



## Luther, Loyola and *La La Land*

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### Abstract

This article compares and contrasts Martin Luther's and St. Ignatius of Loyola's theological anthropologies. Drawing upon the mystical sources that Luther used to develop his own account of the human person, I argue that Luther came to reject an indwelling of the divine presence in the human person and located our relation to God in the external realm of faith alone. The resulting conception of the human person is one in which we are by nature rotten by sin. Union between us and God occurs through the darkness of faith and no longer in the highest parts of the soul as it had for the German medieval mystics upon whom Luther drew. For Loyola, by contrast, whilst human nature was damaged by sin, it could be restored by God's transforming grace to actively cooperate in the process of salvation. Loyola sees the inner stirrings of grace permeating our desires and will and restoring our freedom to its natural end of giving praise, reverence, and service to God. Such an apostolic mysticism is orchestrated by Loyola through formation in the Spiritual Exercises, which provide a unique synthesis in which action becomes a form of contemplation. I conclude by sketching the reasons why these contrasting theological anthropologies of Luther and Loyola find little appeal with the dominant philosophical anthropology of exclusive humanism in the modern west.

### Keywords

Luther, Loyola, anthropology, grace, nature

### Introduction

Martin Luther (1483-1546) and St. Ignatius of Loyola (1491-1556) are both great Christian figures. But often their greatness is portrayed as if it were due to having forged oppositional Christian identities that have separated confessional allegiances for nearly 500 years (O'Malley 2000). I want to argue by contrast that their real importance lies in their unique spiritual itineraries which have

shaped types of religious experience that are embodied in different Christian traditions. However, If for many of our contemporaries talk of experience of God is often talk of a make-believe world not unlike that portrayed in the 2016 Hollywood film *La La Land*, for Luther and Loyola experience of God was the central reality of their lives. So, what has changed to make the spiritual itineraries of Luther and Loyola so foreign to many in the twenty-first century?

Clearly the dramatic times in which they lived marked their identities in particular ways. They were born in turbulent times and their life journeys can in many ways be seen as different responses to the calamities of the fourteenth-century: the Black Death, the Western Schism, and the Hundred Years War. The foundations of the medieval world had been shaken by these events and the failures of the Crusades, and there was a search to recover security in a precarious and unsure world. The undermining of scholasticism and the rise of nominalism, with its emphasis on the individual and the human will, upset the ontologically realist world of medieval scholasticism with its belief in the existence of universals as the embodiment of the categories of divine reason in creation. In this context, the search for certainty would cast a long shadow over the early modern period. Whatever else the passage to modernity entailed it certainly involved an anxiety about the contingencies of humanity in an insecure world.

In Luther and Loyola, we see two early approaches to facing these challenges of uncertainty. Prior to circa 1517 Luther was famously struggling with his own doubts about justification and righteousness, being unable to find peace in his own efforts to assure himself of salvation. Through retrieving the importance of St. Paul's teaching on justification by faith, Luther would find a way to assuage these anxieties that went beyond Augustine's absolute dependence on grace. In his turn to a sole reliance on faith (*sola fide*), Luther would detach anthropology from the optimism of the contemporary humanists of his time and squarely place the locus of salvation outside of ourselves in the righteousness of Christ received by sinners through the free gift of faith.

This was a departure from his earlier thinking. His nominalist teacher Gabriel Biel (1420-1495) had adopted a semi-Pelagian view on the issue of whether works could be conducive to salvation and, in his early lectures at the University of Erfurt in 1509, Luther accepted Biel's views on the natural freedom of the will, on the notion of works as congruously meritorious (*de congruo*), and on the position that grace disposes but does not force the will (WA 2: 394, 31f; 9: 72, 27f; 401 22-29). But as Luther matured in his theology, he would distance himself from Biel's influence and by the time of his lectures on St. Paul's Letter to the Romans in 1515-1516 in Wittenberg, it is clear that for Luther any good we may be able to accomplish is due to God acting in us and is the fruit of grace already given

(WA 56: 355, 28ff). Yet, as a number of studies have highlighted, it would be wrong to view Luther outside the influence of his medieval and indeed mystical forebears in working out his position on justification (Leppin 2016, 11-63, Oberman 1986, 104-125). Luther continued this earlier tradition of articulating what the experience of God is like but transformed this into a new existential framework grounded on the concept of faith rather than of love (McGinn 2016, 21-47).

