective, IA may see that the world is in need of a cultural revolution,<sup>229</sup> and it is God's call that might make those engaged in IA seem to be "revolutionaries."<sup>230</sup>

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223 (Catechism of the Catholic Church, n 1883).

224 (Sobrino, 2008, 41-2)

225 (Ellacuría, 1993,561)

226 "The civilization of wealth" that he opposes to Ellacuría's the civilization of poverty, "produces primordial ways of thinking and feeling that in turn mold cultural and ideological structures that contaminate the very air we breathe." (Sobrino, 2008, 40)

<sup>227</sup> (Rahner, Function of Church as Critic of Society, 1972, 241)

228 "Poverty and injustice appear today as the great negation of God's will." (Ellacuría, 1993,278)

229 "Implica no sólo mejores condiciones de vida, un cambio radical de estructura, una revolución social, sino mucho más... una "revolución cultural permanente." (Gutiérrez 1972,239)

230 "Quien entiende la resurrección de Cristo como una destrucción de la muerte, de la esclavitud, del pecado, y como una abertura definitiva para la vida nueva, para la libertad, por la Justicia, es lógico que sea un revolucionario. No se puede ser cristiano si no se es revolucionario. No se puede ser cristiano si no se es utópico. No se puede ser cristiano si no se es, en el mejor sentido de la palabra, activista." (Casaldaliga 1988,239)

#### 4. The Cross as Sacrament of the God of Liberation:

As it has been stated above, IA is one of the ways the SJ has to respond to the invitation of God to partake in the Son's mission. IA is thus an SJ effort to partake in Jesus' mission of empowering God's people (fostering their integral liberation) and working for the coming of God's kingdom. Moreover, IA is called to partake in Jesus' mission by following Jesus as a model and taking the Incarnation principle as a blueprint. As a consequence, IA might have to endure some form of cross as a possible outcome of its mission in a world where sin has power.<sup>231</sup> Effectively, IA has been missioned to advocate the cause of the poor and the marginalized, to share in their hope and advocate with them rather than on their behalf.<sup>232</sup> In this sense, IA means advocacy done in an incarnational way, by sharing their "place" in society in order to grasp their joys and sorrows and their perspective.<sup>233</sup> Getting the cross right matters for IA because its beneficiaries, its companions, those with whom and for whom it exists are today's crucified people of God, and IA is called to enter those realities of death and cross to bring God's life, joy and hope. In engaging in Jesus' mission, IA might be confronted by the powers of sin that keep God's people crucified, and some cross in major or minor degree might be the consequence.

From our take on Ignatian Theology we understand the cross as a sacrament of Jesus's faithfulness, a sign of God's extreme solidarity with God's people.<sup>234</sup> This perspective avoids considering the cross as an a priori necessity in God's plan of salvation and as something in itself desired by God. As a consequence, we hold that Jesus was killed because his fidelity to God's dream for God's people clashed with structures of oppression and power that kept God's people

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231 (Sobrino, 2004,234;238-9)

232 (Sobrino, 2008,100-4)

233 "It is especially in the third World that faith and hope are placed in question most radically" and where "hope becomes the hope of the poor and oppressed." (Sobrino, 1994,44) See also development through pages 33ff.

234 "Si Elias no hubiera huído ante Jezabel, habría muerto. Jesús no huyó... y murió." (Varone 1988,57) Developed in 57-118; Also (Sobrino, 1993,694-5)

apart from God. Ultimately, the cross witnesses to the fact that God has taken sides with the powerless and the marginalized and that it was God's fidelity to the poor that provoked Jesus' conflict with the powerful and led to his execution as a rebel.<sup>235</sup> Therefore, the cross is part of the Mystery of creation and Incarnation,<sup>236</sup> and when it is seen as a consequence of Jesus' life centered in serving God's Kingdom and performing God's liberation (Lk 4; Acts 8,38),<sup>237</sup> it is ultimately perceived as the solidarity of God with God's creatures that brings salvation.<sup>238</sup>

Ignatian Theology views the cross from the perspective of Easter, whereby the community learns that in the scandal of the cross God's divinity was hidden, as a sign of the excess of God's love.<sup>239</sup> In the cross, God let God's beloved Son be taken away from God rather than betray the covenant God had with God's creation from "the beginning."<sup>240</sup> God, who has limited God's power in order to have a relationship of love and partnership with human beings, assumes in the cross the consequences and backlashes of this relationship. God has created in freedom but has not forsaken the creation; rather God has made Godself vulnerable out of love, deciding that God's relation with creation would be mediated only by love. The resurrection unveils the meaning of the cross: when sin happens and God's love in Jesus is rejected, God keeps God's covenant with the creation; he does not wipe it out, but rescues it from the threat of

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235 (Sobrino, 2004,242-8)

236 "En la cruz... se realiza en acto... la prohibición de hacerse imágenes de Dios: no aparece ni la perfección, ni la belleza, ni el poder de la divinidad... aparece impotente en la cruz... sumergido dentro de lo negativo", (Sobrino o.c., p. 153);

237 Jesus understood that the arrival of God's Kingdom was indissolubly linked to his person that through his signs and healings the power of God was irrupting in history, and Jesus was for those who believed in him a sign of hope in that the plenitude of the Kingdom is at hand. (Rosato, 1994,); (Aguirre 2001,62)

238Borrowing Moltmann's impressive words "Dios no es más grande que en este rebajamiento. Dios no es más glorioso que en esta entrega. Dios no es más poderoso que en esta impotencia. Dios no es más divino que en esta humanidad." (Moltmann, 1977,286)

<sup>239</sup> "Dios se apropia de la tragicidad de la existencia humana hasta sus más radicales abismos... así la supera sin por ello hacerla inocua o abandonarla desde fuera." (H. v. Balthasar, 1995, 54)

240 "Propongo la idea de un Dios, que durante... -el tiempo del proceso universal en progreso- renunció a todo su poder de inmiscuirse en el curso de las cosas del mundo; que no contestó al choque del acontecer terrenal contra su propio ser con «la mano fuerte y el brazo extendido»... sino con la intensidad de su muda solicitud a favor de su meta incumplida...[Dios] ha dejado a algo distinto de él mismo, algo creado por él, un espacio de acción y un derecho de co-decisión... por un acto de sabiduría insondable o de amor... renunció a garantizar la satisfacción de sí mismo por su propio poder, y lo hizo después de haber renunciado ya por medio de la Creación misma ser el todo del todo." (Jonas 1992,205)



death and annihilation. Understood this way, Jesus's death is a moment in God's integral liberation.<sup>241</sup> This is probably too high a standard for IA and for anyone working to empower the poorest of the poor. God respected the time and rhythm of God's counterpart even when they rejected God's love and killed God's Son.<sup>242</sup> God, who probably knew better and had the power, did not impose the solution "from above." Until the end God remained faithful to the confidence deposited in God's creatures.<sup>243</sup> God, who created out of love and chose to be mediated only by love, makes manifest on the cross that love is omnipotent only when it can be rejected.<sup>244</sup> God thus shows IA the way of proceeding for radical empowering.

Simultaneously, Ignatian Theology reveals to IA the filiation (sonship) of Jesus on the cross, not in descending from the cross (he would have not been able), but rather in facing the cross, which denied God's love and God's kingdom.<sup>245</sup> Jesus is the Son in giving himself to God, surrendering his life to his father's love, so that his death, as his life, witnesses to a God greater than death and evil.<sup>246</sup> Jesus trusted in God to the point of understanding his death as the last service to God's Kingdom. Jesus did not run away, but remained faithful to the end, showing a fidelity to God that revealed his divinity. Conversely, God assumed Jesus' love and faithfulness and hope to the end, thus revealing God's patience and love for God's creation. To put it another way: if Jesus had been descended from the cross in a

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241 "Jesús muere a favor de los hombres porque en ella se revela un amor incondicional de Dios" (Sobrino, 1977,142); "La resurrección muestra que la cruz es realmente el primer paso para la vida, que Dios estaba realmente en la cruz asumiendo y salvando la historia". (Ibid,171)

242 "La creación de una libertad que puede, sin ninguna otra causa que ella misma, oponerse a la libertad divina... libertad humana, (que) en su sí como en su no, habita en la autonomía divina." (H. v. Balthasar, 1995,304). "Lo que hizo posible el «no» fue simplemente la «imprudencia» trinitaria del amor divino... Aquí radica su poder infinito, como también su impotencia y vulnerabilidad innatas... Dios, en su propio ser... soporta, en la total indefensión del amor absoluto, la contradicción con este amor." (Ibid,306-7)

243 "La cruz de Cristo significa el verdadero afianzamiento del universo. La creación goza de consistencia eterna porque el Creador está dispuesto desde un principio a esos sufrimientos a favor de su creación". (Moltmann, 1987,102)

244 "Es el camino de la renuncia a todo mesianismo del poder, desde una soberana libertad íntima humana, y este camino vital comporta la «via crucis»... Aquí se encuentra lo que es único en Jesús". (Segundo, 1980, 256-257).

245 "Si hubiese bajado de la cruz... ciertamente habría satisfecho de un modo prodigioso nuestra idea de Dios, pero no habría afirmado su oposición al sufrimiento y a la muerte, su compañía en la tragedia del dolor humano." (Matino 2005,112)

246 "Aquí está la noche oscura de Jesús, y aquí estuvo la fe y la fidelidad de Jesús...quizás habiendo sido capaz de ver en esa muerte... no meramente como algo a aceptar en la fe, sino incluso como un acto de servicio al reino." (González Faus, 1983,85).

miraculous way, we would have had a wonderful sign of God's power, but we would have been left orphans in our everyday crosses, wondering where God is for us.

Reading the cross from Easter's vantage point reveals that God was present in the crucified, that the crucified was God.<sup>247</sup> As a consequence, Easter means that the life of Jesus, which drove him to be killed as an outcast, is the life of the beloved Son in whom God "is pleased."<sup>248</sup> Ultimately, IA finds that the joy of Easter is an invitation for Christians to get involved in setting God's people free from all oppression, knowing that the God who raised Jesus from the dead will recover and develop our investments in God's mission.<sup>249</sup> In order to understand the event of the cross, IA turns to the Ex, to situate it as part of the following of Jesus. Moreover, in the Ex, the cross can be read as an exercise of strengthening and stretching the exercitant's desire to become a real disciple of Jesus.<sup>250</sup> In Ignatian Spirituality there is not a desire for the cross in itself, but rather the cultivation of the desire to follow Jesus to the point of becoming "un loco por Cristo," so that even if the possibility of cross is glimpsed in the horizon, that is overcome by this desire to follow Jesus.<sup>251</sup> The references to the cross in the Ex can be also read as an invitation to face the fact that some sort of cross can be a consequence of our fidelity to Jesus' mission, for Jesus faced the cross as a consequence of his fidelity to his.<sup>252</sup> Ultimately, in the Ex the cross is the theological, spiritual attitude of one who surrenders to

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<sup>247</sup> Because God's Incarnation, "No es una encarnación cualquiera sino "una encarnación tal que condujo a Cristo intrínsecamente hasta la cruz para triunfar en ella contra los poderes de la muerte", (H. v. Balthasar, 1971,242)

<sup>248</sup> "La vida de Jesús no fue en absoluto divina... en esa vida servidora era ya el Señor." (González Faus, 1984, 184); See also (Burke 2003,128)

<sup>249</sup> "Es la realización de la utopía humana que predicaba el Jesús de la historia, es el sí que da Dios a la pretensión de Jesús." (González Faus, 1984, 162).

<sup>250</sup> Several authors coincide in the interpretation that St. Ignatius intention is twofolded, strengthening the desires and also confronting the exercitant with the possibility that following Jesus brings opposition and rejection "The following of Christ is the following of the Crucified; it is a sharing in the descent of God into creaturehood, I into darkness, into the abyss of sin; in to the suffering of death." (Rahner 1965, 133)

<sup>251</sup> In our desire to answer God's call we have to enhance our desire and boldness, as an exercise of enhancing our desire for God, as "stretching our soul." <sup>251</sup> (Brackley 2010, 159); "[W]e must accept labor, poverty, the cross, and even death so that we might become a part of this Kingdom and its glory." (Rahner 1965,133).

<sup>252</sup> To such point this is the case, that for Ellacuría opposition and persecution are the criterion for the quality of fellowship (Ellacuría, 1991, 142; 124-8 and (Rahner, 1965, 177)

God.<sup>253</sup> For IA, the willingness to engage in Jesus' mission, even if it means the cross, springs from the passion for God and for God's Kingdom which is a response in gratitude to the Lord who calls the disciple personally to partake in God's mission.<sup>254</sup>

IA understands its call to remain at the foot of the cross as the mission of accompanying God's impoverished and marginalized people, which demands taking "a preferential perspective that sees suffering from the partiality of those who suffer."<sup>255</sup> The cross is finally an invitation to be humble when accompanying God's crucified people in their suffering, because ultimately the possibility of human suffering is grounded in the Mystery of God. As Jesus' companion, IA does not have any answer to the human cry in the midst of the suffering other than Jesus', the leap of faith and hope in God.<sup>256</sup> However, by remaining at the foot of the cross, accompanying the reality of the people in the midst of the struggle, and walking with them, IA witnesses to the presence in their midst of the God who is the friend of life.<sup>257</sup> By helping to "get God's people down from the cross," IA becomes a "raiser," and makes the God of Easter present as a sacrament of sacred hope and of resistance to the power of sin that causes the death of God's children.<sup>258</sup> By remaining at the foot of the cross, IA witnesses to the God who raised Jesus from the dead and so rejected all the crosses of history.<sup>259</sup>

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253 The "Three grades of love" seek the total recognition and embracing of one's creatural condition, of being a beggar of God's mercy and grace. In so doing, the exercitant gains indifference before things and possible outcomes of the mission. It is up to God. (Arzubialde, 1991, 357ff)

254 As a result of this very personal call from God, I should place myself in readiness for the greater and final "more." (Rahner, 1965, 189)

255 In his article "Awakening from the Sleep of Inhumanity" Sobrino explains how the reality of the concrete poor and the real human suffering tore apart his Western metaphysical theology. (Sobrino, 1991)

256 I deliberately avoid engaging in how the suffering of God's creatures may affect God. Instead, I have focused on IA's call to walk and remain with the victims of history and made mine Metz's "humble" discourse about God and suffering. In Metz's words "Qué es lo que hace que... no sea sólo una sublime duplicación del sufrimiento y la impotencia humanos?" (Metz, 2007, 32-33) And continues: "el discurso sobre el Dios que sufre corre el peligro de restarle de antemano importancia teológica al sufrimiento humano. Si Dios sufre, entonces el sufrimiento -se dice- deja de ser una verdadera objeción contra Dios." (Ibid, 33); Metz's Mystic "El lenguaje de esta mística divina (es)... una apasionada pregunta en busca de explicación que brota del sufrimiento, una pregunta dirigida a Dios, llena de tensa esperanza." (Ibid, 36-37).

257 Pues "es cierto que no tenemos derecho a ninguna reivindicación pero sí a toda súplica", (Bonhoeffer, 1983, 273).

258 "Antes de Cristo, el mismo obrar de Dios en el mundo, del Dios que se revelaba, estaba abierto... no se sabía... si la última de sus palabras creadoras sería de ira o de amor. Pero "ahora" ya está dada la realidad definitiva... el inextinguible e irrevocable

The cross understood as a sign and symbol of being for and with the “crucified people,” is a revelatory place for IA, because it unveils how powerful the dynamics of sin can be and how under the appearance of good they engender death and evil.<sup>260</sup> Relying on its Ignatian heritage, IA finds that in the Ex it is precisely in the cross where the power of sin is unveiled and as the exercitant it is before the crucified for love that IA has to discern its mission.<sup>261</sup> The cross in the Ex appears as a crucible: before the cross we are confronted by the following of Jesus in all its rawness. Contemplating the *ecce homo*, it is more difficult to get Jesus’ mission wrong:<sup>262</sup> this is the way God is bringing about the salvation of the world and the liberation of God’s people.<sup>263</sup>

Ignatian theology as we propose it here, does not see in the cross a sadistic God claiming a debt of blood to satisfy his honor.<sup>264</sup> Rather, it helps us understand that Jesus, sustained by his filiation to God, is able to transform the reality of sin and violence through his acceptance in love and hope of the cross, which becomes a sign of love and unconditional

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presente de Dios en el mundo como salvación, como amor, como perdón, como comunicación al mundo, incluso, de la más íntima realidad divina y de su vida trinitaria: Cristo”, (Rahner, 1963, 61-62).

259 “Si amas, tu sufrimiento es el dolor de las personas amadas”, (Matino, 2005, 194).

260 The invitation to IA is that remaining by the crucified people appears as a privileged place to grasp the dynamics of sin and their power. St Ignatius was aware of the complexity of these mechanisms of sin. For him discovering them is a grace and so the exercitant is invited to ask for this discernment in the Exx (3 times for five exercises during 8 days of the Second Week). (Brackley 2010, 125-6) For Ellacuría, Ignatius is showing in the Exx that partaking in Jesus mission is to follow him in the way of Incarnation, which involves humility and poverty and being one with the sinners and the poor and the outcast. (Ellacuría 1991, 129-30).

261 In the context of the Exx the cross helps the exercitant discover the tricks of the “evil spirit” that will have as a consequence the falling of the exercitant for things other than God “he instructs the retreatant in the devil’s art of seduction in order I to show him how he could be tricked into making a wrong decision.” (Ellacuría 1991, 173)

262 In Jesus crucified we face God’s way of engaging in salvation (Sobrino, 1993,694-5). Jesus reveals the *Homo Veris* (Sobrino, 2004, 229-231)

263 (Rahner, 1965, 178)

<sup>264</sup> “Nada ha cambiado en Dios, que no ha saciado su cólera, ni ha satisfecho su justicia (punitiva) de tal manera que ahora pueda pasar a la misericordia. Es en el hombre en quien todo cambia, en su mirada, en su conocimiento y en la dinámica fundamental de su deseo. Dios no se ha reconciliado con el mundo; Dios ha reconciliado el mundo consigo 2 Cor5,19 ... con su juicio... revelado al fin en lo que es (Justicia de Dios), en lo que quiere (el hombre resucitado, que ve colmado su deseo en la gloria de Dios), y en la vía que utiliza (el deseo humano en evolución a través de la condición carnal). Se ha dado un paso definitivo hacia la salvación cuando el hombre ha pasado, del desconocimiento, a la fe en el Dios que resucita.” (Varone 1988, 170)

trust in God.<sup>265</sup> Thus IA can find in Jesus, who surrendered to God without surrendering to despair or fear, a source of hope in the midst of struggle. Furthermore, by looking to Jesus on the cross, IA knows and can make known to others that for God Incarnation means standing by God's beloved children in solidarity, including in their sufferings, when the cross happens.<sup>266</sup> On the cross, God is made solidarity with God's creation to restore life from within. And from Easter's perspective, IA knows that, just as God that did not want Jesus to suffer, but in love accepted the suffering, so God does not want any of God's beloved children to suffer.<sup>267</sup>

Surely, faith in the Risen One does not spare Jesus' followers anxiety, fear, pain or defeat, but Jesus' resurrection is a promise that in the midst of the struggle God stays with us, as he stayed with Jesus.<sup>268</sup> This is why the cross of Jesus is Good News for those crucified today and those who, like IA, have been "called" to accompany them:<sup>269</sup> the victims of this world can look to Jesus as a companion and in his resurrection they can find hope and strength to resist.<sup>270</sup> The cross as proposed in this paper is the measure of God willingness to love God's creatures and to share life with them.<sup>271</sup> This is the full meaning of the cross for IA, which does not seek the cross but has been sent by the Lord to advocate the cause of God's people, to bring them joy

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265 (Gonzalez Faus 1984,540). Rather than running away from the cross, Jesus leaped into the arms of the father, and unveiled Jesus' being-of-God. "The New Testament, especially Philippians 2, 6-11 reflects the crucified Jesus, in both his humiliation and his exaltation, as belonging to the identity of the unique God", (Baukham 1999, 51).

266 Perhaps Welche's Feminist Ethic of Risk can be a secular counterpart for this discourse of surrendering to God. I particularly appreciate her comments on how risk means "the decision to care and to act although there are not guarantees of success. Such action requires immense daring and enables deep joy." (Welch 1990, 68)

267 In the Scriptures we find a compassionate God not alien to human suffering, that reacts against the suffering of God's beloved (Ex 3). See (Jonson 2002,328;325-9 )"El símbolo religioso de la cólera divina revela el ultraje que padece Dios cuando el mal se ceba en quienes ella ama: no debería suceder esto."

268"Lo único que da la fe en el Resucitado es «la convicción de que el esfuerzo humano no queda vacío en el Señor»,(1 Cor 15, 58), no cae en la nada absoluta; tiene un sentido" (González Faus, 1984, 162); see also (Gesché 1995, 223)

269 "El Padre entrega a su hijo a la cruz para convertirse en Padre de los entregados. El hijo es entregado a esta muerte para convertirse en el Señor de muertos y vivos." (Moltmann 1977,345); "Dios, clavado en la cruz, permite que lo echen del mundo... es impotente y débil en el mundo... sólo así está Dios con nosotros y nos ayuda." (Bonhoeffer, 1983, 252).

270"si se consideró que la tierra era digna de albergar al hombre Jesucristo, si ha vivido un hombre como Jesucristo, entonces y sólo entonces tiene sentido que nosotros, los hombres, vivamos." (Bonhoeffer 1983, 273).

