Previous on Jesuit Networking

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1. Introduction.

General Congregations are key strategic elements of our mission-oriented institute due to their potential to formulate and iconize new expressions of our identity and our own self-understanding as an apostolic body in mission. For many people there is no doubt that 35th General Congregation (GC35) was a moment of rediscovery of our vocation to universality. This conference, among many others initiatives, is a consequence of GC35 trying to follow this new framework where networking is starting to be conceived as a "new way of proceeding."[1]

This paper is a reflection on the blooming of universality at GC35 understood as a consequence of two dynamics: (a) the development of a corporative sense of mission and (b) a progressive process of global awareness.[2] I'm going to propose a retrospective analysis of official Jesuit documents paying attention to these developments of the Jesuit mission and structures, as the best way to provide a contextualization to understand what the Society of Jesus means when it refers to networking and why it is seen today as a desirable style of working apostolically.

2. Corporative Sense of Mission

As a starting point of this reflection I will defend the idea that one of the key conditions of possibility for the emergence of Jesuit networking is the beginning of a corporative sense of mission within the Society of Jesus. It is not until 1966 when we can find what Peter Bisson calls "a new comprehensive understanding of mission"[3] that came with GC 31. In the documents of that congregation a corporate concept of Jesuit Mission can be traced for the first time. Expressions like "Jesuit mission" or "Mission of the Society" are used corporately for the first time in the documents of that congregation, providing the seed of a future global consciousness. The same congregation that started this holistic sense of mission recommended also the establishment of the first structures for supra-provincial cooperation: the conferences of major superiors.[4]

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[1] Social Justice Secretariat. *Guidelines for Networking in the Social Area.* Rome, 2003.
[2] The main ideas of this paper are developed in extended way in my STL thesis. See Daniel Villanueva, *The Jesuit Way of Going Global,* Boston, 2008. On-line at: <http://www.pastoralsj.org/danisj/goingglobal>
[3] Peter Bisson, *Engaged Religion and Cosmopolitan Identities,* Unpublished Work, 10.
[4] GC31, d48, n7

In 1975, GC 32 was a definitive turning point in which the Society of Jesus established social justice work as a constitutive dimension of its mission. This congregation can be considered a re-expression of the Jesuit Mission of GC 31, in the light of Vatican II, generating a whole new religious identity for the Society of Jesus.[5] Again, the Trinitarian inspiration of Ignatius, expressed in a masterly way in the contemplation on the Incarnation, is the composition of place to rethink the mission.[6] Here the Jesuits find their theological roots for the universality of the mission,[7] but especially for its self-understanding as collaborators with the Son on His mission of redemption for the whole world.

Already since the inauguration of its generalate Fr. Pedro Arrupe was convinced on the need of freeing the internal apostolic freedom of the Society of Jesus in accordance with the potential of the original Ignatian vision.[8] With the beginning of the acknowledgement of the challenges posed by globalization at a universal scale, he was convinced of the need to "coordinate the work in a concerted effort at a higher level."[9] He was persuaded that for Jesuits to organize a common concerted action they should proceed in an organic mode, beginning planning on a universal scale.[10] As part of this initial stage in the corporate sense of mission and following a recommendation from GC 31,[11] Arrupe stated four priorities based on the result of a sociological survey[12] of the whole Society.[13] As a result of those options, Arrupe established special Secretariats in the Curia for developing and coordinating the activities necessary in each of those fields. The idea was to develop an adequate response to the contemporary needs of the world and, at the same time, give more unity, coherence, and visibility to the Jesuit apostolic body. The

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[5] Ibid, 2.

[6] The most important decrees about mission in the last congregations used this contemplation as a framework to understand the mission of the Society: GC 32, D4: "Our Mission Today" and GC 34, D2: "Servants of Christ Mission." It is interesting how the GC 35 decree on mission "Challenges to our mission, today sent to the frontiers," uses the beginning of the public ministry of Jesus (Lc 4,18-19) and the vision of the Storta as the framework to understand the mission of reconciliation.

[7] "The international character of our mission finds its generis in the Trinitarian vision of Ignatius." GC 34, D21, 1. More development at "Trinitarian Foundation," Section 1.3.1 of Villanueva, *The Jesuit Way of Going Global*.

[8] For more development of all these positions of Arrupe regarding the possibilities of our international body, see "The Jesuit Potentiality," section 1.4 of Villanueva, *The Jesuit Way of Going Global*.

[9] Arrupe, Pedro. *One Jesuit's Spiritual Journey*. St Luis: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1986, 25.

[10] "We need to reeducate ourselves for apostolic project at a larger scale." Pedro Arrupe, "Nuestra Respuesta al Desafío" in Arrupe, Pedro. *Cartas del Padre Arrupe.* Buenos Aires, Argentina: Centro de Espiritualidad de la Provincia Argentina de la Compañía de Jesús, 1980, 67-99. 77-78.

[11] The need was stated for a commission for a deeper study of the choices and promotion of ministries. GC 31, Decrees 21 and 22. "The Better Choice and Promotion of Ministries", and "The Commission for Promoting the Better Choice of Ministries."