Viewing the Reformation in continuity rather than discontinuity with the late medieval period helps us to see more clearly that figures such as Luther drew their inspiration from the mystical and apostolic roots of their predecessors (Leppin 2016, 9-10). Whilst by circa 1516 Luther clearly departed from the medieval mystical theology rooted in Dionysius (Oberman 1986, 130), he nevertheless remained deeply marked by the Christocentric and Augustinian motifs of Bernard of Clairvaux, by Johannes Tauler's sense of complete abandonment in the passivity of the dark night of faith, and by the importance of obedience in the fourteenth-century mystical treatise the *Theologia Deutsch* (McGinn 2016, 32). It was through engagement with these sources that Luther envisioned a theology of justification and indeed a new manner of being church (Roper 2016, 12).

Seen in the context of late medieval reform movements such as those which occurred in the Augustinian canons, the new mendicant orders of the Dominicans and the Franciscans, and the Beguines, Loyola appears not so much as a counter-reformer but more as a Catholic-reformer seeking ways to reform the clergy and the apostolic life of the church (Howells 2012, 115). Less of a theologian than Luther, Loyola by contrast speaks of experience of God in personal autobiographical terms. His own spiritual journey is one of discovering the ways in which God deals with an individual in the way a schoolteacher deals with a young student (Loyola, 47, *Autobiography* [27]). Through his *Spiritual Exercises*, *Spiritual Diary*, and *Autobiography*, we gain a clear picture of a man inflamed with the love of God; a man completely convinced of the personal engagement of God in his own life-experience.

Though portrayed differently, both men shared the same deep conviction that anthropology and soteriology are intimately related. Loyola, following a more Thomist correlational view of the grace and nature relation, presents a theocentric humanism in which human action is transfigured into a mode of contemplation. This *simul in actione contemplativus* spoken of by Loyola's early companion Jerónimo Nadal is grounded in the schooling of the individual in the *Spiritual Exercises* and especially in the regular *Examen*, in which the interior movements of God within the soul are discerned with increasing facility in a person dedicated to the spiritual life. This method of discernment shaped his unique itinerary and provided him

with an articulacy about the spiritual life that appears so utterly foreign to many of our contemporaries today. In the itineraries of Luther and Loyola we meet two contrasting spiritualities that offer alternative Christian pathways through modernity.

### Martin Luther's Spiritual Journey

Luther was a troubled soul. The many references to his *Anfechtungen* in his writings, those sufferings, inner angst, attacks and temptations, feelings of abandonment, and battles with the devil's "thorn in the flesh" make clear that Luther's own spiritual itinerary was a difficult one (Schwarz 1984, 195-197; Oberman 2016, 227-228). In her recent biography of Luther, Lyndal Roper leaves the word *Anfechtung* untranslated as in many ways it is almost impossible to include the range of meanings intended by Luther in modern English (Roper 2016, 60, 61, 68, 148, 208, 288, 312, 319, 367, 377, 421). The danger of translation into a modern idiom is that we reduce these to inner psychological states such as depression and anxiety (Oberman 2016, 11). But for Luther they took physical form such as 'ringing in the ears', nausea, and headaches and there was no doubt for him at least that they were concerned with his spiritual life and his relation to God (Roper 2016, 61). If we want to understand Luther in his own terms, we need to come to understand just how it is that he transformed the late medieval mystical heritage into a new way of speaking about experience of God (Oberman 1986, 126-154).

Luther's approach to God is eminently personal. He differs from the scholastic tendency of abstract reflection about God in that for him biblical passages speak directly to his own spiritual journey (Leppin 2016, 117-122). In his search for a theology of justification his key insight was that God makes such reconciliation with God possible for sinful humanity through the freely given and totally undeserved gift of God that is faith. Nothing in our power can bring this about. All the trials and tribulations he had gone through in his earlier life in the Augustinian monastery in Erfurt had convinced him that without this free gift there could be no salvation. But these inner personal struggles should not be read as somehow separate from the outer structural questions that he is more well-known for. Both these inner and outer worlds became transformed for Luther through his encounter with God. Through his search for a new theology he came to understand that the corrupt practices of the church of his day were symptomatic of the belief that our actions can contribute to our salvation.