271"Ese Dios a quien creen liberador por ser Dios de la vida, misteriosamente, escondidamente, puede también traer esperanza cuando él mismo aparece sujeto al sufrimiento como ellos... todo lo que sea cercanía ya lleva consigo algo de salvación... en la cruz hay, también, una buena noticia." (Sobrino, 1977,384) "La afinidad produce algún tipo de salvación histórica. El que Jesucristo también sufra -más si es Dios," otorga salvación "porque expresa afinidad con las víctimas de este mundo." (387)

and fullness of life, to let them see and hear and feel that the Lord is walking with them. IA understands that by remaining at the foot of the cross it is learning to trust in God despite the evidence of evil and struggle. IA is invited then to an exercise of “surrendering [its] future to God,”<sup>272</sup> of being guided and sustained by the Spirit of the risen Lord.<sup>273</sup> IA remains at the foot of the cross to accompany God’s children in their hope,<sup>274</sup> and by so doing it becomes what Benedict XVI called all Christians to be: “ministers of hope.”<sup>275</sup>

### **III Accompanying its beneficiaries, source of legitimate advocacy for IA.**

This section explains how according to scholarly research, being close to the people whose cause is being advocated is a source of legitimacy and power for the NGOs engaged in advocacy. Concretely it is shown how remaining close to the people allows NGOs to have access to accurate information and how it facilitates the incorporation of the grassroots in the decision making. As we demonstrate, this way of proceeding proves to have better and more perdurable effects in the long run. Moreover, it is shown how when the NGOs do not share responsibility with their beneficiaries run the risk of ending up advocating for other issues different from theirs and losing credibility and legitimacy. This section starts by addressing the topics of power and power relations because they are central to the definition of IA and because they are a common concern in Advocacy scholar research. In a first subsection we refer to the work of Foucault,

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272 (Rahner 1965, 192).

273 “Si hay un lugar propicio donde el creyente puede hacer la experiencia de Dios, ése es precisamente la esperanza, que siempre nos arrastra -pidiendo asilo- hacia el amor más grande que hay en nosotros.” (Rodríguez Panizo, 2000,5)

274 “Esta confianza... es hija de la virtud de la esperanza, que sabe esperar contra toda esperanza... nos hace capaces de recoger las pequeñas señales de la salvación que podemos registrar en nuestra propia vida y en el entorno próximo... nos comunica la persuasión de que ninguno de nuestros afanes liberadores y salvadores resultan definitivamente estériles... nos enseña a entregar a Dios nuestro propio futuro.” (Uriarte 1999, 38-9)

<sup>275</sup> (Benedicto-XVI 2007)

Lukes, and Fiorenza to give the theoretical framework. Then it is explained how these theoretical concerns are at play in the Advocacy arena. Finally, we show how the source of NGOs legitimate advocacy power rests on their grassroots' partners participation.

## 1. Power and Power Relations.

*“how we think of power may serve to reproduce and reinforce power structures and relations, or alternatively it may challenge and subvert them.”*<sup>276</sup>

In this section the notions of power, power relations, and empowerment are discussed. This discussion is important because these terms are central to the definition of IA given in this paper, and because they are terms usually used in the scholarly papers which analyze NGOs' advocacy performance. Effectively, IA's major features (as presented in chapter one) can be summarized and grouped into two major power-related issues: 1) IA aims to *empower the marginalized* to help them improve their socio-economic situation. 2) IA considers that the situation of oppression and impoverishment of the marginalized is the consequence of *unfair power relations*.<sup>277</sup> We subsequently refer to the works of Foucault, Lukes and Elisabeth Schussler Fiorenza and Hannah Arendt to explain power relations, and afterwards it is explained how empowerment in IA means a change in the power relations that affect the way in which NGOs engage with the people they claim to serve and represent.

When discussing power and power relations, it is worth bearing in mind Coleman's advice: “a definition of power divorced from theological anthropology and an understanding of the purposes of God” is misleading. Following Coleman's suggestion, our take on power relies on our theological section, in which it was explained that all power comes from God, who in creating shares God's power with created beings. Drawing on this theology of creation, we here

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<sup>276</sup> (Lukes 2005, 63)

<sup>277</sup> To marginalize designates the practice by which a “whole category of people is expelled from useful participation in social life, then potentially subject to severe material deprivation and even extermination.” (Young 1992, 186)

propose a relational understanding of power, whereby creatures wield power as a result of God's willingness to share God's power out of God's desire to be a God-in-relation. As Tillich explains, creatures by the very fact of existing hold some form and grade of power, as power of being.<sup>278</sup> Consequently, power from a theological perspective is better understood as "the capacity to sustain a relationship," which involves "influencing and being influenced, of giving and receiving, of making claims and permitting and enabling others to make their claims."<sup>279</sup> According to this definition, God is all-powerful precisely in God's ability to be in relation with all beings. In God's creation, power exists as enabling relations, as an opportunity or as a potential to be; it is neither positive nor negative per se. The moral qualification of power depends on the use human beings make of it; as Rahner has it, power can be occasion of salvation or of condemnation.<sup>280</sup>

We propose in this section to work with a broad definition of power, whereby power designates "the range of interventions of which an agent is possible" and is equivalent to "the transformative capacity of human action."<sup>281</sup> This definition intends to accommodate two aspects of power that will be subsequently explained, "power over" and "power to," which can be characterized as "negative" and "positive" forms of power respectively. Both aspects of power are discussed because they are crucial for IA. The first or negative form, helps IA be aware of pervasive uses of power that IA has to challenge in order to change the unequal power relations that foster oppression and marginalization. And, complementary to it, IA has to have a good grasp on the positive meaning of power because IA is aimed at empowering the powerless by creating capabilities and generating structural alternatives that will balance power relations in the

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<sup>278</sup> See here the work of Tillich "Love, Power and Justice."

<sup>279</sup> (Coleman 1982, 4)Loomer p 28 as quoted by Coleman (4)

<sup>280</sup> Rahner Theology of Power, 409.

<sup>281</sup> I am following the definition of Anthony Giddens as quoted in (Hinze 1995, 154)



long run. In this sense IA's focus on empowering implies that power has a positive side to it that can be nourished and developed.

A first subsection deals with "power over" and its imbrications and ramifications by drawing on the work of Foucault and Lukes, who develop a hermeneutic of suspicion to elucidate the not so obvious forms in which power can be oppressive and dominant. Then, drawing on the works of Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza and Hannah Arendt, we refer to a positive recovery of power as "power to." This latter form of power is "nutritive" and is exercised in relationship, in community.<sup>282</sup> This form of power is better understood as "power for" and "power with" the other, which are central notes of empowerment as explained in this thesis.<sup>283</sup>

#### **a. Foucault on Power:**

Foucault is a common reference in the scholarly research work in the world of NGOs.<sup>284</sup> Of particular interest for IA are two aspects of Foucault's take on power: 1) his understanding of the intimate linkage between the discourses of knowledge and power, which explains the perpetuation of structures of exclusion/oppression, and 2) his analysis of how power relations have to do ultimately with the subject.<sup>285</sup> For Foucault power as such doesn't exist except in its exercise

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<sup>282</sup> Leaning on our theological perspective that is shared by progressive and feminist theologians, power involves the inclusion of others as partners and that seeks to foster other capabilities nurturing and developing them. I am drawing here not only on my theological section in this thesis, but also on the observations of (Hinze 1995, 206-215;250-8)and on Rollo's 4th and 5th categories of power as depicted on (May 1972, 109-112). See also (Coleman 1982).

<sup>283</sup> As Coleman explains "I am my sister's keeper as she is simultaneously mine. I am my brother's empowerer or its opposite as he is mine." (Coleman 1982, 3)

<sup>284</sup> "Foucault's power concept is highly relevant for the discussion of the relationships between NGOs and their beneficiaries, since it helps us to analyze the productive power effects of NGOs' discourses on their beneficiaries as the persons *about whom they speak*." Kristina Hahn in (Jens Steffek and Kristina Hahn 2010, 225) Italics in original; see also (Jens Steffek and Kristina Hahn 2010, 6-9,30,42-7,51,224-5)

<sup>285</sup> Foucault aim was to study of power where it "reaches into the very brain of individuals, touches their bodies, and inserts itself into their very actions and attitudes, their discourses, learning processes, and everyday lives." (Foucault 1980a: 39) as quoted in (Lukes 2005, 89)

in relations of power, when it involves someone's action "over another's actions."<sup>286</sup> In his conception, power circulates and pervades the social network, being delocalized and not possessed by anyone.<sup>287</sup> Therefore social relations are relations of power.<sup>288</sup> For him, power relations of domination<sup>289</sup> are made possible, sustained and justified by forms of discourse and knowledge that he calls discourses of truth.<sup>290</sup> In his conception, this power dynamic has more force when its mechanisms are cloaked.<sup>291</sup> Consequently for Foucault it is important to analyze how discourses of truth are formed.<sup>292</sup> In the next section it is shown how these observations matter for IA because power relations are at play also inside the NGOs doing advocacy, they become evident when examining whom is the power to decide the issues to be advocated.

The other point of special interest for IA is Foucault's understanding of how these relations of power influence the "constitution of the subject." For Foucault the subject may perceive that she is self-responsible for her own activity when in fact she is being led.<sup>293</sup> In this case power relations by which some groups dominate others subjugate the person through the

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<sup>286</sup> "It is a set of actions on possible actions; it incites, it induces, it seduces, it makes easier or more difficult; it releases or contrives, makes more probable or less; in the extreme, it constrains or forbids absolutely," rather it is always a "set of actions upon other actions." (Lukes 2005, 138)

<sup>287</sup> "Never appropriated as a commodity or piece of wealth." (Lukes 2005, 98)

<sup>288</sup> "if we speak of the power of laws, institutions, and ideologies, if we speak of structures or mechanisms of power, it is only insofar as we suppose that certain persons exercise power over others. The term 'power' designates relationships between 'partners.'" (Foucault, 2003, 135)

<sup>289</sup> Domination understood not only as the action of one person or "one group over another," but as "the manifold forms of domination... exercised within society." (Steven Lukes 1986, 232); see how this differs from Weber definition in Max Weber, "Domination by Economic Power and by Authority," in (Lukes 1986,33)

<sup>290</sup> "rules of right that provide a formal delimitation of power," and the "effects of truth that this power produces and transmits." (Foucault 1980, 92-3)

<sup>291</sup> Its exercise "is not a naked fact," but it is rather "elaborated, transformed, organized" and deploys processes "that are more or less adjusted to the situation," (Foucault, 2003, 140)

<sup>292</sup> "We have to know the historical conditions that motivate our conceptualization. We need a historical awareness of our present circumstance." (Foucault, 2003, 127) Ellacuría criticized ideologization as a degeneration of ideology that clothes the truth to protect the interest of the elites, and advocated for a "realist hermeneutics" to unveil this process. (Kevin F. Burke and J. Matthew Ashley, translators. 1975), # 43."

<sup>293</sup> , through "patterns that he finds in the culture and which are proposed, suggested and imposed on him by his culture, his society and his social group." (Foucault 1987: 11) as quoted in (Lukes 2005, 96-7)

creation of discourses that make her fit into the system.<sup>294</sup> Since in his understanding society means power relations,<sup>295</sup> and “power is ubiquitous,” it follows that “there can be no personalities that are formed independently of its effects.”<sup>296</sup> As we shall explain in the next section with some examples, this is a point of controversy and discussion in the NGOs’ advocacy intervention.

These unequal power relations, which are sustained by discourses of truth that constitute the subject, require certain conditions in order to exist. namely, that the powerful create a system of differentiations (status, wealth, legal, etc), that legitimates their ability to act over the powerless in order to protect their own interests or privileges (maybe that very same difference of status or wealth). We claim that what Foucault understands to be the labor of the philosopher, “to keep watch over the excessive powers of political rationality”<sup>297</sup> that justify these power inequalities, should be part of the labor of IA, since IA is aimed at challenging at their roots the structures and mechanisms that keep God’s people oppressed and marginalized.

## **b. Steven Lukes**

Lukes states in his definition of power that “*A* exercises power over *B* when *A* affects *B* in a manner contrary to *B*’s interests.”<sup>298</sup> Apart from the commonly understood forms of power (“coercion, influence, authority, force and manipulation”<sup>299</sup>), it is of great interest for IA Lukes’

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<sup>294</sup> Foucault’s conception of power involves domination or control over others in relations of power that through discourses and, through the normalization of life, shaped and constituted the subject. In his words, there has been an “immense labor to which the West has submitted generations in order to produce ... men’s subjection: their constitution as subjects in both senses of the word” (Foucault 1980c(1976), 60)

<sup>295</sup> “A society without power relations can only be an abstraction.” (Foucault 1980c(1976), 140).

<sup>296</sup> (Foucault 1980a: 142)

<sup>297</sup> (Foucault 2003,128)

<sup>298</sup> (Lukes 2005,37)

<sup>299</sup> Coercion, exists where *A* secures *B*’s compliance by the threat of deprivation where there is ‘a conflict over values or course of action between *A* and *B*’ (ibid, 24). Influence exists where *A*, ‘without resorting to either a tacit or an overt threat of severe deprivation, causes [*B*] to change his course of action’ (ibid, 30) “*B* complies because he recognizes that [*A*’s] command is reasonable in terms of his own values’ either because its content is legitimate and reasonable or because it has been arrived at through a legitimate and reasonable procedure.” (ibid, 34 and 37)” In the case of force, *A* achieves his objectives in the face of *B*’s noncompliance by stripping him of the choice between compliance and noncompliance. (ibid, 21-22)

incorporation of the “mobilization of bias.”<sup>300</sup> This form of power consists in preventing some ideas or preferences from entering the decision-making process; it is a veiled form of domination.<sup>301</sup> Lukes shares Foucault’s conception that power is legitimized through discourses of reason<sup>302</sup> and that power is concealed and pervades the social network, in order to further “the interests of the powerful” while bearing negatively “upon the interests of those subject to it.”<sup>303</sup> Lukes makes a particular contribution to IA in his disagreement with Foucault’s depiction of an all-embracing net of power that renders all the subjects like puppets and leaves room neither for an autonomous subject, nor for her responsibility.<sup>304</sup>

Lukes develops Foucault’s description of how power relations are intertwined with identity issues and the construction of value systems.<sup>305</sup> In a circular relation, power is exerted through the differentiations that are constituted through discourses of truth, which in turn exist as a result of power interests.<sup>306</sup> These discourses contribute to create, shape, and maintain subjugated identities and unequal relations of power.<sup>307</sup> Since IA works with marginalized ethnic minorities and impoverished people, it should pay attention to how identity issues are the

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<sup>300</sup> (Lukes 2005,21)

<sup>301</sup> What he names “the third dimension of power.” Namely, “the capacity to secure compliance to domination through the shaping of beliefs and desires, by imposing internal constraints under historically changing circumstances.” (Lukes 2005,143-437)

<sup>302</sup> (Lukes 2005, 90)

<sup>303</sup> (Lukes, 2006, 86) This conception of power relations that holds that “people’s wants may themselves be a product of a system,” (Ibid, 38) is an interesting intersecting point of Lukes with Foucault, Ellacuría. Foucault for his part understood that society is intertwined by power relations that shape institutions and discourses, Ellacuría prevented about how the ideologization of concepts justified and legitimated the interest of the powerful making them acceptable for those affected by them.

<sup>304</sup> Lukes (with Foucault critics) wonders “What scope does this leave for the agency of the subject?” (Lukes 2005,95)

<sup>305</sup> “To maintain and transmit a value system, human beings are punched, bullied, sent to gaol, thrown into concentration camps, cajoled, bribed, made into heroes, encouraged to read newspapers, stood up against a wall and shot, and sometimes even taught sociology,” there are “concrete interests and privileges that are served by indoctrination, education, and the entire complicated process of transmitting culture from one generation to the next.” (Moore 1967: 486) as quoted in (Lukes 2005,120)

<sup>306</sup> These categories recall Foucault’s, see (Foucault, 2003).

<sup>307</sup> “Difference is the velvet glove on the iron fist of domination. The problem is not that differences are not valued; the problem is that they are defined by power.” MacKinnon, as quoted in (Allen 1999, 12) Lukes distinguishes; Insufficient recognition, excessive or unwanted recognition, and recognitional domination. See (Lukes, 2005, 119-20)

necessary correlate of asymmetric power relations.<sup>308</sup> These unequal power relations that produce marginalization are a complex form of oppression.<sup>309</sup> As a result of pervasive power relations, some groups are disfavored as a consequence of the everyday life activities of the rest of the population. Therefore the marginalization and oppression some groups suffer are the result of the normal life of others *who would not recognize themselves as oppressors*. In this regard, IA's role would be to help those unconscious oppressors become aware of the consequences that their way of life is having in the life of others as a first step to correcting the situation of oppression from its roots.<sup>310</sup> The task of IA is to denounce these mechanisms, to critically raise consciousness.

### **c. Towards a positive take on power:**

Welch states that Foucault's work is especially suggestive for "a theology done from the perspective of one who is both oppressor and oppressed."<sup>311</sup> She explains how Liberation Theology is called to partake in the re-shaping of "discourses of truth," precisely what we claim must be part of IA aims.<sup>312</sup> Relying on Welch intuitions, we here present the works of Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza and Hannah Arendt, as two examples that build on Foucault's work in order to propose a positive recovery of power and generate valid approaches for IA.

<sup>308</sup> "Relations of power and inequality are produced and reproduced through a systematic process in which the energies of the have-nots are continuously expended to maintain and augment the power, status, and wealth of the haves." (Young 1992, 183)

<sup>309</sup> I follow Marilyn Frye's definition of oppression: "an enclosing structure of forces and barriers which tends to be the immobilization and reduction of a group or category of people." [Marilyn Frye, "Oppression" in *The Politics of Reality* (Trumansburg, N.Y.: The Crossing Press, 1983), 1-16.] Therefore oppression that is not "a function of a few people's choice or policies," but rather is "systematically reproduced in major economic, political, and cultural institutions." (Young 1992, 180)

"oppression" designates the disadvantage and injustice some people suffer." (Young 1992, 175-6)

<sup>310</sup> She states that for "every oppressed group there is a group that is privileged in relation to that group." (Young 1992, 181)

<sup>311</sup> (Welch 1985, 23; 15-31) See how she links the task of Liberation Theology to what I have claimed is part of IA' to subvert the so called discourses of truth that generate oppression and perpetuate unjust structures of power.

<sup>312</sup> (Welch 1985, 27)

Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza basically shares the analysis of power and power relations given so far. She depicts two main power dimensions: a vertical dimension (or kyriarchal)<sup>313</sup> that describes power relations as domination,<sup>314</sup> and, the horizontal dimension which redefines groups and identities.<sup>315</sup> Which is Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza's potentially major contribution to IA is her understanding of the role that a Critical Feminist Liberation Theology (CFLT) has to play in denouncing the structures of oppression and engaging in their transformation.<sup>316</sup> Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza claims the heritage of liberation theologians, which considers voicelessness and invisibility part of the oppression of the poor.<sup>317</sup> She conceives her CFLT as a movement for societal change with the specific claim for wo/men's<sup>318</sup> empowerment: they ought to be in charge of their own liberative process; they should be authors and subjects of their own history. Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza's understanding of the oppressed, not only as a privileged place for discerning revelation but as agents of their own liberation, is a significant step forward from IA's perspective. Moreover, she claims that recovery of the subjugated and silenced voices of wo/men is a good trend for developing a critical concept of empowerment. Effectively Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza claims that the transformation of power relations will contribute to "empowering wo/men's agency and commitment to alter relations of domination."<sup>319</sup> Building

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<sup>313</sup> "Any oppressive structure that denies full dignity and equal sharing to wo/men." (Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza 2007, 128).

<sup>314</sup> "Allowing "hierarchical and material differences in power between people to be erased from consciousness, even while these same economic and social differences are bolstered." (Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza 2007, 58)

<sup>315</sup> [Chela Sandoval, *Methodology of the Oppressed* (Minneapolis, Minn.: University of Minnesota Press, 2000), 72

<sup>316</sup> "The\*logically, liberationist feminism understands all wo/men as the people of G\*d created in Her image and hence it indicts the death-dealing powers of exclusion and oppression as structural sin and life-destroying evil. It asks for the transformation of the structures of domination, a transformation that is brought about by social movements for justice and change engendering a different self-understanding and vision of the world." (Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza 2007, 48)

<sup>317</sup> (Sobrinho 2008, 24;26).

<sup>318</sup> This is an inclusive term to designate human beings under oppression, women and men. All women as "fragmented and fractured by structures" and not as singular homogeneous group, and all oppressed men (Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza 1993,24,191). It is a political vindicating term, see (Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza 2007,7)

<sup>319</sup> (Ibid, 164) Allen for her part describes "how members of a subordinate group are empowered to act despite their subordination" (Allen 1999, 126)

on Foucault's genealogy,<sup>320</sup> she seeks to the recovery of wo/men's subjugated knowledge as a source for empowering wo/men to "struggle," which in IA means defending and advocating their own cause.<sup>321</sup> Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza's CFLT as IA, is concerned about giving voice and leadership to the oppressed.<sup>322</sup> Of interest for IA is that she considers that there is an important role for Scripture and religion as sources of resistance and empowerment to help wo/men be authors of their own liberation.<sup>323</sup> The novelty of Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza's approach with respect to other Liberation Theologies is that she undertakes a critical analysis of how scriptural and religious discourses are not necessarily liberative and can become themselves sources of oppression for wo/men.<sup>324</sup> Thus for Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza religious discourse and Scripture are also to be subjected to analysis of power and power relations before using them as sources for the process of empowering the marginalized.

#### **d. Hannah Arendt, the communitarian dimension of power.**

Hannah Arendt can make a contribution to a positive understanding of power with her understanding of Greek democracy in the polis and its paradigm of power in politics. She understood that it is people's support that gives power to the institutions and their laws.<sup>325</sup> Of interest for IA's challenge to unjust structures is her warning about the risk of developing a

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<sup>320</sup> Genealogy designates "the union of erudite knowledge and local memories which allows us to establish a historical knowledge of struggles and to make use of this knowledge tactically today." (Foucault 1980,83)

<sup>321</sup> What ESF claims to recover is a tradition that "has claimed and continues to claim the authority and right of wo/men to interpret experience, tradition, and religion from their own perspective and in their own interests." (Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, 1998, 73)

<sup>322</sup> ESF invites the oppressed wo/men to "claim their own religious voice, heritage, and community in the struggle for liberation" (Elisabeth SchüsslerFiorenza, 1998, 26).