[12] AR XV, 1970, P.538

[13] These were: (1) Theological Reflection, (2) Social Apostolate, (3) Apostolate of Education, and (4) The Mass Media Apostolate. Pedro Arrupe, "Our Four Apostolic Priorities," in Pedro Arrupe, *Other Apostolates,* 1-8. The methodology for selecting the apostolic priorities followed the Ignatian criterion for choosing ministries and the proper character of the Jesuit institute. GC 32, D 21, n 12

Secretariats were born as global structures for coordinating specific dimensions of the apostolic mission of the Society. The global apostolic priorities and the secretariats were the first Jesuit tools and structures towards the embodiment of a universalized mission; years later, the foundation of JRS would be part of the same "prophetic intuition."[14]

In 1995, the dimensions of culture and dialogue with other traditions enriched the concept of justice of GC 32 and the awareness of God working already in the world, issuing a call to join his mission, "on his terms, and in his way,"[15] is the source of the Jesuit impetus to dialogue, openness, cosmopolitanism, and optimist engagement with the whole of creation. Inculturation and dialogue become essential elements of the Jesuit way of proceeding in mission.[16] At GC 34 the promotion of justice is not one apostolic area among others, but rather, "it should be the concern of our whole life and a dimension of all apostolic endeavors."[17]

GC 34 recommended that Father General, with the Provincials and Moderators,[18] should discern the greater needs of the universal Church and establish global and regional priorities.[19] The Moderators progressively assumed a growing role in the progress of supra-provincial cooperation, and Kolvenbach made of them an indispensable tool in discernment for the apostolic body of the Universal Society. In parallel to the work of the central secretariats, for the Provinces and Conferences to establish their own priorities, they had "to take into consideration" the choices made by the Society in the apostolic preferences voiced by the universal body.[20] In accordance with this, in 2003, Kolvenbach established a new set of five apostolic preferences[21] following the main directions of the Society's mission already expressed in GC 34.[22] Once established as a priority, the central government left to the assistances the responsibility to coordinate and narrow down the mission.

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[14] That was the term the Pope used to refer to JRS in his address to the 35th General Congregation on 21 February 2008.

[15] GC 34, D26, 8.

[16] GC 34, D2, 14-21 y GC 35, D3, 3

[17] GC 34, D4.

[18] The Presidents of the Conferences of Major Superiors

[19] GC 34, D21, 28.

[20] GC 34, D28, 21, GC 34, d 21, 16.18-20. The objectives of the conferences are "to foster a sense of universality in the provinces; to facilitate unity, communication, and a common vision among superiors; to point out priorities and coordinate common activities and to stimulate those superiors to offer mutual assistance in fulfilling their responsibilities for the Society and the Church." CN 398 #3

[21] Peter-Hans Kolvenbach, Our Apostolic Preferences. Letter to All Major Superiors. 1 January 2003.

[22] These are (1) Africa, (2) China, (3) The Intellectual Apostolate, (4) Interprovincial works and houses in Rome, and (5) migrants and the Jesuit Refugee Service. It is important to highlight here how a specific apostolic work like JRS made it into the apostolic preferences of the whole Society and, especially, how Father General commends to the Conferences of Major Superiors this specific apostolic preference. JRS, now a real option for the whole Society, is commended to the middle governance structures because the situation of the people on the move "is not everywhere the same." Kolvenbach based this in the preferential option for the poor (GC 34, D26, 12-14) and the option of GC 34 for JRS (GC 34, D3, 16).

This shows that mission and structures have been developed in a process of growing universalism during the last five congregations. The conceptualization of a corporative mission is the first step to allow strategies of global scope. The definition of global priorities, as privileged expression of the universal mission formulated by the central government, will become the common ground to start global synergies. As consequence of this process, in parallel to the conferences' growing role in order to open the Society to its universal dimensions,[23] the secretariats were created to organize the Jesuit ministries around the apostolic priorities developing an infrastructure of coordination in each apostolic area.[24]

3. Process of global awareness

As early as 1949, Superior General Jean-Baptiste Janssens had already expressed his optimism about the possibilities of the Society "if only we unite our forces and [work] in a spirit of oneness."[25] Since then, the growing consciousness of being one body and the progressive recognition of the universal scope of Jesuit mission has been constantly present in the Jesuit documents.

The need for supra-provincial or international cooperation within the Society of Jesus has been mentioned in its documents since 1938.[26] Proposals regarding the universal good of the Society and the ability to work as one apostolic body were also made in the congregation in which Arrupe was elected.[27] Years later, GC 32 was clear on the international dimension of the problems and the need for a consequent international coordination.[28] GC 33, in recognizing the integration of faith and justice as part of the same Jesuit mission, stated the universality of that mission, and how it affects the whole body of

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[23] The objectives of the conferences of mayor superiors are stated in GC 34, D21, 18. They are to (a) open their region to the universal dimensions of the SJ, (b) to foster responsibility of mayor superiors for the SJ and Church in the region, (c) to facilitate unity, communication, common vision, and effective leadership among major superiors, and (d) to set priorities, to plan and coordinate common activities. GC 35 will develop these objectives in GC 35, D5, 17-23 as we will see later on.

[24] Their mission is to encourage, support, and coordinate with the maximum respect for jurisdictions, subsidiarity, and the initiative of others. Social Justice Secretariat, *Networking in the Social Apostolate,* 8.