The debate he engaged in in Augsburg with the papal legate Cardinal Cajetan in 1518 centred on this question by focussing the discussion on the extent to which the church can dispense the merits won

by Christ in the form of indulgences. Luther was adamant in this exchange with Cajetan that no soteriological credit can be purchased by sinners. Whilst the church may be able to deny individuals the sacrament, and so communion with the church, it could not dispense salvation to sinners (Roper 2016, 116-118). This could only be freely given by Christ in the gift of faith. His theological efforts between 1512 and 1522 were oriented towards understanding better how it was that this salvation was given to individuals by Christ and how an individual could become certain of this salvation. Rooted in doubts about his own personal salvation, Luther came to see that we are alone in this search for the certitude of salvation and that no structure or practice of the church could free us from the *Anfechtungen* that this uncertainty inflicted.

In this search for a theology of justification, Luther's studies in patristic and medieval theology at Erfurt between 1501 and 1512 were vital. His spiritual father Johannes von Staupitz (ca. 1469-1525) had introduced him to the spiritual writings that he would draw inspiration from for this theological quest (Leppin 2016, 11-22), and as an Augustinian, he was steeped in the writings of St. Augustine with their anti-Pelagian views on grace and justification (Oberman 2016, 224-232). This was hardly surprising. Practically all medieval theologians claimed to be anti-Pelagian and drew on St. Augustine to defend their arguments (Duffy 1993, 173). However, Luther went beyond Augustine's primacy of grace for salvation in declaring that it is only through faith, and faith alone, that God declares us just in his eyes through the totally independent righteousness of Christ freely given to sinners. Luther found this deep and inner knowledge of our own total unworthiness for salvation in Bernard of Clairvaux's Augustinian theology. In Bernard, Luther discovered a theological anthropology that drew its account of human nature from the cross of Christ. It was the anger of God against sin that revealed the futility of human effort alone to overcome the ever present reality of sin. While remaining simultaneously a sinner and yet justified (*simul justus et peccator*), it was only the death of God's Son that could remedy this problem (WA 50:471.1-6).

This soteriological theme of our utter incapacity to save ourselves also finds strong resonances in the writing of the Dominican mystical preacher Johannes Tauler (ca. 1300-1361). Luther came to know of a 1508 version of Tauler's sermons through his friend Johann Lang (McGinn 2016, 28), and he greatly admired the mystical preacher's emphasis on the need for humility and absolute passivity in the act of salvation (Ozment 1969, 197-205). It is God alone who acts to confer salvation upon us and we are powerless in the face of sin. This experience of dereliction, of an abandonment to the forces of evil by God, is how for Tauler the passion of Christ is present in our sinful human nature. But despite the awfulness of this

experience, Tauler views it as a sign that we are on the right spiritual path. Luther was very taken by this theme, no doubt because it resembled his own personal experience and he subsequently commented on several of Tauler's sermons on dereliction in his own writings.

In a commentary on one of these sermons, Luther reflects upon Tauler's use of the metaphors of the three different types of myrrh to represent our detachment from the world, our sufferings, and the anguish, which arises in us through inner darkness (WA: 9:104.12-14). Significantly for Luther's own theological development, the influence of Tauler occurred at the same time as his *Lectures on Romans* (WA 56:378.13ff). It furnished Luther with a spiritual vocabulary to express the inner darkness of human suffering, which feels itself abandoned by God. Luther read the Pauline dialectic of faith and law expressed in Paul's Letter to the Romans through Tauler's mystical theology of dereliction. Yet, Luther went beyond Tauler in radicalising the utter incapacity of humans to save themselves. Whereas Tauler had held to the view expounded by Eckhart, which drew upon neo-platonic imagery and John's Gospel, that despite our depravity, God remains present in the highest parts or ground of the soul (*gemuete*) (Ozment 1969, 15-21), Luther rejected this view. From 1515-1518 it was clear that Luther rejected mystical union between the soul and God. God for Luther did not dwell in the soul. Union between us and God occurs through the darkness of faith which is outside of us and only mediated to us through God's action of freely conferring the certitude of salvation which faith alone provides.