<sup>323</sup> She claims that through this hermeneutic is possible to recover a biblical emancipatory imagery that can "encourage and empower wo/men." (Elisabeth SchüsslerFiorenza, 1998, 33).

<sup>324</sup> ESF claims for a critical hermeneutical and theological tradition to critically analyze the "oppressive mind-sets and ideological frameworks," and to "intervene in this struggle over the control and codification of knowledge and information." (Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, 1998, 74)

<sup>325</sup> In Arendt's words "All political institutions are manifestations and materializations of power; they petrify and decay as soon as the living power of the people ceases to uphold them." (Arendt 1969, 40-1)

bureaucratic system of government that can turn into a tyranny without a visible tyrant.<sup>326</sup> Arendt's analysis of power on its own falls short, for she excludes "conflicts of interest and, in particular, coercion and force,"<sup>327</sup> and she understands violence as the degeneration of power not as an extreme form of domination.<sup>328</sup> However, when compared with the former authors, she adds an interesting feature of power for IA, the communitarian dimension. She understands that power "corresponds to the human ability not just to act but to act in concert"; therefore, power is never individual but fundamentally collective and "remains in existence only so long as the group keeps together."<sup>329</sup> Accordingly, for Arendt power is not possessed by an individual; it inheres within a group and consists of dialogic communication and cooperative activity among equals; it is primarily a capacity or potential for action, arising only from co-operative action in the process of making agreements.<sup>330</sup> Arendt's take on power reinforces IA concern to remain community oriented and community centered as key features of its participatory and creating capabilities way of doing advocacy.

It has been the aim of this subsection to examine the categories of power and power relations that are central to IA's depiction of its mission.<sup>331</sup> In the following section it is shown how it makes sense for IA to pay attention to Elisabeth Schussler Fioreza's invitation to

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<sup>326</sup> "In a fully developed bureaucracy there is nobody left with whom one can argue, to whom one can present grievances, on whom the pressures of power can be exerted. Bureaucracy is the form of government in which everybody is deprived of political freedom, of the power to act; for the rule by Nobody is not no-rule, and where all are equally powerless we have a tyranny without a tyrant." (Arendt 1969, 81)

<sup>327</sup> (Steven Lukes 1986, 31-33)

<sup>328</sup> "Power and violence are opposites; where the one rules absolutely, the other is absent. Violence appears where power is in jeopardy, but left to its own course it ends in power's disappearance... violence can destroy power; it is utterly incapable of creating it. (Arendt 1969, 56)

<sup>329</sup> (Arendt 1969, 45)

<sup>330</sup> As an example of how her understanding is suitable for IA is her reference to the Civil Rights Movement Campaign in the US, as a people movement that defied mechanism of govern that masked "machinations and manipulations." "To tear the mask of hypocrisy from the face of the enemy, to unmask him and the devious machinations and manipulations that permit him to rule without using violent means, that is, to provoke action even at the risk of annihilation so that the truth may come out-these, are still among the strongest motives in today's violence on the campuses and in the streets. (Arendt 1969, 65-6)

<sup>331</sup> I started by showing with Foucault how power is intertwined in the very fabric of society, and how it is at play in configuring the subjects that are part of the transmission chain of power relations. Then I incorporated Lukes' explanation of how unequal relations of power demand the creation of unequal identities and how power relations can embrace situations of domination in different forms. Then I incorporated ESF's CFLT as a recovery of the subjects and their narratives.



recover the narratives and the identity of wo/men as a source of empowerment and as a first step in the struggle to trigger the transformation of kyriarchal structures. It is also explained how it is crucial for IA to keep in mind Hannah Arendt's contention that it is the communitarian dimension of power that is legitimate.

## 2. NGOs and Power issues:

This section discusses two scenarios where power relations affect the advocacy of NGOs: they are the two extremes of the advocacy chain, namely, the local level and the international level. Relaying on scholarly research, this sections discusses how power relations and power issues are also at play in the NGOs world, to make the case for the importance of closely accompanying the people in order to be able to listen to their demands and concerns.<sup>332</sup>

For (Steffek & Hahn 2010), when evaluating NGOs' responsiveness and accountability, it is not enough to evaluate how the NGOs are responding to the demands that were in fact articulated. It is also necessary to study those "that were never formulated... in the first place" because there was "lack of transparency, participation rights or empowerment measures." This phenomenon of power as preventing some grievances from being expressed can interfere with the NGOs' process of gathering information in the field. In her critical assessment, Brühl argues that southern NGOs may sometimes represent the urban elites and dominant groups and not necessarily the poor.<sup>333</sup> As a consequence she claims that NGOs engaged in advocacy should "focus more closely on the power structures in southern civil society."<sup>334</sup> In the same sense,

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<sup>332</sup> Obviously we will never be able to address all the concerns or demands, just as we will probably not be able to reach the poorest among the poor either. Therefore we must at least be aware of the power dynamics in play that may distort our information gathering process, in order to correct it and to avoid neglecting, as far as possible, the concerns of the neediest.

<sup>333</sup> Accordingly she warns about uncritically increasing Southern NGOs representation in civil institutions for it could result in the "strengthening of the elites instead of more effective representation of the people." (Jens Steffek and Kristina Hahn 2010, 194)

<sup>334</sup> (Jens Steffek and Kristina Hahn 2010, 193-4)

Warren Nyamugasira warns that NGOs in the South, despite working in the midst of the poor, may identify some elites as their representatives, who “are socialized in the value systems and thought patterns of the global elite,” and stand for the values defended by the NGOs rather than for those of the rest of their community.<sup>335</sup>

With regards to the International forum, Tanja Brühl denounces strong power-relation asymmetries in the world of transnational NGOs,<sup>336</sup> pointing out that they are in fact rooted in Western countries (66% to 34 % in 2007) and their membership is basically Western. Brühl claims that Southern NGOs are ill-represented in the international forum and that the UN consultant status is limited to almost only Northern NGOs.<sup>337</sup> Although she concedes that development policy is moving away from a top-down model towards a paradigm of partnership, she contends that this partnership takes the form of “a dialogue of the unequals,” in which power asymmetries persist.<sup>338</sup> She argues that the setting of the advocacy agenda and the defining of advocacy issues are done almost exclusively by Northern NGOs, whose interests are different from their Southern counterparts.<sup>339</sup> By the same token, a report by Oxfam shows how the Northern NGO representatives can find themselves trapped in the world of academic debate and more concerned about meeting donors’ expectations than about defending the rights of their beneficiaries.<sup>340</sup> Arguing along the same line, Edwards warns that if advocacy’ NGOs detach from the field, they might

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<sup>335</sup> By so doing the NGO “project their own construct of the issues purported to be those of the poor, while they consciously or unconsciously protect their own interests and those of their kind.” (Eade 2002,11) In the same line, Edwards warns “Northern NGOs must be careful not to use the groups with which they choose to work to legitimize a view of the world in which they believe, but which may not be shared by the broad mass of people in the South.” (Ibid, 22)

<sup>336</sup> Barnett explains that power and politics are discussions avoided in the NGO world because ““Humanitarian organizations have traditionally been very reluctant to acknowledge that they are powerful,” since “the language of power fits very uneasily with the core ethics of service.” (Weiss 2008,128)

<sup>337</sup> (Jens Steffek and Kristina Hahn 2010, 191)

<sup>338</sup> Brühl goes as far as to state that transnational NGOs “with their predominant Northern membership distort the inequalities of power and influence in the world politics even further.” She is quoting (Ngaire Woods 2001, p. 97) in (Jens Steffek and Kristina Hahn 2010, 191)

<sup>339</sup> (Jens Steffek and Kristina Hahn 2010, 192) Reference to (Johns, 2004, p. 56)

<sup>340</sup> Nyamugasira in (Eade 2002, 7-22). See also Edwards explains how NGOs receiving public funding are less prompt to engage in advocacy and states “We cannot after all bit the man that feed us.” (Eade 2002, 109)

end up advocating issues dictated by the “the wider system,” rather than by their constituency, becoming “*market-driven*, rather than *programme-driven*.”<sup>341</sup>

As a consequence of this, Northern NGOs may not always represent the voice of the poor, who are in theory the source of their legitimacy. This seems to be the case because: a) Southern NGOs may be transmitting interests and claims from local elites and not necessarily the poorest of their beneficiaries, and b) Northern NGOs, with more power in the international arena, may implement their advocacy interests, which may not coincide with those of their southern counterparts. All these considerations make it all the more necessary for the NGOs to remain in the “operational arena” and to have a close collaboration with the grassroots in the South so that their advocacy grows out of and is informed by the grassroots experience.<sup>342</sup> The issues discussed here show how it is central for NGOs engaged in advocacy to remain close to the people they serve. In order to make this point clearly, two examples of advocacy campaigns are offered. They illustrate how power issues, representativeness and legitimacy are intertwined. They are also good examples of how the power of discourse has consequences for NGO beneficiaries and how the ability to create and ascribe categories to others is a form of power relation. In what follows the anti-human trafficking and the anti-genital mutilation campaigns are presented.

#### **a. Anti-human trafficking campaign:**

The controversy in which some associations of prostitutes and some NGOs campaigning against human trafficking stood against each other, illustrates how NGOs can misuse the power

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<sup>341</sup> (Eade 2002,102)

<sup>342</sup> As Warren Nyamugasira puts it “if the desire is to focus attention on the opinions of the traditionally voiceless, then their voice must be dearly heard before their message can be dearly articulated... The first step is, then, to meet them at their own level before they will speak.” (Eade 2002,13)

they receive from the people they represent to advocate their own ideas or ideology.<sup>343</sup> The issue of prostitution and its relation to anti-human trafficking is “a contested issue” in international forums.<sup>344</sup> This controversy hit an intense pitch with the discrepancies between two NGOs claiming to advocate on behalf of prostituted women – the Global Alliance Against Traffic in Women (Alliance) and the Coalition against Trafficking in Women (Coalition) – and organized groups of prostitutes. The Coalition considered prostitution as such to be a form of violence against women and part of women trafficking. From the Coalition’s foundation in 1988, their position faced the opposition of associations of prostitutes, which insisted on differentiating between forced and voluntary prostitution. As a consequence of these discrepancies, the Alliance was founded in (1994) in order to give voice to the associations of prostitutes. The center of the controversy, pinpointing a key theme in any advocacy effort that seeks to empower the people, is the fact that the Coalition thought that the prostitutes “were not able to perceive correctly the exploitation to which they were subjected.” As a consequence, the Coalition opposed the claims of the prostitutes’ organizations for the good of the prostitutes and allegedly on their behalf.<sup>345</sup> The prostitutes’ organizations for their part strongly disagreed with establishing a direct link between prostitution as such and trafficking and claimed that they should be allowed to advocate their cause in the international forum without the mediation of any NGO.<sup>346</sup> The fact that the associations of prostitutes rejected the NGOs’ representation is an example of how *NGOs’* “power of advocacy” has to be carefully examined.”<sup>347</sup> A whole different scenario would be that

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<sup>343</sup> It is not my aim nor is part of this paper to engage or discuss the terms or to arbitrate among these two groups or conceptions about prostitution and human trafficking. This example illustrates the discrepancies between the beneficiaries and the NGO that in principle derives its legitimacy and power mostly because it claims to represent the beneficiaries’ opinions and interests.

<sup>344</sup> In 1994 the UN Declaration on Violence against Women differentiated between forced and voluntary prostitution; up to today this distinction remains controversial and disputed among NGOs and among UN consultants

<sup>345</sup> See Kristina Hahn in (Jens Steffek and Kristina Hahn 2010, 226-235)

<sup>346</sup> (Jens Steffek and Kristina Hahn 2010, 228)

<sup>347</sup> “since it involves the risk of paternalism and may be used by NGOs that want to pursue their own political goals... Otherwise, advocacy NGOs, instead of being the ‘mouthpiece’ of their beneficiaries, may even contribute to the silencing of those affected by their work.” (Jens Steffek and Kristina Hahn 2010, 236)

whereby the survivors yield their right to represent their cause on some NGO's to advocate their cause because they are too wounded or because the social constraints make it undesirable for them to go public and talk about their stories of being abused or exploited. In this case the NGO's if legitimately appointed by the survivors, have not only the right but the duty to speak on their behalf.<sup>348</sup>

**b. The Kiyuku and the “female genital mutilation campaign.”**

This is a complex example that can help to elucidate several aspects of our argument. In the “female circumcision campaign” it was the international part of the advocacy network that stressed the need to remedy this practice. Their first step consisted in renaming the issue as “female genital mutilation.” This change in name relates to the perception on the part of experts in the international NGOs that women suffering the practice were unaware of the violence exerted against them.<sup>349</sup> The involvement of Northern women's associations, which identified female genital ablation as an instance of violation of human rights, resulted in the UN issuing some declarations encouraging a review of religious and traditional practices. However, not much was achieved in the field.<sup>350</sup>

In some countries, like Nigeria, the female genital ablation campaign was poorly framed from the start. Since the concern descended from the international to the national and local level, it was perceived as a colonialist intromission. In the concrete case study by (Keck and Sikkink, Kathryn 1998), which focused on “the Kiyuku” in Nigeria, the local population, were divided over the female ablation practice, that in the local culture it shared with male circumcision the ritual meaning of “transition from childhood to adulthood.”<sup>351</sup> The missionaries championing the campaign developed a paternalistic approach and tried to exert some leverage over the beneficiaries of their programs

<sup>348</sup> This is a reflection that I owe to Margaret Guider in conversations on a draft for this paper.

<sup>349</sup> Moreover, for the NGOs advocating its eradication, referring to this practice as circumcision meant making it comparable to male circumcision and veiling an exercise of violence against women under the cloak of religious and cultural practices.

<sup>350</sup> Quotation needed.

<sup>351</sup> (Keck, E. Margaret and Sikkink, Kathryn 1998, 67)

(schools and medical centers) to get them oppose to the practice. The backlash came because the campaign was designed with a top-down patriarchal approach; there was no participation or consultation of local women's grassroots associations; even female missionaries in Kenya were excluded from the decision-making bodies; and the recommendations of women's conferences were disregarded.<sup>352</sup> As a result, the campaign failed to gain any momentum among the local population. It was perceived as a "European" and thus produced the contrary effect: the local leaders championed the practice as proper to their culture and tradition.<sup>353</sup>

This counter-example makes an argument for why it is important to accompany the people closely: the campaign was ill-conceived and ill-timed. By framing the controversy in Western religious terms, precisely in a moment of growing rejection of colonial practices and of nascent nationalism, the natives experienced the campaign as Western and foreign. As a result, "the "anti-circumcision campaign became associated with colonialism and interference, and the practice of female circumcision with independence, nationalism and tradition."<sup>354</sup> Had the missionaries been more sensible to the local culture and collaborated with the local women's associations, they might have found ways of framing the issue in terms of the local culture.<sup>355</sup>

Both these campaigns, against trafficking of women and against female genital ablation, illustrate how empowerment properly understood can be a really demanding way of proceeding. It means helping the people develop their issues and complaints, helping them to frame the issue in their own terms, letting the advocacy efforts rise from among within, bringing information and skills to raise people's consciousness, and coaching them to become agents of their own development and integral liberation. Engaging in empowering advocacy means learning to

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<sup>352</sup> (Keck, E. Margaret and Sikkink, Kathryn 1998, 69)

<sup>353</sup> Quotation needed.

<sup>354</sup> (Keck, E. Margaret and Sikkink, Kathryn 1998, 71-2)

<sup>355</sup> That is the case of what happened in China with the campaign of the abolition of feet binding Which is what happens in another example that (Keck, E. Margaret and Sikkink, Kathryn 1998, 60-71) portray the anti-feet binding campaign.

disempower or de-center the self and letting others become agents of their self-empowerment. In the light of these two examples and relying on our understanding of empowerment, we are moved to warn IA that this can be pretty demanding. The conception of empowerment proposed in this paper has a strong implication: the NGOs cannot pull the trigger and impose their views on their beneficiaries by rejecting a traditional practice, even if from the point of view of their expertise (or moral or religious standards) they clearly see that this practice is contrary to human rights. This is a strong and, probably controversial, statement. However, it has strong practical backing: a top-down approach will not work in advocacy which is seeking long-term transformation of structures. It will be perceived as Western moral imperialism and will not be implemented in the first place. Moreover, even if as a consequence of some sort of leverage it is locally and temporarily implemented, it will not work in a tenable way.

### **3. Legitimacy and accurate information: the NGOs' source of Power and Credibility.**

*"The question is ... Who holds the activists accountable?"*<sup>356</sup> This question of *The Economist* summarizes the thesis of this section, namely that the role of the NGOs is strongly dependent on their credibility. In this section and relying on scholarly research it is argued that that this credibility is better achieved and assured when the NGOs remain people-centered and close to the people, when they accompany the people they serve. Thus, we contend that IA finds a source of legitimacy and credibility in its being faithful to its call of accompanying the people whose cause it advocates. We contend that accompanying enables IA to perform an effective advocacy. Put another way, IA finds that, although the first and most important reason for accompanying

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<sup>356</sup> "Bodies such as these are, to varying degrees, extorting admissions of guilt from law-abiding companies and changes in policy from democratically elected governments. They may claim to be acting in the interests of the people — but then so do the objects of their criticism, governments and the despised international institutions.

the people is the response to God's call, there are secondary and practical reasons for doing it, namely: accompanying the people results in better advocacy on their behalf.

Scholarly research shows that advocacy NGOs are heavily dependent on their credibility. Effectively, NGOs are commonly regarded as the advocates of the poor and the guardians of moral standards,<sup>357</sup> and as representing "the political concerns of the poor," injecting their voice "into international decision-making."<sup>358</sup> NGOs power to advocate on behalf of the poor relies precisely in their mission.<sup>359</sup> Thus, it is necessary to implement some mechanisms that allow the beneficiaries have some control over the NGOs representing them, which can be called control "from below."<sup>360</sup> Moreover, NGOs mission is in part "helping to make the world's political and economic institutions more broadly accountable,"<sup>361</sup> *and their ability and power to exercise moral leverage depends greatly on their "noble goals and incorruptible expertise."*<sup>362</sup> Since the NGOs' power is based on their knowledge and reputation, their legitimacy and transparency should be taken into account when considering the power they have to change unequal power relations.<sup>363</sup> According to scholarly research on transnational NGOs working on advocacy issues, there are three main challenges that these NGOs should face if they want to have a real impact in shaping or changing political issues in the global scenario: Legitimacy, Representativeness and Accountability. In this section and drawing on research, it is shown how meeting these

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<sup>357</sup> They have "assumed the role of ambassadors for the World's poor" (Sutherns, 1996, 195)

<sup>358</sup> (Eade 2002, 7)

<sup>359</sup> As, power to influence politics, UN and donors.

<sup>360</sup> (Jens Steffek and Kristina Hahn 2010, 102)

<sup>361</sup> If NGOs want to advocate the cause of the poor "pushing for justice, equity, democracy and accountability," it follows that first "these characteristics need to be reflected in their own systems and structures." Edwards et al 1999, 133 as quoted in (Jens Steffek and Kristina Hahn 2010, 13)

<sup>362</sup> Understood as moral leverage that "pushes actors to change their practices by holding their behavior up to international scrutiny, or by holding governments or institutions accountable to previous commitments and principles they have endorsed." (Keck, E. Margaret and Sikkink, Kathryn 1998, 201)

<sup>363</sup> See (Jens Steffek and Kristina Hahn 2010, 2; 117; 188). In order to be able to fulfill their self-proclaimed mission, the NGOs need not only accurate information but "must also have an impeccable reputation. Ideally, it also needs to be a respected household name." (Eade 2002, preface xii). See (Weiss 2008, 126-8) for an explanation on how due to the increasing number of NGOs, accountability has been increasingly requested by governments and donors. The proof that reputation and credibility are vital assets for NGOs is that recently several of them agreed to sign a charter with good practices, and the UN has started to require that NGOs aspiring to consultant status conform to certain standards of quality and morality.



challenges require that the NGOs doing advocacy remain close to the people they serve. In other words, the case is made that it is by being with the people and accompanying them that the NGOs doing advocacy find their source of power, accurate information and legitimacy.<sup>364</sup>

#### **a. Legitimacy:**

Legitimacy “in the normative sense” refers to “the conditions in which power is rightfully exercised.”<sup>365</sup> When contrasted with experience and concrete practice, it designates “the conditions under which persons or institutions in power manage to gain acceptance and support from the people they rule over.”<sup>366</sup> With regard to scholarly research work on advocacy, the critical question is “from where do the NGOs draw legitimacy for their advocacy work?”<sup>367</sup> As a result of recent scandals, scholars doing research in the NGO realm demand closer monitoring of NGO practice before recognizing their legitimacy to speak for the poor.<sup>368</sup> This section summarizes what research indicates are the main sources of legitimacy for NGOs: participation, access to accurate information, and accountability.<sup>369</sup>

#### **i. Participation and representation:**

*“When government policy-makers are challenged by advocates from the North, their line of attack tends to be to question these advocates' mandate to speak for the poor.”<sup>370</sup>*

The degree of participation of the beneficiaries determines different types of advocacy. Advocacy as representation implies that the advocacy campaign incorporates at least in part the

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<sup>364</sup> “Access to accurate information on the consequences of their actions among real, living people” and the “popular appeal, credibility, and access to the media which NGOs have developed over the last ten years” can potentially put the NGOs “in a position of great power.” (Eade 2002,99)

<sup>365</sup> (Jens Steffek and Kristina Hahn 2010, 7)

<sup>366</sup> (Jens Steffek and Kristina Hahn 2010, 7)

<sup>367</sup> (Eade 2002, preface xi)

<sup>368</sup> “Claiming the right to speak out simply because an NGO has projects or contacts on the ground is unlikely to be acceptable to a skeptical audience” or to a “critical local population.” (Edwards 1999:15) as quoted in .” (Eade 2002, preface xi)

<sup>369</sup> For Eade: expertise, their moral values, the participation of their constituencies in the decision making see (Eade 2002). For “Steffek et al,” these categories are participation, inclusion, responsiveness, transparency and, independence in (Jens Steffek and Kristina Hahn 2010, 102-116). I group them in Participation (which includes Steffek et al inclusion), accountability (which includes Steffek et al responsiveness and transparency), accurate information (which includes expertise and experience).