[25] Jean-Baptiste Janssens "Instruction On the Social Apostolate," quoted on Kolvenbach, "On the Social Apostolate," Promotio Iustitiae 73 (2003): 26.

[26] In the 28th General Congregation already appeared the importance of the coordination of the public impact of the Society at the international level (quoted in Pedro Arrupe, "Why Interprovincial and International Collaboration?" in Pedro Arrupe, *Other Apostolates Today,* (St Louis: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1981) 193. The 30th General Congregation, in its decree n.49, a call to develop cooperation among the provinces already shows evidence of this awareness.

[27] The 31st Congregation stressed again the interprovincial cooperation to "reach out readily and generously the universal good of the Society" (d 48, 2). In 1966 the Society of Jesus was already trying to work "like a body that is one and apostolic" (d 48, 5).

[28] It was the Arrupe congregation (GC 32, D 4, 81) the one which started the awareness of the international dimension of the problems and the need for organizing the international answer required by our service of faith and justice. In the first decree of the Congregation 33, the international cooperation is again named and recommended (GC 33, D 1, 46).

the Society.[29] Finally, the need to emphasize the universality of the Jesuit vocation was expressed in GC 34 when the Society was urged to nourish, express, and challenge its "universal consciousness."[30] Never before was the tension between the needs of the fast-changing world and the mobility, availability, and flexibility of Jesuit structures so clear and so urgent. The Society realizes that the new global context for the mission requires new structures: "today many problems are global in nature and therefore require global solutions."[31]

The awareness of constituting a single universal body has grown throughout the years, but already in 1990 Father Kolvenbach clearly expressed the opinion that the Jesuits were not exploiting "all the possibilities given by being an international apostolic body."[32] Further, he insisted on the debt the Society of Jesus owes to the poor and the Church for this reason. This concern comes from the evolution of the corporate consciousness and the growing awareness of the universal scope of the Society's mission and the "extraordinary potential represented by our character as an international and multicultural body."[33]

The noted lack of appropriate interrelated structures was the reason for the GC34 to recommend the development of "global and regional networking."[34] Such networks would be capable of addressing global concerns that at that moment were beyond the scope of the Jesuit mission. The new context for the mission points without doubt towards a wider interconnectivity. The message was clear already in 1995's globalized context: (1) The Society of Jesus requires networking in the carrying out of our mission.[35] (2) The Society's very nature as a universal body represented an enormous untapped potential in this regard.[36] (3) The development of networking in the Society could not easily be foreseen and would inevitably proceed by trial and error, although there was already some accumulated experience on which to reflect.[37]

4. The era of the networks

As a consequence of the mainstreaming of the commitment to faith and justice as integrative principle throughout all Jesuit ministries, the social sector become the testing

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[29] GC 33, D 1, 38.
[30] GC 34, D 21, 3. Stated even more clearly by Peter Hans Kolvenbach in the letter of presentation of the *Guidelines for Networking in the Social Area.*
[31] NC 395 , 1.
[32] Peter H. Kolvenbach, Address to the Congregation of Provincials, Loyola, 1990 in GC 34, D 21, 4.
[33] GC 35, D 3, 43.
[34] GC 34, D 21, 13.
[35] GC 34, D 21, 13.
[36] GC 34, D 21, 5.
[37] GC 34, D 21, 14. The three conclusions are a summary of Fr. Kolvenbach in the introductory letter to the document *Networking in the Social Area,* 2003.

ground of network initiatives before any other. Coordination and networking become key strategies in the search for institutional consistency in the social sector, but the task was not easy. At the beginning of Jubilee 2000, Kolvenbach wrote a letter to the whole Society expressing concern about the social apostolate losing its orientation and impact. He offered recommendations regarding the need for better communications, and formation, where he specially emphasized that "in order to fulfill this potential and grow as an apostolic body, the social apostolate very much needs adequate coordination."[38] The needs of the most mainstreamed sector clearly involved organization and structures.

In the same year, at the meeting of provincials at Loyola, the topic of networking was introduced, noticing "the increasing number of networks emerging in the Society, through which we exercise our commitment against every form of injustice and misery."[39] Michael Czerny, then Social Justice Secretary, with the help of some advisors, was entrusted with the task of studying the reality of networking within the Society and suggesting some ways of proceeding. Subsequently in 2003, the social justice secretariat finally published its "Guidelines on Jesuit Networking in the Social Area,"[40] considering networking a new apostolic style.

Already in 2003, Networking in the Society was seen as a style of working apostolically, that carried out the apostolate across many of the lines which had until then been delimiting Jesuit activities and jurisdictions.[41] Curiously, the document of 2003 is the only existing official document focused on networking as such, even when the topic has been addressed collaterally in many other occasions.

For example, in 2005, a workshop organized by the Social Justice Secretariat in Santa Severa focusing on the potential for advocacy of our apostolic body, highlighted how globalization can be seen as "an opportunity for networking at the service of peace." In the final report they recognize the amazing work that the Jesuits are already doing in networks.[42] This workshop arose again the challenge to further develop the growing global interconnectedness into a web of mutual responsibility and solidarity.[43]

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[38] Kolvenbach, "On the Social Apostolate", 24.