Central here is the shift in anthropology that this theology ushers in. It represents a shift away from the "high anthropology of the fourteenth-century German mystics" towards a new vision of the fallenness of humanity (McGinn 2016, 30-31). This "high anthropology" expressed a view of human nature as permeated by God in its inner depths. Through the classical three-fold mystical stages of purgation, illumination, and union, these inner depths are uncovered to reveal God as our "soul-ground". In removing God from the core of our human nature, Luther externalises salvation in a way that would have profound consequences for the modern account of human nature (Hampson 2001, 11). If God lay at the core of our being for medieval mystics, for Luther the core was rotten through sin. Externalising humanity's spiritual ground meant that no one was pure by nature. Regardless of one's spiritual efforts, union with God was no longer an intrinsic quality but a gift of faith alone. In shifting the spiritual outside human nature, Luther's theology shaped a modern reading of human nature as theologically significant *only* in so far as we become aware of our own wretchedness and incapacity for union with God through love. By highlighting the importance

of faith over against our nature, Luther downgraded the significance of nature, especially our human nature, in the spiritual journey of modernity.

Luther was inspired to develop this position by his encounter with another source of the late German medieval mystical tradition. He discovered the anonymous fourteenth-century vernacular mystical treatise known as the *Theologia Deutsch* or *Theologia Germanica* in 1516 (McGinn 2016, 31). This was also Luther's first publication, in which he wrote a preface and later an introduction to the work in 1518 (WA: 1: 375-379). He read the *Theologia Deutsch* carefully between 1516 and 1518 and perhaps also in 1520 as he was working out the theological significance of the Ninety-Five Theses (Roper 2016, 103). Central to the influence of this work on Luther's thought was the notion that sin is to be understood through the category of disobedience. It was the sin of Adam, in being disobedient to God in the Garden of Eden that was overturned by the second Adam, the Christ, who in obedience to the Father went to his death on the cross. This turn towards a biblical understanding of the existential predicament of humanity and one that was structured by an array of oppositional dualisms such as obedience and disobedience in Christ and Adam, further supported Luther's view of the corruption of human nature and its incapacity to reach union with God through love (Oberman 1986, 120).

These sources of late German medieval mysticism were Luther's guides as he carved a way through the labyrinths of his own spiritual journey. But it was in the discovery of a justifying faith through which we passively receive salvation that he would transform a soteriology centred on charity shared by figures such as Bernard and Tauler into one which is constituted by faith alone. As Luther's theology developed it gradually shifted from the piety of the *Theologia Deutsch* and its contemplative dimensions, so characteristic of late medieval piety, and would come to accentuate a more intellectual approach to the Bible. This would more fully emerge in the later emphasis on exegetical rigour and the intellectual assent notion of faith that came to feature so strongly in Protestantism (Roper 2016, 103). That was not of course Luther's intention. He had wanted faith to be an existential experience of complete trust and utter dependence on God. Luther even speaks of faith in terms of it being a "wedding ring" through which union between Christ and the believer occurs (McGrath 2012, 122).

But as God became eclipsed in a predominantly Protestant-shaped modernity the manifestation of God under the contrary signs of the cross of Christ, always central in Luther's *theologia crucis*, and in the experience of suffering would simply become a *La La Land* view of mortal human nature (Carroll 2007, 229-254). The existential language of faith, so cherished by Luther, lost its power to

convincingly articulate the presence of God in modernity. Shorn of an external agent to effect the transformation of our mortal nature into the mystical union of Luther's Germanic forebears, human nature became a "buffered or a punctual self", closed off from God and external nature (Taylor 1989, 159-176). If, in contrast to Augustine's view, justifying righteousness would remain outside the sinner as an "alien righteousness" (*iustitia aliena*) (McGrath 2012, 126), once in modernity this outside became the transcendental realm of *La La Land* there would be no place for this justification to dwell (Dupré 1976, 18-30).