<sup>370</sup> Warren Nyamugasira in (Eade 2002, 13)

beneficiaries in the process of decision-making.<sup>371</sup> Advocacy as solidarity takes place when the cause is advocated entirely by others in behalf of the beneficiaries.<sup>372</sup> In order for advocacy to be empowering it should seek to foster representation rather than solidarity. For IA, which seeks an empowering advocacy that is participatory and people-centered,<sup>373</sup> this implies that its beneficiaries should participate in the decision making.<sup>374</sup>

By placing the beneficiaries at the center, IA will be closer to ensuring that “its activities and lobbying efforts are in line with the interest and needs of those affected,”<sup>375</sup> which is essential of IA claiming to represent them. As it has been explained in the section about power and power relations, ensuring the partaking by the voiceless has to be a particular concern for IA.<sup>376</sup> Concretely, in IA, members and donors should not have informal ways of participation or of influence which override the right to participate of the beneficiaries. In order to meet that end, IA has to create safe spaces, power-free spaces, in which the voice of those more reluctant to speak can be heard.<sup>377</sup> We contend that when doing IA the role of the NGO is to “accompany,” to learn the language of the beneficiaries, and to translate it into the language of the donors and lobbyists

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<sup>371</sup> What Barnett contends about organizations working in war zones is applicable to the relation of Advocacy NGOs, he notes “Only those humanitarian organizations that are led by people from within war-torn societies can be construed as speaking as the victims.” And continues to state that those organizations that work “closely, on the ground” and developing “long-standing relationships with communities in war zones can describe themselves as working with the victims.” And this nuances matter because the authority of these organizations derives “not from what they do” but “from whom they represent” 131

<sup>372</sup> (Jens Steffek and Kristina Hahn 2010, 66)

<sup>373</sup> Whereby IA contributes to what Eade attributes to advocacy NGOs, to “broaden the political space within which the voices of the poor can be expressed and heard” (Eade 2002, preface xv)

<sup>374</sup> According to (Jens Steffek and Kristina Hahn 2010, 106) terminology, Members are Those who have a pledge to support the organization and that “identify with it.” In practice, they usually “have the right to elect the board” and/or are allowed to “take decisions at the strategic level.” Supporters are donors and volunteers. Finally, beneficiaries designate “A discernible, specific group of individuals, for whose benefit the CSO explicitly claims to speak,” and interestingly and critically enough they introduce an important nuance to bear in mind “It is also possible that the CSO’s activities” in fact result “disadvantageous for them.”

<sup>375</sup> (Jens Steffek and Kristina Hahn 2010, 107)

<sup>376</sup> IA should be vigilant that the voiceless are not left out in the decision making, that under a false appearance of consensus there are not clocked grievances that are prevented from being aroused by more powerful constituencies.

<sup>377</sup> In the previous section we warned that, since people’s opinions and claims can be shaped by the dominant cultural powers, the interests voiced by the beneficiaries might be shaped by what they perceived to be the expectations of NGO, so that they then voice what they think the NGO wants to hear.

rather than the other way around.<sup>378</sup> This reflects how empowerment is better understood as creating capabilities in IA; it involves becoming aware of the power issues that are in place preventing the voice of the voiceless from being heard, and it means helping the beneficiaries gain power to overcome these roadblocks so that they can lead in the process of advocating the issues they consider most important. As it was tentatively explained in the discussion on power, this is a highly complicated issue. As Welch explains, even when consciously trying to incorporate the survivors or beneficiaries in the dialogue there are power issues into play that have to be considered.<sup>379</sup>

Then the question arises: what does participation of the beneficiaries mean? According to (Steffek & Hahn 2010) since these NGOs claim to be advocating social justice issues and to represent the voice of the poor or excluded or otherwise powerless, it comes as a consequence that incorporating the beneficiaries into the decision making will always be a work in progress and limited in the extent of participation. Effectively, the poor and marginalized find themselves in the situation they're in precisely because of structures and relations of power that exclude them. In this perverse circle, they are excluded because they lack the types of skills, resources, and "formal education" that the power structures recognize. They do not have "the linguistics,"<sup>380</sup> and they probably lack organizational and communication skills.<sup>381</sup> Moreover, it is often difficult to reach the poorest of the poor since they are more concerned with meeting "pressing short-term needs" than with "conscientisation, mobilisation and empowerment."<sup>382</sup> However, the

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<sup>378</sup> The beneficiaries need accompaniers "who can enter into the reality of the poor and interpret or translate it into the sophisticated conceptual frameworks and detailed policies intelligible to the relevant policy-makers, without compromising the authenticity of the original views." (Eade 2002,17)

<sup>379</sup> (Welch, A Feminist Ethic of Risk 1990,134) See development in pages 129-140

<sup>380</sup> It designates the "capacity to interpret the reality of the poor, and translate it into conceptual frameworks and policies that are intelligible to the outside world but retain the original meaning." (Eade 2002, 9)

<sup>381</sup> (Hulme 1992, 25)

<sup>382</sup> (Eade 2002, 9)

NGOs engaged in advocacy should offer as much involvement to their beneficiaries as possible if they are to claim legitimate representation,<sup>383</sup> because otherwise, if the NGOs fail “to consult the groups in the south they claim to speak for,” and to “be responsive to their views,” then they will be engaging in “illegitimate advocacy.”<sup>384</sup>

With regard to participation, then, IA’s empowering can be concretized as creating capabilities for these groups to be able to voice their concerns, sharing information with them and doing so in their own terms and language, and providing whatever technical assistance might be needed in the process.<sup>385</sup> Moreover, to the extent that it is possible, IA should try to have the beneficiaries represent their own cause before the decision maker in the North preventing that the beneficiaries end up losing control over their own stories.<sup>386</sup> Understanding empowerment this way, IA gains not only a source of legitimacy but also a source of accurate information.<sup>387</sup> In order to be participatory and people-empowering advocacy, IA has to make these beneficiaries part of the process being its companion.<sup>388</sup>

Empowerment in IA entails that at every stage of the advocacy chain, from the field to the national and then to the international level, works as a two-way “transmission chain.” It works up-wards conveying the interests and voices of the people with whom it shares advocacy efforts to the center of power and then back again.<sup>389</sup> And it works downwards by remaining people centered and accountable to the beneficiaries. In the best sense, empowering in IA means “subverting” (Ellacuría) the transmission of power as it usually takes place between North and

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<sup>383</sup> (Jens Steffek and Kristina Hahn 2010, 68)

<sup>384</sup> (Jens Steffek and Kristina Hahn 2010, 104)

<sup>385</sup> Adapted from (Jens Steffek and Kristina Hahn 2010, 110)

<sup>386</sup> (Keck, E. Margaret and Sikkink, Kathryn 1998, 19)

<sup>387</sup> (Keck, E. Margaret and Sikkink, Kathryn 1998, 1059)

<sup>388</sup> (Jens Steffek and Kristina Hahn 2010, 68-70)

<sup>389</sup> See (Jens Steffek and Kristina Hahn 2010, 103) for a graphic. This demands from the CSO the responsibility of being hold accountable *ibid* p 110-111.

South, turning it upside-down and helping the voiceless to recover their voice. If IA claims to represent the interests of the powerless and seeks to generate structural changes, then the powerless have to be at the center,<sup>390</sup> it is a matter of being honest with reality (Ellacuría). Ultimately this is a lesson learnt from practice and experience; the involvement of the beneficiaries “is essential to ensure real and sustained change.”<sup>391</sup>

### **“Itaparica,” an example of grassroots participation:**

A possible way of assuring participation of the beneficiaries in the advocacy process is the involvement of grassroots and communal organizations.<sup>392</sup> To make our point Hall’s case study of the construction of a hydropower station in Brazil is incorporated.<sup>393</sup> “Itaparica” exemplifies how grassroots involvement is crucial for achieving success in an advocacy campaign and for empowering the local population. Itaparica is an example of people-centered advocacy that created a synergy of partners as diverse as grassroots organizations, local NGOs, Church activists, bishops, labor unions, and finally international NGOs.

In this case study the organized local protests forced the hydroelectric project to provide for “comprehensive resettlement of an entire displaced population.”<sup>394</sup> We want emphasize the role the church played in “Itaparica,” not because, as Hall states, it was the condition of possibility of the whole campaign,<sup>395</sup> but because it exemplifies all the theoretical explanations about advocacy and empowerment we have made so far: the local Church accompanied and

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<sup>390</sup> See (Hulme 1992,143) on the importance of NGOs working in partnership with grassroots people organizations to foster peoples empowerment. This approach relies “on the ability of communities to define their own problems, decide on their options,” and thus creates “participatory structures that will no longer allow the elite and self-appointed parties and personalities to speak in the name of the people.”

<sup>391</sup> (Eade 2002,129)

<sup>392</sup> “The very poorest people in the world who form part of Oxfam’s constituency by they very poverty are not in a position to engage in a democratic within Oxfam. Such people are struggling to survive and often require urgent help.” (Jens Steffek and Kristina Hahn 2010, 70)

<sup>393</sup> in (Hulme 1992, 148-158)

<sup>394</sup> (Hulme 1992, 148)

<sup>395</sup> “Without the grassroots support of the Church to help initiate and legitimate the protest in its early days, it is possible, even probable, that neither the Polosindical nor the wider social movement would have existed.” (Hulme 1992, 153)

remained with the people through the whole process. It acted first as a catalyzer “carrying out grassroots educational campaigns” focused on “the potential threat to the local population posed by the dam” and the need to articulate a response.<sup>396</sup> The Church was able to network with community workers and rural-union officials to develop a series of educational campaigns, which after six years of organized workshops led to the creation of a strong labor union (Polosindical). The networking extended to join efforts with the local Church networked with the National Conference of Brazilian Bishops, with national labor unions, and with international NGOs such as Oxfam. And, once the issue gained national attention, the Church continued being present by assisting the progress of community-organizing efforts led by national labor unions in the region.<sup>397</sup> Finally, and decisively as a valuable example for IA efforts, once Polosindical and the local social movement had gained enough critical mass, the Church “took a conscious decision to withdraw from the struggle in order to allow the Polosindical to develop autonomously.”<sup>398</sup> The joint effort of different actors empowered the citizens of Itaparica to defend their interests and livelihoods against the hydropower project. Itaparica exemplifies how empowering from below means accompanying the people being affected in their process of acquiring the technical knowledge and organizational skills required to defend their cause. According to Hall, this support is crucial “in the early embryonic phase, when other domestic sources of assistance are frequently few and far between.” It also illustrates how, when the campaign gets to national and international arenas, the advocates may have to provide economic support and expertise to overcome opposition.

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<sup>396</sup> (Hulme 1992, 153)

<sup>397</sup> (Hulme 1992, 153-4)

<sup>398</sup> (Hulme 1992, 151)

With regard to IA, its willingness to engage in empowering advocacy implies investing in community building and community mobilization. This has important consequences in the allocation of personal and material resources and in organizational aspects, because establishing community organizations takes constant accompaniment of the process. Concretely this approach requires the determination of incorporating representatives of the community in the whole process of planning and decision making,<sup>399</sup> in a process whereby the NGOs diminish their role as people gain control over the campaign.<sup>400</sup> As demanding as this community-centered approach might sound, experience in the field shows that a top-down approach will not work.<sup>401</sup>

## **ii. Accurate information: Expertise and practical experience.**

*“How serious are we in our efforts constantly and consistently to enrich our knowledge and experience with what is happening in the communities of the poor, with what often gets least exposed to the public eye?”<sup>402</sup>*

Advocacy NGOs claim that they represent the voice of the poor and speak on their behalf before the politicians and decision-makers of the North. Their declared aim is to bring to the headquarters of power in the North the reality of the poor, “a reality that they are too privileged ever to experience for themselves.” It follows then, that the NGOs must have a direct experience of the reality they claim to represent. As we have stated, engaging in dialogue with the truly poor and marginalized is a difficult enterprise, even for NGOs in the South, and we should not uncritically assume that local NGOs just by virtue of being local represent the voice of the Southern poor.<sup>403</sup> In this sense Edwards encourages NGOs to remain close to their beneficiaries and to exchange directly with them a continuous “supply of good-quality information,” without which “successful advocacy is impossible.”

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<sup>399</sup> See (Hulme 1992, 172-8)

<sup>400</sup> “the NGOs have to “identify how best they might support but not substitute themselves for what exists.”

<sup>401</sup> The authors explained the shortcomings in the way and NGO organized a campaign in Uganda. (Hulme 1992, 178-9;186-7) In fact, Halls attributes the “effectiveness” of the campaign to the involvement of the local grassroots in the whole process.

<sup>402</sup> (Eade 2002,2)

<sup>403</sup> (Eade 2002,2-7)

With regard to IA the implications are obvious. IA should remain with the poor, accompanying them so that they remain IA's center of concern and so that IA's advocacy remains people driven. Accompanying the people, listening to them, and paying careful attention to their needs and claims is central if SJ' NGOs are going to engage in IA.<sup>404</sup> A people-centered and people-empowering way of doing advocacy requires that its campaigns emerge "from genuine priorities in the field" so that there is a clear link between IA advocacy campaigns and "direct practical experience." For Edwards, this is the condition for advocacy to be done "with some degree of authority, legitimacy, and credibility."<sup>405</sup>

**a. Representativeness. People-centered Advocacy: letting the narratives of the beneficiaries speak for themselves.**

Keck and Sikkink give different examples of how closeness to the reality of the beneficiaries makes advocacy campaigns more successful.<sup>406</sup> They explain how this closeness makes Advocacy NGOs more effective in being able to trace the effects of power relations all the way down the power-transmission belt, descending to the personal stories (what Foucault called microphysics of power). In a previous section it was stated that a form of empowerment for IA was to remain participatory, to work from the bottom up, and to recover the beneficiaries as subjects, with their stories, narratives, claims and interests. The recovery of these identities and narrative (Foucault's "subjugated knowledge"<sup>407</sup>) can be a proper form of IA empowerment for them.<sup>408</sup> Moreover, relying on Welch's suggestions for Liberation Theology, we claim that this is part of how IA generates an alternative account of history, whereby IA challenges the established and false discourses that

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<sup>404</sup> What (Jens Steffek and Kristina Hahn 2010, 105) demand from CSO and citizens participation, is applicable to IA: The participation in the decision making process and in the organization of the Advocacy efforts not only ensures that the information is constantly updated, but is also a source of empowerment, for it builds the organizational skills and capabilities in the constituency.

<sup>405</sup> (Eade 2002, 102)

<sup>406</sup> (Keck, E. Margaret and Sikkink, Kathryn 1998)

<sup>407</sup> These knowledge are "disqualified," rendered as "inadequate" or "insufficiently elaborated," lacking the "required level of cognition or scientificity." (Foucault 1980,81)

<sup>408</sup> "a genealogy should be seen as a kind of attempt to emancipate historical knowledges from that subjection, to render them, that is, capable of opposition and of struggle against the coercion of a theoretical, unitary, formal and scientific discourse." (Foucault 1980,85)



perpetuate oppression. This could be IA's contribution to the writing of a critical history that recalls those dangerous memories that the powers that be tend to silence.<sup>409</sup>

We claim that advocacy is more effective when it remains centered in the subjects, because by remaining close to the people the NGOs are more able to advocate accurately the real claims of their beneficiaries. We contend that NGO advocacy is more powerful when it manages to interrupt the narratives of the centers of power with the narratives of the beneficiaries, which show the consequences in real lives of unequal power relations. Subsequently two examples are given that show how, by being centered in the people's stories NGOs have a powerful tool for advocating their cause and how on the contrary, when the NGOs lose touch with the people, they end up making compromises and neglecting their beneficiaries' grievances.

The first example is an analysis of the link between an IMF campaign and the deforestation in Brazil in the 1980s.<sup>410</sup> Keck and Sikkink show how the environmental network campaigns succeeded because they centered their advocacy efforts in making known the concrete stories of the people being affected rather than in confronting IMF expertise with their own expertise. In their own words, they found that the testimony "from those more directly affected by bank projects was often a more powerful organizing tool than information produced by outside experts." In the same sense, Edwards notes that it is easier for powerful institutions (banks, oil companies, hydropower, etc.) to challenge the NGOs' expertise with their own than it is to discredit the stories of human beings who are suffering. Reinforcing the claim that the participation of the beneficiaries is crucial in advocacy campaigns, the authors attribute the success of the campaign to the "partnership" approach "in which genuine links between organizations of those suffering harm and those speaking for them were crucial

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<sup>409</sup> (Welch 1990, 123-151)

<sup>410</sup> (Keck, E. Margaret and Sikkink, Kathryn 1998, 141)

to the campaign's legitimacy."<sup>411</sup> In this partnership approach the local grassroots organizations moved from being mere "informants" to being part of the decision-making process and becoming a crucial part of the advocacy campaign.

As a counter example, Keck and Sikkink refer to the "Comfort Korean women campaign,"<sup>412</sup> in which the lack of first-hand testimonies hampered the reports made by experts and analysts. According to them, it was not until the women themselves spoke out that the NGOs were able to "turn the subject into an issue."<sup>413</sup> This example also illustrates how remaining close to the people helps the NGOs to advocate with accuracy – to be honest with the real, as Ellacuría would put it. At the beginning of the campaign, the lack of experience in the field and the influence of veiled interests trapped the NGOs that were advocating for these women in diplomatic and academic language that referred to the victims as "comfort women." However, the first-hand testimony of the women discussed the issue in terms of violence and sexual abuse exerted against them. This is a clear example of how power relations are also at play in the NGOs' world: even though the women testified that they were victims of "sex tours" for clients coming "mainly from Japan,"<sup>414</sup> the advocacy NGOs kept using the expression "comfort women" to frame the campaign. This case shows that when advocacy campaigns are not people centered, their beneficiaries lose control of their own stories and grievances, and the NGOs can end up compromising the interests of the beneficiaries for the sake of other concerns (donors, survival, etc.), at the cost of the NGOs' legitimacy.

This case study illustrates how the situations of marginalization or disempowerment are neither natural nor accidental; they are the result of power relations from which someone is benefiting, advocacy campaigns need to have well informed persons with expertise in the field to determine the

<sup>411</sup> (Keck, E. Margaret and Sikkink, Kathryn 1998, 142)

<sup>412</sup> (Keck, E. Margaret and Sikkink, Kathryn 1998, 176)

<sup>413</sup> "All the research, rhetoric and war memories were as nothing until the women were prepared to come forward and speak out against their exploitation," Quote 41 (Keck, E. Margaret and Sikkink, Kathryn 1998, 176); Also Ibid 186-7.

<sup>414</sup> (Keck, E. Margaret and Sikkink, Kathryn 1998, 176)

power relations at play. A crucial element in the process of information gathering is anticipating possible backlash and detecting “opponents” who might see their status challenged by the advocacy intervention.<sup>415</sup> Moreover, since some forms of power relations are sustained by “unconscious oppressors,” part of the task of IA is to unveil this reality and “propose credible solutions.”<sup>416</sup> In order to do that, it is vital to remain close to the people to get a sense of how power relations and ideological discourses are shaping their situation.

When because of obstacles and fear of repression the local organizations cannot advocate the cause by themselves, the international NGO can develop the strategy called “boomerang effect,” by which the NGO advocates the cause of local people before their government but in the international arena.<sup>417</sup> This practice in advocacy requires sophisticated networks of information,<sup>418</sup> because part of the opponents’ counterattack will usually be to cast doubt on the accuracy of the NGO’s reports. Therefore Advocacy NGOs, in addition to the beneficiaries’ narratives and powerful media campaigns, have to be able to count on accurate expert reports and a powerful network.<sup>419</sup>

## **b. Accountability and Evaluation:**

Accountability, generally speaking, refers to *“a process by which power-holders are required to explain and justify their conduct towards an audience who can pose questions and who have the ability to impose some sort of sanction.”*<sup>420</sup>

The special character of international NGOs, “private in form and public in purpose,”<sup>421</sup> implies that they should be accountable not only to their own members and donors, but also to the public at large and to the state authorities in particular. Moreover, in order to legitimately wield power on

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<sup>415</sup> For as Hulme puts it, “Genuine empowerment will generate response from local and national elites and the state, that range from intimidation to violence.” (Hulme 1992, 25)

<sup>416</sup> (Keck, E. Margaret and Sikkink, Kathryn 1998, 19)

<sup>417</sup> (Keck, E. Margaret and Sikkink, Kathryn 1998, 24)

<sup>418</sup> See (Keck, E. Margaret and Sikkink, Kathryn 1998, 12) on the “boomerang” pattern.

<sup>419</sup> Campaigners advocating against kids’ bottle feeding relied not only in aggressive and dramatizing media campaigns to raise awareness but most importantly in accurate health reports. (Keck, E. Margaret and Sikkink, Kathryn 1998, 21)

<sup>420</sup> (Jens Steffek and Kristina Hahn 2010, 8)

<sup>421</sup> (Jens Steffek and Kristina Hahn 2010, 15)

behalf of others, NGOs should deploy a twofold accountability: an upward accountability to donors and governments and a downward accountability to those who are affected by their work.<sup>422</sup> This two advocacy is consistent with the two ways chain of power depicted above. In this regard, Jens Steffek and Kristina Hahn propose that state regulation and inner self-regulation should be complemented with “social auditing” by donors and institutions providing the funding.<sup>423</sup> Accountability implies that NGOs have to pay attention to their “transparency”<sup>424</sup> and disclose at least enough information to make public their objectives, their way of proceeding, and their budget.<sup>425</sup>

Accountability is usually reduced to economic accountability, which is certainly one of its more visible aspects and the minimum to be demanded from any NGO. As different authors note, recent scandals in the world of NGOs have increased the demands for economic accountability: donors and governments are increasing their demands for NGO budget transparency.<sup>426</sup> In a time when the number of NGOs is growing and competition among them for donors is increasing, economic accountability has gained more importance, so that the NGOs are required to improve their mechanism of evaluation.<sup>427</sup> In this thesis we strongly insist on the need for NGOs involved in IA to be economically transparent and accountable. However, accountability is a very complex issue

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<sup>422</sup> (Jens Steffek and Kristina Hahn 2010, 169). Part of the problem and resistance to accountability is NGOs reluctance to acknowledge the power they have on behalf of others. See Barnett 128-9.