[39] Kolvenbach, Peter-Hans. *"Corresponsible in service of Christ's mission*," Opening talk of Father General in the Loyola 2000 meeting of provincials, September 22, 2000. Available at http://www.jesuits-europe.org/doc/

[40] Social Justice Secretariat, *Guidelines for Networking in the Social Area*, (Rome, 2003).

[41] Social Justice Secretariat, *Guidelines,* 4.

[42] Effectively, the Jesuits are doing impressive work in (1) networks: Ignatian Solidarity Network in USA, AJAN, International Jesuit Network for Development; (2) solidarity support: Entreculturas, Fe y Alegría, Alboan, South Asian People's initiative; and (3) advocacy, in Washington (Office of Social and International Ministries of the US Jesuit Conference), in Brussels (OCIPE) and elsewhere (Jesuit Refugee Service). "Seeking Peace in a Violent Word." Workshop on violence and War. 15-17 September, Sta Severa (Rome). in *Promotio Iustitiae*, nº89, 2005/4, 20.

[43] Idib, 22

Following the GC34 call to universalism, a task force on globalization was constituted and in 2006 its recommendations were approved and published in a document titled "Globalization and Marginalization, our Global apostolic Response." The objective of this document was to build trust in the network of international Jesuit apostolates, to respond globally from our ministries, and constitute communities of solidarity. Again, the analysis emphasizes the potential of the Jesuit network to use globalized structures to promote solidarity. The novelty of the reflection is the attempt to systematize apostolic dimensions and strategies from the global point of view. A key cornerstone, in my view, is the apparition of "acting in synergy"[44] as criteria for discerning the local mission, bringing the communitarian discernment as one of the global apostolic strategies, together with better and globalized structures of governance.

Finally, at the end of 2006, almost one year before GC35, a commission named by Father General to reflect on the last decree of Justice published their conclusions. Their reflections ended up with a set of recommendations to renew the structures of governance to assist "in the formation of an effective international network," in order to build a real universal apostolic mission. Once more, the emphases were in (1) strengthening supra-provincial authorities; (2) to achieve the overall mission of the Society and the particular goals, (3) update the structures of the curia, (4) incorporate the use of information technology, and (5) work on a global and apostolic leadership.[45] Many of these recommendations would find their place in GC35 decrees on mission and governance.

6. 35th General Congregation

After all these developments it can be demonstrated that, regarding collaboration and networking, GC35 is simply bringing together most of the previous reflections and recommendations and raising them to the rank of decree. It is clear for the last general congregation that global apostolic networks, transnational realities, and the new challenges and opportunities for ministry "require reflection, formation, and concerted action that cross Province and even Conference boundaries."[46] GC 35 recognizes the growing interconnectedness of the Jesuits and how recent years have witnessed a "concerted and generous effort to increase inter-provincial cooperation in a variety of ways."[47]

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[44] Social Justice Secretariat. *Globalization and Marginalization: Our Global Apostolic Answer*. Rome: Social Justice Secretariat, 2006, 22.

[45] Social Justice Secretariat, *Internal document of review of decree 3 of GC 34*, 13.

[46] GC 35, D 5, 25.

[47] GC 35, D 3, 38.

Although the Jesuit interconnectedness has increased,[48] GC 35 described the need for supra-provincial structures of cooperation as an "undeniable necessity."[49] Even when the basic analysis was already stated in the decree 21 of GC34, I would contend that GC 35 is the definitive step towards the embodiment of the universal mission within the Jesuit structures, not for the novelty of the awareness of the global dimensions of its mission, but for the specificity of its structural consequences. In so far as the Society of Jesus is organized as a function of its mission and from a perspective of greater universality, GC 35 has made room for universality by (1) reinforcing the role of Father General in apostolic planning, (2) confirming the importance of global apostolic priorities, and (3) empowering the conferences of major superiors in a clear trend towards the internationalization of our organizational structures.

(1) The last congregation stated that the role of Father General and the central government is "to do comprehensive apostolic planning and to animate the whole body of the Society."[50] The Superior General is understood as mainly a source of unity in the universal body of the Society, who recognizing the diversity and need of inculturation must place the diversity "at the service of our universal mission and identity."[51]

(2) GC 35, recognizing the concerted and generous effort to increase interprovincial cooperation, encouraged Father General to "continue to discern the preferences for the Society, to review the current preferences, to update their specific content, and develop plans and programmes that can be monitored and evaluated."[52] The global priorities establish some of the "most important and urgent needs, more universal, or where the Society is called to answer more generously."[53]

(3) Contextualizing the conferences as structures oriented for mission, not just for coordination,[54] GC 35 states the need for an apostolic planning following the global apostolic preferences, now with a noticeable priority over the local ones.[55] The radical orientation to mission of the Jesuit structures implies a challenge when the global context is transforming the way Jesuits exercise their ministries. Many documents start to

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[48] GC 35, D 3, 9.
[49] "We hold the conviction that today cooperation among provinces and regions to realize the apostolic mission of the Society is an undeniable necessity." GC 35, D 5, 17.
[50] GC 35, D 5, 10.
[51] GC 35, D 5, 7.
[52] GC 35, D 3, 40.
[53] GC 35, D 3, 38.
[54] GC 35, D 5, 18 a.
[55] It is especially important that the statement says, regarding the assignments for works depending on Conferences, "all other things being equal, the needs of Conference activities and works have priority over those of individual provinces." (GC 35, Draft on Decree on Governance, 20) This affects directly the previous directions at GC 34 that indicated "at least equal priority." (GC 34, D 21, 24).

highlight the need for evaluation of the structures on every level in terms of their contributions to the Society's universal mission.[56]

What is interesting for us is that networking in GC35 is always linked to the concept of inter and supra-provincial aspects of the mission,[57] directly related with collaboration and coordination. The last General Congregation makes a clear recommendation to look for a more effective networking,[58] or widening the possibilities of it,[59] in the context of collaboration with our apostolic partners.