It is not difficult to see how faith in such a context, if it is talked about at all, becomes a matter of intellectual assent rather than something embedded in the existential reality of human life. Whilst some recent interpretations of Luther have sought to recover themes of deification in the early Luther (Braaten and Jensen 1998, Hampson 2001, 19-20), the effect of the reception of Luther's teaching in later Protestantism was to detach God from human nature (Roper 2016, 103). In this sense Luther paved the way for a modern interpretation that opposed God and humanity in an unbridgeable and even unspeakable divide (Jüngel 1992, 72; Ebeling 1972, 242; Buckley 2004, 70-98). The resulting separation of grace from nature would mean that fallen human nature would be seen as having no active contribution to make to salvation.

### The Theocentric Humanism of St. Ignatius of Loyola

Unlike for Luther, the grace and nature relation would find a new way of dwelling *within* the human person with Loyola. He would operate out of an understanding of the human person as an autonomous substance that is naturally oriented towards the good (Loyola, 161-162, *Spiritual Exercises*, [23]). Whilst he recognised that this natural orientation towards the good could be damaged by sin, he nevertheless believed that through ordering these inner spiritual movements, our lives can be restored towards their natural end in God. One of his early companions Jerónimo Nadal would see the genius of Loyola precisely in this inner ordering of the spiritual life. It would, for Nadal, be this capacity of Loyola that led him to know the deposit of faith intimately and conferred on him such a uniquely rich inner spiritual life (Haas 1977, 165). Once this journey of spiritual discovery had begun for Loyola there would be no turning back. He seemed to continually grow in an inner certainty and calm that was due to a great spiritual awareness of the Holy Spirit guiding his soul with delicate movements of grace. His *Spiritual Diary* records a diligent and even scrupulous attentiveness to these interior motions, which he would meticulously compare on a daily basis with each other in order



to derive ever greater spiritual fruit from an increased awareness of their presence (Haas 1977, 165).

Such attentiveness to interior motions is something that the practice of the *Daily Examen* in the *Spiritual Exercises* is meant to cultivate in the individual (Loyola, 164-165, *Spiritual Exercises* [24]-[36]). In order to help discern the origins of these often contradictory inner motions, Loyola introduces his *Spiritual Exercises* with the so-called “Principle and Foundation”. This statement of the fundamental purpose of the *Exercises* is meant to induct the retreatant into a clear understanding that, properly ordered, the interior life will lead to the natural end for which we have been created, which is “to praise, reverence and serve God Our Lord, and by so doing to save his or her soul” (Loyola, 161, *Spiritual Exercises* [23]). Ignatius understands the “right ordering” of our inner-life to be a consequence of attuning our desires to the end for which we have been created. When these desires are ordered we naturally find a certain “indifference to all created things” because all things are seen in the light of their natural end, which is good.

This Ignatian account of the human person contrasts with that of Luther. It bears similarities to the *via moderna* natural covenantal understanding of justification that is expressed in the Latin maxim “facienti quod in se est Deus non denegat gratiam” (God will not deny grace to anyone who does what lies within them), which Luther came to reject (Ozment 1969, 139-158). Luther saw this understanding of the relation between God and human beings as sliding into a “works-righteousness” that was shared by Radical Protestant reformers and Catholic reformers alike (Raitt 1987, 461). For Luther, the person becomes newly constituted in Christ through faith as its sole source of goodness. This effectively means that one is born again in Christ as a new “theological person” (Hampson 2001, 9-24). There is no contract made between God and humanity in this transformation. Human beings cannot prepare the ground for God; the initiative lies solely on God’s side. This represents a shift in theological anthropology from the Aristotelian notion of the person as a self-subsistent substance to one in which the person is now considered to have their essence outside themselves in God (Oberman 1986, 121).

Whilst for both Luther and Loyola experience of God is fundamental, in Loyola this experience is not centred on a faith coming in from the outside but was rather an inner reality inscribed on our deepest desires. But such a theocentric humanism presents a problem to modern ears. How can we be said to be free if it is really God acting in us? Whilst on the surface Luther’s and Loyola’s answers to this problem may seem to be at odds on closer inspection their differences are actually more subtle than one might realise at first glance. Loyola, like Luther, thought that without God’s grace our

actions are futile. But for Loyola this grace restores our nature to act in a soteriologically meaningful way that Luther thought smacked of “works-righteousness”.