<sup>423</sup> This social auditing, which is inherent to the good governance practices that produce legitimacy, involves “information disclosure, participation, evaluation and standards of conduct.” (Jens Steffek and Kristina Hahn 2010, 166-8). For only “knowing what organizations do, and how they do it, can chains of accountability be constructed and legitimacy awarded.” (Bovens, 2007, p 449) as quoted in (Jens Steffek and Kristina Hahn 2010, 112)

<sup>424</sup> Transparency can be defined as “easy access to accurate and comprehensible information about policy decisions and decision-making processes.” It follows from this definition that the larger the public that has access and the greater the amount of information that is made available, the more transparent the organization is. (Naurin, 2002, 9) as quoted in (Jens Steffek and Kristina Hahn 2010, 113)

<sup>425</sup> With regard to their objectives, the authors ask for the NGOs’ “statutes, bylaws or memoranda of association.” As to the way of proceeding, they recommend the disclosure of the NGOs’ reports and consultation processes so that the “products of their advocacy” and way of proceeding can be properly understood. And finally, as part of the NGOs’ financial accountability and as a way of preventing accusations of being co-opted by their donors, the authors recommend that NGOs make public their donors’ contributions and their budget “If they receive funding from government agencies or one single private company, they are frequently accused of being co-opted.” (Jens Steffek and Kristina Hahn 2010, 115)

<sup>426</sup> See for instance (Michael Edwards & David Hulme, editors 1996); (Edwards 1997); (Hulme 1992)

<sup>427</sup> NGOs are becoming more dependent on public funds and thus “the implementers of donor policies.” (Edwards 1997,8)

because humanitarian work is governed by the moral imperative of human rights as well as by the principles of effectiveness, whereby NGO intervention is judged by outcomes.<sup>428</sup> Evaluation commonly aims to determine the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact, and sustainability of a program or project.<sup>429</sup> But these outcomes in humanitarian work are usually difficult to measure and typify. This is precisely why remaining accountable to both beneficiaries and donors, although it creates a tension, guarantees that NGOs will stay on the right track.

NGOs have to respond to their donors and constituencies about the extent to which they have accomplished their programs, which should be framed in terms of concrete and achievable goals. Accountability thus understood is a broad term that involves the quantitative and qualitative aspects of different outcomes. Some of the outcomes or objectives will be more easily measured and evaluated than others. If the NGOs' goals are concretely framed – for example, the number of children vaccinated or the number of schools built – these are easily observable outcomes. When it comes to broader objectives – such as raising consciousness about human rights, improving sexual education, or raising education standards – then more complex measures through a longer period of time must come into play.

These two aspects of accountability are in tension because the deadlines and interests of the donors differ from those of the beneficiaries, “Donors tend to narrow accountability to project evaluation” and are concerned about how “specific projects are effective in producing specific

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<sup>428</sup> See discussion on (Weiss 2008, 133-5)

<sup>429</sup> Relevance: The relevance of a project relates primarily to its design and concerns the extent to which its stated objectives correctly address the identified problems or real needs. Efficiency: The efficiency criteria concern how well the various project activities transformed the available resources into the intended specific objectives in terms of quantity, quality and timeliness; Effectiveness: The question is what difference the project made in practice, as measured by how far the intended beneficiaries really benefited from the services it made available; Impact: The impact denotes the extent to which the benefits received by the target beneficiaries had a wider overall effect on larger numbers of people in the area of the project; Sustainability: The sustainability relates to the maintenance of the changes effected by a project after the project has been terminated. Adapted from JRS' evaluating guidelines (JRS-International January 2006)

outcomes.”<sup>430</sup> In case of conflict, as Barnett explains, NGOs will tend to tilt to the side of donors.<sup>431</sup> NGOs have to avoid that their “upward accountability” is done at the expense of their “downward accountability.”<sup>432</sup> In this sense, the quest for professionalization and efficiency in the NGO culture may lead to technocracy and ultimately to detachment from the field.<sup>433</sup> Excessive stress on accountability runs the risk of generating competition between “representing the preferences of victims” and “imputing them from outside.”<sup>434</sup>

In this regard, the IA stress on accompanying highlights the difference between humanitarian NGOs and a purely business management perspective. As Barnett puts it, for humanitarian concerns success “is about being not just doing,” which is “intimately related to preserving the dignity of the recipient.”<sup>435</sup> For IA, being accountable to its beneficiaries is central to its mission of accompanying; being accountable to the beneficiaries is a consequence and a requirement of advocacy that is empowering, that remains close to the people, and that works from the bottom up. Since *the aim of IA is not to speak for the voiceless, but rather to create the conditions for the voiceless to find their voice and speak up*, IA must remain accountable to the people whose cause it is advocating in order to make sure that to the greatest extent possible their voices are heard. IA makes strong demands on the organizations embracing it, because it involves sharing responsibility and decision making with the beneficiaries, which in turn means being accountable for them and to them. Since the institutions engaged in advocacy claim to represent the voice and interest of the poor, they should be ready to give

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<sup>430</sup> (Weiss 2008, 134)

<sup>431</sup> (Weiss 2008, 112) As a consequence, NGOs are starting to resemble firms, abiding by the agenda of the donors and offering the possible donors the possibility of use the NGOs name as a publicity claim. NGOs are becoming market driven and that might lead to their compromise with donors to satisfy donor’s demands. See *ibid*, 106-109.

<sup>432</sup> (Edwards 1997, 8-9;13-15;278-9)

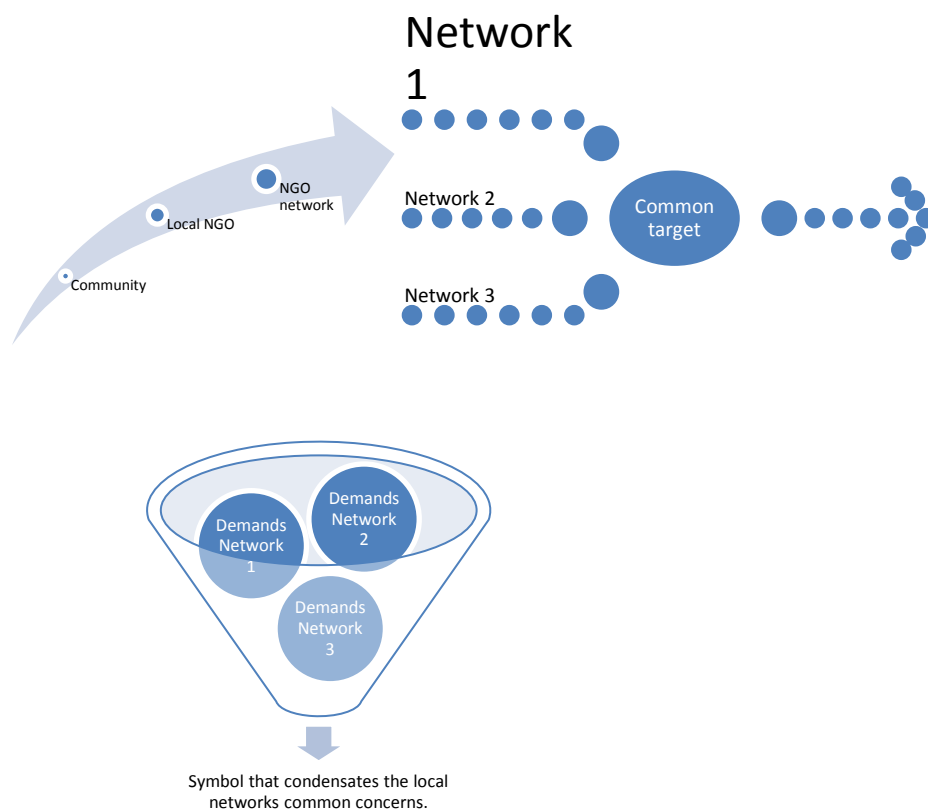
<sup>433</sup> See Barnett depiction of types of humanitarian professionals (Weiss 2008,114-5)

<sup>434</sup> (Weiss 2008,132)

<sup>435</sup> (Weiss 2008,121)

an account of their activities and of their budget to the poor, on whose behalf they do advocacy, design programs, and raise funds.

*As a summary of the whole section* I present an adaptation of what Keck and Sikkink consider the model for successful advocacy campaigns. They explain that in advocacy efforts “strong and dense linkages between domestic and foreign actors” are crucial for the advocacy campaign’s success. They also note that advocacy campaigners need to create “allies” that will help them overcome local or international opposition.



According to the authors, the proper chain of advocacy efforts is as follows: Dispersed Networks working locally start to raise awareness<sup>436</sup> → then these networks come together when they find a

<sup>436</sup> “Characteristic of advocacy networks is the political entrepreneurship of a (usually) small number of individuals who recognize new political opportunities, and join with others to address them strategically.” (Keck, E. Margaret and Sikkink, Kathryn 1998, 132). Barneet stresses how “Humanitarian organizations are committed... to drawing to the greatest extent possible on local

common target that has the power to achieve change and so becomes the focus of their advocacy efforts → condensation of the demands in a symbol that is usually the case story of a victim → catalytic campaign carried out by the international counterparts<sup>437</sup> → creation of an international network of allies to advocate the issue.<sup>438</sup> This schema is suitable for IA because IA has as its base the grassroots contacts and the communities which will allow it to design its advocacy campaigns from below.<sup>439</sup> This partnership approach allows for the “downward accountability” that not only gives legitimacy to the NGOs, but also empowers the beneficiaries, who can hold accountable the NGOs that claim to represent them.<sup>440</sup>

Finally, since IA is an initiative of the SJ, it may be worth pointing out that religious advocates and religious organizations can play a strong role in advocacy campaigns.<sup>441</sup> This is the case because religious institutions can exert moral leverage, because they are usually close to the people on whose behalf they advocate, and usually have a strong transnational network with independent channels of communication and independent funding.<sup>442</sup> It has already been argued in this paper that NGOs engaged in advocacy have their source of power and legitimacy in remaining driven by the people, and that is precisely why their advocacy proves to be most effective. Then again, by accompanying the people, IA has access to first-hand testimonies about personal experience upon which, with the

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knowledge.” And of particular interest for IA as contextual advocacy he adds “Local knowledge is specially important when knowledge is contingent and context dependent.” (Weiss 2008, 140)

<sup>437</sup> This mechanism requires local-national-international networking in synergy where “personal connections are crucial.” (Keck, E. Margaret and Sikkink, Kathryn 1998, 145)

<sup>438</sup> Transnational networking can help to “amplify local demands by resituating them in different arenas with more potential allies.” (Keck, E. Margaret and Sikkink, Kathryn 1998, 144;181) See also “scaling up” in (Hulme 1992, 187)

<sup>439</sup> As note elsewhere, advocacy efforts are a multi-layer synergy effort that combines the engagement of charismatic individuals with social local movements, and grassroots, religious congregations and parishes and then establish a link with international NGOs. This multi-layer requires networking to gather information and to spread it and locate it in the right frame in the right moment and time in order to have political influence.

<sup>440</sup> (Hulme 1992, 25)

<sup>441</sup> (Hulme 1992, 20-30;107-110; 140-1;147-153)

<sup>442</sup> (Keck, E. Margaret and Sikkink, Kathryn 1998, 29-30; 75-6)



help of expert support, it can build up advocacy campaigns that are empowering, people-centered, and effective.

## IV Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) as the embodiment of Ignatian Advocacy

This last chapter shows that the JRS fleshes out the characteristics of IA as described in this thesis. Methodologically, it starts with a brief explanation of the history and identity of JRS. Then it moves to explain how JRS advocacy exemplifies the features of IA in three ways. First, JRS methodology follows IA's principles of being people-centered and focused on creating capabilities in the people it serves. Second, the spirituality of JRS relies heavily on the Ignatian spirituality and the theological foundations that inform IA. Third, the JRS becomes Christological when it partakes in IA's ministry of hope by serving the crucified people of God. A reference to the stress JRS places on education as a practical example that integrates IA's features closes this section.

### 1. The history, identity and spirituality of the JRS.

The JRS came into being as a result of God's call to the SJ to practice God's compassion. Concretely, it was the vision of Fr Pedro Arrupe SJ,<sup>443</sup> who created the JRS in 1980 as the "Society's response to the drama of the Vietnamese boat-people and the plight of millions of starving refugees in the Sahel zone of Africa."<sup>444</sup> Arrupe foresaw that the SJ, with its networks of institutions and collaborators, was "particularly well suited" to fulfill Ignatius's call to seek the

<sup>443</sup> Fr. Pedro Arrupe, S.J. (November 14, 1907 – February 5, 1991) was the twenty eighth Superior General (1965–83) of the Society of Jesus. He was born in Bilbao, Spain.

<sup>444</sup> Peter-Hans Kolvenbach SJ letter to the Society, "Why a Jesuit Refugee Service?" He refers to Father Arrupe announcement of the birth of the Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) (November, 14, 1980). He wrote "this situation constitutes a challenge to the Society we cannot ignore if we are to remain faithful to St Ignatius' criteria for our apostolic work."

Magis in responding to the plea of the boat people.<sup>445</sup> Arrupe envisioned JRS as an all-embracing integral approach, “to render a service that is human, pedagogical and spiritual.”<sup>446</sup> As the JRS charter reads and several GC’s have affirmed, the JRS belongs to the SJ social apostolate and partakes in the SJ mission “to serve faith and promote the justice of God's Kingdom, in dialogue with cultures and religions.”<sup>447</sup> Faithful to Arrupe’s vision, the JRS uses the criteria of the Magis as the key for discerning its mission and areas of intervention.<sup>448449</sup> As the current SJ’s General, Fr. Nicolas SJ, explains, the JRS is so imbued with the Christian commitment and Ignatian vision that is seen in its strategic framework “faith, justice and collaboration joined once again in a single unified vision.”<sup>450</sup> As a Catholic organization and work of the SJ, JRS is “inspired by the compassion and love of Jesus for the poor and excluded.”<sup>451</sup> Finally, by carrying out the SJ’s mission of faith and justice,<sup>452</sup> JRS is also fulfilling Benedict XVI’ call to Christians’: “manifest God’s all-inclusive love.”<sup>453</sup>

According to its “Guidelines,” the JRS is “an international Catholic organization with a mission to accompany, serve and advocate on behalf of refugees and other forcibly displaced persons.”<sup>454</sup> JRS “promotes regional and global cooperation and networking on behalf of

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<sup>445</sup> In the Constitutions St Ignatius speaks of “the greater universal good, an urgency that is ever growing, the difficulty and complexity of the human problem involved, and lack of other people to attend to the need” as Jesuit criteria for choosing ministries (Const VII, 2, n 623)

<sup>446</sup> November, 14, 1980 Father Arrupe

<sup>447</sup> JRS charter 12 in (JRS, JRS.net s.f.)

<sup>448</sup> As Peter Ballais SJ claims, the JRS is properly Ignatian because “as Arrupe remarked, it is the sort of thing Ignatius would have done... and flows naturally from their spiritual outlook.” (JRS 2000, 114-5) The SJ’s mission has been defined as “the *service of faith, of which promotion of justice is an absolute requirement.*” (GC 32, d.4, no.2) and (GC 34, d.3, no.4).

<sup>449</sup> “JRS chooses situations where it can make a special contribution because of its own expertise, because a partner is already established there, or because its initiative can enable others to become involved.” (JRS 2000, 16)

<sup>450</sup> Adolfo Nicolas SJ Superior General, Society of Jesus 14 November 2011 in (JRS, Jesuit Refugee Service Strategic Framework 2012-2015 2012, 3)

<sup>451</sup> (JRS 2012)

<sup>452</sup> (JRS 2012, 7)

<sup>453</sup> “Which is shown and act in seeking out “the poor, the vulnerable, the marginalized,” paying special attention to “those who are in distress, those suffering from depression or anxiety.” (JRS-Malta 2011)

<sup>454</sup> Approved by Fr General Peter-Hans Kolvenbach on 19 March, 2001. This mission is reaffirmed by the JRS’ Strategic Framework for 2012–2015, (JRS 2012). Following Catholic Social Teaching, JRS considers refugees not only those who have been suffering persecution, but also all those who leave their countries forced by natural disasters or grave economic reasons. JRS

refugees,”<sup>455</sup> and develops its mission by networking with SJ institutions, with other religious orders, and with NGOs and UN organisms; it Hence it is a network of “projects and services” inspired by Ignatian Spirituality<sup>456</sup> and supported by the Society of Jesus (SJ) and its institutions.<sup>457</sup> JRS undertakes humanitarian work and is engaged in human rights campaigns, but JRS is neither “a humanitarian organization” nor a “human rights organization.”<sup>458</sup> It is central to JRS’s advocacy in defense of refugees’ rights that it springs from this commitment to refugees’ lives, and is in this sense secondary to accompanying the refugees.<sup>459</sup> The JRS focus is on “the ‘personal aspect’ of refugee life,” which demands an integral all-embracing approach: pastoral work, education, rehabilitation, community reconstruction, health education.<sup>460</sup> As Peter Balleis SJ, General Director puts it, JRS’s work is integral and although “practical” involves a “spiritual” dimension of “promoting hope and reconciliation.”<sup>461</sup> As the SJ general explained, JRS pays attention to the material shortages and to “the problems [that] are in the hearts of the people.”

JRS spirituality enriches the Ignatian spiritual heritage with the scriptural tradition in which God revealed Godself as a God accompanying God’s people in Exile, as a God walking with

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*relies on “Challenge to Solidarity, document on refugees of The Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People and Cor Unum, Vatican City 1992.” (JRS 2000, 15)*

<sup>455</sup> JRS Charter 11: “JRS seeks to work in collaboration with the local Church.” JRS Charter 12: “JRS joins efforts with other international institutions and organizations to combat the injustices which uproot peoples from their land and families.” JRS’ advocacy is done with “Jesuit social institutes and centers of research, and also with human rights organizations.” (JRS, JRS.net s.f.)

<sup>456</sup> “JRS was set up as a collaborative effort of Jesuits, other religious and laity who wanted to serve refugees... JRS is first and foremost a service to refugees and only secondly a Jesuit institution. What unites all who work with JRS is a commitment to refugees.” Jenny Cafiso, Programmes Officer in the JRS international office in Rome between 1995 and 2003, in (JRS 2005, 278) .

<sup>457</sup> Ballais (JRS 2000, 116)

<sup>458</sup> On 19 March 2000, JRS was given a juridical personality as a pious, autonomous foundation in accord with Canon Law, and recognized by the Vatican. However, “In some countries, to accomplish its mission JRS must register as a non-government organization according to law.” Guidelines of the JRS # 34 in (JRS 2000, 22)

<sup>459</sup> “It is impossible to stay in touch with those dimensions of refugee life and remain politically neutral or inhibited.” (Fabre 2002)

<sup>460</sup> However, JRS is not primarily emergency response. (Fabre 2002) See also JRS Guidelines indicate: “JRS opts for a personal style of presence, and deliberately keeps its administrative structure as light as possible. JRS is not normally equipped to undertake large-scale emergency or infrastructure projects.” (JRS 2000, 22)

<sup>461</sup> (JRS 2012, 5)

God's people, and as a God commanding hospitality for the stranger.<sup>462</sup> Relying on the promises of God who "committed his name to liberation," JRS believes that God is constantly "engaged to free his people" and to guide those working for their liberation.<sup>463</sup> JRS seeks God's presence in the refugees' exile.<sup>464</sup> Ultimately, JRS has its spiritual core in Mt 25, in which Jesus identifies himself with the strangers and praises those who give them shelter.<sup>465</sup> The person of Jesus is central to Ignatian spirituality, and Jesus is also the model and criterion for JRS's discernment of the ways of being present among the refugees.<sup>466</sup> Consequently, JRS's planning and programming try to keep in mind Jesus' prophetic standing,<sup>467</sup> Jesus' defense of the poor and marginalized,<sup>468</sup> and Jesus' humble attitude in living out God's mission.<sup>469</sup> Particularly, since JRS's mission is to "humanize all those situations which have been dehumanized,"<sup>470</sup> and since it works in the midst of struggles that are often discouraging, JRS cultivates Jesus' attitude of trust, of surrendering all its efforts to God, of gratuitousness, of acknowledging that all comes from God.<sup>471</sup> Faithful to its Ignatian heritage, JRS seeks to view the world with the compassionate gaze of the Triune God who is concerned for the integral liberation of all human beings, "victims as well as

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<sup>462</sup> Job 31:32; Deuteronomical injunction to love the stranger (Dt 10:19); (Micah 6:8)

<sup>463</sup> "We have God's promise through the prophets Jeremiah and Ezekiel." (Jer 23:7-8); (Ezek 37:12-14). In (Lev 19:33-34) God as goël of refugees and exiles demands from the host nations to respect and welcome them.