7. Last steps

The effects of GC35 are remarkable and since the congregation many initiatives have been taken in the attempt of following the renewed call to answer the challenges of our universal mission. I would like to highlight different attempts to reflect on the possibilities of our universal body that have been undertaken by some apostolic sectors:

(1) The social sector is trying to organize itself globally in order to enhance its advocacy impact throughout an initiative called Global Ignatian Advocacy Networks (GIAN).[60] It started in November 2008 and is currently being fostered by the Social Justice Secretariat relying on a new and complex proposal of 5 global networks where leadership and coordination are lodged in each conference of provincials.

(2) In April 2010 the secretariat for Jesuit higher education launched a worldwide conference at Mexico titled: *Networking Jesuit Higher Education for the Globalizing World: Shaping the Future for a Humane, Just, Sustainable Globe.[61]* In his speech, Father General insisted on the need of going beyond mere regional organizations of cooperation to "expand them and build more universal, more effective international networks of Jesuit

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[56] GC 35, D 5, 18-29.

In this sense the idea of something like an "Ignatian audit" appear in many of the documents consulted during the research. It is especially clear in Arrupe when he says "we should evaluate our works and see if they really answer to the human needs, promoting the faith, building up communities, and advancing justice." (Arrupe, "Nuestra Respuesta al Desafío," 74). GC 35 pointed toward the same idea when proposed a reflection on provincial structures, including the "capacity of a province for developing a comprehensive apostolic plan meeting universal needs" among the criterion of this reflection. (GC 35, D 5, 26). The challenge is the ability to self-critique and the reflection on how our institutions are embodying what is proclaimed. To what extent is the potentiality of the Jesuit education institutions to focus in that mission for justice? Who is being served by the research power of the strong intellectual centers? What is their capacity of influence being used for? Where are the vision and mission of the Society being implemented, or where is this track lost? I am talking of institutional discernment regarding itself, a strategic discernment ready to discard current restraints to mobility. Social Justice Secretariat, *Globalization and Marginalization*, 30.

[57] Conferences are structures of cooperation among Provinces and Regions regarding specific inter- and supra-provincial aspects of mission (common works, formation centres, networking, inter-provincial teams, geographical regions, etc.). GC 35, D5, 18. Also referenced as initiatives which enable us to think and act across Province and even Conference boundaries. GC 35, D5, 25

[58] "We encourage the society's government at all levels to explore means by which more effective networking might take place among all apostolic works associated with the Society of Jesus" GC 35, D 6, 29.

[59] Programs for formation, Discernment, planning, and execution of common projects. GC 35, D 6, 23.

[60] http://www.ignatianadvocacy.org/

[61] http://www.uia.mx/shapingthefuture/index.html

higher education."[62] In a very specific way Fr. Adolfo Nicolás asked the conference to move from meetings to "operational consortia among our universities focused on responding together to some of the 'frontier challenges' of our world, which have a supra-national or supra-continental character."[63]

(3) As a result of the requirement from the last congregation,[64] in September 2011 a new document was issued by our central government on the renewal of the provincial structures at the service of the universal mission. The criteria for a proper leadership in government structures of the Society is stated as (a) to renew the sense of universal mission, (b) to promote a dynamic relation between life and mission, and (c) to generate structures able of animate the mission. The document clarifies the link among the universal mission, government, and structures, stating the priority of the mission that goes before any structure.

(4) This summer in Boston the secondary education secretariat is hosting its first worldwide colloquium on Jesuit Secondary Education titled after Nadal's sentence: "The World is our House." The intention is to promote networking and collaboration among Jesuit high schools around the globe.[65]

I do not think is too bold to say that this conference at Boston College is trying to build on all of these developments, to contribute to this reflection that, as I have shown, is not new – but at the same time is clearly one of the frontiers of today's mission.

8. Final Conclusions

After all these pages quoting documents and official statements I can finally argue that Networking in the Society of Jesus is a way of proceeding, a style of working apostolically, which carries out the apostolate across many of the lines that have traditionally been delimiting Jesuit activities and jurisdictions.[66] When the Society of Jesus talks about networking in its documents, it mainly refers to new ways to understand coordination and supra-provincial collaboration, trying to raise the apostolic structures to a new level of organization more proper to answer the challenges of a renewed universal mission.[67] It implies appropriate interrelated structures to use the potential of our

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[62] Brennan, *Shaping the Future, Networking Jesuit Higher Education for a Globalizing World. Report on the Mexico Conference. April 2010*. 15. Available at http://www.ajcunet.edu/Shaping-the-Future-Mexico-City

[63] He specified three of the challenges addressed by the conference: new-atheisms, poverty & injustices, and ecology. Brennan, *Shaping the Future*, 16.