Yet, if both Luther and Loyola could agree on the fact that it was first grace that sets us free, then they would differ on what the consequences of this grace means for human freedom. For Luther there would always remain a “juxtaposition of contraries” (WA 56,387.2ff) when it came to the nature and grace relation. For Loyola, by contrast, these contraries would be overcome in the experience of being led passively by grace in our innermost being to act (Loyola, 178-180, 186-188, *Spiritual Exercises* [91-100], [136-148]). The key difference between Luther and Loyola on this point is where grace is thought to be situated. Luther held an extrinsic conception of this relation. Loyola, by contrast, through mystical experiences such as at the river Cardoner in 1522 and his vision outside Rome at La Storta in 1537, came to a personal experience of an intrinsic conception of grace through the divine indwelling in Creation that was the origin of his apostolic mysticism (O’Leary 2007). For Loyola, grace operated in, through and *with* our nature and, as a consequence, attentiveness to human nature would become a central characteristic of Ignatian spirituality.

This inner attentiveness of Ignatian spirituality was grounded in a deeply Christological and Trinitarian mysticism as the meditations of the *Spiritual Exercises* and the entries in his *Spiritual Diary* illustrate. Central to this mysticism was Loyola’s insight that, whilst grace descends from God, it would be through our human nature that it would return to God. In the final contemplation of the *Spiritual Exercises*, the *Contemplation for attaining love*, the blessings and the gifts of God descend from above and human action participates in the descending movement of God’s life. We return all to God with the final offering of this prayer. “Take, Lord, and receive all my liberty, memory, understanding and entire will, all that I have and possess. You gave it all to me; to you Lord I give it all back” (Loyola, 205, *Spiritual Exercises* [234]). *Point 2* of this final contemplation makes this insight of divine indwelling explicit when it invites the retreatant to “see how God dwells in creatures — in the elements giving being, in the plants, causing growth, in the animals, producing sensation, and in humankind, granting the gift of understanding — and so how He dwells also in me, giving me being, life and sensation, and causing me to understand. To see too how He makes a temple of me, as I have been created in the likeness and image of His Divine Majesty” (Loyola, 205, *Spiritual Exercises* [235]). It is Loyola’s conception of this divine indwelling in creation that is the key to understanding the new approach to apostolic spirituality that would come to characterise the Jesuit contemplative theory of action. Human action participates in the life of God who “works and labours on my behalf in all created

things on the face of the earth” (Loyola, 205, *Spiritual Exercises*, [236]). In this apostolic mysticism *ora et labora* would for Loyola and his followers be transformed into *simul in actione contemplativus* (Carroll 207, 152-153, n. 117).

But Loyola’s world-affirmation is not naïve. The *Spiritual Exercises* make clear that there is a spiritual conflict going on inside a person in which the *enemy* or *bad angel* is actively at work to undermine our human nature and lead us towards evil ends. Loyola is adamant that we should be vigilant in detecting how it is that this “enemy of human nature”, who often assumes the form of an “angel of light”, operates in our thoughts and emotions. Whereas God and his angels prompt gladness and spiritual joy, the bad angel creates sadness and distress and undermines our peace by troubling us with false arguments and lies. It is for this reason that Loyola provides those making the *Spiritual Exercises* with rules for discernment in the *Spiritual Exercises* in order to guide us through this spiritual conflict zone (Loyola, 226-232, *Spiritual Exercises* [313-336]).

The different spiritual states which are produced in us by God and the bad angel, Loyola calls “consolation” and “desolation” respectively. Consolation is characterised by the interior movements that produce a love for God and enable us to see all created things in the Creator. When we shed tears for the love of God and experience increases in faith, hope, and love in ourselves then we are also in a state of consolation. Desolation, by contrast, is all that is the opposite of consolation. It leaves us disturbed and anxious, without hope and love. We become lazy and sad and feel as if we are separated from God with no hope of return. Knowledge of these different spiritual states is essential in order that we may be able to make good decisions. Loyola counsels us to make decisions only when we are in a state of consolation, because when we do so in desolation we allow the bad spirit to guide and counsel us in ways that undermine decisions made under the influence of the good spirit in consolation.