<sup>464</sup> In fact, according to the Scripture, it was an en exile "the first human being to affirm monotheism and deportees were the first persons to believe in it." (JRS 2005, 21)

<sup>465</sup> "The biblical welcome offered to the widow, the orphan and the stranger is the JRS model of authentic pastoral service." Peter-Hans Kolvenbach SJ, to the whole Society on 24 March 2000 (JRS 2000, 12) "When Job announces that he will allow no sojourner to pass the night without shelter (Job 31:32), he is in fact receiving the *image and likeness* of the God whose heart is open to welcome the oppressed." *Peter-Hans Kolvenbach SJ. at the European Congress of Jesuit Alumni and Alumnae in Brussels, 19 August 1993* (JRS 2000, 93-5)

<sup>466</sup> In the Spiritual Exercises, Ignatius never ceases to invite us to ask for the *grace to imitate Christ our Lord better and to be more like him* (Ex 167). And the Framework reads "we are sustained by our faith and spiritual values... we are inspired by the example of Jesus and his compassion and love for the poor." (JRS 2012, 5)

<sup>467</sup> Jesus denounced all mechanisms and structures of exclusion,... Jesus was a *witness to the truth*. (cf. Jn 18:37).

<sup>468</sup> Throughout his life, Jesus "assumed the figure of the *go'el*... defender of the rights of the poor, of those who have lost everything." (JRS 2005, 115)

<sup>469</sup> Jesus engaged in God's mission "with an attitude of humble service (Luke 22:27) and his attitude "illustrates the way in which the choices and decisions of JRS are primarily guided by the needs of refugees, and not by considerations internal to the organisation." (JRS 2005, 130).

<sup>470</sup> "We enter situations that are broken and full of pain. And by simple human presence, by seeing the dignity of each person and believing in their potential... we see the person as God does." (JRS 2005, 261)

<sup>471</sup> Sometimes as *Denise Coghlan RSM Jesuit Service Cambodia* puts it we just "need to take a rest and trust that providence will find a way." (JRS 2005, 84).

perpetrators.”<sup>472</sup> Similarly, human dignity is part of the “values” that define JRS’s identity: “JRS believes in the intrinsic dignity of every person. We work with refugees and other displaced persons regardless of race, gender, religion or politics.”<sup>473</sup>

JRS finds in Jesus the Emmanuel who is “waiting for us in the people we meet,” a source of inspiration for its mission. Although , Jesus in his adult life was not a refugee nor did he work with displaced people, but his mission involved fundamentally reaching out to persons in need.<sup>474</sup> As Pablo Alonso claims, “Jesus’ encounter with the Syrophenician woman (Mk 7:24-30)” can be of special significance for JRS,<sup>475</sup> because in her, God “was inviting Jesus to “break down the barrier of his prejudices” to attend to “the other in need.” Alonso reflects on how this encounter depicts a experience familiar to JRS staff, working in a foreign country and culture and sometimes overwhelmed by the needs of others. In those occasions, as Alonso notes, “We can still hope,” because Jesus was in a similar situation and God’s love overcame all hindrances.<sup>476</sup>

## **2. JRS advocacy:**

JRS advocacy is at the crossroads of Ignatian spirituality and SJ missiology, called to follow and serve Jesus poor and humble wherever the need and God’s service are greater, with the demands of an advocacy that in order to be Ignatian remains empowering and community-centered.<sup>477</sup> JRS provides IA with “one of the essential features which makes our advocacy

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<sup>472</sup> (JRS 2005, 116)

<sup>473</sup> (JRS 2012, 7)

<sup>474</sup> “Pity draws him to the crowds of people who had nobody to take care of them and he assists and feeds them trespassing “cultural and religious boundaries (Mk, 1:21-28; 1:40-45; 5:25-34; 6:34ff).” (JRS 2005, 24)

<sup>475</sup> See Pablo Alonso SJ in (JRS 2005, 24-26)

<sup>476</sup> (JRS 2005, 26); “God dwelling in us pours forth hope, love and joy from our hearts.” (JRS 2005, 85)

<sup>477</sup> “The Social Apostolate can learn (expertise) and get support (human and material resources) from the concrete JRS advocacy network at all levels in the area of refugee work in order to extend it towards addressing structural root causes of injustices.” (JRS and Social Apostolate 2006)

Jesuit: the direct contact with Jesus incarnate in the refugees, poor and marginal.”<sup>478</sup> JRS advocacy has all the characteristics proper to IA; its advocacy efforts are aimed at changing structures; they are people-centered and focused on creating capabilities. An explanation of each of these aspects follows.

#### **a. JRS advocacy is aimed at achieving structural change**

As an SJ response to God’s call, JRS serves the mission of the church and attends to the immediate needs of the refugees and at the same time takes “effective action on political and socio-economic levels to eliminate the causes of refugee movements.”<sup>479</sup> As Fr. General explains, JRS’ mission consists in enacting the Gospel call to hospitality in welcoming and serving the refugees and at the same time influencing the society “creatively, effectively and positively” to broaden its sense of hospitality.<sup>480</sup> Effectively, according to “Qualified Advocacy,” JRS combines different levels of advocacy (preventive, solution focused, accompaniment rooted, networking, inter-personal).<sup>481</sup> JRS’ advocacy fulfills IA requirements to center its advocacy efforts in seeking perdurable solutions and challenging the roots of the unequal power relations that foster inequalities and injustice, by putting particular stress on “preventive advocacy.” This advocacy efforts seek to analyze the root causes of the “armed-economic-environmental violence” that generate., marginalization and displacement. Moreover, JRS contributes to IA by demonstrating the interconnectedness of SJ “spiritual-intellectual-social action re-sources.”<sup>482</sup>

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<sup>478</sup> (JRS and Social Apostolate 2006)

<sup>479</sup> Dieter B. Scholz SJ, JRS International Director, 1980-1990. Extracts from ‘The World Refugee Problem: Our Responsibility and Role’, an address given at the third international symposium of the Institute for the Study of Social Justice at Sophia University, Tokyo, December 1983. (JRS 2000, 69)

<sup>480</sup> *Rome, November 14, 2010, Adolfo Nicolás, S.J. Superior General.* JRS’ Framework expresses JRS commitment to develop this charge of the general of exercising this ministry of hospitality “to those at the frontiers of humanity.” “We walk alongside, accompany and offer hospitality to the most vulnerable... giving priority to situations of great need, in places where a more universal good may be achieved, and to needs to which others are not attending.” (JRS 2012, 7)

<sup>481</sup> (JRS and Social Apostolate 2006)

<sup>482</sup> There is a relation of interdependency and networking for a common mission and charge as works of the SJ. The JRS relies on the Social Apostolate and Ecology research capacities. (JRS and Social Apostolate 2006)

Furthermore, JRS serves IA by providing it with direct contact with the people whose reality is touched by the power structures, and by feeding the advocacy chain with trustworthy information from the field. Conversely, JRS benefits from the SJ structures and their capacity for research and expertise. As former Fr. General Peter Hans Kolvenbach noted, the SJ with its universities and research facilities has a responsibility to invest and get involved in the analysis of the long term causes of the refugee problem.<sup>483</sup> In this area JRS and the SJES have a lot of room for improvement and initiatives such as the Boston College Workshop point in the right direction. Following the IA way of proceeding, the JRS invites the SJ to engage in the generation of alternative discourses of truth that show how the refugees are the result of politics, economic pressures or, ethnic wars.<sup>484</sup> The SJ institutions have to develop reflection work that denounces the situation of the refugees by pointing out the injustices and flaws of global economics and global politics.<sup>485</sup> In so doing, the SJ would be serving not only JRS but the mission of the church, responding to the charge of Blessed JP II to confront the discourse of public opinion that renders the displacement of populations as “normal,”<sup>486</sup> and to Benedict XVI’s command to promote respect for every

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<sup>483</sup> “With our many universities, social institutes and other facilities of study and research the Society is eminently suited to address these deeper and, in the long term, most important issues, a task which as yet we have hardly begun to tackle.” Kollenbach demands that part of the SJ service to the refugees has to be “political analysis, research, reflection and public debate, in order to deepen the awareness of this great human tragedy of our time at all levels of public life.” (JRS 2000, 53)

<sup>484</sup> And to examine critically “the commonly held view that the refugee problem of our times is the cumulative result of accidental misfortunes...or of actions for which the refugees themselves are responsible.” (JRS 2000, 69)

<sup>485</sup> “The refugee problem is a *sign*, an indication of a more fundamental and pervasive disorder in the world political economy of our time.” Moreover, “The plight of refugees is the result of sin: war, blind violence, hate, exclusion, an unlimited desire for power and riches, exploitation, misery.” Dr Michael Schulteis SJ, *Refugees: The Structures of a Global Justice Issue*, 1983, Centre of Concern, Washington) in (JRS 2000, 69)

<sup>486</sup> “It is something repugnant and abnormal for hundreds and thousands of human beings to be forced to leave their own countries because of their race, ethnic origin, political convictions or religion, or because they are in danger of violence or even death from civil strife or political turmoil. Exile seriously violates the human conscience and the norms of life in society; it is clearly contrary to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and to international law itself (Address to government authorities and the diplomatic corps, Bangkok, 11 May 1984; L’Osservatore Romano, 21 May 1984).” As quoted in (JRS 2000, 132)

migrant's dignity and to provide refugees with "dignified living conditions" until "they can freely and safely return to their homeland."<sup>487</sup>

As a summary of this section, let's conclude by saying that JRS, being a Catholic organization and sharing in "the Church's response at the parish, diocesan and international levels,"<sup>488</sup> JRS has a broad and distinctive approach to advocacy. Its advocacy is Ignatian because its integral and incorporates "moral formation of the public, personal accompaniment to the victims, and theological interpretations of the questions."<sup>489</sup> JRS's service includes several types of advocacy activities,<sup>490</sup> at "local, national and international levels,"<sup>491</sup> aimed at achieving long-term solutions.<sup>492</sup> JRS advocacy is aimed at changing the power structures that provoke the forced displacement of people in the first place.

#### **b. Advocacy that is people-centered and creates capabilities**

*"JRS gives priority to accompaniment and pastoral presence among refugees and forcibly displaced persons" and "offers services that are direct and personal."*<sup>493</sup>

As it was explained in the first section, JRS's mission is to accompany, to serve and to advocate for the refugees' cause and as JRS staff members put it, this order "reflects a

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<sup>487</sup> The pope charges the church to strive to "have the rights of migrants and refugees respected," moving the leaders of nations, and those in charge of international organizations and institutions to promote appropriate initiatives for their support." The pope "The migrant is a human being who possesses fundamental, inalienable rights that must be respected by everyone and in every circumstance. (JRS-USA 2009)

<sup>488</sup> JRS Charter 10 in (JRS, JRS.net s.f.)

<sup>489</sup> (Fabre 2002)

<sup>490</sup> Defending their rights before the local authorities; accurately collecting information about human rights violations; denouncing abuses of their dignity; lobbying national and international policy-makers; participating in international coalitions of non-governmental organizations; sensitizing public awareness about their plight; challenging xenophobia and racism, etc. Adapted from (JRS 2005, 107)

<sup>491</sup> Kolbenbch Fr. General During the last Major Superiors' Meeting (Loyola, Dec. 2005), talking about "*De statu Societatis: our ministries*," under the section of the Social Apostolate. As quoted in (JRS and Social Apostolate 2006)

<sup>492</sup> "To ignore the deeper reasons behind the phenomenon of forced migration is to limit our service to emergency relief, which is necessary, to be sure, in the early stages of every refugee flow but does not address the vital questions of why a person has become a refugee and what could be done to spare others a similar fate." (JRS 2000, 53)

<sup>493</sup> According to the JRS Guidelines these include programs of pastoral care, various kinds of education for children and adults, social services and counseling, and health care.



fundamental intuition,” namely, that “accompaniment comes first.”<sup>494</sup> The JRS reports make the case for what this thesis claims is a central feature of IA: it is by *being with* refugees that one discovers how to serve them. As it was explained above, advocacy in JRS springs from accompaniment. In this regard and according to different JRS reports, the specific value of JRS advocacy does not reside primarily in its knowledge of political leverage but in its “*knowing* in the biblical sense of the word... on its concrete, *flesh-and-blood* understanding of the world of refugees.”<sup>495</sup> It is the experience of JRS that its credibility springs from this knowing that we have called accompanying.<sup>496</sup> JRS reports hold that the credibility and impact of its advocacy work depends on listening to the refugees’ voices and enabling them to claim their rights.<sup>497</sup>

In its desire to learn the reality of the refugees, JRS finds in the application of the Exercises an invitation to see, hear, smell, touch and taste (SpEx 66-70) to better understand the refugees’ perspective.<sup>498</sup> However, accompanying the refugees is not only at the core of JRS spirituality, it also determines how JRS makes “structural and programmatic demands on the work undertaken by JRS,”<sup>499</sup> and it is essential to its humanitarian service, which involves

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<sup>494</sup> As a JRS staff members reflections had it “Our first task is to accompany the people. Living with them as they live we will more likely hear and experience their stories, hopes and responses to their situations.” Extract from a reflection made by JRS workers during the summer school at Oxford, 1993. In (JRS 2005, 285)

<sup>495</sup> “Our words will be all the more credible when backed first of all by our own personal poverty” of accompanying the refugees.” (JRS 2005, 115)

<sup>496</sup> As Christine Bloch (JRS Representative in Geneva since 1999) puts it: “I find imperative in order to carry out a credible lobbying and advocacy work in Geneva is to go to the field and speak to the refugees and JRS workers staff... These are the experiences I can bring back to the decision-makers.” (JRS 2005, 284). As in (Hampson SJ 2009) reads “Though the worker does not live the life of the refugee, a genuine accompaniment can however give him or her a sensitivity and empathy to the refugee situation, and allow an equal relationship of mutual respect and friendship to grow.” (Hampson SJ 2009)

<sup>497</sup> “As for us, are we not in a much better position to make the voice of refugees heard *by those who would prefer not to hear it*, we who have seen with our eyes, heard with our ears, and felt in our flesh the injustice they suffer?” (Kolvenbach, 1997) “Though the worker does not live the life of the refugee, a genuine accompaniment can however give him or her a sensitivity and empathy to the refugee situation, and allow an equal relationship of mutual respect and friendship to grow.” (Hampson SJ 2009)

<sup>498</sup> “We can only try to imagine the experience, the nightmare of violence and war, the loss of home and loved ones, the terror of flight, the tired desperation of struggling to survive, and the growing disillusionment and despair of waiting out years in a camp.” (JRS 2005, 50)

<sup>499</sup> (Hampson SJ 2009)

advocacy.<sup>500</sup> In accord with the centrality of Incarnation in Ignatian Theology, JRS's mission of accompanying the refugees is better understood as being present, as walking with, as readiness to befriend the refugees. By accompanying them, JRS gets a good grasp of the refugees' needs and concerns,<sup>501</sup> and it is particularly appreciated by the refugee themselves.<sup>502</sup> According to Fr. Kolvenbach, the Jesuits working and living in the midst of the refugees reported that, above all material needs, the refugees appreciated: "friendship trust and understanding"; this is what gives the refugees "hope in their struggle."<sup>503</sup> Along the same line he underlines what is in his understanding is essential to the work and identity of JRS: "a personal approach" which is truly holistic, "covering mind, body and soul."<sup>504</sup> Accompanying and remaining close to the refugees is central to the JRS mission and identity; it is in itself a form of advocacy because the mere fact of staying and being present is frequently a form of protection and denunciation.<sup>505</sup> As the JRS reports contend, the refugees depend on NGOs, which in turn depend on donors' deadlines. In the end the alien criteria of NGO policy can make the duration of their support unpredictable, so that the refugees are uncertain as to when services will be reduced or withdrawn. In this context,

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<sup>500</sup> "A key feature of JRS that marks it out from other humanitarian NGOs is the focus on accompaniment." (Hampson SJ 2009)

<sup>501</sup> As Peter-Hans Kolvenbach SJ explains, the JRS by being present, and remaining with the refugees can "perceive needs in their lives which might otherwise remain concealed, and it can sometimes lead us to reverse our priorities." Extracts of a letter from Peter-Hans Kolvenbach SJ to the Society, 1990 (JRS 2000, 49)

<sup>502</sup> As Hampson notes "when there is no stability... the practice of hospitality and welcome is doubly appreciated... The very idea of the presence of a friend, a companion on life's journey, gives most of us hope and a renewed sense of self." (Hampson SJ 2009)

<sup>503</sup> In a powerful wording that reminds Habacuc Fr. Kollenbach goes on to state "So long as there is hope, even when there is neither shelter, nor food, nor medicines, refugees, even the most vulnerable among them, can overcome formidable obstacles." (JRS 2000, 50)

<sup>504</sup> JRS accompaniment believes in a pastoral care that goes beyond denominational and boundary concerns, so that "the refugee can be met and understood in his or her completeness." An approach that keeps the person at the center considering each individual as irreducible that then understands the refugee crisis as "the story of 15 million individual human beings – their suffering, their hope, their indomitable courage, resilience and determination to live." Extracts of a letter from Peter-Hans Kolvenbach SJ to the Society, 1990 (JRS 2000, 50)

<sup>505</sup> "To join JRS is to embark on a journey of faith in the company of refugees... Our desire is to offer personal, flexible and effective service to those uprooted from their countries and families, especially the most vulnerable." A statement drawn up following discussion during the in-service seminar held in Kigali in August, 1995, around the question, "What do you regard as essential to JRS?" (JRS 2000, 73)

remaining close to the people is a clear asset of JRS.<sup>506</sup> Accompaniment as reliable support is one of the most important aspects of JRS's service to the refugees, and ideally the JRS will inform the beneficiaries from the beginning as to how long its intervention is going to last.

Being with, remaining close to the refugees, sharing their lives, is not only the best way for JRS to grasp the particularities of the refugees' needs, concerns, and possibilities; it is also a way of better fostering in them "self-help" and "self-determination."<sup>507</sup> According to JRS staff, accompanying the refugees helps JRS in the process of creating capabilities for and with them, letting them be the protagonists of the whole process of acquiring new skills and of learning to use their own potentialities.<sup>508</sup> It has been the experience of JRS staff that when the refugees lead the decision making process, it "often brings us all to the heart of the matter."<sup>509</sup> This bottom-up organization model for IA was stressed by Fr General Nicolas in his visit to Kakuma (Kenya), where he invited the local community to make use of their own capabilities, and he encouraged them to take the lead. The SJ' General also urged them: "You begin. Don't expect everything to come from above."<sup>510</sup> Similarly, in his visit to JRS camps in Haiti, Fr. General told the JRS to constantly seek to "build participatory communities."<sup>511</sup> He also acknowledged that this capability-creating approach (my wording) is a demanding way of proceeding for JRS but, he rendered it as the way that will be most effective "in the long run"; while strengthening "the

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<sup>506</sup> Effectively, in a refugee camp converge a large of NGOs to supply with different services. These NGOs respond to the coordination of government and/or UNHCR, have "varied mandates, varied understandings of their mission," diverse "levels of effectiveness." (Hampson SJ 2009). For Villanueva, remaining is at the core of Arrupe's vision for JRS, see (Villanueva, Jesuits and the Catholic Political Advocacy Religion 2007).

<sup>507</sup> Diakonia, News from JRS Asia Pacific, Issue 1, November 1983. Everybody's, (JRS 2000, 76)

<sup>508</sup> *This implies, that* whenever possible, "JRS consults, trains and recruits refugees, and encourages them to participate in planning, implementing and reviewing projects." (JRS 2000, 24)

<sup>509</sup> (JRS 2005, 28)

<sup>510</sup> (JRS-EA 2009)

<sup>511</sup> (JRS, jrs.net 2011)

humanity” of the refugees.<sup>512</sup> As the Framework of JRS explains, JRS is committed to working with the local grassroots and in so doing it follows the principle of subsidiarity of CST.<sup>513</sup>

JRS takes its commitment to be refugee centered so seriously, that it took almost 20 years for the JRS to have its charter defined.<sup>514</sup> Applying the Young Christian Methodology of see-judge-act to its decision making process, JRS starts its strategic planning process “by building on experience that is reflected upon, keeping the structures light,” and by favoring “the involvement of individuals and communities” of refugees. JRS’s advocacy is “rooted in proximity to refugees” and is part of an integral response to being with them: “it flows from accompaniment and service and is linked to JRS projects.”<sup>515</sup> Effectively, JRS advocacy starts with the personal request of actual refugees; it is a response “to refugee needs in the course of their daily work.”<sup>516</sup> In a second moment, if the issue raised by the concrete needs of the refugees demands it, JRS advocacy takes place at the national level.<sup>517</sup> If the issue at stake is related to economic or political problems that are sustained by cross-national dynamics, then JRS advocacy becomes organized on “a regional basis” that remains in close contact with the former levels.<sup>518</sup> Finally, JRS advocacy occurs also on the international level to raise awareness and collaborate with “governments and institutions that can

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<sup>512</sup> (JRS, jrs.net 2011)

<sup>513</sup> JRS framework reads: “JRS upholds the principle of subsidiarity, networking with different local institutions and “with refugees themselves, encouraging co-responsibility, discernment and participative decision-making.” (JRS 2012, 7)

<sup>514</sup> (Hampson SJ 2009)

<sup>515</sup> For JRS, being present genuinely means facing injustices and transforming them, that is JRS commitment of service and advocacy. “The mere fact of presence... is not a sufficient holistic response to the evils of refugee and IDP situations... the struggle for justice involve assisting and protecting those whose rights are violated, create conditions where these violations cannot be repeated, and advocate for justice for the victims.” (Hampson SJ 2009)

<sup>516</sup> For example, JRS Ukraine learned that asylum seekers and refugees could not access basic healthcare. The response of JRS was to inform the Ukrainian authorities and hospital administrators about existing access to healthcare laws, and to advocate for their implementation. “Accompaniment becomes advocacy when an appeal is made by a JRS staff member, on behalf of a refugee, to an outside party that can provide help.” This ranges from helping a refugee with a disability to access specialized care to JRS staff approaching the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to ask for changes in policy or practices to better protect vulnerable people. See (JRS 2011, 4)

<sup>517</sup> Because “changes in national law or policy affecting refugees or IDPs are called for.” (Fabre 2002)

<sup>518</sup> It is charged with monitoring the situation of refugees and IDPs in the region and need to be feed with information from the national level to draft strategic plans depending on the needs and the opportunities for advocacy. (JRS 2011)

improve conditions affecting refugees.”<sup>519</sup> As part of the synergy methodology, the international advocacy is tightly linked to regional advocacy, especially in areas of broad concern, such as education, detention and urban refugees.<sup>520</sup>

This bottom-up methodology starts with the staff sharing the conditions of the refugees (to the extent that this is feasible) in order to remain flexible and better suited to adapt to “people’s changing needs.” This approach helps the JRS to keep programming centered on refugees’ needs and concerns.<sup>521</sup> Therefore JRS advocacy exemplifies the IA approach defended in this paper for it starts in the field, scales to the national level, and finally reaches the international scenario. Therefore JRS advocacy is deployed as a networking effort and as an exercise of multilayer synergy; before planning advocacy efforts, it demands consideration of what is “the value that JRS can give” to supplement the work of other grassroots actors and NGOs.<sup>522</sup> As part of IA, JRS’s scaling up of advocacy relies on SJ allies in the centers of power<sup>523</sup> to help guide its decision making process and to help in the detection of “strategic catalysts” and in the planning of strategies “towards durable solutions.”<sup>524</sup>

In short, JRS advocacy fits IA requirements because JRS remains close to the refugees creating space for them as they “tell their stories” and seek to make their voices heard in “the centers of power and [among] those who want to bring about positive change.”<sup>525</sup> JRS advocacy involves an effort to bring the “knowledge and understanding derived from” JRS’s closeness to the refugees “to those who are in a position to effect

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<sup>519</sup> (JRS 2011, 7)

<sup>520</sup> See (JRS, Everybody’s Challenge 2000); (JRS and Social Apostolate 2006)

<sup>521</sup> “Where accompaniment is at the heart of our way of proceeding, we shall inevitably be led to the refugees’ deepest concerns” JRS Charter, #9 in (JRS, JRS.net s.f.)