[64] GC 35, D5 was asking, among others, for the renewal of the government structures and way of proceeding from the perspective of a greater universality.

[65] http://www.icjse.org/

[66] Social Justice Secretariat, *Guidelines for Networking in the Social Area,* 4.

[67] CN 395 #1 "Today many problems are global in nature and therefore require global solutions. [...] It is appropriate that our Socieyt, which forms one international apostolic body, should live its universal spirit more profoundly, should effectively coordinate its resources and means and strengthten its structures, either

international and multicultural body. The term Jesuit Networking points toward networks of persons and institutions,[68] and could be formal structures or informal ties[69] that better enable global and regional cooperation at the service of the universal mission.

It is important to highlight that networking as apostolic strategy is not only to enhance the apostolic effectiveness of our body but mainly to look for better answers to new challenges of the universal mission.[70] There are even attempts to envision networking as a new way of proceeding witnessing solidarity in a fragmented and divided world.[71]

After the research, there are some highlights that could be outlined:

8.1. The Role of Central Authority

In the new global framework of apostolic mission, the authority of Father General becomes key at the apostolic level. Rome should not decide how the Society is deployed at the local level, but the principle of subsidiarity should be combined with the strength of a common mission that needs to be formulated and actualized from a central authority. Here subordination[72] is a key concept to deploy the universal mission through a hierarchical body. As the first companions discovered in their deliberations in the sixteenth century, the bond of obedience is key for the union of the body.[73] If at that time the fourth vow was a way to "achieve greater availability to the divine will and offer the Church better service,"[74] today the authority of Father General is the unique link with the universal mission and therefore is able to generate common synergies. This is an important point: only a higher common recognized authority could lead a synergic movement beyond local particularities. Only the strength of the common mission as part of the same Jesuit body would be capable of pushing the individual works to respond beyond local urgencies. This is the role of Father General and the authority of that office as described by GC 35.

All the above does not mean centralization, but centrality of the mission. And it does not clash with global subsidiarity as the organizing principle for Jesuit networking:[75] If the intermediary level of governance can guarantee the priority of the global mission

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those already established or other more flexible ones with render global and regional cooperation eaiser, so that it may more efficaciously respond to these problems."

[68] GC 34, D 21,14.

[69] GC 34, D 21, 5.

[70] GC 35, D 5,1.

[71] GC 35, D 3,43. GC 34, D 3, 8,23.; D 5, 11; D 21.

[72] Arrupe emphasizes here the role of the subordination of the obedience in the Society. Subordination in the Society is the expression of a government that respect at every level the apostolic plan elaborated at a superior level. Cfr. Const 206, 662, 668, 791, 821. In Arrupe, "Nuestra respuesta al desafío," 78.

[73] More development at "Union of Hearts," section 1.3.5 of Villanueva, *The Jesuit Way of Going Global*. "Since they are so spread out in diverse parts of the world [...] the Society can not be preserved or governed [...] unless its members are united among themselves and with their head." Const 655.

[74] GC 35, D 5, 30.

[75] Social Justice Secretariat, *Guidelines,* 11.

and the complexity of the needed approach[76] there is no reason centralize. It is true that the central government should have a role as source of unity in the universal body, but it is important to remember that the new type of networks "should come from all levels of the Society."[77]

8.2. Centrality of the Mission

The rise of networking as an apostolic strategy is clearly based on the need of innovative structures to embrace the new context of our mission.[78] As a primary apostolic body, the Jesuits prioritize the mission as main criteria to discern the structures.[79] Any reorganization is for the service of the mission,[80] and here we have the natural place of the networking initiatives. There is no way to understand Jesuit networking if it is not from recognizing the new dimensions of the mission and our co-responsibility on developing structures according to the new challenges. Because we need to develop new ways of proceeding for new situations,[81] all instances of the Society of Jesus (even individual Jesuits) are asked for more availability and mobility in the service of the universal mission of the Church and the Society.[82]

8.3. Need of Structure and Resources

But networks require investment of energy, creativity, personnel, financial and infrastructure resources.[83] Counting on the authority of Father General and the established global priorities is not enough to generate synergies if there are not structures or individuals responsible for this task. The social apostolate has formulated this need in a motto that says "no network without a shepherd."[84] GC35 makes a strong emphasis on the training for leadership due to need of structures for international cooperation and partnership with others.[85]

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[76] Is the intermediary level of governance sufficiently strong to guarantee prioritizing the higher mission in equal circumstances with the local claims? Is that enough to guarantee the interdisciplinary and multitracking approach to the level that the objective of the network needs? Is that enough to guarantee the use of global resources for advocacy and public impact required for the specific focus of the network?.

CN 400 states that Father General is directly responsible of interprovincial business that exceeds the power of the conference or its moderator.

[77] GC 34, D 21, 14 "Should come from all levels of the Society but the secretariats of the General Curia must continue to play an important role in establishing them."

[78] "Thus as this world changes, so does the context of our mission; and new frontiers beckon that we must be willing to embrace." GC 35, D 2, 24.

[79] One of the criteria is "Priority of the mission that precedes to any structure." General Curia, "Renewal of the province structures at the Service of the Mission," Rome, Sept 2011. 1.