In differentiating between the operations of these good and bad spirits within us, Loyola developed a vocabulary to articulate the operations of the *good spirit* and the *bad spirit* within our human nature. It is a thoroughly modern language, in the sense that it pays due attention to the freedom with which we engage with these different spiritual sources and it is conscious of the time constraints on our actions. Such a dynamic theocentrism broke with the harmony of the medieval period by acknowledging not one but two dialectically opposed centres of power (Dupré 1993, 226). In uniting these two centres in a correlational manner, Loyola went beyond Luther’s juxtaposition of fallen nature with grace and so bequeathed to modernity a theocentric humanism that respects the soteriological

significance of a modern understanding of the autonomy of the human person.

### Conclusion

In operating with differing accounts of the grace and nature relation these two great figures of modern religious history have opened up two contrasting spiritual pathways through modernity. Following the Osiander Controversy 1549-1566, in which Andreas Osiander, a mystic and Lutheran theologian, had argued for an understanding of justification based on the indwelling of Christ's nature in the person rather than on the external Word as with Luther, the subsequent Lutheran externalisation of the grace and nature relation would result in faith being regulated by the right interpretation of scripture as the sole source of authority (Hampson 2001, 21, Roper 2016, 103). A general drift towards an intellectualisation of faith would make belief in God equivalent to the assent to doctrine. As Deism further rationalised this Protestant emphasis on faith alone (Taylor 2007, 221-269), the polemics between believers and non-believers would be carried out as a sparring match over abstract doctrines speculatively packaged for early modern apologetic reasons (Buckley 1987). But in abstracting faith from the existential domain of the self, God and human nature would gradually become opposed to one another in the popular imagination (Buckley 2004, 70-98). Human freedom and God's omnipotence would appear as incompatible attributes juxtaposed alongside each other and one was forced to choose between them.

This removal of God from the fabric of human nature is alien to the tradition of spirituality bequeathed to modernity by Loyola. In developing a vocabulary to describe the presence of God within us, he would inscribe God-talk on the fabric of human nature. Careful not to conflate inner movements with God or the enemy of human nature, Loyola provided a means by which we can discern the causal pathways of our moods and desires as they are linked and promoted by these agents. Through reviewing the development of these pathways within us, we become more and more sensitive to the workings of the good and bad spirit in our human natures. In a truly modern fashion, Loyola depicts these interactions as occurring in the inner spaces of our human freedom, porous to dimensions of transcendence, which influence and shape our emotions, desires, and will.

Yet, in retreating from the world and at times condemning it wholesale, the pre-Vatican II Roman Catholic Church would foster an isolationism for itself in the face of a modern world that saw the church as out of touch and unable to build bridges (Carroll 2010). Given this mutual incomprehension between the church and the modern world

it is unsurprising that talk of dimensions of transcendence affecting us in our inner lives has become for many the stuff of *La La Land*. This may well be due to an inability to understand how God interacts with our human nature. It may also be due to a loss of vocabulary for articulating the operations of transcendence within us. In providing alternative ways of talking about this transcendence, Luther and Loyola highlight different aspects of the spiritual adventure of modernity. For Luther the passivity of humanity in the face of salvation is the result of being gifted with faith from without. For Loyola our passivity is a means through which the activity of God takes place through our actions. Neither would see humans alone as able to save themselves and it may be this resistance to accept our need of God, and indeed of our need for salvation at all, that in the end is at the origins of belief in God as a fantastic projection of *La La Land* in modernity.

Abbreviations for references to the works of St. Ignatius of Loyola and Martin Luther

**Loyola:** *Obras Completas de San Ignacio de Loyola, Edición Manual, transcripción, introducciones y notas del P. Ignacio Iparraguirre S.J., con la Autobiografía de San Ignacio editada y anotada por el P. Candido de Dalmases, S.J.* (Madrid, Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos, 1952). Cited by page number in this edition followed by the text from which the citation is taken, *Autobiography*, *The Spiritual Diary*, or *The Spiritual Exercises*, and with square brackets indicating the section.

**WA:** *D. Martin Luthers Werke: Kritische Gesamtausgabe*, ed. J. K. F. Knaake, G. Kawerau, et al. (Weimar, Herman Böhlau, 1883-2009). Cited by volume, page, and line number.

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