<sup>522</sup> “JRS advocacy builds upon synergies among forcibly displaced people; academics; human rights advocates; the public who support our work; and, in some instances, government and UN officials.” (JRS 2011, 3); See also (Villanueva 2008)

<sup>523</sup> These allies that will vary from “academic-researchers” and “expert-practitioners,” to “politicians, *Ignatian* spiritual facilitators, and field workers.” (JRS and Social Apostolate 2006)

<sup>524</sup> (JRS and Social Apostolate 2006)

<sup>525</sup> (JRS 2011, 3)

positive change.” Moreover, JRS advocacy seeks to remain people-centered by giving a contextualized response to the concrete problems and necessities of the local people it is accompanying.<sup>526</sup> As it was claimed in earlier sections of this paper, the JRS advocacy toolkit states that this proximity to the refugees is what gives JRS advocacy “its integrity; it is what makes it so effective.”<sup>527</sup>

### **c. Discernment in JRS**

In earlier sections it was claimed that discernment was an essential feature for IA, here we show that it is essential for JRS because JRS’s work takes place in “gray areas.” As Mark Raper SJ has it, JRS needs “a strong life of the spirit” if it is to persevere in its work with integrity.<sup>528</sup> In concrete, a concern of JRS in advocacy campaigns is how to balance its prophetic voice with an stable presence in the country that enables it to serve the refugees in the long run. As Lluís Magrifia SJ (former director of JRS International) puts it, “In such situations, it is not easy to know what to do. Do we move on, remain, do we take up a project or not?”<sup>529</sup> Sometimes, the JRS team decides to remain accompanying the refugees despite the threat of while while other institutions working under the umbrella of the UN leave and this is a source of tension for JRS and the SJ.<sup>530</sup> It can also happen, that the SJ as institution asks the JRS to down play the advocacy role and that is also a source of tension and friction ad intra.<sup>531</sup> That is way, in Raper’s words, “JRS requires a cycle of discernment that leads to planning, evaluating and reporting in the light of our common mission.”<sup>532</sup> Discernment in JRS, as in IA, has a threefold meaning; it has a practical dimension,

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<sup>526</sup> “Being close to the people concerned, and supporting their hopes and aspirations” and constantly examining if its approach is “appropriate to local conditions, reflecting local needs, resources and opportunities.” (JRS 2011, 3)

<sup>527</sup> (JRS 2011, 7)

<sup>528</sup> (JRS, *Everybody’s Challenge* 2000, 89)

<sup>529</sup> (JRS, *Education as Empowering Horizons* 2005, 137)

<sup>530</sup> (JRS-BC-Workshop 2011)

<sup>531</sup> (JRS-BC-Workshop 2011)

<sup>532</sup> “Reflection and self-criticism help prevent us from being overwhelmed by the great needs, from favoring small groups and from taking sides” Mark Raper (JRS 2000, 89-90). He was international Director, Jesuit Refugee Service, 1990-2000.

it seeks to incorporate God's guidance in the decision making and, it also discerns God's accompanying presence in everyday life.

Discernment obviously has a practical side to it, since JRS learns from experience what solutions work best in each situation.<sup>533</sup> In this regard, JRS embraces the criteria set forth by David Hollenbach, namely, the needs of the poor over the wants of the rich, the freedom of the dominated over the liberty of the powerful, and the participation of marginalized groups over the preservation of an order that excludes them.<sup>534</sup> JRS is called to discern its concrete implementation by relying on the characteristic social action cycle, "see, judge and act," to which Mark Raper SJ adds the need to reflect upon what "we have learned from our experience and personal contact with those whom we serve."<sup>535</sup> Another aspect of discernment in JRS is that properly spiritual. JRS empowerment is not only practical or logistical, but an exercise of allowing God to have a say; this is part of what makes the JRS process Ignatian, and it is a way of gaining depth and perspective.<sup>536</sup> JRS's closeness to the refugees implies then an attitude of careful listening that seeks to discern "the life of the spirit" in the refugees. This attitude, which JRS calls the "spirituality of the road," implies constant discernment and evaluation.<sup>537</sup> It consists in seeking "God's gaze" while applying "all the analytical tools at our In virtue of its capability-creating approach, JRS shares this effort with the refugees."<sup>538</sup> The fact that the mission is shared and community-centered demands that the discernment be communal. The community becomes the "reference point" and the "natural space" for JRS discernment. Fr. General Adolfo Nicolas

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<sup>533</sup> "Discernment means keeping our feet on the ground in assessing what the real possibilities are, and ultimately looking for ways to make our work successful." (JRS 2005, 137)

<sup>534</sup> David Hollenbach SJ, *Claims In Conflict*, 1979

<sup>535</sup> (JRS, *Education as Empowering Horizons* 2005, 138)

<sup>536</sup> *JRSS as SJ effort and organization, leans on Ignatian Spirituality and incorporates Ignatian discernment, as Raper puts it* "Discernment is a key element of Ignatian spirituality and thus of our methodology."

<sup>537</sup> "Let us constantly question our way of being present. Let us discern our way of service." (JRS 2005, 112)

<sup>538</sup> "One bears witness to what the refugees live through direct presence, another gathers and structures the information; and still others bring it to the attention of lawmakers, officials, the appropriate ministers, and to public opinion." (JRS 2005, 113)

referred to the centrality of accompanying in the JRS mission as being *friends in the Lord with the refugees*. This expression conveys a clear image: accompanying in JRS is multi-directional, because the JRS staff is accompanied by God and by the refugees while accompanying. In turn, JRS wants to incorporate this aspect in the decision making, which implies that JRS's "responses to challenges should emerge from a well-rehearsed habit of communal discernment." Thus *Francois Chanterie SJ* describes JRS communal discernment with these words: "we come together *as friends in the Lord* to seek his will and to serve him."<sup>539</sup>

Finally, the discerning process has a third important role in JRS mission. Drawing on its Ignatian spirituality, JRS is invited to seek God's presence in its everyday work (*SpEx* 234, 236). Becoming aware of how God is present in the midst of tension and anxiety is a source of hope and strength for both JRS and refugees. Paraphrasing Aloysius Pieris SJ, it can be said that JRS's spirituality is a practical mysticism of open eyes whereby "God is found rejoicing in the birth of a new baby, in the smiles of children, exulting when the refugees are glad" and "weeping when loved ones are killed and children starve."<sup>540</sup> This spirituality calls JRS to cultivate "a listening, discerning heart" that allows JRS to see Christ in every refugee;<sup>541</sup> it also requires quiet times of liturgical celebration and prayer where, resting from "the hurly burly of everyday...the face of Jesus comes back to haunt us, surprise us or smile at us."<sup>542</sup> For *Denise Coghlan* this is JRS's distinctive way of being present among refugees,<sup>543</sup> and this is precisely Arrupe's famous "swan

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<sup>539</sup> (JRS, *Education as Empowering Horizons* 2005, 120)

<sup>540</sup> (JRS 2005, 78)

<sup>541</sup> (JRS 2005, 80)

<sup>542</sup> Agathe Durand, a member of JRS in Bukavu explains how she felt overwhelmed by the experience of violence and despair "I was confronted, like never before, with hatred on a grand scale, the extreme suffering of so many people without exception" and of ultimately surrendering her hope to God when there was nothing left to be done "prayer allowed me to accept that I had not been able to do more that day, and to start again the next day." (JRS 2005, 80)

<sup>543</sup> "Our first steps in the camps were 'an application of the senses': to touch, to see, to hear, to taste the hardship of exile the refugees lived... I dare say our words took on a different shade compared to those exchanged by specialists on the geopolitics of the Great Lakes, simply because they were spoken with both feet firmly rooted in the hard reality of the refugee camps." Denise Coghlan RSM, Jesuit Service Cambodia poetically explains: (JRS 2005, 85)



song' for the Society," his call for JRS staff to rely on God.<sup>544</sup> In the same line, Kolvenbach praised the JRS teams for discerning God's will in the midst of the struggle, and he reminded them that it is in "fellowship with Christ" that the JRS staff is to find "the source of the hope" they share "with the refugees."<sup>545</sup> JRS reports witness how JRS seeks to experience God's presence in the midst of the refugees and in JRS activity in all its diversity.<sup>546</sup> The ***JRS' team have been encountered by God in God's "displaced people."***<sup>547</sup> Part of this life springs from becoming aware of God's presence and sharing hope as "God's gift."<sup>548</sup>

### 3. JRS a Ministry of hope:

"Finding God at the heart of our experience of accompanying refugees, a journey from loss, suffering, and courage to hope through hopelessness itself, we begin to see and understand our world from God's perspective."<sup>549</sup>

In this subsection we contend that the JRS mission is "Christological" for it witnesses to God's love in serving God's crucified people, because it conveys God's hope and salvation to them and from them to the rest of the society, and because JRS remains at the foot of the Cross "hoping against hope."

#### a. JRS serves the Crucified People,

The refugees "are uprooted people, cut off and thrown out like the trees that we transplant and uproot."<sup>550</sup> They are in shock, carrying "a deep sense of loss"; they have been "humiliated,"

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<sup>544</sup> This is final address to Jesuits working with refugees in Thailand Pedro Arrupe SJ, 1981 what would be his final address as General of the SJ is an invitation to pray, to discern. He said "Problems such as these are not solved by human efforts." (JRS 2000, 37); See also Burke's reference to Arrupe's mystic of open eyes in (Burke, Pedro Arrupe's Mysticism of Open Eyes 2007).

<sup>545</sup> Extracts of a letter from Peter-Hans Kolvenbach SJ to the Society, 1990 (JRS 2000, 50)

<sup>546</sup> Whether "walking the streets in a refugee camp, visiting families in a slum, coping with a new crisis, writing a report, attending a meeting, or seeking funds," Ignatian Spirituality helps JRS to seek God's presence and to feel God's accompanying them. (JRS 2005, 55)

<sup>547</sup> "People from many different backgrounds, cultures and faiths join JRS. They bring with them experiences from their past, their partly formed world views, the prayers or words of wisdom they have learnt, the religious practices they have followed or abandoned, their gifts, their own hopes and joys, grief and anxieties." (JRS 2005, 77)

<sup>548</sup> As an example she refers to the story of Nathaniel who had been refugee for 30 years enduring "suffering, separation from family members, and uncertainty of the future," and yet he held "For a Christian there is always hope." (JRS 2005, 54)

<sup>549</sup> (JRS 2005, 57)

<sup>550</sup> Fr Ceyrac worked between 1980 and 1993 in the Thai-Cambodia border camps.

they are “anxious and disoriented,” they feel wronged and have “committed or suffered atrocities.”<sup>551</sup> Besides their loneliness and despair they have to endure the painful experience of being rejected by the countries in which they ask asylum, and some cannot stand it.<sup>552</sup> JRS is serving those who “live at the margins of society,”<sup>553</sup> those affected by the downside of globalization and global politics.<sup>554</sup> Their plea unveils the hidden sin of the world which is caused by unfair power relations.<sup>555</sup> JRS partakes in IA’s prophetic denunciation and is charged with the responsibility to “communicate to the world what is hidden and what people suffer, often silently”; it must challenge discourses that favor the status quo by asking “why masses of people are forcibly displaced.”<sup>556</sup> The refugees are a crucified people because they are the victims of unfair structures of power; their very existence is a cry, “a silent protest against corrupt human ways.”<sup>557</sup> And yet, as Liberation Theologians would have it, the refugees are a crucified people because their contemplation can bring salvation: they are an invitation to conversion for the rest of the world, to a change of mind-set.<sup>558</sup> As crucified people, the refugees are “best placed to tell us clearly and correctly what is wrong”; being innocent, they can “start the miracle of reconciliation,” for they have an interest in changing the status quo. As Raper puts

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<sup>551</sup> *The Jesuit Refugee Service experience Mark Raper SJ, September 1998* (JRS 2000, 85-6)

<sup>552</sup> “a man who hung himself... left a paper beside [him]” that read “I am rejected by all the third countries so are my father, my mother, my brothers and sisters, because I lost my father, my mother, my brothers and sisters” thus “there is only the fourth country left.” (JRS 2005, 18)

<sup>553</sup> “In a camp of displaced people, each one is a former something: a former farmer, housewife, doctor, husband, minister of state. Each is a person in waiting, dependent on another’s decision.” (JRS 2000, 128-9)

<sup>554</sup> “In our commitment to refugees, we are getting in touch with the dark side of globalization: persons uprooted by chains of causes that are connected to very powerful global structures. Our ‘clients’ are the pariahs of globalization.” (Fabre 2002)

<sup>555</sup> As Raper says they “reveal to us all are profound shifts and stresses underlying our social and economic systems” they are the new signs of the times that flag “our global community’s deep tensions... When refugees cry for help, they cry out on behalf of all of us.” And he concludes what “turns local conflicts into humanitarian disasters is poverty.” (JRS 2000, 128-9); “By our presence among people on the move, our hearts and minds are cracked open and we can learn much about our world and its needs.” (JRS 2005, 138)

<sup>556</sup> Extract from a reflection made by JRS workers during the summer school at Oxford, 1993 in (JRS 2005, 285).

<sup>557</sup> As Peter Balleis puts it “Due to unjust structures, a quarter of humanity lives on the edge, struggling to survive and maintain its dignity. Conflicts erupt as people scramble for their share of dwindling resources.” (JRS 2012, 4)

<sup>558</sup> “Listening can help us understand our era better from God’s perspective, and especially from that of Jesus, the Servant Lord.” The reality of the refugees their stories of sorrow and struggle have “the potential to lead everyone of goodwill to a new mind-set, one aimed toward a more compassionate and welcoming world order.” (JRS 2000, 133)

it, “The solution will come from the victims” because “God has chosen them.”<sup>559</sup> As Fr. Nicolas explained to JRS staff, JRS’s work is a sign and a source of conversion and salvation for the rest of civil society.<sup>560</sup> As part of its advocacy, JRS is called to make the stories of refugees to be taking into account, to help rewrite the history of the world “from the point of view of the dispossessed and powerless.” The stories of the refugees “reveal the structural sin embedded in the world’s contemporary systems,” and they are a locus theologicus that reveals that the Kingdom of God is “a task still to be accomplished.”<sup>561</sup> Being aware that its most valuable asset “is its on-the-ground contact with people in the most remote areas,” the JRS keeps asking itself how it should bring “their stories to the heart of the European Parliament, the European Commission and even the Council.”<sup>562</sup>

As it was argued previously, in terms of IA appropriation of Ignatian Theology, it is important for JRS to understand its partaking in the cross from the perspective of Easter. From this vintage point, JRS discovers that, by being companions of refugees at the foot of their crosses, they are made “companions also of Jesus.” Getting the cross right is crucial for JRS, because it means understanding that “it is not the suffering, but God’s love that saves,” And then, the Mystery of the Cross “can take us deeper into the mystery of human suffering and offer a glimpse of understanding, a new source of hope.”<sup>563</sup> Moreover, drawing from its Ignatian spirituality background, JRS is called to develop a ministry of hope which helps the refugees find God’s presence in their lives.<sup>564</sup> We contend in this paper that the JRS mission is better understood as a

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<sup>559</sup> The causes of forced displacement: the breakdown of sustainable global community *Mark Raper SJ* (JRS 2000, 141)

<sup>560</sup> “I encourage you to continue because what you do saves the world... You help the society know that there is healing and hope.” (JRS-EA 2009)

<sup>561</sup> As David Townsead SJ explains in (JRS 2005, 36). As Raper puts it, one of JRS tasks is to “reflect on what message refugees have for our world and to help our societies to become more sensitive to the changing needs of the foreigners in our land.” (JRS 2000, 6)

<sup>562</sup> (JRS 2005, 60)

<sup>563</sup> (JRS 2005, 51)

<sup>564</sup> By “remembering, embracing, and contemplating the experiences, the suffering and joy, the mysteries and paradoxes; the treasures are all there.” (JRS 2005, 55)

Ministry of Hope, for its integral approach to the refugees is aimed at giving them hope for a better future, for a return home someday, and for better possibilities.<sup>565</sup> In the words of Fr. General Adolfo Nicolas: JRS has been “the Lord’s instrument in bringing the fuller life of the Gospel to those who have lost their homes and hope.”<sup>566</sup> In fact, hope figures among the values that reinforce the JRS Framework and,<sup>567</sup> most importantly, hope is what the refugees themselves claim to have received from JRS.<sup>568</sup> The JRS was born out of God’s charge to the SJ to enact God’s compassion for the refugees, to offer them an integral accompaniment, and to attend to all their physical and spiritual needs. Finding themselves in an “evil place,” many refugees wonder, “Why does God allow this?” JRS does not have any other answer than clinging to Jesus as a Sacrament of Hope. Effectively, the mystery of God’s love revealed in the suffering Jesus sustains and inspires JRS<sup>569</sup> to bring God’s “message of hope” to the refugees, “people who have been denied hope.”<sup>570</sup> Paradoxically and mysteriously enough, JRS’s reports and reflection papers convey a powerful religious experience: the JRS team has found hope and resistance and life in the refugees.

Effectively, JRS reports commonly reveal that JRS staff finds hope in the midst of the struggle, that the refugees’ lives are also a source of hope and witness to the God who is the friend of life.<sup>571</sup> JRS is nourished by this scattered and wounded hope., This hope is never an

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<sup>565</sup> “We come to listen, to foster initiatives, to promote organization – in short, to offer a source of hope. We believe in the refugees. To let them know this in some practical way is to change their lives.” Ballais in (JRS 2000, 112)

<sup>566</sup> (JRS, jrs.net 2011)

<sup>567</sup> “The plan is built on deep values of compassion, solidarity, justice, hope, accompaniment, reconciliation and respect for the intrinsic dignity of every human person.” Adolfo Nicolas SJ Superior General, Society of Jesus 14 November 2011 in (JRS, Jesuit Refugee Service Strategic Framework 2012-2015 2012, 3)

<sup>568</sup> “Sr Elisabeth brought a wave of hope for us refugees by visiting our tents even during the hottest weather here in the Sahara... Try to imagine how difficult it is to build hope among refugees living in the open desert. But this is just what is being done by the sisters. Their names are printed in our hearts.” Treza Debasay a refugee from Eritrea in (Vella 2011)

<sup>569</sup> Mark Raper SJ, September 1998 (JRS 2000, 87)

<sup>570</sup> The causes of forced displacement: the breakdown of sustainable global community Mark Raper SJ (JRS 2000, 140-1)

<sup>571</sup> “Your retention [refugees] of your own humanity despite your often appalling treatment and experiences, is, for me, a mystery of the power of God’s tremendous loving compassion in your lives, and is a challenge to a world so clearly in need of loving compassion.” (JRS 2005, 36) David Townsend SJ. As John Dardis SJ [Europe Regional Director between 2000 and 2004] explains in the midst of “blazing heat, under a straw roof, in the barest of conditions in a remote refugee camp... I feel I met

alienating or otherworldly hope that detaches JRS from reality. On the contrary, this is a crucified hope that turns out to be a source of resistance that keeps JRS engaged in the struggle for justice. It is a hope in the Exile, a hope “in a God who liberates and in his Kingdom in which all people can find their place.” Hope in JRS is a crucified longing, for it is a hope tested in the crucible of chaos and evil; it is an invitation “to have trust in the invisible.” (Mk 4:26-29) <sup>572</sup>

The service of JRS becomes a ministry of hope: when being encountered by these “seeds of hope,” they accompany the refugees “to allow them to grow, to fan the feeble spark into flame.”<sup>573</sup> JRS has discovered its Bet-El in the refugee camps. The refugees’ lives and stories have somehow been a theophany for JRS. God has been revealed in the refugees’ crucified hope.<sup>574</sup> In the 2011 JRS workshop at BC, the JRS staff shared the perception that God is at work in the refugees’ stories of death-defying and life-affirming resistance and that by carefully listening to them it was possible to reach beyond “the story itself” and gaze at “the sacramental vision that it conveyed.” <sup>575</sup> For the JRS representatives, these stories were signs of the transcendent, which witnessed to the “worthiness of another, that ultimately refers us to the Other,”<sup>576</sup> and to a sacred resistance of life that “surrenders but ultimately does not surrender.”<sup>577</sup> The JRS ministry of hope consists then in detecting the grace already at work in the refugee’s

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God in a profound way in my life. Here were people who had suffered enormously, had lost everything. Yet their desire to reach out to others, to dream, to say that survival is more than just food and water but involves something much more profound, this desire was still there.” (JRS 2005, 259-60)

<sup>572</sup> “What strikes you first is the inhumanity in the camps and the prevalent rancor, on the verge of igniting a new inferno of violence. But inside, something rises... So through their dignity, refugees have unknowingly offered me a glimpse of the Kingdom. Christophe Renders SJ JRS Belgium in (JRS 2005, 118)

<sup>573</sup> Mark Raper SJ, September 1998 (JRS 2000, 86)

<sup>574</sup> This hope that the JRS finds at the foot of the cross is not “optimism” rather is a “virtue grounded in suffering,” that “gives strength” as a “promise that takes root in the heart and is a guide to an unknown future.” (JRS 2000, 86)

<sup>575</sup> (JRS-BC-Workshop 2011)

<sup>576</sup> (JRS-BC-Workshop 2011)

<sup>577</sup> “There is hope in the stories of the refugees, in their dignity and perseverance. Formulating it and calling it to surface demands careful discernment. We perceive through the stories of others that God is at work. Even when we do not name God the same way, we can acknowledge that there is an experience forthcoming from one “other than you.” (JRS-BC-Workshop 2011)

life, and helping them to make explicit what she “already experienced” as an offer of grace.<sup>578</sup> We propose that the Application of the Senses (AS)<sup>579</sup> can be useful in helping JRS to better approach these stories in which the Christian hope “is present as hidden.”<sup>580</sup> By dwelling on those stories in which they have become aware of God’s grace, they experience spiritual empowerment<sup>581</sup> and become aware of being “*tutored by God*.”<sup>1</sup>

#### **b. JRS remains at the foot of the cross:**

“Experience has also taught us that advocating the cause of refugees often takes place ‘under the standard of the Cross’.”<sup>582</sup>

The JRS staff members are confronted with their limits and weaknesses, with a particular “liability to suffering,” that results from their own “openness to suffering.” Out of their desire to follow Jesus, JRS partakes somehow in the refugees’ crosses, to the extent that they share the uncertainty and insecurity of the refugees.<sup>583</sup> This partaking in the cross is what makes it so

<sup>578</sup> (Rahner, *The Anonymous Christian* 1963, 394). See also (Endean 2007).