[80] The congregation is clear in the recommendation to Father General on the reorganization of the central governance for the service of the mission (GC 35, D5, 9) even with the development of a comprehensive apostolic planning with the aim of animate the whole body of the society.

[81] NC 256#1

[82] NC, 255 #1

[83] Social Justice Secretariat, *Networking in the Social Area,* 4.

[84] Ibid, 11.

[85] GC 35, D 5, 30-32.

GC 34 established that the universal mission is discerned by the central government[86] and then the middle structures of governance become the place where the universal mission should be enacted. Fr. Kolvenbach had already pointed to these structures as the locus of the creative tension between a globalized mission and local realities.[87] Since GC 35 the conferences of provincials have no longer been just instances of coordination among provinces, but also intermediary structures of Father General's authority regarding the universal mission. The governance structures become structural generators of mission, conducting apostolic planning and fostering initiatives towards the universal mission.[88] An unresolved question here is the role of the secretariats in the midst of a reorganization process today,[89] and initially intended[90] as key players in the coordination of these new apostolic dynamisms.

8.4. The Structural Criteria: Synergy

Due to our vocation to universality and the potential of our international apostolic body, the structural dimension is a key element in the discernment of the mission.[91] If we want to maximize the impact of our apostolic structures we need to use the strengths of our transnational body, and this means not only organize and coordinate but also formulate and envision new and higher levels of mission. It does not mean to create or generate new institutional weight, but to develop new structures of coordination tapping into existing resources. This is why acting in synergy[92] is a key criterion to discern the mission,[93] meaning to strengthen, create, and develop webs of relationships that build up reality and possibilities of new levels of agency. This means go beyond particularisms and

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[86] GC 34, D 21, 28.

[87] Peter-Hans Kolvenbach, "*Corresponsible in service of Christ's mission*," Opening talk of Father General in the Loyola 2000 meeting of provincials, September 22, 2000.

[88] GC 35, D 5, 18.

[89] In February 2011 some changes were introduced in the curia following the recommendations of GC 35. One of them was precisely to switch from sectorial secretariats to secretariats in charge of transversal dimensions of the mission: service of faith, promotion of justice and collaboration with others. Given the importance o the educational apostolate, the secretariats on secondary education, higher education and intellectual apostolate were conserved for the animation and coordination of the sector. Other former secretariats like interreligious dialogue or communications are in the process of become networks.

[90] GC 34, D21, 14 "Should come from all levels of the Society but the secretariats of the General Curia must continue to play an important role in establishing them."

[91] Once we have a global vision, the trick is that Ignatius' criteria of urgency, the complexity of the problem, and especially the lack of others to attend the need and the greater universal good (Constitutions [622-623].) transform the organizational question into a key variable for discerning the mission.

[92] Social Justice Secretariat, *Globalization and Marginalization*, p22.

[93] Major superiors should turn their attention to the needs of the whole Society. CN 397#1.

institutional selfishness towards a "perfect and open cooperation"[94] widening our scope of collaboration at the level of the whole Society of Jesus.[95]

8.5. In Partnership with others

Another clear insight is the benefit of cooperation as a positive value, rather than as a pragmatic strategy necessitated merely by a lack of manpower. Cooperation "rooted in the realization that to prepare our complex and divided world for the coming of the kingdom requires a plurality of gifts, perspectives, and experiences, both international and multicultural."[96] Facing problems of great scale and complexity, the Jesuits recognize that they need to unite their creativity, intelligence and strengths with those of others.[97] Such a work does not rely necessarily upon the Society of Jesus for its Ignatian identity, though it may affiliate with the Society in partnership through networks and other structures.[98] Networking is a way of proceeding that implies a culture of openness and engagement with all the apostolic work associated with the Jesuits[99] and also with other "emerging associations of women and men of goodwill"[100] as far as the aim of the collaboration fits within the framework of the Society's mission.

8.6. Other remarks in process

8.6.1. Focus on Social Justice

I have stated that is not by chance that the social sector is the one where networking has been developed the most, as it represents the embodiment of the integrative principle[101] of our mission, or what some authors[102] even identify as the Jesuit identity as apostolic body on the Church. Most of the official references to Jesuit networking point toward a focus on social justice: networking is desirable as a way to

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[94] An open and complete cooperation should be promoted, as well as the "spirit of union and charity that boldly rejects every brand of particularism and egoism" CN 395 #2

[95] "On our part, great solidarity and availability and real openness to change will be necessary […] in order to foster the growth of cooperation and coordination throughout the whole Society, in the service of the worldwide mission of the Church." CN 246 #7. GC 32, d. 4, no. 69.

[96] GC 34, D 26, 5.

[97] Social Justice Secretariat, *Characteristics*, lv. This partnership should be open to all those working for the integral development and liberation of people, what in today's world means to work with "international agencies, NGOs, and other emerging associations of women and men of goodwill." (Inter-Provincial and Supra-Provincial Co-operation. GC 34, D 21, 14) The need to work together with social movements (Social Justice Secretariat, "The Social Apostolate in the Society of Jesus, Challenges and Situation," *Promotio Iustitiae* 80 (2003), 25.) in order to build-up networks to give greater power to the poor is also clearly stated.

[98] GC 35, D 6, 9.

[99] GC 35, D 6, 29.

[100] GC 34, D 23, 14.

[101] The integrating principle of our mission is the inseparable link between faith and the promotion of the justice of the kingdom." GC 34, D 2, 14.

[102] Fernando Franco, "Faith and Justice" in José García de Castro (Dir), *Diccionario de Espiritualidad Ignaciana* (Santander : Mensajero-Sal Terrae, 2007) 877-885.

"exercise commitment against every form of injustice and misery,"[103] the global action is intended to promote solidarity,[104] for a "most just international order,"[105] or to network at the service of peace.[106] The examples referred are mainly the Jesuit Refugee Service, Fe y Alegría and the African Jesuit AIDS Network.[107] Most of the initiatives reference to the potential for advocacy and public impact, in response to the considered challenges posed by globalization that are mainly social justice issues. After studying these innovative structures, the social secretariat confirmed that "there is virtually no serious human concern or suffering which can be excluded from possible Jesuit networking."[108]

It is not stated that Social Justice issues are the only horizon for networking, and even Kolvenbach was clear that what is said for the social sector it applies, *mutatis mutandis*, to networks in other sectors of Society's mission.[109] GC 34 widened the scope of Jesuit networking "with examples ranging from an interprovincial novitiate to the JRS,"[110] understanding that global networking should be capable of addressing global concerns, without defining the content, exemplifying in networks of university departments, research centers, scholarly journals, and regional advocacy groups.[111] The decree also suggests the possibility of cooperation through international agencies, NGO's and other associations.

8.7.2. Interdisciplinary and Multitracking[112]

As far as the motivation for networking relies on the use of all the possibilities of the apostolic body, everything points towards the need for different disciplines and levels to work together, to connect "direct and organizational involvement among the poor, reading of and research into social reality, and action on culture and structures."[113] This is one of the most powerful potentialities of the Jesuit infrastructure, an apostolic body present "at all the various levels from the grassroots to international bodies, and in all the various approaches from the direct forms of service, through working with groups and movements, to research, reflection, an publication."[114] The preference given to the

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[103] Kolvenbach's Letter on Loyola 2000, 8 December 2000. Quoted in SJS, *Networking,* 13
[104] Globalization and Marginalization
[105] GC34 review #12.4
[106] Seeking Peace in a Violent world
[107] GC35, d6, 22
[108] Social Justice Secretariat, *Networking in the Social Area,* 6.
[109] P.H. Kolvenbach, in the introductory letter to the document *Networking in the Social Area*. 2003.
[110] GC34,d21,13
[111] GC34,d21,14
[112] I am taking the concept of tracks from diplomacy theory. Specifically the idea come from Elías López, who inherits the model from the works of R. Moreels and Luc Reychler. Elías López, *Incarnate Forgiveness. Gift and Task of Field Diplomats from a Christian Perspective*. Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, 1999.
[113] Social Justice Secretariat, *Characteristics*, lvi.
[114] Kolvenbach, "*On the Social Apostolate*", 5.

conferences as spaces for apostolic planning, and the ongoing change within the secretariats at the General curia, shows that we are talking about collaboration beyond the traditional apostolic sectors.

8.7.3 Participation and Discernment

The complexity of the structures, variety of contexts, and multiplicity of levels of governance are challenges for the spiritual leadership of the works. This is why the reflection on Jesuit networking sometimes is accompanied by the question of the way the mission is discerned in these new structures. There is an emerging sense of need of responding more globally and collectively in discerning the Jesuit mission,[115] not as a challenge to the classical Jesuit way of proceeding, but as a way to assure a right apostolic discernment in such a wide range of situations, regions and cultures. The topic of common apostolic discernment as a consultative tool for the exercise of the Jesuit authority has been on the documents since GC32,[116] but specially in the last general congregation appeared linked to the new type of leadership demanded by the new context of our mission for Jesuits and others in positions of leadership at all levels of governance.[117]

In April of 2010 Father General, talking to the leaders of Jesuit higher education, again raised the question: *"Can we not go beyond the loose family relationships we now have as institutions, and re-imagine and re-organize ourselves so that, in this globalized world, we can more effectively realize the universality which has always been part of Ignatius' vision of the Society?"[118]* This paper has shown that Jesuit Networking is one of the ways the Society of Jesus is trying to re-imagine and re-organize itself, as Father General is suggesting.

Undoubtedly the Society of Jesus needs networking and international cooperation to carry out its mission,[119] but we are far from having a systematic approach to what that means in terms of structures or dynamics of governance. I hope this paper can be understood as a contribution towards clarity on what has been said already and where to start the way forward.

A.M.D.G.

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[115] Globalization and marginalization #117, p 32.

[116] GC32, d11, n24. NC 151 #2,3. Also Kolvenbach, years later, reflected on it recognizing the importance of a common approach to spiritual discernment, specially in complex times demanding deep and interdisciplinary analysis. Peter Hans Kolvenbach, *Letter on the Apostolic Discernment in Common*, 1986.

[117] The last general congregation, talking about the need of training for the leadership demanded by the new context, highlights in first place the need of formation on "principles of Ignatian leadership, including the practice of apostolic discernment in common." GC35, d5,31.

[118] Brennan, *Shaping the Future,* 15.

[119] GC 34,d21,13. "We hold the conviction that today cooperation among provinces and regions to realize the apostolic mission of the Society is an undeniable necessity." GC 35, D5, 17