<sup>579</sup> I rely on Endean’s observation: “Whatever the text about drawing the senses might have meant for the Ignatius who wrote it, it now functions... to indicate whatever counts as a climactic growth-point, here and now, for those who entrust themselves to Ignatius’ process.” (Endean 2007) Two petitions of principle apply in order to make this proposal arguable in this short paper, namely: a) This proposal concerns the aims of JRS Christian staff who wants to accompany the refugees, not necessarily Christian, in their process of making sense of their lives in the light of God; b) It assumes that the JRS staff has (or otherwise acquires) the spiritual sensibility and awareness that would allow them to accompany the refugees in seeking God in their lives. This need of being accompanied and formed in Ignatian Spirituality was one of the conclusions of (JRS-BC-Workshop 2011).

<sup>580</sup> (Rahner 1971, 133)

<sup>581</sup> See (Traub 2008, 58). Regarding the legitimacy of using the AS for narratives different from the Gospel, I rely on Endean’s interpretation of the AS. He holds that the spiritual senses are a metaphor designating the ability to find God in all things; he also understands that in the text of the AS “divinity” is to be sought in every soul infused by God’s grace, which opens the room for finding God in narratives different from those about Jesus. It is also worthwhile for my proposal to refer to Endean’s remark about how Ignatius invites the exercitant to reflect not only on what the characters *actually say* (in the Gospel text), *but on what they might be saying* (Sp. Ex. 123) (Endean, *Aplicación de Sentidos* 2007, 91). Thus, it seems that Ignatius is open to God’s communicating Godself through sensing and imagination which is not necessarily limited to the “canonical text” of the Gospel. I suggest that, since the AS is aimed at helping the exercitant find God in all things (Endean) and since it is possible to find God through the use of imagination and sensing (Rahner and Balthasar), then it is legitimate for the JRS staff to use the AS to help the refugees find God’s presence in their stories.

<sup>582</sup> “Expressing solidarity with a group of vulnerable people whose rights are being scorned renders one vulnerable. Defending the rights of victims of injustice is to expose oneself to taunts, calumny, and injustice. Siding with the humiliated sometimes leads to being humiliated. We do not usually look for such consequences of our commitment with and for the refugees; rather, we would flee them because they leave a bitter taste. Yet when the time comes, a look at the Humiliated one on the Cross may bring peace, even though the bitterness is still there.” (JRS 2005, 116)

<sup>583</sup> They feel like they fail to secure their future “secure [their] own future, to protect ourselves from any adversity, to live with easy clarity and assurance, or to ward off shame, pain, or even interior anguish.” (JRS 2005, 131)

important for IA to have a healthy theology of the cross: in JRS the cross does happen.<sup>584</sup> Effectively, accompanying God's people in their Exile, if it is genuine accompaniment and risks being compassionate, implies partaking of their crucified sorrows. Accompaniment in JRS *implies* "attentive listening – listening with the heart," and that "involves a risk," the risk of being shocked by the stories and the suffering of thousands of refugees. As it was argued in the theological section for IA, it is essential for JRS to look to Jesus and cling to his willingness to find God even in the midst of despair.<sup>585</sup>

The cross, properly understood as a space for God's revelation, "links us profoundly with God"; it becomes a "privileged arena" in which God's grace and power are mysteriously perceived.<sup>586</sup> Relying on Ignatian spirituality, on Scripture, and particularly on Jesus' example, JRS knows that "when confronted by evil and suffering" it is invited "to keep in touch with God" as "the only way to withstand evil."<sup>587</sup> As people of faith sustained by the Spirit, JRS staff members are invited to partake in Jesus' surrender to God without surrendering to despair; this is what Sr. Inés Oleaga from JRS Grands Lacs called: A "surrender that does not surrender." This is an attitude of trust, of surrendering all our efforts to God, as Denise Coghlan RSM of JRS Cambodia explained at the BC conference: "You just need to take a rest and trust that providence will find a way."<sup>588</sup> It is precisely because crucifixion happens, that discernment becomes central to the JRS mission to remain "rooted in Christ, the source of our hope and courage." Discernment opens JRS staff and refugees to the paradox of the cross properly

<sup>584</sup> "Where is God? When villages and refugee camps are attacked and burnt, and we lose our companions in new violence? Or when food rations are cut so drastically that hunger eats away at their spirit and lives?" (JRS 2005, 56)

<sup>585</sup> As Mateo Aguirre SJ wrote: "We must live it in the light of this mystery because, from a human perspective, it makes little sense. What gives me strength is love beyond death." (JRS 2005, 79)

<sup>586</sup> As I sustained in the Theological chapter, God can be found in weakness because "Weakness is a chosen context for the epiphany of the Lord," and following the Mysterious logic of the Incarnation in which the humble Jesus is fully God being fully human, that is precisely in the "experience of weakness" what "deepens both our sensitivity to human need and our experience of prayer." Michael J. Buckley SJ in (JRS 2005, 132)

<sup>587</sup> "In the Bible women and men keep talking to God in all sorts of situations, health or sickness, victory or defeat, success or failure. As such, no situation prevents our relationship with God. (JRS 2005, 18).

<sup>588</sup> (JRS 2005, 84)

understood; it reveals that they are mysteriously being accompanied by God and affirms their belief that “We are not abandoned. God is with refugees; God is with us.”<sup>589</sup> Then the experience of accompanying the crucified people becomes teophanic, and JRS’s labor becomes Christological.<sup>590</sup> JRS takes courage in Jesus’ example which, as Sobrino puts it, invites the Christian to risk everything out of Mercy.<sup>591</sup> And JRS’s presence becomes a witness of how God’s love for those who suffer that “brings comfort and hope and redeems the suffering.”<sup>592</sup>

#### **4. Education as a concrete example of how JRS develops integral IA.**

This section shows how JRS’s focus on education is an example of the ways in which JRS integrates IA’s features: seeking the Magis, being attentive to the refugees’ needs, remaining community-centered, and focusing on creating capabilities. We include this section on education because, besides its solution-focused advocacy components, JRS education represents a preventive advocacy element insofar as it creates capabilities in the refugees.

JRS’s focus on education “universally recognized as an inalienable right,”<sup>593</sup> is a consequence of JRS application of the Magis. Education “is an often neglected need and implements its preferential option for vulnerable groups in doing so,”<sup>594</sup> and of JRS concern for responding to the requests of the refugees.<sup>595</sup> In JRS experience, education has proven to be a key asset in creating

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<sup>589</sup> (JRS 2005, 56)

<sup>590</sup> As Roxanne Schares SSND from JRS Eastern Africa recounts her journey started “Walking through the refugee camp streets with throngs of children following, laughing at and with the stranger,” and then the unexpected caught her “Some elderly people began laughing at the spectacle... Chris, my refugee companion... shared her comment with me: See this woman? See her love for us? Now we know that God is with us. I was being accompanied.” (JRS 2005, 50)

<sup>591</sup> (J. Sobrino, *Awakening from the sleep of inhumanity* April 3, 1991, Vol.108); see also (Sobrino 1994)

<sup>592</sup> (JRS 2005, 53)

<sup>593</sup> Acknowledged by international law and “continually underscored in global summits and conferences.” (JRS 2005,7)

<sup>594</sup> (JRS, *Education as Empowering Horizons* 2005, 19)

<sup>595</sup> According to *Survey on Education in Emergencies* (2004), more than “27 million children and youth affected by conflict do not have access to formal education; 90% of them are internally displaced people.” (JRS 2005, 7-8); “Visiting newly arrived refugees, whether in the Krajina district across from the Bihac pocket in Bosnia, or at the Burma border close to Mae Hong Song in Thailand, I would regularly find them most pre-occupied about their children’s future. The first job in resilient communities was to get the school going.” (JRS, *Education as Empowering Horizons* 2005, 12)



capabilities in the refugees and therefore is part of JRS engagement in preventive advocacy efforts; it helps them to grow in their skills and self-respect, as well as in their hope for a better future.<sup>596</sup>

Education in JRS is closely related to long-term or preventive advocacy. Education programs are not only a source of hope and a way for refugees to increase their capabilities, but they are also part of JRS's pastoral approach of caring for the whole person and building the person's dignity,<sup>597</sup> in accord with IA. The focus on education is proof that JRS develops an integral approach to advocacy and takes the person as a whole as the center of its concerns.<sup>598</sup> Furthermore, JRS education programs are committed to "working in partnership with refugees"<sup>599</sup> and to building upon the refugees' needs and requests.<sup>600</sup> Education has a communal dimension that meets the IA demand for creating capability efforts and for giving an active role to the community.<sup>601</sup> In JRS's experience partnership with the refugees is a rich input, because the refugees are the best suited to point out the "the people most in need" and to signal the potential leaders; they can also help to organize meetings with the communities to explain the programs.<sup>602</sup> Education is a paradigmatic example of how refugees develop their skills and

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<sup>596</sup> Education serves the JRS ministry of hope because it is "life-giving"; it "spurs refugees beyond mere survival to being fully alive"; it means "planting seeds of hope in the insecure and traumatic present of refugees, seeds which hold future promise." For refugees, "the acquisition of new skills and knowledge are concrete steps towards freedom, empowering them in more ways than one as they are enabled to regain a measure of control of their lives." (JRS, *Education as Empowering Horizons* 2005, 41) "It affirms the humanity of refugees and restores their wounded dignity." (Ibid, 7) The school itself "however makeshift," introduces a sense of "normalcy to the unnatural and often very limited environment of exile," and the learning process with its concrete achievements however simple and discrete they might be, "gives them valid expectations for a better future." (Ibid, 11)

<sup>597</sup> AS the JRS education document puts it: "Offering education as a means of hope to all is a pastoral work which calls for a far-reaching approach." (JRS, *Education as Empowering Horizons* 2005, 120)

<sup>598</sup> The case is powerfully made by these words of Maurice Niwese, a former refugee and teacher in the camp schools in Bukavu "JRS understood from the beginning that we, refugees are not only flesh: we need to feed our spirit to attain dignity. Otherwise we could become monsters, unbalanced human beings." (JRS 2005, 22)

<sup>599</sup> (JRS, *Education as Empowering Horizons* 2005, 7)

<sup>600</sup> "In so far as this is possible, projects are designed by listening to what refugees have to say, and implemented by drawing on the wealth of their experience and developing their potential.... JRS workers seek to implement this priority concretely by engaging the refugee community in running services offered: Planning... starts with asking the refugees about their lives and needs." His summarizes the response given by participants in a seminar in Kigali in 1995, when they were asked, what do you regard as essential to JRS?" (JRS, *Education as Empowering Horizons* 2005, 61)

<sup>601</sup> "Equipping refugees to be self-sufficient offers realistically grounded hope to more than individuals. Formation is a source of communal hope, enabling refugees as a body to fend for themselves and to rebuild their broken communities." (JRS, *Education as Empowering Horizons* 2005, 42)

<sup>602</sup> "The most valuable lesson I have learnt is to create a community and to build a project with them." As the JRS team puts it "Little by little we got to know the people with the help of this team, and we felt that we were really walking in the same direction." (JRS, *Education as Empowering Horizons* 2005, 62)

capacities, because after receiving a proper training, the refugees are invited to take part in education programs.<sup>603</sup>

This way of involving refugees as active partners echoes what has been claimed to be part of the IA approach, as Ellacuría's "civilization of poverty" requires: JRS views refugees as "being catalysts for change rather than passive recipients." As it has been stated elsewhere, experience proves that this process will be more demanding and will take more time, but it will be closer to the Incarnational approach proper to Ignatian Theology and it is the best way of achieving lasting changes.<sup>604</sup> Through the support of JRS thousands of students manage to attend colleges and universities, and the refugees "consider them as community resources."<sup>605</sup>

Finally, Education shares with every JRS project, an explicit advocacy component. To illustrate this point some simple examples of advocacy at different levels may suffice. Working with urban refugees in South Sudan, the JRS team learned about the "poor conditions of schools and about low school attendance in Yei district." As part of its accompaniment, JRS gathered information documenting the problem and contacted the District Commissioner in order to mount a joint effort among different agencies that resulted in increased school attendance. With regards to the national level, JRS in Dominican Republic provides a good example. Due to the lack of official birth certificates, many refugees and forcibly displaced children had no access to education, despite the fact that there were vacant places in the schools. JRS was involved in lawsuits against

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<sup>603</sup> Although the backlashes and difficulties are big because urban high schools lure these JRS qualified teachers with greater salaries, the outcome is also worthy, for as JRS Nepal notes: "The teachers' sense of responsibility is high, as it is their duty to shape the future of their country and community, because the students are torch bearers and future leaders." (JRS, *Education as Empowering Horizons* 2005, 8) The "Green Counseling Centre" in Kakuma camp, Kenya, provides a good example to illustrate this point. This center, an initiative based on the refugees' need for counseling, has 42 refugees working as counselors. Having refugees as counselors has a twofold side benefit; it creates capabilities in the counselors and it improves the service of the center because the counselors who are refugees have a better understanding of the problems of their fellows.

<sup>604</sup> As Francois Chanterie SJ masterfully explain when describing JRS methodology "Authentic dialogue starts the moment someone shows confidence in the power of growth latent in each person, in the capacity to exercise freedom and act responsibly. This is the place where the other receives freedom to be him or herself, and is encouraged to express doubts, sadness, hope and dreams." (JRS, *Education as Empowering Horizons* 2005, 118)

<sup>605</sup> (JRS 2005,18)

the government for refusing birth certificates to children of Haitian descent - in contravention of the Dominican Constitution. Finally, and as an example of international or cross-border advocacy efforts, we refer to JRS's joint networking effort with UNICEF and other NGOs to guarantee that the Burundian students of the JRS schools in Tanzania had their school certificates recognized by Burundi's education ministry. This is another example where remaining close to the people allowed JRS to detect the problem and establish a close collaboration with other agencies to reach a proper solution. As is recommended for IA, JRS developed advocacy efforts ranging from the local to the international level.

We want to finish this section by making JRS's prayer my own, for in prayer we acknowledge that as created beings we render to God the last word. This summarizes all we have tried to express about JRS spirituality and theology which are ultimately JRS's most distinctive features:

*“God of compassion, in your son you shared the life of all who are excluded. May we search for you in the places and among the people of your choice. May we follow the compassionate Jesus. May we walk with those driven from their own homes. Place our hands, our hearts, and our minds at their service. Lead us on your way together, until at last we all find our home in you. Amen.”<sup>606</sup>*

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<sup>606</sup> (JRS 2005, 138)

## By way of conclusion.

“In the end the beginning.”<sup>607</sup>

In November, 2011, the Human Rights Center of Boston College organized a workshop that gathered several members of the JRS staff with some Faculty of Boston College. The dynamics that undergirded this workshop are a good summary of this whole thesis. The workshop sessions started with the JRS staff sharing some stories of especially challenging moments in their lives shared with the refugees. By choosing to rely on story-telling as a way of portraying JRS concerns and reflections, the central protagonism of the workshop was given to the refugees. *In a second moment* the Boston College faculty, after carefully listening and pondering, were invited to react to these stories by trying to provide some systematization. They were also asked to point out possible ways in which BC could contribute to a theoretical framing of the issues that the JRS staff was bringing to BC on behalf of the refugees. Given the desire to keep the discussion centered on the JRS experience and on the stories of life in common with the refugees, *the third round of discussion gave voice again open to the JRS staff*, allowing them to offer clarifications to the BC faculty. Finally there was a general discussion in which *joint theological and ethical contributions were made*. This way of proceeding, whereby the beginning and the end corresponded to the voices of the refugees and of the people walking with them, is an example of the way Ignatian Advocacy should be done, in accord with the claims in this paper. The willingness of the Human Rights Center to bring the voices of the refugees to BC and to offer BC’s human and intellectual resources of BC to work jointly with the JRS staff is a breakthrough and an example of the kind of networking that has been suggested in this thesis as

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<sup>607</sup> (J. Moltmann)

a crucial need. This collaboration between IA and SJ universities and research institutions is an area where IA, and concretely JRS, has still room for improvement.

This paper has shown how being companions to, remaining with, and accompanying the people whose cause is being advocated is one of the key features of the Ignatian way of doing advocacy. In the first chapter it is shown how remaining with the people is for IA a matter of faithfulness: first, to its origins, for IA was borne out of the JRS team's being encountered by the God of the refugees in Modesta; and second, to its Ignatian spirituality, which makes attention to the whole person an essential feature of the mission of faith that promotes justice. Relying on this, and on the centrality of Incarnation in Ignatian Spirituality, the second chapter provides the theological foundations, arguing that the Christological way of doing advocacy implies being one with the people and serving the people by remaining with them. Effectively, it is argued, from a theology of creation and an anthropological theology, that IA has its origin in God's call to the SJ to continue Jesus' mission, and it finds in the Incarnation of the Son its blueprint and way of proceeding. From an ecclesiology of mission, the case is made that IA is meant to partake in Jesus' liberating mission, which involves helping the people to get down from their crosses. In this regard, it is specifically argued that IA needs a healthy theology of the cross, because denouncing other people's crucifixions may trigger opposition and IA may itself have to face some sort of cross. It is specifically claimed that the cross for IA is not sought in itself but results from denunciation of sin, as opposed to God's will, and that as such it is resisted, and in the last resort, accompanied. In this sense, it is claimed that by remaining by the foot of the cross, IA is faithful to its Christian identity, for it witnesses to a God greater than death so that *its mission becomes a ministry of hope and resistance*.

Since IA is aimed at empowering the marginalized and changing unequal power relations, the third chapter discusses power and power relations. The aim of the third chapter is to show that there are power issues and inequalities in power distribution that are best challenged by those advocacy NGOs which remain centered in the people, give people participation, and are accountable to the people they serve. To that end, the chapter discusses the theoretical framework of power, with references to academic research, and later moves on to a more practical section on the NGOs' research work. As has been stressed throughout the paper, the third chapter shows clearly that, if IA wants to challenge the root of power inequalities, it has to start its advocacy efforts from the ground level by counting on grassroots input and building upon people's concerns and demands. Concretely, space is devoted to explaining that empowerment in IA is properly understood as creating capabilities and relying on expertise and scholarly research. It is also shown that legitimate forms of power should remain community-centered. Moreover, from a practical point of view, it is shown that those advocacy campaigns in which the NGOs have a close relation to the beneficiaries and count on their participation have achieved more durable and effective results.

The fourth and final chapter of the thesis returns to the JRS, where IA had its beginnings. It is shown how the JRS way of proceeding, as depicted in its reports and publications, exemplifies the way IA should be done. Drawing on JRS publications, it is argued that JRS advocacy is rooted in accompaniment, that it keeps refugees' concerns at the center, and that it fosters the cultivation of capabilities among the refugees. Furthermore, it is claimed that JRS develops a ministry of hope and resistance, for it engages in advocacy through its Ignatian heritage, discerning God's presence in the midst of the struggle, letting God guide the JRS in seeking the Magis, and also letting God's hidden and accompanying presence surface. It is

argued that, by remaining close to the refugees even in the midst of incertitude and struggle in response to God's call to accompany God's people, the JRS mission becomes Christological. Moreover, it is shown how the God who "was once a refugee" (Hollenbach) has made Godself present and has encountered JRS staff as the God of the refugees and that encounter has proven to be a source of hope and resistance for both JRS staff and for the refugees.

The Thesis concludes as it started, claiming that accompanying, serving, and advocating with the people whose cause is being advocated is the proper way of doing advocacy. This whole thesis may be summarized in a simple statement: *Ignatian Advocacy is not the exercise of being the voice of the voiceless but rather the exercise of accompanying and serving the voiceless to find and express their voice.* And we claim that this is an Ignatian and Christological way of engaging in advocacy, best described as a ministry of hope and resistance.

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